



# **Corporate Data Quality Strategy: Technical Annex**

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March 2008**

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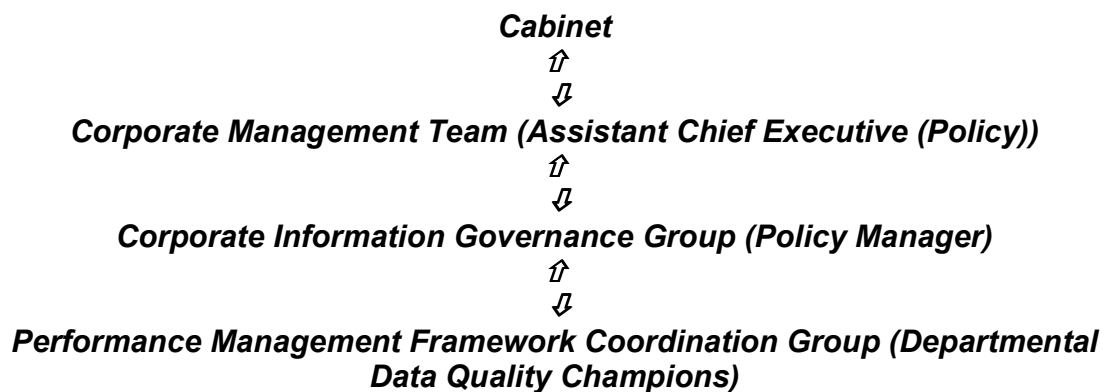
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## 1 Our plan: actions

This section expands on the issues raised in the strategy and the tasks outlined in the action plan. It follows the same structure for ease of cross-reference.

### 1.1 Governance and leadership

#### 1.1.1 Data quality management governance



In addition the Audit Committee receive reports as necessary and Scrutiny Committees, in particular Resources Scrutiny consider data quality (as necessary) through their scrutiny of performance provided by quarterly reports.

#### 1.1.2 Review and revise Performance Management Framework

The role of departments is critical to the successful implementation of this strategy. The Performance Management Framework Coordination Group (PMFCG) with representation from all departments, internal audit and the Policy Unit which 'controls' the PMF ensures that performance monitoring, and management and data quality is addressed appropriately across the Council. However, in order to fully meet the requirements of the PwC Data Quality Review, their role is to be reviewed to ensure that the integrity of the strategy is maintained across the organisation and that broader data quality issues are appropriately addressed. The existing roles and responsibilities will be reviewed in consultation with the PMFCG to enhance the following issues;

- To champion the Data Quality Strategy in their department
- Ensure that data management systems, standards and processes, as outlined in the strategy, are in place to provide accurate and timely data
- Ensure that any performance information emanating from such data is used by the Departmental Management Team to monitor, manage and improve performance and reported in accordance with the performance management framework. *PerformancePlus* (and the forms as appropriate) must be populated with actual performance to the laid-down timetable.

- Coordinate target setting for the Sustainable Community Strategy (Local Area Agreement) with Darlington Partnership (and thus partners such as Darlington PCT), Corporate Plan, department plans and service plans. *PerformancePlus* (and the forms as appropriate) must be pre-populated with targets that have been profiled so that performance can be meaningfully tracked (against) target throughout the year.
- Act as the first point of contact with the Policy Unit, Internal Audit, External Audit (as appropriate) and Corporate Information Governance Group
- Liaise with the Accountable Officers so that performance data is reliably recorded and that reasons for under and over performance are included on Performance Plus (and form as appropriate).

