Data Quality Update

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1   To note the progress being made in improving data quality arrangements.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

2.1   The Council is subject to an annual assessment of its data quality arrangements by External Audit. The results inform the auditor's qualified / unqualified opinion on the Best Value Performance Plan - BVPP and contribute towards the Use of Resources and Comprehensive Performance Assessment - CPA - service assessments.

Response to recommendations

2.2   The 2006/07 audit report made recommendations in respect of three performance indicators – BV165: % of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people, BV199a: local street and environmental cleanliness and BV212: Average time to re-let Council Housing. The Committee asked for an update on progress in implementing recommendations – this is shown in **Appendix 2**.

2.3   The 2007/08 data quality audit will take place during August and September 2008. The results will be reported to the Committee in due course.

Data quality policy

2.4   The Committee approved the Data Quality Policy in April 2008. Progress in delivering the action plan is shown in **Appendix 3**. The Partnership Performance Coordinators Group takes responsibility for monitoring the policy and action plan.

2.5   The main area of slippage is the approval of the Policy by Derby City Partnership, which is now scheduled for September 2008.

2.6   At the last meeting, Members raised the issues of reporting deficiencies in third party data and the role of the Council in auditing performance indicators where the Council is not the lead organisation.

2.7   The reliance on third party data for indicators is a factor that accountable officers are expected to highlight during the self assessment process, and is reflected in terms of the overall risk rating assigned to that indicator. Consequently any issues around third party data should be addressed by departmental data quality spot checks and/or work

done by Internal Audit. The Internal Audit work programme specifically covers controls around third party data. Any data quality issues in respect of Council or LAA indicators are highlighted in performance reports for Cabinet and Derby City Partnership. Data quality is also one of the criteria for selecting indicators for Performance Surgery.

2.8   The role of the Council in auditing national indicators where partners are responsible for providing the data is not clear. It is expected that further guidance will be issued by the Audit Commission as part of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. Currently, each partner is subject to their own data quality audits and the process for joined-up review of arrangements is uncertain. As accountable body for the Local Area Agreement, the Council would certainly have a remit to review information systems for LAA indicators if it was felt appropriate (as has occurred with the second Local Public Service Agreement). Further updates will be provided to the Committee once relevant guidance has been issued.

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Background papers:	
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications
	Appendix 2 – Officer response to PwC recommendations 2006/07
	Appendix 3 – Data quality action plan update – June 2008

IMPLICATIONS	3

Financial

1.   The results of the data quality audit inform the Auditor's qualified / unqualified opinion on the BVPP and 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.

Officer Response to PwC recommendations

PI	Overall conclusion	Control issues identified	Actions Taken	Update – June 2008
BVPI 165: % of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people	**Fairly stated at 89%**	**The outturn was revised from 95% to 89% for the following reason:** Our testing identified two non-compliant crossings out of the twenty nine tested. These crossings were non-compliant with the Communities and Local Government (CLG) guidance because the dropped kerb on two sides of the road was greater than the 9mm allowed for the crossings built earlier than 2002. To assess the impact of this error on the performance indicator, an extrapolation was performed across the whole population. The outcome of this extrapolation was to reduce the compliant number of crossings by ten to 141 from 151. The impact of this revision was to change the final outturn by 6%. **The following control issue was noted:** The reason for amendment noted above is also a control weakness. **Recommendations:** **The Council should ensure only compliant crossings are included in the performance indicator calculation.**	Every signal installation has now been checked in respect of this indicator and a list of non-compliant sites identified. Action has already started to rectify the defects found and procedures have been revised to ensure that new crossings are compliant.	All installations within Derby City were checked for compliance. This check has revealed significant problems relating to the kerb upstands at controlled crossings which has resulted in the lower figure being reported. The majority of failures fall within a few millimetres of the recommended figures and are unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on disabled people, however work is planned for those crossings where the variance is greatest. In Q4 a new compliant junction has been installed at Uttoxeter Road / Western Road, Mickleover. The issue of the contractor not installing to the specification is being addressed by checking at installation and again at site completion checks. We are addressing some of the worst sites through our maintenance budget although limited budget means there will only be a few sites completed each year.

PI	Overall conclusion	Control issues identified	Actions Taken	Update – June 2008
				No complaints have been received from users regarding this. Performance at the end of 2007/08 stands at 61.7% as a result of the compliance checking.
BVPI 199a: Local street and environmental cleanliness	**Fairly stated at 11.7%**	**The outturn was revised from 12% to 11.7% for the following reason:** Communities and Local Government (CLG) performance indicator guidance requires the outturn to be stated at one decimal place. This change had no significant impact on the performance indicator. **The following control issue was noted:** Our testing identified 154 incomplete survey forms out of the 300 surveys carried out. It was noted that one or more details listed below were missing from the survey forms tested: • The surveyor details • The date of the survey • The ward being tested **Recommendation:** **The Council should ensure that all survey forms are completed correctly and all necessary fields are completed.**	The recommendations have been taken on board and all primary documents and data entries are subject to routine checking. An officer in Waste Management is now designated as being responsible for these checks.	An officer is in charge of accuracy and reviews all returns to ensure forms are completed fully e.g. dated, surveyor named, written in ink etc. The officer is also undertaking survey visits to validate 10% of survey forms.

