HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

DATA USE AND ANALYTICS STRATEGY 2025–2028

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Havant BOROUGH COUNCIL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Havant Borough Council's Data Use and Analytics Strategy (2025-2028) aims to enhance how the organisation uses data to make decisions, deliver services, and communicate with the public. Data is a powerful tool that enables the council to address community needs effectively, improve service delivery, and support evidence-based decision-making. By adopting data-driven tools and ensuring insights are accurate and timely, the council is committed to making informed choices that benefit residents.

A key focus of this strategy is data protection and ethical governance, ensuring that privacy, fairness, and transparency remain at the forefront of data use. The council is dedicated to maintaining high data quality standards, improving staff data literacy, and implementing secure, accessible, and well-managed data systems.

To achieve this, the strategy outlines five core principles:

DATA QUALITY

Ensuring data is accurate, complete, and reliable to support effective decision-making.

DATA LITERACY

Empowering staff with the knowledge and tools to interpret and utilise data efficiently.

DATA ETHICS & RESPONSIBILITY

Upholding transparency, security, and fairness in data collection and use.

DATA STANDARDS

Establishing frameworks for governance, interoperability, and compliance.

LEADERSHIP IN DATA

Embedding data-driven decision-making across council operations.

By aligning with the Corporate Strategy (2024–2028) and integrating with key initiatives like customer experience, digital transformation, and governance policies, this strategy will foster a data-driven culture. It aims to enhance public trust, operational efficiency, and community engagement, ensuring that data is used responsibly and effectively to improve outcomes for residents and staff.

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

This is the council's first Data Use and Analytics Strategy.

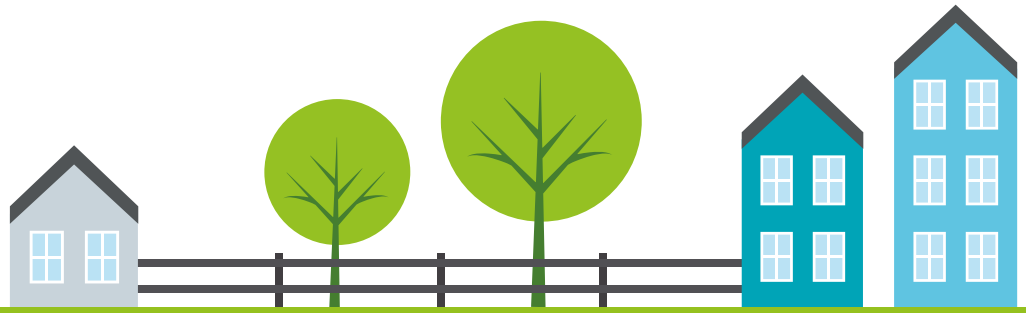
Adopting this strategy reflects the council's commitment to becoming a data-driven organisation and meeting our corporate priority of applying good governance and transparency in our working and decision making, as outlined in the Corporate Strategy 2024–28.

The Council is currently implementing several operational system upgrades while enhancing reporting capabilities and improving performance visibility using tools like Power BI. Having the right tools, systems and accessibility to data, reports, and dashboards aid in creating a strong basis for data-driven decision making.

This is important for the council as it empowers teams to make informed decisions, boosts accountability, and supports strategic alignment across departments. By using data effectively, the council can identify trends, optimise resource allocation, and enhance service delivery, ensuring that policies and initiatives are both efficient and impactful.

Additionally, the council is bringing services such as Customer Services back in-house and has recently adopted our Customer Access and Experience Strategy aimed at promoting data to enhance customer satisfaction. The council is also in the process of reviewing a comprehensive Digital Strategy, supported by an established Information Governance Policy, Strategy, and Framework, as well as an Engagement Strategy. Together, these five strategies form a robust foundation for the council's data-driven future by guiding and enabling officers.

When we refer to data, we encompass both business and personal data, both of which are covered by this strategy. However, the use of personal data is subject to additional legislative requirements, which are further detailed in the Information Governance Policy, Strategy, and Framework referenced above.



VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

The vision of this strategy is to harness the power of data and analytics to deliver efficient, effective, and transparent public services. By enabling and promoting robust data governance, ethical practices, and innovative analytics, we aim to transform decision-making processes, enhance transparency, and improve outcomes for all residents and staff.

This strategy is closely aligned with Havant Borough Council's Corporate Strategy 2024-2028, which underscores the importance of data as a key asset in shaping services, informing decision-making, and engaging with the community. It commits to treating data with the highest standards of security and compliance, in line with data protection legislation and best practice, while also prioritising data's role in driving innovation and empowering residents.

Benefits for Residents

This strategy directly supports residents by delivering improved service quality, fostering transparency, and empowering communities.

By utilising data insights, public services can be tailored to meet residents' specific needs, ensuring the efficient allocation of resources. Predictive analytics have the potential to enhance the council's ability to anticipate and address community requirements, reducing response times, and ensuring proactive service delivery.

