

Data Management and Insight Strategy

2022/2023

1. Introduction/Purpose/Vision

Information comes in many forms; policy documents, minutes, statistics, operational data, case files, personal data, and research papers. It is held in a variety of physical and electronic formats; it can be structured or unstructured.

Across the Council we use this information in our daily working lives as we work to achieve our objectives, whether it be delivering services, formulating policy, managing projects, holding meetings, or managing staff. We recognise the importance of data for our organisation and will embark on a journey to increase our understanding of how to best use data to achieve our strategic goals and needs.

We will develop a process for building an advanced and sustainable capability for information and data management. We will significantly advance our awareness of data issues and build strong foundations for information management and governance. This will generally improve our data capability. However, we are already aware of the many issues that we currently have with our data which persist due to the legacy of old technologies, processes, and approaches.

Many areas of our data ecosystem needs improvement. Inconsistent, incomplete and duplicated data sources are invertedly used for decision making, potentially negatively impacting the quality of these decisions and introducing business and reputational risk.

"We will enable and ensure the use of data to drive effective decisions, providing value for money and good customer service whilst ensuring compliance and appropriate use."

2. SWOT/Current Data Maturity

Many teams have some experience of handling data as reports and datasets are produced for many areas of the organisation, and there is a correspondingly broad range of knowledge within the Council. Most reporting is done within the existing service systems or familiar Microsoft applications such as Excel, but other areas are starting to use Power Apps such as Power BI. We do not have a data strategy, and currently, several interconnected issues prevent the best use of data in the Council.

Strength

- Essex- wide mandate/ partnership
- Corporate performance and service performance overhaul in 2019 means we are more outcome focused and data driven for performance
- PPG team, GIS team and ICT team already working to address data quality issues

Opportunity

- Current use/ knowledge of Power BI tool to further link to data systems
- Levelling up agenda – Sharing trends and demand data will help
- ICT strategy- link to products like Azure will mean databases are easier to join in future?

Weakness

- Very few teams using individual KPI/statistics driven performance, even where available system data
- Individual staff training/ knowledge of issues such as data quality
- Resource and capacity not currently identified in services to manage data and performance.

Threat

- Current legacy systems have patchy data, and are difficult to link to data reporting like Power BI
- Lack of corporate capacity and awareness for monitoring and reporting data
- A change in culture is required to focus leadership on making data driven decisions

2. Supporting Policies/Strategies

The Data Management and Insight Strategy has been written to align with and complement our national, organisational and partner strategies to deliver a whole Council approach, as listed below

- UK Digital Strategy
- National Data Strategy
- Maldon District Councils Corporate Plan 2020-2023
- Maldon District Councils Customer Strategy
- Maldon District Councils Climate Strategy
- Maldon District Councils Information Technology Strategy
- Maldon District Councils Local Development Plan

The Council has several cross-cutting programmes currently being progressed which will endorse the Data Management & Insight Strategy.

- Process Improvement Programme
- Programme of IT Projects
- GIS Programme

3. Journey ahead

We aim to have *mature* approach to information governance that supports the Council to manage and govern information effectively. There will be developed systems and processes in place across the Council to manage access to information requests.

Improvement to our current data ecosystem is a dependency for future growth. Where poor quality data exists, it results in inaccurate insight, poor decisions, a lack of trust in the data source, and more effort is put into data collection and management. Value is then lost, data does not yield much return on investment, and does not provide accurate business intelligence. Where we are not aligned with good practice, we put ourselves at risk of regulatory enforcement e.g., in terms of Personal Data with the Information Commissioner.

We have the opportunity through programmes of work (i.e.) Corporate Plan refresh in 2023, where objectives and data management can be linked to the objective work throughout the organisation

Where do we want to be

- Accurate data
- Consistent and master sources.
- Clear data mythology
- Clear understanding of the insight
- Listening and acting on what the data is telling us.

Priority 1- Championing the use of data and analytics

What does this mean

We will champion the use of data and analytics that enables better decision making to improve the lives of Maldon residents and businesses. We will model behaviours that support the increased use of data and analytics for decision making by increasing our data literacy, being open minded, curious, and asking good questions.

How we will deliver

- We will build strong data foundations with team responsibilities set out clearly, data sets joined up and data held and exchanged securely, as described by the relevant legislation and guided by our Information Governance.
- We will improve our understanding of data and its quality, ensuring we comply with legislation, and have strong processes for evolving our data.
- We will improve officer and member use of data by ensuring we have the appropriate tools for using and sharing it and create Key Performance Indicators to ensure our data is being used and the quality is being improved.
- We will embed the principle with the Council leadership that customer demand informs service planning, and decisions should be made based on data

Priority 2 - Building data literacy and capability

What does this mean

We will support specialist areas within the organisation to develop analytical skills and knowledge and support all staff in developing their understanding and awareness for data and analytics. We will maximize the power data & analytics can bring by embracing a data literacy learning agenda and equipping staff with the skills to create and foster a data culture that drives confidence in how we make evidenced based decisions

How we will deliver

- We will ensure that staff and members fully understand the principles of data security and the legislation underpinning it.
- We will ensure our staff are trained and qualified in data collection and information dissemination to make the best use of data
- We will link with the GIS (mapping) roll out project and lead officers throughout the organisation to make the most of data in their area.
- We will establish compulsory e-learning for all staff and members- annually refreshed in January and host ELT specific training to improve data driven leadership

Priority 3 Adopting responsible and accessible data

What does this mean

We will ensure the data we collect, process, maintain and hold is good quality data. This includes working to improve the accuracy, completeness, consistency of our data, and being GDPR compliant. Data held within our organisation must have a clear purposes and public benefit so that data sharing becomes the norm not the exception. We must always act ethically and be appropriately transparent in our data usage by communicating our commitment to the use of data to our residents and businesses.

How we will deliver

- We will ensure compliance with all relevant data protection legislation.
- We will use our data efficiently to improve services.
- We will ensure our data is accurate and that our use of it is transparent.
- We will ensure that the right data is available to the right people, and only them, using a Privacy by Design approach.
- We will be as open as possible with our data, to encourage sharing, collaboration and wider use.
- We will work to ensure we make the best use of our data and information assets
- We will be transparent about data that we have used to inform decision making

Priority 4 - Delivering change, monitoring progress and measuring success

Resourcing the Delivery

Funding for the Data management and Insight Strategy 2021-2023 will fit within BAU/ continual improvement aspects of the ICT and the Programmes, Performance and Governance team. For specific business projects associated with the strategy, detailed financial analysis will be undertaken as part of the development of the implementation plan, which will include identification of additional funding and resources required as appropriate

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

It is essential we monitor progress and ensure that the work we are doing is delivering a tangible difference to our staff, members, residents, visitors, communities and businesses. Therefore, this strategy will be supported by a robust implementation plan which will evidence the delivery of our priorities and will set out key milestones and achievements. These actions will also be captured in relevant service plans that will be monitored by directors monthly.