

**Report to: Finance and Performance
Management Cabinet Committee**

Report reference: FPM-024-2015/16

Date of Meeting: 21 January 2016



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Governance and Development Management

Subject: Data Quality Strategy 2016/17 – 2018/19

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee review the Data Quality Strategy for 2016/17 – 2018/19.

Executive Summary:

The Council is required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions and services are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of the duty to secure continuous improvement, the Council must also ensure that all data and information used to plan and deliver services is accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant, and complete, in order to inform decision-making in respect of functions and services. Performance information is used for the assessment of the Council's performance, and the Council's Data Quality Strategy sets out the arrangements for ensuring that the quality of key data meets the highest standards.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Data Quality Strategy sets out the Council's management arrangements to secure the quality of the data used to manage its functions and services. Reliable and robust data is essential for the assessment of performance and to inform decision making.

Other Options for Action:

None. The Data Quality Strategy sets out the principles for the Council's approach to data quality, identifies data ownership, and sets out its arrangements for key performance data collection and management. Failure to secure and improve the quality of data could mean that evaluation of performance is inaccurate, opportunities for improvement lost, and might adversely affect the reputation of the authority.

Report:

1. Good quality data is essential to support the Council's decision making especially decisions involving finance and performance. Additionally the Council's customers, partners and others interested in the Council's performance, need to be able to rely on the data we produce for evaluation purposes. The Council is also accountable for the money it spends and must manage competing claims on its resources. It therefore

requires data which is accurate, reliable and timely in order to plan for the future and meet customer needs.

2. The Council has identified principles and arrangements to ensure high standards of data quality and has for a number of years, formalized them within a strategy, to support consistency and encourage high standards of practice of data quality management. This revised strategy continues to reflect the principles for data quality originally identified by the former Audit Commission in its publication, 'Improving information to support decision making: Standards for better data quality, and reflects best practice and improvements to systems and processes, including systems and arrangements for the production and submission of Key Performance Indicator data. The Council aims to ensure that all the data it uses is 'right first time'. Therefore data quality arrangements include ownership of data, systems, and ensuring staff have the skills and knowledge they need to deliver high standards of data and data management.
3. The Council also relies on data produced externally by third party organisations and therefore we need to be confident that that data is robust. This revised strategy includes a commitment to mapping that third party data to understand the data quality processes to which it is subjected, to ensure that they are of a high standard and therefore that the data is reliable.
4. This revised strategy was considered by Corporate Governance Group in November 2015 and will be submitted to each of the Select Committees in respect of their monitoring role of the Council's Key Performance Indicators in the next committee cycle.

Resource Implications:

The production of this strategy and arrangements for securing high standards of data quality, have been and will be met from existing resources.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report which seeks to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to secure continuous improvement in the way in which the Council's functions and services are exercised.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district. Implications arising from specific actions to achieve data quality will be identified by the responsible service director.

Consultation Undertaken:

The strategy has been considered by Corporate Governance Group in November 2015, and will be considered by the Select Committees in the next cycle of committee meetings in respect of their monitoring role of the Council's Key Performance Indicators.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues arising from the recommendations of this report. However, failure to secure and improve the quality of data could mean that evaluation of performance is inaccurate, opportunities for improvement lost, and might adversely affect the reputation of the authority.

Due Regard Record

This section shows which groups of people are affected by the subject of this report. It sets out how they are affected and how any unlawful discrimination they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how access to the service(s) subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to understand each other better as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

There are no negative equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Ensuring that the data the Council uses in its assessments of its performance and in its service planning and provision is of a high quality, will assist in the provision of services which meet the needs of customers.

This strategy sets out the requirements for all data the Council relies upon and therefore includes data relevant to services which specifically meet the needs of protected groups. Service provision which is based upon reliable, relevant and timely information is more likely to be effective and efficient.