Transparency can be reinforced through accessible data, enabling both public and resident engagement by allowing individuals to track the progress of council initiatives, understand decision-making processes, and hold the council accountable.

Open Data initiatives create opportunities for greater involvement in governance, empowering residents to advocate for local priorities and collaborate on innovative community projects. By providing access to key datasets on council spending, project timelines, and policy outcomes, Open Data supports both public and resident engagement by enabling informed discussions and assessments of council performance. It also strengthens participation in governance committees by equipping residents with insights into agenda items, past decisions, and ongoing discussions, allowing them to attend meetings with greater knowledge, submit informed questions, or provide feedback. Furthermore, Open Data facilitates evidence-based advocacy, helping residents and community groups analyse trends in areas such as housing and environmental impact, thereby enhancing their ability to influence policy decisions with data-backed proposals. Digital engagement and crowdsourced solutions are also encouraged through Open Data initiatives, such as platforms that allow communities to report issues or suggest infrastructure improvements. Ethical data practices and robust protections are central to this approach, ensuring data is managed responsibly while fostering trust in technology-driven services.

Ultimately, Open Data enhances transparency, accountability, and both public and resident engagement, empowering communities to play a more active role in shaping their local areas.

Benefits for Staff

The strategy also brings substantial benefits for council staff by improving decision-making, operational efficiency, and professional development.

Data analytics facilitate evidence-based decisions, highlight trends, and optimise resource allocation. Streamlined workflows reduce administrative burdens, enabling staff to focus on delivering impactful services.

Staff will benefit from access to advanced tools and training, enabling innovation and collaboration across departments. Clear performance metrics improve transparency and accountability while simplifying reporting processes. Ethical governance frameworks encourage creative problem-solving while mitigating legal and reputational risks. By equipping staff with the necessary tools, skills, and safeguards, this strategy empowers them to deliver responsive, high-quality services to residents.

Commitment to Secure and Ethical Data Practices

In alignment with Havant Borough Council's Corporate Strategy and Digital Strategy, this approach treats data as a valuable resource to inform decisions and drive outcomes. The strategy ensures that personal data is managed securely and in compliance with data protection legislation, safeguarding public trust. Anonymised data will be used innovatively to benefit the community while maintaining strict adherence to data protection principles and ethical governance.

By aligning with the priorities set out in Havant Borough Council's Corporate Strategy 2024–2028, this Data Use and Analytics Strategy reinforces the council's commitment to transparency, efficiency, and community engagement. Through responsible and innovative use of data, we will deliver impactful and forward-thinking public services that meet the needs of residents and staff alike.

DATA SECURITY

Data security is a fundamental pillar of Havant Borough Council's Data Use and Analytics Strategy, ensuring the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of information.

Given the council's commitment to transparency and data-driven decision-making, the council must maintain robust security measures to protect personal and sensitive data from unauthorised access, breaches, or misuse. This involves maintaining strict compliance with data protection regulations, such as employing encryption, conducting regular audits, and fostering a culture of security awareness among staff. Secure data practices not only safeguard residents' personal information but also build public trust in the council's digital initiatives. Furthermore, ethical handling of data minimises risks associated with bias, privacy violations, and data misuse, reinforcing the council's dedication to responsible governance. By maintaining strong/robust data security, the council can confidently harness the power of analytics to enhance service delivery while ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards.

The council curates a base-specification model for all cloud-based service procurements and new digital initiatives. Supported by technical design authority gateways, all digital projects must adhere to the National Cyber Security Centre's 14 design principles of cloud security: https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/cloud/the-cloud-security-principles

OBJECTIVES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND MONITORING

We recognise the vital role of data in driving success and are committed to building a strong data framework. This section outlines key principles, objectives, and monitoring strategies to ensure **data quality**, foster a data-literate workforce, uphold ethical practices, and enhance efficiency through strategic investments and leadership.

There are five key principles that will be the guiding force of the strategy and areas we will focus our actions on. They are:

1

DATA QUALITY

2

DATA LITERACY

3

DATA ETHICS & RESPONSIBILITY

4

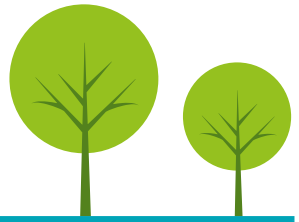
DATA STANDARDS

5

LEADERSHIP IN DATA

These principles provide a foundation for embedding data-driven practices across the council, promoting transparency, innovation, and efficiency.

The Data Use and Analytics Strategy is scheduled for a three-year review cycle, enabling a structured and sustainable approach to maintaining its relevance and effectiveness over the long term. This approach ensures the strategy remains responsive to evolving data practices and organisational priorities while promoting stability and strategic foresight.



