

## **DATA QUALITY PROGRESS REPORT**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress made under the Council's Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The Council aims, through its Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan, to ensure that the data it uses to measure its performance and inform its decision making is of the highest quality consistent with the efficient and effective use of its resources.
- 2.2 The results of our internal audit of Performance Indicators were presented to the Audit Committee in December 2009.
- 2.3 In addition to our internal audit of our data quality, our External Auditors are required to make an assessment of our data quality arrangements. From 2008/9 this was undertaken as part of the Annual Use of Resources Assessment produced as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process.
- 2.4 The Use of Resources Report for 2008/9 is now formally available and the findings in respect of data quality are summarised below.

### **3 KEY FINDINGS OF THE USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSMENT IN RESPECT OF DATA QUALITY**

- 3.1 The Use of Resources Assessment covers data quality under a Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE), which reads: "The organisation produces relevant and reliable data and information to support decision making and manage performance".
- 3.2 The External Auditor's overall assessment of Rochford against this KLOE is that our arrangements were "consistently above minimum requirements" and we were "performing well," scoring a 3 on the assessment framework.

### **4 ONGOING AND FUTURE DATA QUALITY ACTIVITY**

- 4.1 The data quality work programme will primarily consist of those activities already in place to assure timeliness and accuracy, including year end internal audit of performance indicators; in year spot checks of measures identified as being at higher risk of error; use of preformatted data capture software to ensure correct calculation of results; identification of data quality responsibilities in staff performance reviews and staff awareness training.

- 4.2 In addition, in late 2009, we asked our third party contractors to provide formal assurances of the quality of data they provide to us. These assurances are now being received and evaluated.
- 4.3 For the future it is proposed to make an Annual Data Quality Report to the Audit Committee in December 2010 covering the results of the Internal Audit of Performance Indicators and the data quality aspects of the Use of Resources Assessment for 2009/10.

## **5 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The implementation of the Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan has minimised data quality errors and thus mitigated any potential strategic, operational, reputational or regulatory consequences.
- 5.2 Failure to continue with the procedures implemented under the Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan could create the potential for inaccurate data and could put the Council's score in future Use of Resources Assessments at risk.
- 5.3 The data quality findings in the Use of Resources Assessment support the performance data used for the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) and thus poor data quality findings would have negative implications for our assessments under the CAA process.

## **6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Data Quality and Records Management Policy and the Data Quality Strategy and Action Plan assist the Council in meeting its obligations under the Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **7 RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) That the findings of the 2008/09 Use of Resources Assessment, which states that Rochford is "performing well" against the Data Quality KLOE, be noted.
  - (2) That a further report on Data Quality be made to the Audit Committee in December 2010.

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**Background Papers: -**

None.

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