
REPORT TO:	Finance & Management Committee	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	20th March 2008	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Head of Organisational Development	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	John Porter (Ext. 5780)	DOC:
SUBJECT: WARD (S) AFFECTED:	Data Quality Strategy 2008-2011 All	REF: TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee adopt the proposed Data Quality Strategy 2008 – 2011 and action plan that is available on the intranet by clicking on the following link - <http://harvey/corporate/organisationaldevelopment/cpm/dataquality/dqstrategy08>. The action plan is attached as an appendix.
- 1.2 That the Chair of this Committee is confirmed as the Member Performance and Data Quality Champion.
- 1.3 That all contracts tendered after 1st April 2008 include a standard clause concerning the production of performance information in line with the Council's Data Quality Strategy.
- 1.4 That the Head of Organisational Development is responsible for the monitoring and reviewing of the action plan included with the Data Quality Strategy.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To present a Data Quality Strategy that sets out how the Council will manage its arrangements for the correct and timely collection of management information to evidence the achievement of our targets.

3.0 Detail

Introduction

- 3.1 Public services need information that is '*fit for purpose*' with which to manage services and account for performance.
- 3.2 Recently, the 2006 Local Government White Paper, *Strong & Prosperous Communities* and the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, have set out a new performance framework for local services. This places a greater reliance on data quality for local performance management and to inform performance assessments.

- 3.3 This framework also emphasises the need for local public services to use information to reshape services and to account to local people for performance.
- 3.4 Inspection bodies, such as the Audit Commission will require reassurance that our performance information is accurate and correct. Therefore, the quality of our data is essential for assessments of our effectiveness across all Council services.

South Derbyshire District Council's Data Quality Strategy

- 3.5 In a recent inspection, the Council was assessed to be at Level 2 (Level 4 being the highest), against the descriptions in the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry for Data Quality. In essence, our arrangements for collecting data are viewed as adequate.
- 3.6 As part of the assessment, a number of recommendations were made to improve our current arrangements for collecting data. These have been considered along within the key internal and external drivers for change and included within the proposed Data Quality strategy.
- 3.7 The Council recognises the importance of data quality, as we need to have reliable, accurate and timely performance information to manage services, inform users and demonstrate our performance. We are committed to ensuring high standards of data quality are maintained so that our performance information is produced 'right first time at the right cost.'
- 3.8 All Council systems and processes that produce performance information are within the scope of this strategy to ensure that accurate and dependable information is available for all Council functions. However, any continued initiatives in relation to data quality should be proportionate to risk.
- 3.9 There are a number of principles that underpin good data quality that have been incorporated within the Data Quality strategy. The six key characteristics of good data, identified by the Audit Commission, are:
- **Accurate** (in terms of correctness and intended purpose)
 - **Valid** (in an agreed format which conforms to recognised Council and National Standards)
 - **Reliable** (in terms of stable and consistent data collection processes across collection points and over time)
 - **Timely** (must be available for the intended use within a reasonable time period)
 - **Relevant** (to the purposes for which used)
 - **Complete** (based on the information needs of the body and data collection processes matched to these requirements)

It is expected that the achievement of the action plan, including the adoption of this Data Quality strategy, will enable the Council to fully demonstrate that they are working to good quality data principles.

- 3.10 It is important to recognise that the principles of this strategy are adopted both internally within the Council and any other partner or company who provides services on our behalf. To support this any contracts tendered after 1st April 2008, will include a requirement for a contractor to provide timely and accurate performance information and that responsibilities for data quality and checking information are clearly set out

- 3.11 Once adopted, training in the principles of good data management and support for Officers responsible for the production of performance information will be provided by the Policy team.
- 3.12 The adoption of this Data Quality strategy will not only improve our arrangements for collecting performance data, it will also inform subsequent decisions made on services.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this '*Strategy*.'

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 The Data Quality strategy sets out how the Council will collect data to manage its performance. It will therefore support the production of management information for all the priorities listed within the Corporate Plan.
- 5.2 This will require all Council services to ensure that accurate and reliable data is produced. Additional support will be made available from Officers within the Policy Team.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 Achieving the actions within the Data Quality strategy will ensure that decisions regarding services and their performance are made in an accountable and transparent manner. This will enable members of the community to understand the achievements of the Council and the areas where additional considerations may need to be made.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Council recognises the importance of data quality, as we need to have reliable, accurate and timely performance information to manage services, inform users and demonstrate our performance.
- 7.2 This Data Quality strategy provides a framework for ensuring that high standards of data quality are maintained so that our performance information is 'right first time at the right cost.'

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 Audit Commission, '*Improving information to support decision making: standards for better quality data,*' (November 2007)
- 8.2 Audit Commission, '*Data Quality Score Feedback; South Derbyshire District Council, Audit 2006/07,*' (September 2007)
- 8.3 Audit Commission, '*Data Quality: South Derbyshire District Council, Audit 2007/08*' (December 2007)