PRINCIPLE	OBJECTIVE
Data quality	Establish and maintain **data quality** standards that ensure accuracy, reliability, and accessibility across the council, driving informed decision-making, operational efficiency, and strategic growth.
Data literacy	Establish a **data-literate** workforce equipped to interpret, analyse, and support data for informed decision-making, operational efficiency, and a culture of continuous improvement.
Data ethics and responsibility	Ensure responsible and ethical data practices at the council, prioritising data protection, transparency, equity, and public trust in the collection, storage, and usage of data.
Data standards	Establish robust data standards across the council to ensure data is managed securely, consistently, and in a manner that promotes accessibility, interoperability, and operational efficiency.
Leadership in data	Cultivate an organisation-wide culture of data-driven decision-making by embedding data utilisation into operational practices, empowering leaders and teams alike to harness strategic insights for impactful outcomes.

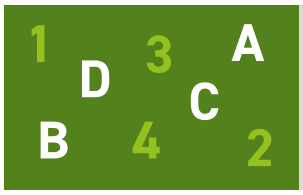
What do we mean by Data?

Data refers to raw facts, figures, and information collected from various sources, which can be processed, analysed, and interpreted to support decision-making, gain insights, and drive innovation, in this context we are not referring to personal data.

Data can exist in various forms, including numbers, text, images, or sound, and is the foundation for creating actionable knowledge in local government contexts.

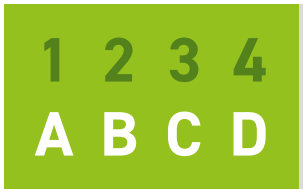
This strategy considers the move from raw, unprocessed data through to informed, ordered intelligence used for decision making in a data-driven, intelligent organisation.

The types of data can include:



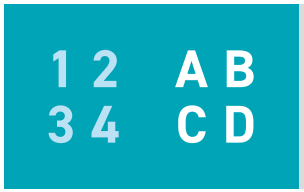
RAW DATA

Unprocessed and unorganised information collected from a source.



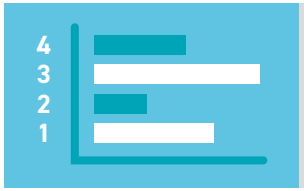
SORTED DATA

Data that has been arranged in a specific order, such as numerically or alphabetically.



ARRANGED DATA

Data that has been structured or organised for easier analysis.



PRESENTED DATA (VISUALLY)

Information displayed using charts, graphs, or tables for better understanding.

EXPLAINED DATA

Data that has been interpreted or analysed to provide meaning.

ACTIONABLE DATA

Processed information that can be used to make decisions or take action.

Data is used every day and can be **quantitative** (how much/how many), **qualitative** (feedback/experience), or **visual** (maps). Data can be structured Organised, formatted, and easily searchable (e.g., databases, spreadsheets). or unstructured Unorganised, raw, and not easily searchable (e.g., text files, images, videos) and the type of data will have a significant bearing on its use, storage, or analysis.

Definition of Data Use

Data use refers to a clear set of guidelines, rules, or conditions that outline how data is permitted to be collected, accessed, processed, stored, shared, and utilised. The definition ensures that data is used responsibly, ethically, and in compliance with applicable laws, standards, or agreements. It often includes the following components:

- Purpose of Use
- Scope of Use
- Data Categories
- Access Controls
- Data Security
- Compliance
- Retention and Disposal
- Sharing and Transfer
- Consent and Privacy
- Prohibited Uses
- Monitoring and Enforcement

Data Maturity

To establish a baseline for data usage and complexity across the council, a **Data Maturity Assessment (DMA)** was conducted using the Government's Data Maturity Assessment Framework. This framework evaluates an organisation's **capability, effectiveness, and readiness** to use data in alignment with strategic, operational, and corporate priorities.

The DMA process involved **60+ self-assessment workshops** across various council teams, collecting **quantitative data** on key areas of data maturity. Each council service underwent an assessment to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement in data management and utilisation.

Self-Assessment Results: Maturity Levels

The Government's DMA framework defines **five levels of maturity**, indicating progression in data capability:

1 BEGINNING
Compliance with minimal legal requirements, siloed data management, limited literacy, and ad hoc access control.

↓

2 EMERGING
Data is used but not prioritised; responsibility is unclear, with limited leadership engagement.

↓

3 LEARNING
Growing recognition of data's importance, improved literacy, and embedded legal/policy requirements.

↓

4 DEVELOPING
Organisational-wide data integration, consistent governance, external collaboration, and data-driven decision-making.

↓

5 MASTERING
Exemplary data culture, proactive strategy, predictive analytics, and deeply embedded data capabilities.

The results indicate that **most teams fall between the Learning and Developing stages**, with varying levels of maturity across different themes.

Key Findings Across Core Themes

DATA QUALITY

- The assessment highlights **moderate consistency** in applying data effectively.
- The **Tools theme** displays mixed results: while many responses rank **3–4 (Learning to Developing)**, the lower quartile dips to **2 (Emerging)**, indicating **gaps in tool utilisation**.
- **Data inventory and infrastructure** show high variability, with some teams rating **1.5–3 (Beginning to Learning)**, reflecting inconsistencies in understanding and managing available data.

