



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
3 December 2009

ITEM 12

Report of the Chief Executive and Corporate
Director of Resources

Data Quality Standards in the Council - Update

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to maintain adequate data quality standards to ensure performance reporting at all levels is accurate and robust. Our arrangements are subject to annual review by our external auditors, which in 2008/09 were assessed as 3 out of 4 (performing well).
- 1.2 The Council has in place a Data Quality Policy which sets out roles, responsibilities and standards for data collation, use and reporting. An action plan was created to improve data quality arrangements.
- 1.3 As part of the action plan, the Council has introduced an innovative self assessment process to facilitate risk based reviews of performance indicators by Internal Audit. This has been extended across the wider National Indicator set.
- 1.4 There are some areas of slippage. Further work will be undertaken to embed data quality within departmental risk registers and raise the profile of data quality across the Partnership.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note progress against the data quality action plan as shown in Appendix 2.
- 2.2 To agree to receive a further progress report in April 2010.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Review of data quality 2008/09

- 3.1 The Council's data quality arrangements are assessed annually by the External Auditors as part of the Use of Resources judgement, in particular KLOE 2.2 - Use of information and data quality. In 2008/09 this was assessed as 3 out of 4 – performing well.
- 3.2 The Use of Resources report makes reference to the Data Quality Policy in place and the supporting action plan to improve data quality. One recommendation has been raised regarding the need to develop further partnership arrangements to identify and resolve data quality issues. This has now been incorporated into the action plan
- 3.3 Progress in delivering the 2009/10 action plan is shown in **Appendix 2**. There are some areas of slippage as highlighted in the action plan. Further work will be undertaken to embed data quality within departmental risk registers and raise the profile of data quality across the Partnership.

Self assessment process

- 3.4 One of the main ways of reviewing data quality arrangements is through the self assessment process introduced in 2008/09. This is designed to identify where controls for individual indicators may be weak and would benefit from a review. Self assessments for all Local Area Agreement (LAA) indicators were completed during 2008/09 and have informed the Internal Audit programme for 2009/10.
- 3.5 LAA Indicators selected for review are...
 - NI 57 – Children and young people's participation in high quality PE.
 - NI 110 – Young people's participation in positive activities.
 - NI 116 – Proportion of children in poverty.
 - NI 18 – Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision.
 - NI 39 – Rate of hospital admissions for alcohol related harm.
 - NI 112 – Under 18 conception rate.
 - NI 121 – Mortality rates from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75.
 - NI 152 – Working age people on out of work benefits.
 - NI 8 – Adult participation in sport.
 - NI 172 – VAT registered businesses in the area showing growth.
 - NI 9 – Use of public libraries.
- 3.6 Internal Audit have reviewed 8 of the 11 LAA Indicators, 2 reviews are underway and awaiting further information, and the review of NI 152 has been unable to commence as we have been unable to gain access to Jobcentre Plus systems. This will be raised with the Derby City Partnership Management Group.

- 3.7 From the 8 reviews undertaken all were considered to provide a good level of control, with only 6 'merits attention' recommendations overall. Internal Audit was more concerned with issues raised against the Government appointed agencies responsible for producing performance figures and/or anomalies with respect to the LAA definitions provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government, which accounted for 8 further issues.
- 3.8 A summary report will be prepared by Internal Audit following completion of the performance reviews to identify the level of assurance which can be taken from the self assessment process and the subsequent performance indicator reviews, this report will provide further details of their findings.

For more information contact: Heather Greenan Tel 01332 256297 heather.greenan@derby.gov.uk List of appendices: Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Data Quality Action Plan

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The results of the data quality audit contribute towards the assessment of Use of Resources.

Legal

2. None directly arising from this report.

Personnel

3. None directly arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. None directly arising from this report.

Corporate priorities

5. Our data quality arrangements support the analysis and performance reporting on progress in delivering the Council's corporate priorities.

Data Quality Action Plan – December 2009

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
1. Governance and leadership						
1.1	Review all departmental risk registers to ensure data quality is incorporated.	Data quality is embedded in risk management arrangements, with regular assessment of risks associated with unreliable or inaccurate data.	Performance Leads. Council Strategic Risk Group.	June 2009	Major slippage	Departmental risk registers are still to be updated and will be improved as part of the 2009/10 business planning process.
1.2	The Council needs to develop further partnership arrangements to identify and resolve data quality issues.	Raised profile amongst partners of data quality arrangements and joint working to improve data used to inform decision making.	Planning & Performance Team.	March 2010	Some slippage	On the whole there is good partnership working on data quality through the Partnership Performance Group. There have been some difficulties with Government led agencies such as Job Centre Plus where systems are not subject to local control. Data quality does not have a high profile at Management Group so it is intended to report key issues to this forum by the end of March 2010.
2. Policies						
2.1	Establish data sharing protocols for all partners providing data for Data Warehouse and Performance Eye.	A formal set of quality requirements is applied to all third party data used by the organisation.	Performance Management Adviser	March 2010	On track	New protocols are being written as part of the new system implementation (Corvu).

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
3. Systems and processes						
3.1	Complete audits on all high risk Local Area Agreement indicators	Assurance regarding data systems for high priority PIs with clear action plans for improvement.	Internal Audit	December 2009	On track	Reviews are expected to be completed for 10 of the 11 LAA Indicators selected. One audit has been cancelled due to access to Job Centre Plus systems.
3.2	Complete self assessments for all National Indicators		Accountable officers/ Performance Leads	September 2009	Some slippage	Self assessments have now been received for all but 10 indicators. Work is being undertaken to chase the remaining forms and has been raised at the Performance Support Group.
3.3	Introduce a system of departmental / partner spot checks.	Ongoing challenge of data quality arrangements.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions.	Ongoing	Some slippage	Spot checks for Council indicators have been ongoing as part of quarterly performance reporting. Validation is carried out as part of year-end procedures, with particular emphasis on LAA indicators. Going forward, spot checks need to be targeted based on results of self assessment process. At the moment, this is not possible due to lack of dedicated resources. It is planned to get spot checks in place by March 2010.

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
4. People and skills						
4.1	Produce data quality tool kit to help staff meet the basic data quality requirements	Staff are aware of roles and responsibilities in relation to data quality.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions.	March 2010	On track	Data quality is covered as part of performance system training, which is undertaken regularly and will be reinforced as part of training on the new system in January 2010.
4.2	Check job descriptions of appropriate staff and amend as necessary.	Accountability for data quality is part of IPM for those defined as responsible for data quality	Planning & Performance Team / HR	Ongoing	On track	This is being done on an ad-hoc basis. Job descriptions are being revised as and when vacancies arise and will be considered as part of the Chief Executive Office restructure.
5. Data use and reporting						
5.1	Work to reduce missing/incomplete data.	Strengthened processes for checking reported data/performance indicators, both departmentally and corporately.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. Assistant Directors.	Ongoing.	On track	Missing data has improved during the second year of NI collection. Work continues with accountable officers to minimise the amount of missing data.
5.2	Work with accountable officers to improve the standard of commentary and action planning.	Improved standard of contextual information to support outturn performance results.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. Accountable Officers.	Ongoing.	Some slippage	There is still room for improvement on commentary/ action planning. It is planned to incorporate additional requirements for commentary within the new performance system (Corvu) which is currently being implemented.