
REPORT TO:	AUDIT SUB COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 6
DATE OF MEETING:	14th December 2006	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	SALLY KNIGHT (EXT: 5728)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	AUDIT COMMISSION – DATA QUALITY SCORE FEEDBACK REPORT	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Sub Committee receives the Audit Commission's Data Quality Score Feedback report and identifies any issues it would wish to bring to the attention of the Finance and Management Committee.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To consider the Audit Commission's Data Quality Score Feedback report and to highlight any matters arising.
- 2.2 A copy of the report is attached.

3.0 Detail

'Data Quality' – a new approach

- 3.1 The Audit Commission has developed a new approach to the audit of performance indicators. It is a broader piece of work than the previous review of Best Value Performance Indicators and focuses on the Council's arrangements to ensure data quality.
- 3.2 The audit approach has three stages:

Stage 1:	Review of overall management arrangements to secure data quality
Stage 2:	'Completeness check' of reported performance information
Stage 3:	Data quality spot checks

3.3 This report is concerned with Stage 1 of the process.

The Key Lines of Enquiry

3.4 The Audit Commission’s Stage 1 work is was focused on 5 Key Lines of Enquiry:

- Governance and Leadership
- Policies
- Systems and Processes
- People and Skills
- Data Use

3.5 Each Key Line of Enquiry is assessed on a 1-4 scale where:

1:	Below minimum requirements – inadequate performance
2:	Only at minimum requirements – adequate performance
3:	Consistently above minimum requirements – performing well
4	Well above minimum requirements – performing strongly

3.6 The extent of further work in Stages 2 and 3 is governed by a risk assessment based on the Stage 1 findings. Essentially, a score of 1 produces High risk; scores of 2 and 3 Medium risk and 4 produces Low risk.

The Council’s Assessment

3.7 The Audit Commission’s assessment process included consideration of a short written submission from the Council, a document review and on site meetings with members and employees

3.8 The report now before members presents the key findings under each of the Key Lines of Enquiry together with the improvements needed to move to the next level.

3.9 For each of the Key Lines of Enquiry the Council has achieved a score of 2 ‘adequate performance’ giving an overall score of 2.

Next Steps

3.10 Many of the improvements identified in the report are quite specific and it is intended to bring them together within the ambit of a comprehensive Data Quality Strategy.

3.11 The Strategy is scheduled for completion by end of March 2007 in accordance with the Council’s Improvement Plan (set out in the Best Value Performance Plan 2006).

3.12 It is proposed to submit the Audit Commission’s report to the February meeting of the Finance and Management Committee along with any comments/views for this Sub Committee and a progress report on the Strategy.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report. However, where a Council's arrangements are assessed as higher risk, auditors will need to consider charging higher fees.

5.0 Corporate and Community Implications

- 5.1 Good quality data, backed up by robust management arrangements, is the basis of sound decision making. It also enables Internal and external stakeholders to have confidence in performance reports and stated service delivery outcomes.

6.0 Background Papers

- 6.1 Data Quality Score Feedback (Audit Commission) September 2006
Data Quality Position Statement (July 2006)