DATA LITERACY

- **Engaging with Others** exhibits a **tight interquartile range (IQR) of 2.5–3.5**, indicating **consistent collaborative practices**.
- **Skills and Knowledge** display **greater variability**, with responses ranging from **below 2 (Emerging) to 3.5 (Learning to Developing)**. This suggests a **need for targeted training** to bridge skill disparities.

DATA ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY

- **Managing and Using Data Ethically** shows moderate consistency, with most teams in the **2.5–3.5 range (Emerging to Learning)**.
- **Protecting Your Data** falls largely within **2–3 (Emerging to Learning)**, but outliers below **1.5 (Beginning)** indicate **critical vulnerabilities** requiring immediate action.

DATA STANDARDS

- The **Uses theme** shows moderate alignment, with most teams between **2.5 and 3.5 (Emerging to Learning)**.
- However, **Data Culture** exhibits the widest disparity, ranging from **1 (Beginning) to 5 (Mastering)**, highlighting **challenges in fostering a unified data-driven culture**.

LEADERSHIP IN DATA

- **Collaboration and Engagement** show a stable IQR between **2.5 and 3.5**, indicating foundational teamwork in data initiatives.
- However, **Leadership and Skills** reveal **greater variability (1.5–3.5, Beginning to Developing)**, signifying **inconsistent application of leadership principles** and a need for **more strategic leadership development**.

Summary of Insights

- Themes like **Engaging with Others** and **Managing and Using Data Ethically** show **moderate consistency** across teams.
- However, **Culture, Tools, and Knowing the Data You Have** reveal **significant variability**, indicating **widespread gaps in data integration, adoption, and understanding**.

A **detailed analysis** of DMA results will be presented in a separate report, outlining targeted **strategic interventions** to enhance data maturity across the council.

DATA QUALITY

What is Data Quality and why is it important?

Data quality is the standard by which data meets specific criteria to be deemed fit for its intended use, encompassing attributes like accuracy, consistency, completeness, and timeliness.

High-quality data underpins effective decision-making, insightful analyses, and reliable reporting, while poor data quality introduces risks, inefficiencies, and the potential for flawed outcomes.

We know that having data of a suitable quality is key to improving our data use as an organisation. Good **data quality** means that our data is fit for purpose and it should be accurate, complete, consistent, valid, unique and timely. If our data is not of a suitable quality, then the resulting decisions and actions will not be as optimal as they could be.

It is important that we encourage a suitable level of **data quality** in our systems, ensuring our systems are fit for purpose and user friendly for those inputting data. We need to support those inputting data as the initial data input could play a crucial role in a later decision. Consideration also needs to be given to the systems we procure and how we configure those systems to enable best quality data inputs. Where personal data is concerned data accuracy is a fundamental principle.

What we are trying to achieve

ACCURACY

Non-personal data shall be sufficiently accurate for its intended purposes, representing clearly and in sufficient detail the interaction provided at the point of activity. Accuracy is most likely to be secured if data is captured as close to the point of activity as possible. Reported information that is based on accurate data provides a fair picture of performance and should enable the council to make informed decisions at all levels. The need for accuracy must be balanced with the importance of the uses for the data, and the cost and effort of collection.

VALIDITY

Data will be recorded and used in compliance with relevant requirements, including the correct application of any rules and definitions. This will ensure consistency between periods and with similar organisations. Data items held on council systems must be **valid** and contextually logical. Where possible free-text fields will be avoided, and standard codes or options used that comply with national standards or map to national values. Wherever possible computer systems will be programmed to only accept valid entries. In particular, steps will be taken to ensure that service-user details are validated for changes and accuracy throughout the duration of service provided by the council.

RELIABILITY

Our data will reflect stable and consistent data collection processes across collection points and over time, whether using manual or computer-based systems or a combination. Councillors, managers and stakeholders should be confident that progress towards performance targets reflects real changes rather than variations in data collection methods.

TIMELINESS

Data will be captured as quickly as possible after the event and will be available for the intended use within a reasonable time period. Data must therefore be available quickly and frequently enough to support information needs and to influence both operational and strategic decision making. To that end, key staff need to be aware of relevant deadlines.

RELEVANCE

Data captured will be relevant for the purposes for which it is to be used. This will entail periodic review of requirements to reflect changing needs.

COMPLETENESS

Data requirements will be clearly specified based on the information needs of the council, and data collection processes matched to these requirements. An assurance review may be instigated should monitoring identify missing, incomplete or invalid records. In this respect the assurance and feedback processes will be adhered to, ensuring quality of data.

DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES

In order to minimise errors and achieve good quality data, appropriate procedures and guidance must exist so that staff can be trained and supported in their work. Details of these procedures, processes and training will be contained in any relevant manuals and available to all staff.