<b>Department</b>	<b>Departmental Coordinator</b>
Chief Executive's	David Goodchild/Peter Roberts (Kathryn Plant)
Children's Services	Julian Kenshole (Mirren Hunter) (Geoffrey Scott)
Community Services	Sharon Raine (Elaine Lowcock/ Jeanette Crompton/Jacqui Caley/Susan Walker/Allan Wreglesworth)
Corporate Services	Ian Wilson (Amanda Hugill)

Accountable officers (sometimes called responsible officers) are also a key part of data quality management and the performance information derived from such data. Each (performance) indicator has an officer who is responsible (in so far as is possible) for performance against that indicator. Accountable officers have the following responsibilities:

- Take ownership of the data ensuring its quality using the principles, objectives and products outlined.
- Be aware of the contribution of the indicators that the officer is responsible for have in meeting service and corporate objectives and the Sustainable Community Strategy themes, including priorities
- Establish, document and maintain systems to derive individual performance indicators (national indicators and local indicators) using the corporate PMF.
- Ensure that the data is passed for input onto *PerformancePlus* (and forms as appropriate).
- Produce performance monitoring information (interpreted from the data) at required intervals (for formal reports) and feed to service manager, Director, DMT and CMT as appropriate on an exception basis.
- Ensure that action is taken to correct under/over performance against target as agreed and provide feedback on progress.
- Contribute to target setting

- As a named officer implement agreed recommendations from external and internal audit reports
- Liaise with the Departmental DQ champions/ coordinators:
  - Provision of updated definitions, guidance and the like regarding specific PIs
  - Consideration of internal and external audit reports
  - Monitoring the implementation of both internal and external audit recommendations
  - Handover arrangements

### **1.1.3 Corporate Coordinators – roles and responsibilities**

#### **1.1.3.1 Corporate Services Department**

The contact officers in Internal Audit are Dawn Barron and Brian James who will

- Advise on the establishment of monitoring systems
- Report on the operation of performance systems once established
- Obtain evidence on the reliability of performance information as part of the sample testing for the systems review
- Agree a programme of review with PricewaterhouseCoopers re-performance monitoring systems and inform them of the adequacy of such systems
- Advise Departmental Coordinators of internal audit report recommendations
- Monitor implementation of such recommendations.

The Information Governance Team will provide support in the completion of the Data Quality Checklist (see section 1.2.5.1).

#### **1.1.3.2 Chief Executive's Department– Policy Unit**

The Policy Unit will:

- Collate and publish national and local indicators as required.
- Collate and publish the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement (in association with Darlington Partnership).
- Collate and publish the Corporate Plan.
- In association with internal audit coordinate and facilitate external audit
- Provide support and guidance, especially re-revision to targets in the Corporate Plan and new targets emerging from a variety of sources.
- Provide overall management and support for *PerformancePlus* including high-level mapping, training and liaison with the supplier regarding improvements to the software.
- The provision and update of documentation including forms and guidance notes.
- Provide links to each department by the allocation of a Policy Advisor to each department who attends the departmental management team and provides a convenient link.

- To effectively achieve the necessary levels of coordination a Policy Advisor is aligned with each department, although this is for more than data quality.
- Lead and coordinate the activities of the PMF Coordination Group and PMF Practitioners Group.

#### **1.1.4 Data quality assurance checklist**

The Internal Audit Team will use an agreed Data Quality Assurance Checklist as a quality control operating procedure within their audits. The checklist is to be used to assess the data quality and to provide officers with a structured action plan of systematically improving the data, if the initial quality checks fail. The checklist and action plan will be applied to data with the assistance of the Information Governance Team.

The checklist will contain of the following components:

- Identify problems, i.e. data being processed excessively
- Record possible sources of quality error, i.e. not applying the RMS retention, archiving and destruction schedule
- Risk assess, i.e. quantify the level and likelihood of risk in keeping data beyond its retention period
- Define data clean-up work, i.e. destroying data in line with the retention, archiving and destruction schedule
- Define process improvements, i.e. systematic housekeeping procedures for data, in line with the above schedule and the dissemination of appropriate fair processing notices (if relating to personal data)
- Assess the resource requirements, i.e. how many staff will be needed to complete the clean-up work and to maintain the housekeeping
- Action plan for improvement

## **1.2 Improve policies and procedures**

### **1.2.1 Corporate Data Quality policy**

The corporate policy will provide Council employees, Members and partners with a formal policy that all subsequent data quality and management procedures and practice need to adhere to. Compliance with this policy will be monitored and non-compliance reported to the appropriate Director and/or Chief Executive (and Corporate Management Team) as necessary.

