



Essential Reference Paper 'B'

Data Quality Strategy

Data Quality Strategy

Contents

	<i>Page Number</i>
<i>1. Document Control</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>2. Introduction</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>3. Background</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>4. Awareness</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>5. Definitions</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>6. Input</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>7. Verification</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>8. Systems</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>9. Output</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>10. Presentation</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>11. Data Sharing</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Essential Reference Paper A</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Essential Reference Paper B</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Essential Reference Paper C</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Essential Reference Paper D</i>	<i>15</i>

Data Quality Strategy

1. Document Control

Document

Client	East Herts Council
Project	Performance Management
Document	Data Quality Strategy
Author	Performance Monitoring Officer
Published Date	26 February 2009
Version	14.0

Change History

Issue	Date Of Issue	Comments / Reason For Change
1.0 – 5.0	N/A	Initial Draft
6.0	23 October 2007	Final Draft
7.0	3 February 2009	Annual amendments
8.0	26 January 2010	Annual amendments
9.0	8 March 2011	Annual amendments
10.0	13 December 2011	Annual amendments
11.0	12 February 2013	Annual amendments
12.0	19 March 2014	Annual amendments
13.0	18 March 2015	Annual amendments
14.0	23 February 2016	Annual amendments

Distribution

Name	Position	Organisation
N/A	Chief Executive	East Herts Council
N/A	Directors	East Herts Council
N/A	Heads of Service	East Herts Council
N/A	Officers responsible for PI's	East Herts Council

Abbreviations Used

EHPI	East Herts Performance Indicators
SPI	Service Performance Indicators
PI	Performance Indicators

Data Quality Strategy

2. Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to outline the council's approach to data quality.

The council is committed to producing accurate, timely and relevant information. This strategy will ensure a consistent, corporate approach to data quality across the authority by:

- Articulating a set of core principles of data quality and
- Standardising the council's approach to the calculating and collating of data on a diverse range of outcomes.

Data Quality Strategy

3. Background

The **council** is committed to having a robust approach to data quality, because it underpins not just performance management but effective decision making.

In addition, data is used in a variety of processes between councils and their partners and that data can potentially be passed on to other party organisations. **The council has also recently embedded customer profiling metrics into the service planning process.** Councils are accountable for any information they supply and it is important that good data quality is applied when handling any data when any data is shared.

The principles of good quality data are outlined below:

- Awareness
- Definitions
- Input
- Verification
- Systems
- Output
- Presentation

Data Quality Strategy

4. Awareness

Data quality plays an important part towards contributing to the delivery of the council's corporate priorities:

- Priority 1 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities
- Priority 2 – Enhance the quality of people's lives
- Priority 3 – Enable a flourishing local economy

Data quality is the responsibility of every member of staff, whether they are inputting, extracting or analysing data from any of the council's information systems. Each member of staff should be aware of their responsibility in relation to data quality, however some officers will play a greater role than others.

Responsibility for data quality should be reflected in job descriptions and the appraisal process as appropriate. Line managers are encouraged to ensure where relevant, that suitable appraisal targets and paragraphs in job descriptions reflecting the council's policy are included. This should be proportionate to the level of involvement staff have.

Also staff that are responsible for data quality should be made aware that should any unauthorised tampering with data or any breaches to data quality be found, a line manager will look to remedy the case initially through the council's disciplinary policy.

Essential Reference Paper A details the roles and responsibilities for data quality in respect to the overall performance management framework.

Data Quality Strategy

5. Definitions

In respect to performance indicators it is the responsibility of officers to have a clear understanding of the measures assigned to them, in terms of definition and calculation, and how lapses can either lead to errors or delayed reporting. Both of which could limit the council's ability to manage performance effectively.

A clear understanding might be defined, for example, as the knowledge of what the numerator and denominator are, and whether there are any important technical guidelines (for example, the exclusion of certain cases).

Where indicators have originated from national measures, set definitions may therefore already exist. However it is important that the service is clear on the exact definition that is being applied. This ensures that data is recorded consistently, allowing for comparison over time.

The latest guidance for all performance indicators e.g. (EHPIs and SPIs) can be found by logging on to the council's performance management system where the definition and calculation is stored.

Performance indicators are either monitored on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. All targets and outturns in relation to monthly and quarterly monitoring refer to a period (with the exception of a few indicators which are cumulative), whereas the annual reporting relates to the end of year position.