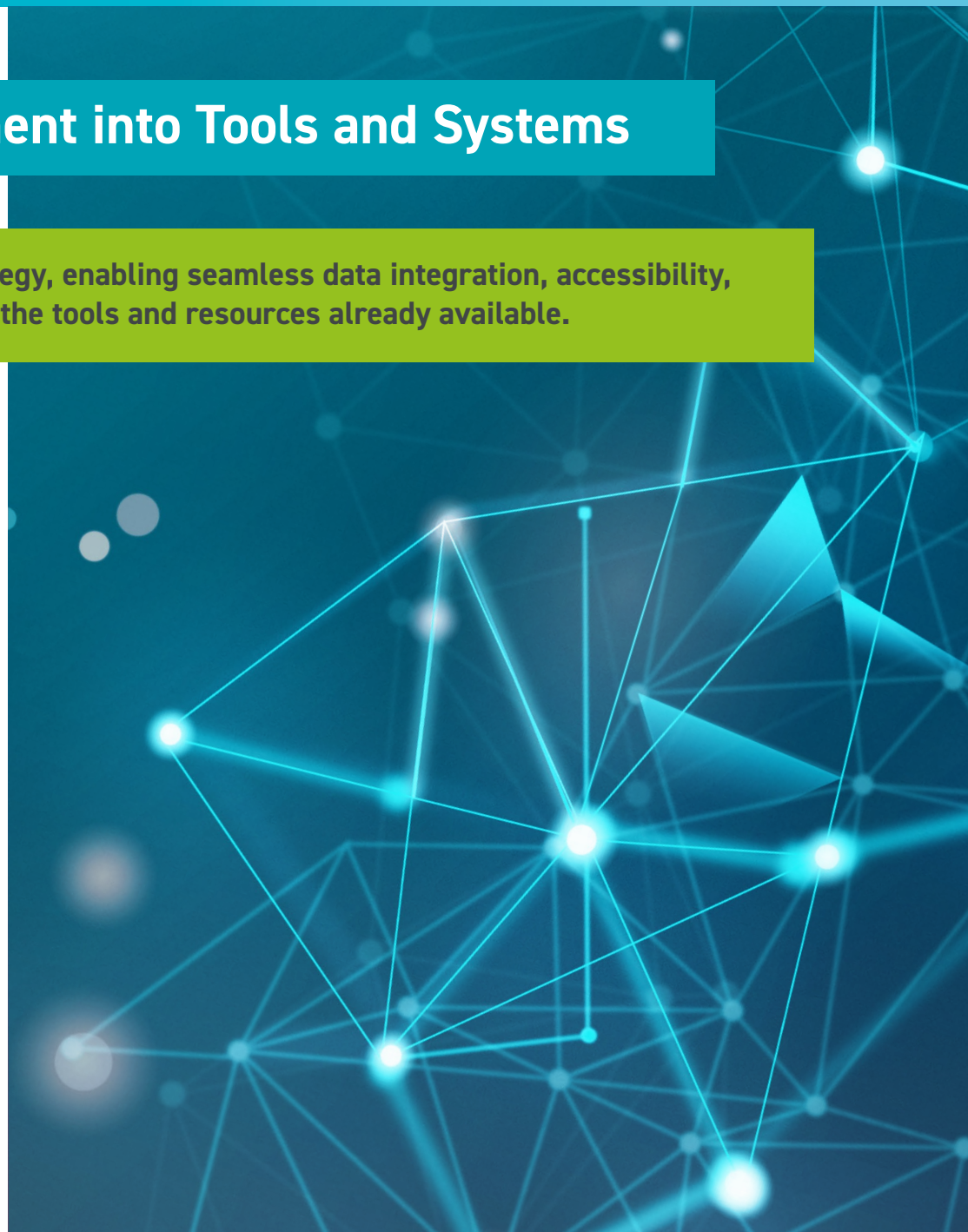
Enabling Data Quality through Investment into Tools and Systems

Investing in tools and systems is critical to a successful data strategy, enabling seamless data integration, accessibility, and scalability. However, equally important is making the most of the tools and resources already available.

By maximising the use of existing systems and exploring free or low-cost solutions, subject to the councils Technical Design and Innovation Authority approval, the council can achieve significant improvements in data management without unnecessary expenditure. This approach enables the organisation to centralise disparate data sources, improve **data quality**, and support advanced **analytics** in a cost-effective way.

To achieve these outcomes, it is essential to recognise that reliable, accurate, and insightful data depends on using systems and tools to their full potential. Making better use of current tools by identifying untapped features, integrating systems more effectively, and encouraging widespread adoption across teams can unlock value. By complementing these efforts with targeted investments in advanced tools when needed, the council can automate processes, ensure **data security**, and extract actionable insights to drive informed decision-making.

Focusing on getting the best out of existing tools and resources, alongside selective investments, allows businesses to optimise **data capture** and management. This approach not only supports evidence-based decision-making and organisational success but also ensures that the council remains agile and efficient in its data strategy. Making full use of what is already available is the first and most critical step towards unlocking the full value of data.



What we will do

- Promote a **data quality** focus from system and process development to data collection and use.
- Conduct regular data audits to identify and rectify inconsistencies or errors.
- Implement automated **data validation tools** to ensure continuous quality monitoring.
- Develop and distribute a “Data Quality Handbook” for best practices across departments.
- Explore use of underutilised system features.
- Ensure all new tools meet data use and reporting requirements.
- Explore **AI technologies** for data analysis and operational improvements.
- Evaluate system effectiveness regularly.

