

BOARD INSIGHT MICRO LEARNING · I · JULY 2026

Data Governance & Data Protection

Effective Data Governance for Better Business Outcomes



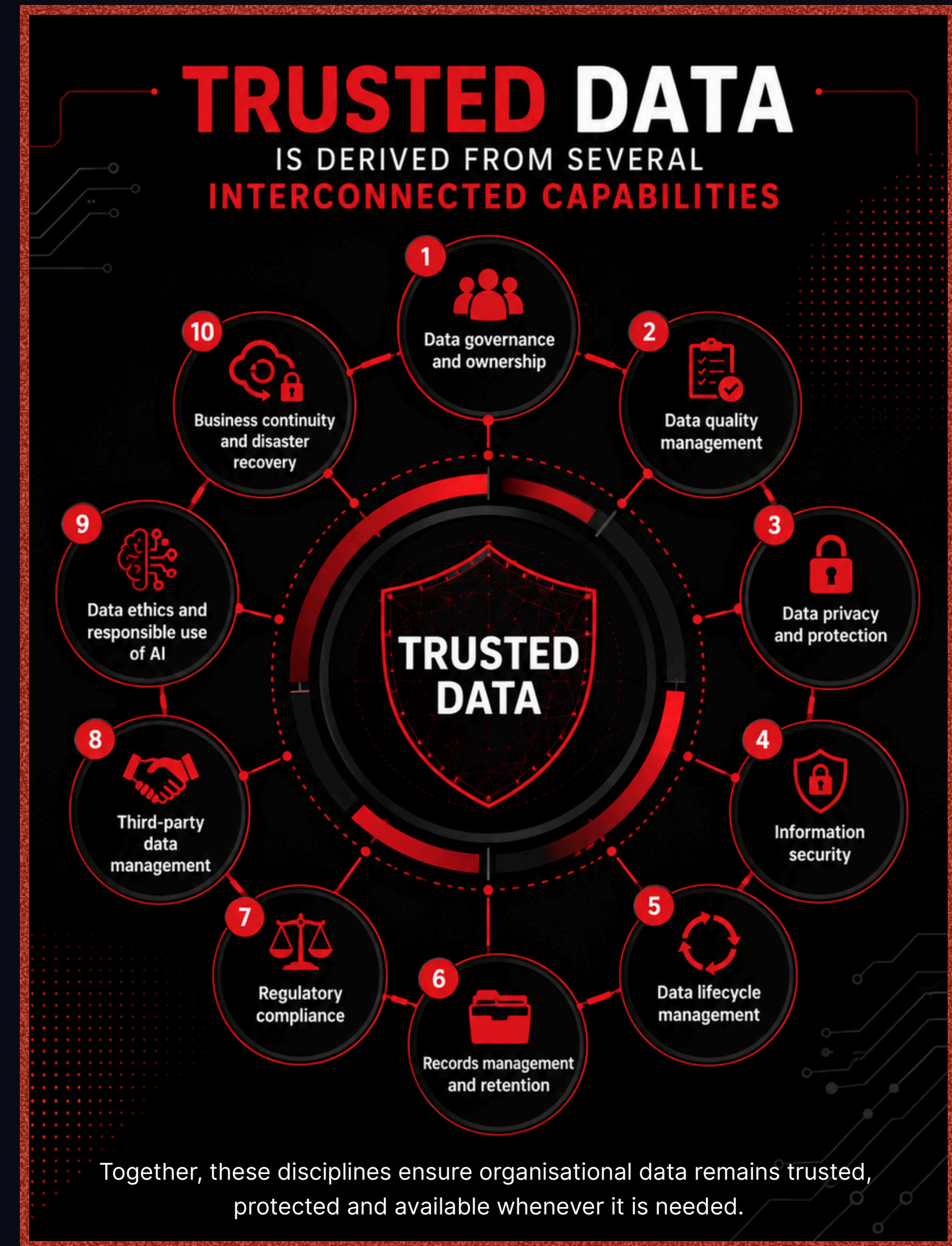
Section 1: Building Trusted Data

Why This Matters

Data is one of an organisation's most valuable strategic assets. It underpins decision making, supports digitally reliant services, enables innovation and AI, and helps organisations meet the expectations of customers, regulators, investors and other stakeholders. However, data also presents significant legal, operational and reputational risks if it is not effectively governed and protected.