### **1.2.2 Data matching code of practice and guidance**

A data matching code of practice will be developed along with staff guidance and will be issued through the manual (see section 1.2.4) and CETIS. The code of practice will link in with the best practice exercised by internal audit, the Audit Commission and the National Fraud Initiative.

### 1.2.3 Quality control operating procedures

These operating procedures will bring together all existing procedures, augment them with outputs from this strategy (such as the data quality assurance checklist) and form one formal document that will underpin data quality throughout the Council and be used to inform staff training.

## 1.3 Systems and processes

### 1.3.1 Data Quality Standards

New information architecture standards are to be created to govern data quality in all lines of business and discrete Council ICT systems. They are to be embedded into ICT development and procurement practices to ensure:

- Compliance with ISO 15836:2003 Dublin Core Metadata Element Set, Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Section 46 on records management and retention schedules) and Data Protection Act 1998
- Data addressing standard
- Adherence to the Council's Records Management Policy
- Capacity for statistical data manipulation in the production of data reports and performance management and for sharing with colleagues and partners, as and when appropriate

The following standards are to be applied across the Council in order to satisfy the above requirements:

- Metadata (based on ISO 15836:2003 Dublin Core Metadata Element Set)
- Address standard - Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) look up
- Search and browse taxonomies using Local Government Category List, Local Government Classification Scheme, Local Government Service List and Integrated Public Sector Vocabulary.

### 1.3.2 Data management rules and manual

Rules will be agreed for the creation, compilation, housekeeping, disclosure, sharing and presentation of data. They will mirror those recommended by the revised Records Management Policy and align with those cited in the revised Data Protection Policy. A data sharing code of practice and data sharing/disclosure protocols will be created through the forthcoming revised Data Protection Policy.

### 1.3.3 Performance Management system improvement (including *PerformancePlus*)

It is recognised that the performance management system needs to respond to changes in condition, including the regulatory framework (Government and Inspectorates in particular), the requirements of the Council and its constituent parts, the needs of partners, the increasing wish to provide performance data that can be understood by citizens and best practice in other organizations.

*PerformancePlus* is an integral part of the Council's PMF. Due to these factors

and influences, changes in the way the Council sets up and uses the system may be necessary. There are a variety of means by which the Council seeks to improve its PMF including:

- Internal critical informal reviews that are undertaken annually or as part of the internal audit programme.
- Discussions between departmental staff and the corporate centre when issues arise.
- Discussions at forums such as the North East *PerformancePlus* User Group and benchmarking groups.
- Good practice guidance as produced by, for example, the Improvement & Development Agency and the Audit Commission.
- As a result of external audit which can be especially valuable in providing an experienced, expert and external perspective. Typically the reports identify Strengths and Weaknesses followed by more specific recommendations and/or findings in the annual auditors report. These are addressed by discussion at the PMF Coordination Group and the production of a 'lessons learnt' document.

As the detail will vary year-on-year the successive audit reports and lessons learnt reports should be consulted for details.

## **1.4 Develop people and skills**

### **1.4.1 Data quality awareness sessions**

Whilst officers are aware of the need to be maintain sound data quality it is considered that for optimum effectiveness a more formal process is required. Initial data quality awareness sessions will be undertaken facilitated by Internal Audit, Policy Unit and relevant departmental officers. Appropriate documentation with key messages will be produced and made widely available, including on the intranet.