How will we measure success?

To evaluate the effectiveness of the council's data quality initiatives, we will use the following metrics and methods:

- **Accuracy Improvements**: Track reductions in errors or inaccuracies from audits and measure stakeholder confidence in data-driven decisions.
- **Data Completeness:** Monitor the percentage of records meeting completeness requirements and identify reductions in missing fields in critical datasets.
- **Timeliness of Data Availability**: Measure the average time taken from data collection to availability and adherence to reporting deadlines.
- **Validation Success Rate**: Track invalid or rejected entries flagged by validation tools and reductions in manual corrections required.
- **User Satisfaction**: Gather feedback on data input processes, system usability, and confidence in data accuracy and reliability.
- **Governance Adherence**: Monitor policy compliance during audits and ensure alignment with data quality standards.
- **System Performance**: Evaluate system integration and accessibility, focusing on reduced downtime and fewer errors in data collection.
- **Resolution Time for Data Quality Issues**: Measure the average time to resolve issues and improve turnaround for corrections and quality checks.

  Engagement with Training and Documentation: Track staff participation in training and the use of the "Data Quality Handbook."
- **Return on Investment in Tools and Systems**: Identify operational outcomes and efficiency gains linked to new tools, automation, and AI-driven enhancements.
- **Improved Decision-Making Outcomes**: Document examples of better decisions enabled by high-quality data and the organisation's ability to meet strategic goals.

DATA LITERACY

What is Data Literacy?

Data literacy refers to the ability to read, understand, create, and communicate data as information. It involves not only knowing how to interpret data but also the skills to critically analyse it, draw meaningful insights, and effectively use it for decision-making. A **data-literate** individual can assess the quality of data, understand its context, and apply appropriate tools or methods to make informed conclusions.

Achieving a new Data Culture at the council promoting Data Literacy

At the council, we are committed to fostering a transformative **data culture** that empowers employees to leverage data effectively across all functions. This vision comprises the following key initiatives:

FOUNDATION OF DATA CONCEPTS AND TRAINING ON DATA TOOLS AND TECHNIQUE

The council commits to educate employees on essential data concepts, covering data types, databases, metrics, KPIs, and trend analysis.

FOSTERING DATA CURIOSITY

The council creates an environment where data-related questions are welcomed, and exploration is encouraged.

Empower employees to actively seek insights from data and go beyond passive report consumption.

ENCOURAGING DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

We commit to promote a culture of using data in daily decisions and project planning.

Share real-life examples and case studies demonstrating successful data-driven decisions within the council.

IMPLEMENTING DATA STORYTELLING

Train teams and Councillors on effective data storytelling, emphasising clarity, relevance, and context.

Teach employees and Councillors to connect data points to the council's strategic goals, creating a compelling narrative.

STANDARDISING DATA DEFINITIONS AND METRICS

Ensure consistent definitions for terms, metrics, and KPIs across the council.

Maintain an accessible "data dictionary" or glossary that employees and Councillors can reference for clarity.

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DASHBOARDS

Develop user-friendly **dashboards** that display relevant key metrics tailored to each department's needs.

Ensure real-time or near-real-time updates to provide actionable, current insights.

ENCOURAGING CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

Facilitate data-sharing across departments, subject to data protection principles where personal data is involved, to create a holistic view of the council.

Schedule regular "data share" presentations as part of internal communications, where teams can present insights, successes, and best practices.

PRIORITISING DATA QUALITY AWARENESS

Educate teams on the importance of **data quality** and how to identify and report inconsistencies or errors.

Make data quality a shared responsibility, with an emphasis on collaboration in maintaining data accuracy.

CELEBRATING DATA-DRIVEN SUCCESSES

Recognise and celebrate impactful decisions and improvements made through data-driven insights.

Sharing these successes can reinforce the value of **data literacy** and inspire further engagement across teams.

What we will do

- Provide training on Excel, SharePoint, Power BI, and key systems (Finance, HR, and service-specific).
- Conduct workshops on data analysis and interpretation for operational staff.
- Develop role-specific **data literacy** programs.
- Maintain an accessible "data dictionary" or glossary that employees and Councillors can reference for clarity.

How will we measure success?

To evaluate the effectiveness of the council's **data literacy** initiatives, we will use the following metrics and methods:

- **Employee and Councillor Engagement**: Track participation and completion rates for training sessions and workshops.
- **Confidence in Data Usage**: Use pre-and post-training surveys to measure improvements in confidence and understanding.
- **Tool Adoption**: Monitor usage of Excel, SharePoint, Power BI, and other tools to assess engagement.
- **Data-Driven Decisions**: Log and track decisions influenced by data insights to evaluate integration into daily workflows.
- **Metric Standardisation**: Audit departmental use of the "data dictionary" to ensure alignment across the organisation.
- **Dashboard Accessibility**: Monitor engagement with department-specific dashboards to ensure they are being used effectively.
- **Data Quality Awareness**: Track and resolve reported data quality issues, focusing on reducing inconsistencies and errors.
- **Collaboration**: Facilitate regular interdepartmental data-sharing sessions and encourage knowledge sharing.
- **Success Stories**: Share and celebrate data-driven achievements to highlight the value of **data literacy**.
- **Employee Feedback**: Collect and track employee and Councillor data-related questions and suggestions to encourage ongoing engagement.

