

## Information sharing risk management

### Key questions

Good risk management is increasingly seen as an effective method for organisations to deliver their outcomes whilst protecting the interests of their stakeholders. Good risk management allows organisations to understand the necessary actions to deliver their objectives and manage threats to delivery. It can be effective in inspiring confidence that the desired outcomes for any project will be met.

**Information risks** are those associated with the collection, management and use of information within and between organisations. It is important that organisations understand what their information risks are and that these are wider than just Information Security, which is often seen as an IT concern. If poorly understood, information risks may have far reaching implications impacting on organisational reputations, finances and operations as well as posing a threat to individual privacy.

**Information sharing risks** may be defined as the risks associated specifically with the sharing, or not sharing, of information between partner organisations. It is important that any organisation that works routinely in partnership with others understands the implications in terms of information and the risks associated with that partnership.

#### KEY QUESTIONS

Before you think about the risks associated with sharing / not sharing your information, consider the following questions:

- Do you know what your information sharing needs are?
- Do you know who you will be exchanging information with?
- Do you know who your key stakeholders are?
- Do you know what your organisation / project objectives are?
- Do you know what your key lines of reporting / governance structures are?

#### Governance

- What lines of accountability / reporting processes do you need to feed into?
- What resources do you have?
- How will you engage / involve your partners / stakeholders?
- How large / extensive is your intended information sharing likely to be?

#### Partnership / stakeholder involvement

- Who are the partners that are involved in data sharing?
- Have similar approaches been taken before?
- Who can provide you with expertise?
- How will you involve / engage your partners?

### **The process**

- Does your organisation have established risk management procedures that you can / should use?
- If you are the lead organisation within a partnership, are your established risk management procedures satisfactory to your partners? Or;
- Do you need to agree a risk management plan with your partners / stakeholders?

### **Identifying key information sharing risks**

- What are the risks to your organisation?
- What are the risks to your partners?
- What are the risks to project / programme / service delivery?
- What are the risks to the individual privacy?

### **Assessing risks**

- What is the likelihood that the risk will happen?
- What would be the impact if it did happen?
- How will you score each risk against impact and likelihood?
- How will you grade each risk; does the risk represent a low, medium or high risk?
- What are the thresholds for low, medium, high risks; are these stipulated by your organisation's risk management strategy?
- Do you need to agree thresholds with your partners?
- Do you have a standard approach to dealing with low, medium, high risks?

### **Planning**

- What is your risk appetite; if a risk were to happen what consequences would be acceptable to you?
- Are there any risks that should be avoided eg. by not undertaking the activity?
- Are there any risks that could be transferred?
- What action could you take to reduce the likelihood and / or impact of a risk taking place?
- What would be your contingency plan if a risk does occur?
- What are the triggers that may signal the event is about to / has happened?
- Who owns the risk and what are they responsible for?

### **Recording and monitoring**

- Have the identified information sharing risks been logged on your project / organisation risk register?
- Have you agreed procedures for monitoring / reporting on risks?