

Agenda



Chair of Cabinet

Date: Friday, 29 September 2017

Time: Not required

Venue: Not required

To: Councillor Wilcox

Item

Wards Affected

1 Wales Audit Office Data Quality Review (Pages 3 - 26)

This page is intentionally left blank



Report

Chair of Cabinet

Part 1

Date: 29 September 2017

Subject Wales Audit Office - Data Quality Review

Purpose To advise the Cabinet Member of the findings from the Wales Audit Office's recent review of the council's data quality and the proposed action plan to address them.

Author Rhys Cornwall – Head of People and Business Change
Mike Dickie – Business Service Development Manager
Rachel Kalahar – Senior Performance Management Officer

Ward All

Summary The Wales Audit Office has conducted a data quality review which looked at how the Council collects analyses and retains its performance data.

- It is pleasing to note that no recommendations were made as a result of this review
- The following proposals for improvement were identified;
 - 'The Council must improve the accuracy of its data capture systems by:
 - PF1: ensuring there are effective internal validation checks of performance data prior to data submission;
 - PF2: addressing the findings from Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to ensure data capture systems and performance reporting are robust, particularly those relating to National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) EDU/015a and EDU/015b; and
 - PF3: providing members with the full results of Internal Audit's review of the Council's data quality arrangements, thereby enabling members to challenge the arrangements'
- The council's management response is also included; this identifies actions to address the proposals for improvement

Proposal To consider the contents of the Data Quality Review, and the proposed actions to address the proposals for improvement

Action by Business Improvement and Performance Team

Timetable immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Heads of Service
- Operational Performance Network

Signed

Background

In January 2017 the Wales Audit office carried out a review of the data quality assurance arrangements in place for performance data.

It is pleasing to note that although there are 3 proposals for improvement, there are no recommendations from this review.

The WAO concluded that 'The Council must improve the accuracy of its data capture systems by:

- PF1: ensuring there are effective internal validation checks of performance data prior to data submission;
- PF2: addressing the findings from Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to ensure data capture systems and performance reporting are robust, particularly those relating to National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) EDU/015a and EDU/015b; and
- PF3: providing members with the full results of Internal Audit's review of the Council's data quality arrangements, thereby enabling members to challenge the arrangements'

The council has responded to this by compiling an action plan to address the proposals for improvement that have been identified in the presentation.

The actions to address the proposals centre on the development of a new performance management strategy and data quality framework that will build a more collaborative approach in conjunction with internal audit.

Financial Summary

- There are no direct financial implications to this report.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Improvements not made to data quality processes	M	M	Embed processes and procedures to mitigate against data inaccuracies	HoS, service managers, Operational Performance Network, Performance Team
Data is inaccurate	M	L	Ensuring that the self-assessment processes are robust and all staff involved are trained with a good understanding of the processes and the impact on the council if data is inaccurate	HoS, service managers, operational performance network, Performance Team

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Accurate performance data underpins the Council's key policies including service plans, and the Improvement Plan.

Options Available and considered

- a) To consider the contents of the Data Quality Review, and the proposed actions to address the proposals for improvement
- b) Reject the proposed actions or ask for further information

Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is a. to drive forward improvement in data quality.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications arising from the report as all the actions identified will be contained within existing approved budgets

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from this report

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

This report provides a baseline from which we can improve data quality, drive a more consistent approach and share good practice across the council. The report also provides assurance that errors are generally minor and do not affect the red, amber or green (RAG) status of measures.

The management response details the wide scale actions that are planned and how we will work collaboratively to implement them.

Comments of Cabinet Member

The Chair of Cabinet has been consulted and has agreed that this report goes forward to the Cabinet Member for consideration

Local issues

N/A

Scrutiny Committees

Please include a record of any consultation with scrutiny committees. Please add here details of any consultation and the outcomes.

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Although no targeted consultation takes place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation on planning applications and appeals is open to all of our citizens regardless of their age. Depending on the scale of the proposed development, applications are publicised via letters to neighbouring occupiers, site notices, press notices and/or social media. People replying to consultations are not required to provide their age or any other personal data, and therefore this data is not held or recorded in any way, and responses are not separated out by age.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Auditor General helps to ensure that public bodies are held to account for their performance in relation to the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Wales Audit Office consider the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in the planning and implementation of their work, they provide the council with assurance as well as helping to identify areas for improvement.

