



## **REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

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to  
**AUDIT COMMITTEE**  
**22 JUNE 2017**

### **REVIEW OF DATA QUALITY POLICY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Council's Data Quality Policy sets out the Council's expectations for data quality across the organisation and outlines how Maldon District Council (MDC) is committed to ensuring data quality exists throughout the Council.
- 1.2 This policy is reviewed every two years to ensure that it is up to date and fit for purpose and the 2017 review has been completed.
- 1.3 This Committee is responsible for providing assurance on the adequacy of the Council's internal controls, corporate governance and risk management processes and data quality is a significant factor in the effectiveness of these processes.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report, therefore, is to seek the approval of the Committee to the revised policy which is attached as **APPENDIX 1** to this report.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the Data Quality Policy attached to this report as **APPENDIX 1** is agreed.

To the Council:

- (ii) That the Data Quality Policy (**APPENDIX 1**) is adopted.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The policy is, in the main, similar to that approved previously. Amendments made include re-ordering sections to make the flow more logical for the reader and clarifying / simplifying sections (e.g. including the table within section 4 on why data quality is important).
- 3.2 While the policy is subject to review every two years, it will be reviewed again in 2018 to ascertain any impact on the policy of the General Data Protection Regulation which comes into effect in May 2018.

- 3.3 The Committee is requested to agree the proposed Data Quality Policy and recommend it to the Council for adoption.

#### 4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 4.1 MDC is accountable for the public money it spends. It must manage competing claims on resources to achieve the corporate goals and objectives stated in the Corporate Plan and the needs of the communities it serves. The financial and performance information used to account for its activities, both internally and externally, to local residents, partners, government departments and regulators, must be appropriate for these purposes by providing the level of accuracy, reliability and consistency required.

#### 5. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** - The amendment and approval of the Data Quality Policy has no direct impact on customers itself, but should the requirements of the policy not be adhered to and the principles not followed, then obviously decisions could be taken on the basis of incorrect data which could have an impact on customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** - All Council systems and processes that produce information are included within the scope of the Data Quality Policy, in order to ensure that accurate and dependable information is available for all Council functions. Good quality data is the essential ingredient for reliable performance and financial information to support decision making. The data used to report on performance, validate controls, publicise information etc. must be fit for purpose and represent Maldon District Council's activity in an accurate and timely manner.  
  
Should data that is not fit for purpose be maintained or used, then there is a risk that this will affect decision making, inaccurate information could be shared with partners or the public which could lead to reputational damage.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** - No direct impact, but should the requirements of the policy not be adhered to and the principles not followed, then obviously decisions could be taken on the basis of incorrect data.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – There are no direct costs associated with the amendment or approval of the revised policy. However, to maintain accurate data, some resources may be required to undertake training or to improve systems and/or processes to ensure that these are fit for purpose.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background papers: None.

Enquiries to: Julia Bawden, Performance and Risk Officer, (Tel: 01621 876223).