Every performance indicator has a named officer who is responsible for collecting and reporting the information. This ensures that there is consistency in the application of definitions and use of systems for providing the data. In some larger services this is split between two officers (see **Essential Reference Paper A**).

Although this section focuses on the importance of 'definition' in relationship to performance indicators, the good principles of 'definition' should apply to all measures of data.

Data Quality Strategy

6. Input

There must be adequate controls in relation to the input of data into service-based systems and **the council's performance management system**. Data inputting is the responsibility of the relevant service department and named officer for the performance indicator/measure.

System produced figures are only as good as the data entered into that system in the first place. The aim should be 100% accuracy 100% of the time. It is important that officers have clear guidelines and procedures for using systems and are adequately trained to ensure that information is being entered consistently and correctly.

A key requirement is that data is entered on an ongoing basis, not saved up to be entered in a block at the end of a period. This reduces the error rate and the need for complex verification procedures.

Controls should also be in place to avoid double-counting. These should be designed according to the nature of the system, in particular where more than one person inputs data. A likely control will be a clear division of responsibility setting out who is responsible for what data entry.

Where a service does not have a bespoke/dedicated system to record data, data may be entered into a number of excel workbooks. If this is the case then the service should ensure that the workbooks are linked and that the formulas to calculate performance are pre set. This not only saves officer time but decreases the chance of errors.

As the **council's performance management system** is unable to integrate with service systems, the monthly, quarterly and annual data is inputted manually. Here the service, in line with the Performance Team, needs to ensure that data from service systems is correct and **consistent. Please refer to Essential Reference Paper C** for information on the relevant service systems.

The **council's performance management system** is reviewed annually to ensure that the system is up to date and that officers are informed of all functionality within the system to help support their roles.

Data Quality Strategy

7. Verification

Data verification is the responsibility of the:

- Service in terms of undertaking verification checks of their own systems and the
- Performance Team in terms of performance indicator data **on the council's performance management system**

Service responsibility:

The council has a number of robust information systems, nevertheless even these have possibilities for errors in data entry. The frequency of verification checks for these systems needs to be aligned with the frequency **of** data reporting.

A simple verification process may be to review a sample of recent data against expectations, or a reconciliation of system-produced data with manual records if appropriate. Some systems may require more checks such as:

- Data cleansing, e.g. to remove duplicate records or to complete missing information
- Sample checks to eliminate reoccurrence of a specific error, e.g. checking one field of data that is pivotal for a PI against documentation, for a sample of cases
- Test run of report output, to check the integrity of the query being used to extract the data
- Spot checks, e.g. on external contractor information

Partnership responsibility:

The council expects partners to demonstrate responsibility for the quality of data they provide. Where data is provided directly the service concerned will ensure partners (shared services/third parties) have an adequate data assurance process or sign up to an assurance process with East Herts Council. Where possible a record of source data should be kept.

Data that is provided from external sources also needs to be checked. The council will work alongside contractors to ensure **this**.

A requirement to provide timely and accurate data should be made clear when entering into new contracts. Likewise, the contractor must be clear of their responsibility for data quality and how **the council** will check **the** data.

Some information/data **is** provided directly by external agencies e.g. waste collection statistics. The council will work with these agencies constructively wherever possible to provide assurance on data quality and resolve any problems identified.

Performance Team responsibility:

Once performance indicator data has been entered on to **the council's performance management system** the Performance Team **will undertake** periodic spot checks to ensure that the data has been calculated as per the performance indicator definition. In particular the spot check will look to see if the correct:

- Numerator and denominator have been used
- Calculation has been applied
- Data has been reported to the correct decimal place

The spot **checks on** performance indicators **are identified** in the annual estimates and future targets report which is presented to the Leadership Team, Joint Scrutiny committee and then to Executive. The findings of the spot check are then reported as part of the annual outturn report and will again go through the Leadership Team, Corporate Business Scrutiny and Executive.