The objective of data governance and data protection is to create trusted data—data that is accurate, secure, available, used ethically and managed throughout its lifecycle. Trusted data enables confident decision making, operational resilience and compliance with applicable legislation whilst maintaining the confidence of customers and stakeholders.

Achieving trusted data requires clear ownership, accountability and decision rights for organisational data, together with effective governance over how data is created, classified, stored, shared, retained and ultimately disposed of. For organisations operating within the UK and Europe, governance frameworks should align with applicable data protection, privacy and information management legislation.



Section 2: Why Boards Should Care

DATA GOVERNANCE & DATA PROTECTION

BUILDING TRUSTED DATA THAT DRIVES VALUE AND CONFIDENCE

Integrated disciplines working together across the data lifecycle to ensure data is **accurate, secure, available, used ethically and managed responsibly.**



BETTER
DECISIONS



REDUCED
RISK



GREATER VALUE
FROM DATA



STAKEHOLDER
CONFIDENCE



STRONG GOVERNANCE. EFFECTIVE PROTECTION. TRUSTED DATA. SUSTAINABLE ADVANTAGE.

Boards increasingly recognise that data risk is business risk.

Every strategic decision, customer interaction and digitally reliant service depends upon trusted data. If data cannot be relied upon, organisations face poor decision-making, operational disruption, privacy breaches, regulatory action and loss of stakeholder confidence.

Regulators increasingly expect Boards and senior executives to demonstrate effective oversight of how organisational data is governed, protected and used. Compliance with applicable legislation requires more than documented policies—it requires demonstrable governance, clear accountability and effective operational controls.

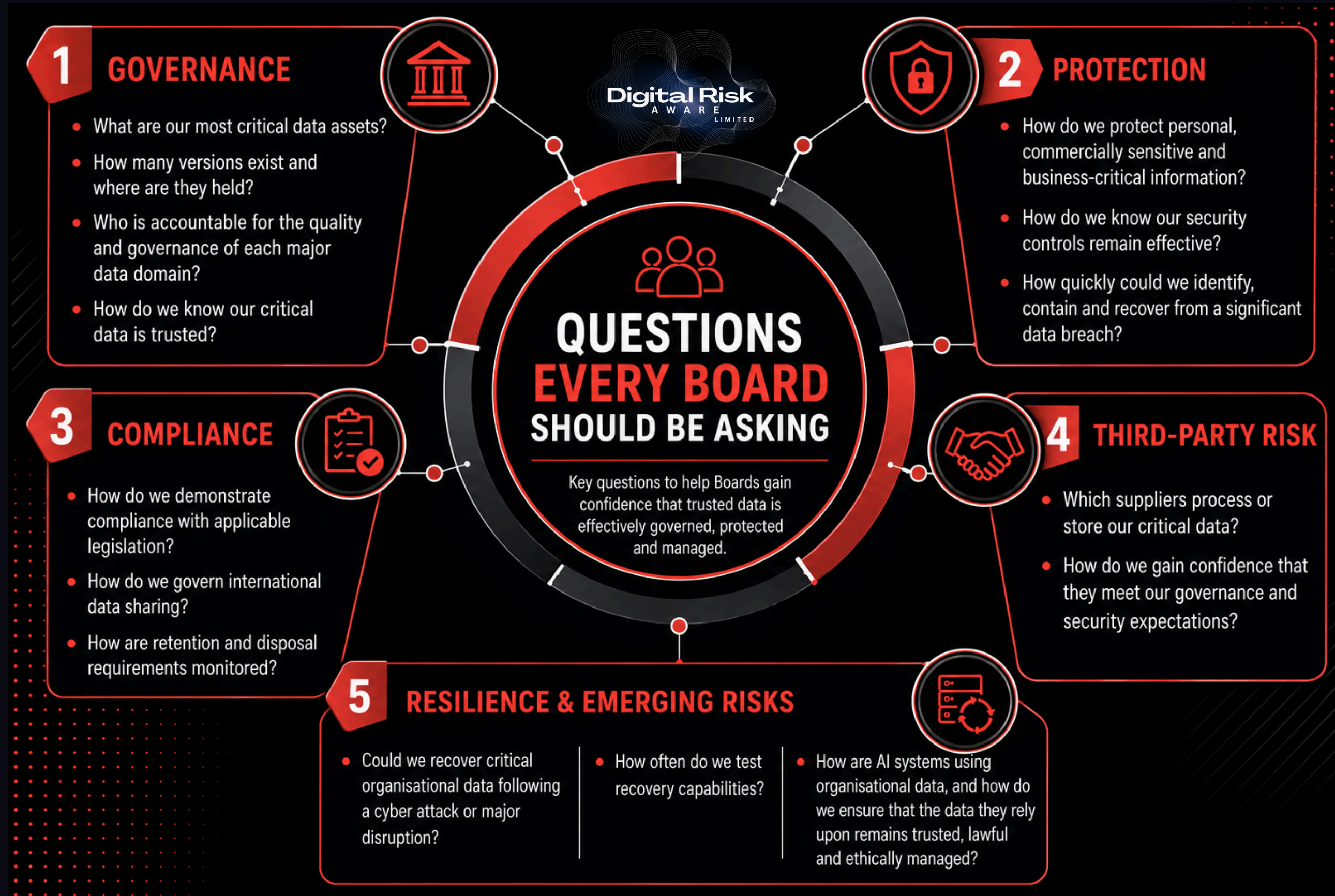
Boards should therefore have confidence that....