DATA ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY

What is Data Ethics?

Data ethics is the branch of ethics that examines the moral issues surrounding the collection, use, analysis, and sharing of data. It focuses on ensuring fairness, accountability, transparency, and responsible data use. Data ethics addresses concerns such as bias, consent, data ownership, security, and the societal impact of data-driven technologies. While personal data is governed by data protection principles, data ethics provides a broader framework for ethical decision-making in all types of data usage, helping to prevent harm and build trust in a digital and data-centric world.

What we are trying to achieve

Ensure responsible and ethical data practices at the council, prioritising protection, transparency, equity, and public trust in the collection, storage, and usage of data.

Transparency and Accountability

TRANSPARENCY IN DATA COLLECTION

The council should clearly communicate what data is collected, how it is collected, and for what purposes. Residents should understand the types of data gathered and the intended benefits for both non-personal and personal data (already covered under Data Protection).

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR DATA MISUSE

Adhere to Data Protection legislation, for which the council has a Data Protection Policy which governs how personal data will be processed.

Privacy and Confidentiality

DATA ANONYMISATION AND AGGREGATION

Our aim, is where possible, to anonymise data to prevent re-identification of individuals, however where this is not possible data protection principles will be adhered to particularly when data is shared publicly or with third parties.

Fairness and Equity

AVOIDING BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION

Implement data practices that prevent reinforcing existing biases. Ensure data accurately represents diverse community segments to avoid unintended discrimination.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO DATA BENEFITS

Ensure all communities, especially under-served ones, benefit from data-informed improvements in services and infrastructure.

Data Minimisation

LIMITING DATA COLLECTION

Collect only data that is strictly necessary for a defined purpose, reducing potential risks associated with breaches or misuse of personal data.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL POLICIES

Store data only as long as necessary and dispose of it securely in accordance with legal, business, and ethical guidelines.

Security and Protection

ROBUST DATA SECURITY MEASURES

Adhere to security protocols, including encryption, regular audits, and training, to protect personal data from unauthorised access and use.

DATA SHARING AGREEMENTS

When sharing personal data with third parties, data protection principles will be adhered to.

Purpose Limitation and Ethical Use

USING DATA FOR INTENDED PURPOSES ONLY

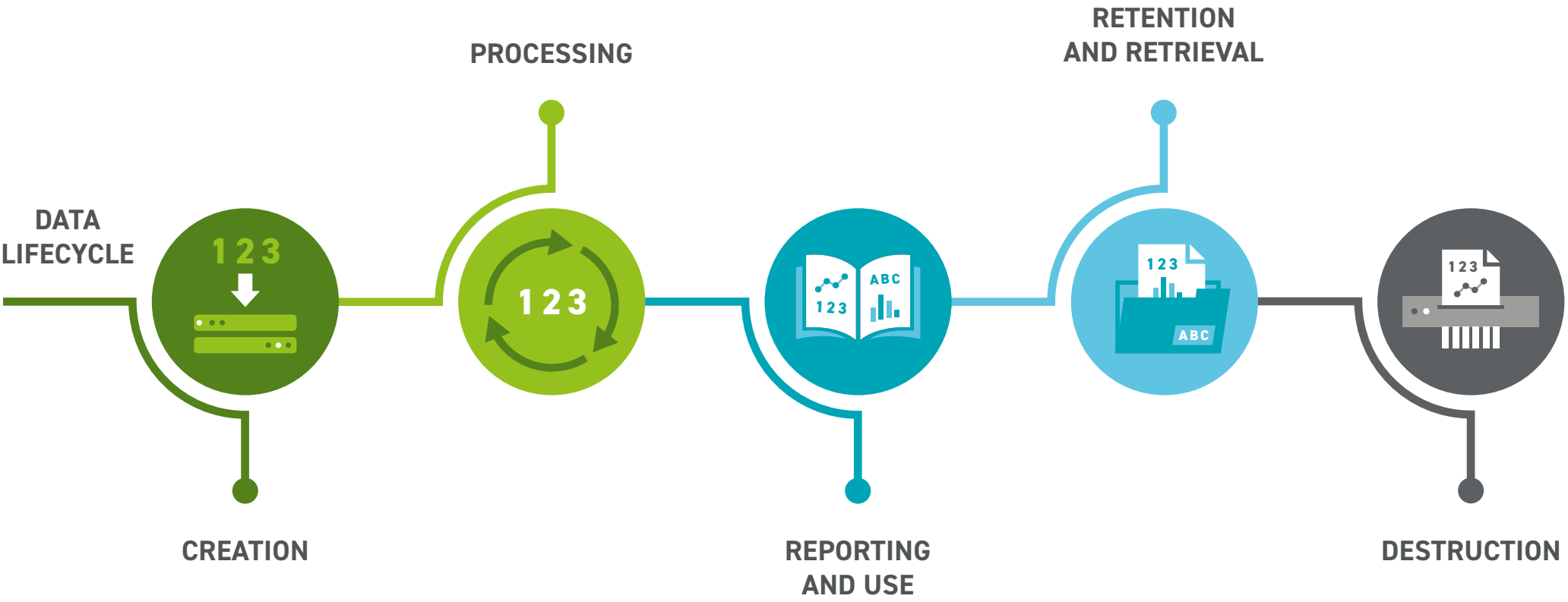
When processing personal data, the purpose limitation principle will be adhered to as required by data protection legislation.