In this report, the Data Quality Review considers the internal quality assurance processes the council has in place for its performance data. The proposed action plan to address the proposals for improvement considers how sustainable improvements can be made to the data quality assurance process. The actions aim to prevent the errors identified occurring again or getting worse and to provide a long term outcome of improved data quality through a collaborative approach.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Consultation

Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

Background Papers

None.

Dated: September 2017



Management Response

Local Authority: Newport City Council

Report title: Data Quality Follow-up Review

Issue date: May 2017

Document reference: 341A2017

Page 7

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
The Council must improve the accuracy of its data capture systems by:							
P1	Ensuring there are effective internal validation checks of performance data prior to data submission;	Data used and published by the Council is accurate.	Yes	Yes	Actions identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The data quality process is being revised as part of a review of the Performance Management Strategy, this will introduce a new approach to data quality in conjunction with	April 2018	Head of People and Business Change

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 8					Internal Audit. Bench marking with other authorities has been carried out to assist with this process. The process will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it continues to reinforce data quality arrangements		
	P2	Addressing the findings from Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to ensure data capture systems and performance reporting are robust, particularly those relating to National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) EDU/015b and EDU/015b; and	Yes	Yes	Actions identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action plan has been put in place following the Internal Audit report, this will be subject to regular monitoring. However, the national data has changed 	April 2018	Heads of Service

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 9					<p>significantly for 2017/18 and not all the measures tested are still required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The data quality process is being revised as part of a review of the Performance Management Strategy, this will introduce a new approach to data quality in conjunction with Internal Audit. Bench marking with other authorities has been carried out to assist with this process. The process will be reviewed on a regular basis to 		

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
					ensure it continues to reinforce data quality arrangements		
Pa3	Providing members with the full results of Internal Audit's review of the Council's data quality arrangements, thereby enabling members to challenge the arrangements.	Members effectively challenge the effectiveness of the Council's data quality arrangements	Yes	Yes	Actions identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the local elections, the performance reporting framework is being reviewed. 	October 2017	Head of People and Business Change

Newport City Council

Follow-up review of Data Quality Assurance Arrangements

Page 11

May 2017

Background

❖ Our Data Quality Review in November 2015 concluded that:

- our statutory recommendation (relating to the Special Educational Needs PI) had been addressed.
- there had been some improvements but weaknesses remained in data quality arrangements.
- weaknesses needed to be addressed to ensure that published performance data was accurate.

❖ Proposal for improvement: the Council needed to focus on the accuracy of its performance data by:

- ensuring all nationally set indicators were recorded in VIEWS;
- Checking the quality and accuracy of information provided in the self-assessment forms;
- formalising and recording the risk assessment approach used to identify which indicators should be reviewed by Internal Audit;
- providing members with results of Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to enable members to challenge the arrangements; and
- improving the proof-reading of performance reports.

❖ In January 2017, we undertook a follow-up review of the Council's data quality assurance arrangements.

The Council's new system could help it improve performance management but continuing weaknesses in some data capture arrangements undermine its effectiveness

We came to this conclusion because:

- Management Information Hub is more visual and accessible
- Development plan in place to maximise functionality of the system
- Three data quality systems were effectively run

BUT

- Weaknesses in three of eight Council's data systems reviewed and areas for improvement in two others
- Data capture errors identified by ourselves and Internal Audit (IA) show further work needed to ensure data capture systems underpinning new Hub are robust
- July 2016 and January 2017, IA reported a 'significant issue' with EDU/015a highlighting poor data quality and incorrect application of the definition

Internal Audit

Data Quality Review findings – July 2016

- IA used risk based approach to identify high risk indicators for testing.
- IA found data quality was variable and there was a lack of secondary review resulting in significant errors.
- 5 of the 15 indicators reviewed had moderate or significant errors.
- Performance of seven indicators for 2015-16 was incorrect and amended.
- IA's overall 'reasonable' assurance rating was reported to Audit Committee in December 2016, but did not receive full findings of IA's review.