### **1.4.2 Data quality roadshow**

The aim of the Data Quality Roadshow is to spread awareness of the importance of quality data to management, officers and Members in the Council. High risk business areas will be targeted first (i.e. those with datasets that contain difficult/costly to replace data, confidential/sensitive data, etc.). The Corporate Information Governance Policy Knowledge Management workstream will also provide an introduction to data quality for all management, officers and Members.

### **1.4.3 Data quality training programme**

In order for the data quality training programme to be effective, a skills assessment and gap analysis will be undertaken. The information gathered from this exercise and the above procedural reviews will underpin the creation of training sessions to accommodate any such skills gaps. This programme will then be added to the Council's online training system, CETIS.



## 1.5 Data use and reporting

Reporting of data is essential if it to be used and there are a number of reporting mechanisms for various types of data. All such existing performance indicator and data quality reports will be reviewed and augmented by outputs from the strategy. Formal checking procedures will be devised to assess the level of quality of external data coming into the Council.

## 1.6 Engage with partners

### 1.6.1 Partnership Toolkit

Provide all council officers with guidance on the Partnership Toolkit on what their partners should have in place re: information governance perspective to ensure compliance with this strategy and legislation.

## 2 Key stakeholders

- Accountable officers (PIs and datasets)
- Citizens and service users
- Corporate Management Network (Tier 1 and 2)
- Corporate Management Team (Tier 1)
- Corporate Planning Network
- Corporate Policy Unit
- Darlington Partnership
- Data administrative staff
- Departmental Management Teams
- External Audit and Inspectorates (PwC, Audit Commission, etc.)
- Finance Practitioners Group
- Information and Communications Technology Division
- Information Governance Team
- Information Uses Group
- Internal Audit
- Members
- Partners (such as the PCT, Durham Constabulary, etc.)
- PMF Coordination Group
- Procurement
- Risk Management
- Senior Management Network (Tier 3 and 4)
- Service managers (PIs and datasets)

## 3 Glossary

Term	Definition
Action	Directed activity that is undertaken. This may lead to the

	achievement of a (Performance) Indicator.
Aim	A broad assessment of what it is wished to achieve. An aim may well have several particular objectives.
Audit Commission	A national organisation sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government which is responsible for overseeing, amongst other things, the activities of local authorities. They provide advice and guidance and also appoint the external auditors.
Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)	The CAA replaces CPA and is an assessment by the Audit Commission of how well an area is performing so it includes the local authority, health, police, etc.
Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)	A mechanism by which the Audit Commission rates local authorities on behalf of Government. Each authority is given a star rating between 0 and 4 with higher being better and an indication of direction of travel. CPA is replaced by CAA from 2009.
Data	Data usually takes the form of factual or other information that can be easily organised for analysis or used to reason/make decisions. It is often represented in a form suitable for processing by computer, e.g. databases.
Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA)	The DPA provides protection for personal data. The Information Commissioner's Office is the UK's independent authority set up to promote access to official information and to protect personal information.
Economy	This is to do with the quantity of input being used to produce a given output. Therefore the less (and lower cost) resource used the better.
Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness	The terms economy, efficiency and effectiveness are usefully defined as elsewhere in this list however, note that they are closely related to each other. Usually a service should exhibit high economy, high efficiency and high effectiveness but high economy and high efficiency are no good without the service being effective. Equally very high effectiveness may require high inputs which give a low economy and poor efficiency due perhaps to the need for redundancy (and thus poor utilisation of resources) to produce such an effective service.
Effectiveness	This is whether the activity or work achieves what it is desired to achieve and is fundamentally about outcomes. Using the report analogy; the fact that 2 people produced the report may make it better (more effective) than the report produced by the single person.
Efficiency	Basically the ratio of output to input or the concept of getting more for less. Thus 1 person producing a report in 6 hours is more efficient than 2 people producing a report in 4 hours each.