- All versions of the critical data assets held have been identified, classified and prioritised.
- Clear ownership and accountability exists for significant data assets.
- Trusted data supports accurate reporting and informed decision-making.
- Personal and commercially sensitive information is protected throughout its lifecycle.
- Compliance with applicable legislation is embedded into business processes.
- Third parties handling organisational data are appropriately governed.
- Critical data can be recovered following cyber incidents or operational disruption.
- AI and advanced analytics are built upon trusted, lawful and ethically managed data.
- Management can demonstrate the effectiveness of governance through meaningful reporting, metrics and independent validation.

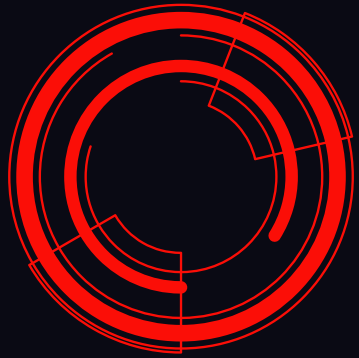


Effective Board oversight enables organisations to create and maintain trusted data, supporting better decisions, stronger resilience and greater confidence amongst regulators, customers and investors.

Section 3: Critical conversations to strengthen governance, protection and organisational resilience.

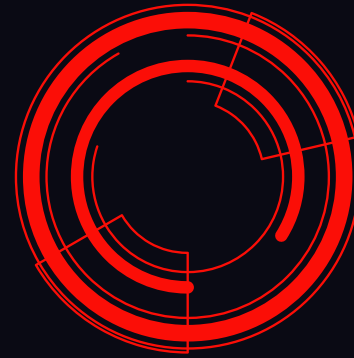


What This Means for the Board



Board members do not need to become data specialists.

Their role is to gain confidence that management is creating and maintaining trusted data and can demonstrate that appropriate governance and controls are operating effectively.



Ultimately, trusted data is not created through policies alone.

It is achieved through effective governance, clear accountability and evidence that controls consistently deliver the outcomes expected by Boards, regulators and stakeholders.