2016-17 Proposals for Improvement (PFIs)

The Council must improve the accuracy of its data capture systems by:

PF1: ensuring there are effective internal validation checks of performance data prior to data submission;

PF2: addressing the findings from Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to ensure data capture systems and performance reporting are robust, particularly those relating to National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) EDU/015a and EDU/015b; and

PF3: providing members with the full results of Internal Audit's review of the Council's data quality arrangements, thereby enabling members to challenge the arrangements.

Detailed findings of indicators reviewed

Quality descriptors for each performance indicator:

- The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run.
- The data system is adequate but some improvements could be made.
- The data system has some weaknesses which the Council is addressing.
- The data system has some weaknesses which the Council must address.

Performance Indicators selected for review

We examined the following indicators:

- STS/006 The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days; (NSI)
- WMT/009b Percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including course segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way; (NSI)
- THS/012 Percentage of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal © roads that are in overall poor condition (PAM)
- CHR/002 The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence; (PAM)
- EDU/016b Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools; (PAM)
- Local Number of young people accessing children and young people skills project;
- Local The percentage of victims satisfied with the service they received from the Youth Offending Team around the Family; and
- Local The number of people fully reabled.

Key to our assessment

- ✓ Indicates a particular positive aspect of data quality arrangements.
- ❖ Indicates shortcomings in data quality arrangements.

WMT/009b - Percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way

The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run.

- ✓ No issues identified with the transfer of data.
- ✓ Data recording arrangements captures all relevant information to calculate end of year performance.
- ✓ Sample testing demonstrated correct calculation and recording of PI and application of definition.

The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run

- ✓ Correct application of the definition and calculation of the end of year performance.
- ✓ Teachers use hand held devices to capture the register. Hand held devices are linked to SIMS (School Information Management System).
- ✓ Schools upload annual attendance figure into DEWI (Welsh Government system for capturing schools performance).
- ✓ Welsh Government checks validity of performance information provided via DEWI.
- ✓ SIMS captures and records specific information relevant for this PI.

THS/012 - Percentage of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal (c) roads that are in overall poor condition

The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run.

- ✓ Definition was correctly applied.
- ✓ There is no human input into identifying poor road conditions or calculating survey results.
- ✓ The only manual transfer of data is the end of year performance being inputted into VIEWS. No problems identified.

STS/006 - The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days

The data system is adequate but some improvements could be made

- ✓ Definition was correctly applied.
- ✓ Data recording arrangements captures all relevant information to calculate performance.
- ❖ Two minor discrepancies in end of year performance reporting due to human error in calculating and transferring information from paper-based records to electronic records.

Local – The number of people fully reabled

The data system is adequate but some improvements could be made

- ✓ Local definition is applied correctly
- ✓ Number reabled, as recorded in VIEWS, SWIFT (electronic case file system) and monthly spreadsheets, reconcile
- ❖ Sample testing identified one discrepancy regarding date closed (did not affect end of year performance). Accurate recording of 'date closed' crucial to ensure client has been recorded in correct reporting year

NB: The Council is no longer using this PI for 2016-17.

CHR/002 - The number of working days/shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence

Weaknesses remain in the data system which the Council must address

- ✓ Definition was correctly applied.
- ✓ I-Trent automatically generates the number of days lost to sickness based on the working pattern of each employee removing a manual calculation of performance.
- ❖ Identified errors in manual transfer of data in four cases.
- ❖ No secondary check of data undertaken when data is put into I-Trent from the paper copies.

Local – Number of young people accessing children and young people skills project

The data system has some weaknesses which the Council must address

- ✓ Community based teams receive referrals and manually transfer data into single excel spreadsheet that all community based teams can access
- ✓ All information from excel spreadsheet is transferred by Community Evaluation Monitoring Programme (CEMP) team onto CEMP database.
- ❖ Unable to sample test during fieldwork as CEMP system not made available.
- ❖ Council unable to provide data necessary to meet the PI definition. Therefore, we were unable to recreate end of year performance.

Local – The percentage of victims satisfied with the service they received from the Youth Offending Team around the Family

The data system still has some weaknesses which the Council must address.

- ✓ Local definition is used correctly.
- ✓ Review of Child View Justice system confirmed all victims cases were closed in the correct reporting year.
- ❖ Unable to reconcile Child View Justice system and quarterly performance records as number of discrepancies identified. Unable to recreate end of year performance.
- ❖ Six (out of 34) differences between closure dates on Child View and on recording sheets.