Freedom of Information Act 2000(FOI)	The FOI Act provides people with access to a wide range of information from public bodies. The Information Commissioner's Office is the UK's independent authority set up to promote access to official information and to protect personal information.
Information	Information can take the form of documents, photographs, plans, maps, pictures, data and other artifacts held in both physical and electronic form. It is derived from study, experience, instruction, specific events or situations that has been gathered or received by communications, intelligence or news, including processed, stored or transmitted data. Information is often termed 'processed data' in that it has been made useable, for example by being put into context.
Input	The resources used to get a particular activity or work done. For example 2 employees utilised, £50,000 spent, 5 personal computers used, etc.
National Indicator (NI)	An indicator that is set by Government to cover the whole country. The national indicator set consisting of 198 indicators was introduced from 1 April 2008 (i.e. 2008/09).
Objective	A detailed assessment of what it is desired to achieve but of a broader nature than a target.
Outcome	The outcome is the effect on those who receive the service, the impact of the activity or work done. For example 95% of invoices paid within 30 days means people get money due in an expected timescale, the appropriate action undertaken from the written reports, and an improved service as a result of the inspections.
Output	This is what happens as a result of the activity or work. For example 25 invoices processed, 6 reports written, 12 inspections done, etc.
(Performance) Indicator (PI)	The description of an activity or work (and mechanism) by which outputs or outcomes (sometime inputs) can be assessed. An indicator may not assess performance per se rather it could just be a parameter, for example population density.
Performance Management Framework (PMF)	<b>A system</b> that controls the performance of the council so that it achieves what it wants to. This requires that the council has some strategic direction, aims, objectives and policies, and that it sets indicators and targets so that it can measure its achievement towards them. Implicit in this control are a suite of indicators and their regular reporting of actual performance against targets. By this means corrective action can be taken if targets are not met.

	Additionally councils have to report on a suite of National Indicators (NIs), which are fully audited. The Government requires the NIs to be collected within a coherent Performance Management Framework so that they can have confidence that the PIs are being collected properly and consistently and that they are being used to drive performance.
(Performance) Measure	For our purposes the same as a Performance Indicator, although some organisations make a distinction between the two. A measure may not assess performance per se rather it could just be a parameter, for example population density.
(Performance) Target	What output or outcome is desired to be achieved from a particular activity or work. A target may not assess performance per se rather it could just be a parameter.
Performance Standard	The level of performance that it is required to achieve, which may be set as a minimum. Thus in Best Value the Government has in the past set best quartile targets (based on the best performing councils) for certain BVPIs and different targets for others. These are in effect the Performance Standards that a council must achieve by the set dates. A standard may not be against performance per se rather it could just be a parameter.
Policy	This is the means by which the strategy is achieved. There could be several ways or means to achieve the strategy - thus policy could change if it doesn't work.
PwC (PricewaterhouseCoopers)	The Council's external auditor who, amongst other things, audit the financial accounts and the performance management framework, including indicators and assess data quality.
Review	This means an objective retrospective analysis on the current relevancy of an item and the delivery of that item's outputs.
Strategy/Plan	A strategy is broadly what it is wished to achieve and how to get there and often the why by way of justification. Strategy and plan are often used interchangeably.
Task	See Action, although a task may be regarded as a discrete element of action.

#### 4 References

- Corporate Information Governance Policy (yet to be uploaded onto the Intranet)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Information Security Policy](#)

- Records Management Society [RMS Retention Guidelines for Local Government](http://www.rms-gb.org.uk/resources/91) <http://www.rms-gb.org.uk/resources/91> [22 April 2008]
- National Statistics, Methodology and Quality [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/projects/what\\_is\\_quality.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/quality/projects/what_is_quality.asp) [22 April 2008]

The above documents can be accessed from the Darlington Borough Council Intranet if you have access or the Internet where web addresses are shown. If you do not have access to the Intranet then they are available electronically from Ciara Shimidzu (email: [ciara.shimidzu@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:ciara.shimidzu@darlington.gov.uk), telephone: 01325 388931)