Data Quality Strategy

8. Systems

Each system will have a named systems 'key user' and they will be responsible for data quality issues relating to that system. These officers will have the following responsibilities (although this is dependent on the type of system in place, so some or all will apply, it is down to the service to determine this). **The following will also apply to new systems when introduced.**

- Ensure users are adequately trained, if appropriate this should include a formal training programme, which is periodically evaluated and adapted to respond to changing needs
- Ensure there is security for accessing and amending the data if periodic tests of the integrity of the data are undertaken
- Provide information management support to users
- Undertake system upgrades where necessary (accommodate amendments to performance indicator definitions)
- Ensure the system meets the manager's information needs
- Ensure the system can produce adequate audit trails
- Produce a set of written procedures, i.e. a user guide (also available on download from intranet)
- Produce a business continuity plan for the system exists to protect vital records and data
- A named substitute officer is nominated to deputise for the systems Key user in his/her absence

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper C** for information on the relevant service systems and **Essential Reference Paper E** regarding the compliant form for new systems.

Data Quality Strategy

9. Output

Data should be timely and accurate. In order for performance indicator data to be acted upon quickly by the Leadership Team, Heads of Service and Members, a timetable for reporting performance indicator data is produced by the Performance Team, each financial year.

Performance data is compiled into a 'quarterly performance report' which is produced on a quarterly basis for the Leadership Team, Corporate Business Scrutiny and the Executive. In addition to key performance data the quarterly report also contains information on financial and customer satisfaction measures and an update on the council's strategic risk register.

In summary the governance arrangements for monitoring performance data is as follows:

1. Each service uploads monthly and quarterly data on to the council's monitoring system. A reminder is sent by the Performance Team alerting officer to this and the request for commentary to support the data so context if available.
2. Every month Heads of Service verbally update their Portfolio Holder and the Leadership team 'by exception' on performance /progress against key performance indicators

The verbal updates are designed to be 'fluid', giving Heads of Service the opportunity to raise concerns and issues where relevant and equally celebrate success and achievement.

3. At each quarterly period a 'quarterly performance report' is produced by the Performance and Finance Team, for consideration at the Leadership Team, Corporate Business Scrutiny and Executive.

Where data is to be used as part of the service planning process, Heads of Service must ensure the data is relevant to service delivery.

It is important that Heads of Service are satisfied that the data being presented to the Leadership team and Members is accurate, as decision making is based in part on the data provided.

Data Quality Strategy

10. Presentation

During external audits there should be at least one other officer who is able to provide advice and information on the performance indicator in the absence of the lead officer. This is an important control to ensure that audit work proceeds smoothly.

When information is presented for external audit, a member of the Performance Team must review working papers (calculations/evidence) to confirm that the definition has been followed, also the calculations are correct and the indicator is supported by a full audit trail.

Data Quality Strategy

11. Data Sharing

Protocols for data sharing and data sharing agreements within partnerships should be defined at the start of any partnership work.

The council's Data Sharing Protocol can be obtained from the council's intranet or further information can be obtained from the link below:

<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/intranet/article/30296/Data-Sharing-Protocol>

Data Quality Strategy Essential Reference Paper A

The roles and responsibilities for data quality in respect to overall performance management framework.

	All officers responsible for inputting/extracting data from systems	Head of Service	Leadership Team	Performance Monitoring Officer	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager
System Role	‘Assignee’ and/or ‘Managed by’		Managed by	Administrator	
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of relevant performance indicator definitions and guidance • Inputting accurate information on to the council’s performance system and internal system • Ensuring up to date record keeping. • Support/assist in any external audit requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring a robust control environment exists for data inputting and extracting within service area/systems • Ensuring the data contained on the council’s performance system and internal systems is accurate and reliable • Sufficient explanations are provided explaining performance data • Relevant evidence provided to support data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robustly scrutinising data and responding to performance information reports E.g. Corporate Healthcheck, Estimates, Outturns and Targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the council’s performance system so that roles and permissions are current • Ensure services have access to the latest performance indicator definitions and guidance • Undertake training on Performance Management Framework processes e.g. monthly and quarterly monitoring, estimate and target setting, outturn collation • Undertake training on the council’s performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Performance Management Framework • Support/assist in any external audit requirements. • Advice and support to officers to meet requirements of data quality.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support/assist in any external audit requirements		<p>system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake data quality spot checks	
--	--	---	--	--	--

Data Quality Strategy Essential Reference Paper B

Performance indicators are monitored on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis using the council's performance management system. The system enables different roles to be assigned to help support the collation of data. The ownership pane provides details on who is accountable and responsible for the performance indicator, at six different levels:

- **Responsible OUs** – the service responsible for the performance indicator.
- **Administered By** – the system administrators who have full control over the performance indicator in terms of setup, data and targets.
- **Managed By** – the most senior officer with responsibility for this performance indicator, usually a Head of Service or a Director.
- **Assigned To** – the lead officer or person with responsibility for the performance indicator, if a second officer is needed in addition to the 'Managed By' role.
- **Portfolio Owners** – the member who has responsibility for this performance indicator.
- **Also Visible To** – All the users who can see the performance indicator, though not necessarily edit it.