PI	Overall conclusion	Control issues identified	Actions Taken	Update – June 2008
BVPI 212: Average time to re-let Council Housing	**Fairly stated at 32 days**	**The following control issue was noted:** Our testing identified five out of forty void properties sampled where the start and the end dates per the academy system could not be agreed to the supporting documentation. **Recommendation:** **The Council should ensure that all appropriate supporting documentation is retained to support start and end dates of tenancies.**	We are in the process of thinning all our house files ready to be scanned into a new system which should mean in future once a sign up is completed all the paperwork will be scanned and saved on an electronic house file which we be accessible from any location rather than saved onto a paper house file at a local office. This should make the audit process a lot easier in future.	We are still in the process of electronically scanning all new and archived documents from property files in order to make future access/audit more straightforward. File thinning will be completed by July 2008.

Update on Data Quality Action Plan – June 2008

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
1. Governance and leadership						
1.1	Undertake training for Board and elected members on the importance of data quality and the arrangements put in place to mitigate the risks associated with poor data quality.	Evidence that those charged with governance have received training on the importance of data quality and are aware of the arrangements.	Planning & Performance Team.	September 2008	On Track	Elected member training is scheduled for 24 June. Further training will be undertaken with the Partnership once the policy is approved.
1.2	Data quality to be included as a standing agenda item on all DCP Performance Group meetings.	There is a framework for monitoring data quality, with regular formal reporting on key measures.	Local Agreements Coordinator.	March 2008	Completed.	
1.3	Make sure data quality is reflected in all business plans.	Data quality objectives are linked to business objectives and are supported by local delivery plans.	Performance Leads. Planning Performance Officer.	April 2008	Completed.	Data quality is a corporate and policy theme in the business planning guidance and as such departments include details on their plans to address data quality.
1.4	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 2008	Some slippage	This will be considered by the Strategic Risk Group in July 2008.

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
1.5	Publish data quality policy and action plan across the Partnership.	Corporate commitment to data quality is actively promoted and making roles and responsibilities clear.	DCP Performance Group	May 2008	Some slippage	The policy will be approved at the next meeting of the LAA Steering Group in September 2008.
2. Policies						
2.1	Draw up communications process to inform staff of changes in data quality procedures.	Consistency in reporting compliance with data quality policies.	DCP Performance Group	September 2008	On track	To be considered by Partnership Performance Group in September.
2.2	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.	Research and Strategy Officer.	July 2008	On track	Protocols are in place for the Data Warehouse but need to be established for Performance Eye in light of new NI set – awaiting final confirmation of accountable officers by the end of June.
2.3	Review roles and responsibilities of performance coordinators to ensure there is a data quality champion in place for each partner or department.	Effective network of data quality champions across the Partnership.	DCP Performance Group	July 2008.	Completed	Members of the Performance Group are nominated as data quality champions for their organisation / dept. The membership of the group has just been reviewed to make sure representation covers the partnership.

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
3. Systems and processes						
3.1	Implement the revised self assessment template for new National Indicators.	Completed self assessments for all national indicators.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions. Compiling/ Accountable Officers	October 2008	On track	It is intended for self assessment forms to be issued to accountable officers during quarter two.
3.2	Based on completed self assessments, identify high risk indicators for incorporation into the Internal Audit programme for 2008/09.	Audit reviews of high risk indicators, with recommendations for improvement.	Planning & Performance Team / Internal Audit.	November 2008	On track	
3.3	Introduce a system of control mapping and testing of performance information systems.	Prevention and detection of data manipulation and error.	Internal Audit.	March 2009	On track	
3.4	Introduce a system of departmental / partner spot checks.	Ongoing challenge of data quality arrangements.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions.	October 2008	On track	
4. People and skills						
4.1	Awareness sessions to be held in all departments to be delivered to all staff involved in the performance process.	Staff are aware of roles and responsibilities in relation to data quality.	Performance Leads/ DQ Champions.	March 2009	On track	This has been incorporated into the training programme for 2008/09 to support the Performance Strategy.

Ref	Action	Outcomes	Lead unit/ officer(s)	Timescale	Progress Rating	Commentary
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	July 2008	Some slippage	Job descriptions are being revised as and when vacancies arise. A policy is being prepared to incorporate data quality into HR recruitment procedures – expected completion is Sept 08.
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	Work is ongoing to minimise missing data through awareness raising e.g. briefing notes, work of department coordinators. The new performance framework has brought new challenges and actions required will be reviewed after quarter one.
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 and further work is required as part of the new performance framework. This will be considered by the Partnership Performance Group in September.