Data Quality Strategy Essential Reference Paper C

Detailed below is a list of the core systems the council uses to manage data, in relation to its performance management framework. As part of the consultation process services will be contacted about the systems they are currently using to input data and who is the registered system administrator.

Service Area	System Name	System key user
Strategic Finance and Business Development	Financials	Accountancy Manager
	Covalent	Performance Monitoring Officer
Benefits & Revenues	Capita	Head of Benefits and Revenues
Planning & Building Control	IDOX – for planned response FastCONTROL Building Control - site visits	Building Control Manager

Service Area	System Name	System key user
Planning & Building Control (continued)	APAS in reference to Planning – back office system for Development Management.	Systems Administrator
	Opentext – for Development Control report generation	Administration Assistant
Housing and Health	LALPAC – Licensing applications Mayrise – Anti Social Behaviour data Access – Enforcement data data provided by the Police IDOX – Environmental health inspections	Head of Housing and Health
	Excel – Housing register	Housing Manager
Operations	Mayrise	Waste Services Manager
Communications, Strategy and Policy	Delphi	Administration Manager
	Covalent Mitel Contact Center Management – Telephones Infreemation – Freedom of information (FOI), Data protection and Complaints Mosaic – Area profiling	Customer Services Manager
HR and Organisational Development	HREvolution Excel – PDR, sickness monitoring and establishment list	Human Resource Officer Administration Assistant
Shared Business and technology Services	Track it – Service desk system	Network and Systems Support Manager

Data Quality Strategy Essential Reference Paper D

This reference paper details the continuing actions the council needs to undertake to ensure good data quality is embedded.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Theme 1 – Governance		
Periodic member training on Data Quality and the council's performance system.	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and Performance Monitoring Officer, in partnership with Democratic Services	To be determined as part of the member training plan. (annually)
Data Quality Strategy reviewed.	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and Performance Monitoring Officer	Every three years
Theme 2 – Policies and procedures		
Continue to consult with Heads of Service and officers responsible for inputting performance indicator data on the council's performance system updates and enhancements, revisions to the data quality strategy and training.	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and Performance Monitoring Officer	As and when required – Consultation to be undertaken either face to face or through e-mail.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Theme 3 – Systems and processes		
Evaluate and maintain the council's performance system to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose to support the council's performance management framework.	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and Performance Monitoring Officer	Ongoing through attendance at the council's performance system user group meetings and an annual review of system reported to the Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy.
Undertake an annual review of the controls in place on the council's performance system reporting to Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy on the outcomes of review.	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and Performance Monitoring Officer	March each year.
Theme 4 – People and Skills		
Periodic officer training on Data Quality and the council's performance system.	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and Performance Monitoring Officer	As and when requested.

Data Quality Strategy Essential Reference Paper E

Below is a form to be completed when introducing a new system that will ensure the system is compliant with the council's data quality policy.

Please fill in the name of the officer who will be responsible for delivering each criterion.

- Users are adequately trained

User name	Date trained	Trainer

- Ensure there is security for accessing and amending the data if periodic tests of the integrity of the data are undertaken

Configured by IT	Date

- Provide information management support to users

Web links	Document links

- Undertake system upgrades where necessary

Schedule (e.g. year/6 months etc.)	Name	Date

- Ensure the system meets the manager's information needs

Name	Date

- Ensure the system can produce adequate audit trails (**agreed by Audit**)

Name	Date

- Produce a set of written procedures, i.e. a user guide (also available on download from intranet)

Web links	Document links

- Produce a business continuity plan for the system exists to protect vital records and data

Web links	Document links

- A named substitute officer is nominated to deputise for the systems Key user in his/her absence

Name	E-mail	Telephone

Please return your completed form to the following email address performance@eastherts.gov.uk. Until the online form is set up on the council's intranet page.