PUBLIC GOOD OVER PROFIT

Data should be used to benefit the community, with a commitment to residents' welfare over financial motives.

What is Data Responsibility?

Data responsibility refers to the ethical and accountable management of data throughout its lifecycle, ensuring its collection, storage, use, and sharing align with legal standards, data protection principles, and ethical considerations. It emphasises protecting data from misuse, ensuring data accuracy, transparency, and accountability to build trust with stakeholders and safeguard individuals' rights.



What we are trying to achieve

The council has prioritised **data responsibility** within the council assigning Information Asset Owners (Executive Heads of Service) who are **Accountable and Responsible**, and Information Asset Managers (Service Managers) who are **Responsible** for ensuring data integrity, privacy, security, and compliance to build trust, reduce risks, and support informed decision-making.

Data Schema / Map

A **data schema or map** is a structured framework that defines how data is organised, stored, and managed within a database or system. It outlines the blueprint of the database, specifying tables, fields, data types, relationships, and constraints. By providing a clear structure, a data schema ensures consistency, accuracy, and efficiency in data storage and retrieval.

A well-designed data schema is essential for maintaining data integrity and supporting efficient queries, especially in complex systems handling large volumes of data.

It also enables seamless communication between different systems by providing a common format for data exchange. In modern applications, schemas can also be used in **data modelling** and documentation, serving as a guide for developers, analysts, and stakeholders to understand the organisation's data structure and flow. This ensures scalability, optimised performance, and compliance with data governance standards.

A data schema map is not a **Record of Processing Activities (ROPA)** or **Information Asset Register (IAR)**, which are detailed further in the IG Policy Strategy and Framework.

What we will do

- Draft a clear, accessible policy that outlines ethical practices, with regular reviews and updates to adapt to evolving data standards and public needs.
- Ensure every officer is aware of their responsibilities to monitor data practices, enhance accountability, and ensure alignment with ethical standards.
- Create and maintain a data schema/Map to support the ROPA and IAR.
- Establish a data focus group similar to the IT User Group. The group will cover topics such as training, lessons learnt, mentoring opportunities as well as identifying where data can be joined up.
- Develop and improve Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including non-statutory KPIs to highlight service successes.

How will we measure success?

To evaluate the effectiveness of the council's data ethics and responsibility initiatives, we will use the following metrics and methods:

- **Transparency and Accountability**: Track public awareness of data collection practices through surveys and feedback. Review annual transparency reports detailing data usage and any incidents of misuse.
- **Privacy and Confidentiality**: Monitor the anonymisation and aggregation of datasets before sharing. Track and resolve privacy complaints effectively, pursuing to prevent data re-identification.
- **Fairness and Equity**: Ensure proportional inclusion of diverse groups in datasets and measure the impact of public service improvements on underserved communities.
- **Data Minimisation**: Regularly review data assets to ensure only necessary data is collected. Monitor secure data disposal in line with retention timelines.
- **Security and Protection**: Continue to conduct regular security audits, investigate all personal data breaches so as to protect against further data breaches.
- **Purpose Limitation and Ethical Use**: Monitor the alignment of data usage with its intended purpose. Highlight and report on community-focused projects demonstrating ethical data use. Purpose Limitation forms part of the annual RoPA review.
- **Data Schema / Map Implementation**: Maintain and update a centralised data schema / map regularly. Monitor completion rates for documenting data assets and adherence to quarterly reviews.
- **Stakeholder Engagement**: Facilitate regular data focus group meetings. Gather public feedback to assess satisfaction with data practices.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**: Develop and track KPIs to measure service improvements driven by data. Incorporate non-statutory KPIs to showcase successes.

DATA STANDARDS

Data Standards Definition

Data standards are agreed-upon guidelines and specifications that ensure data is consistent, interoperable, and easily shared across different systems, organisations, or sectors. They define formats, structures, and rules for data representation, such as file formats, metadata definitions, or data exchange protocols. By promoting uniformity, data standards improve accuracy, enable seamless integration, and facilitate effective communication.

Key principles / What we are trying to achieve

Establish robust **data standards** across the council to ensure data is managed securely, consistently, and in a manner that promotes accessibility, interoperability, and operational efficiency.

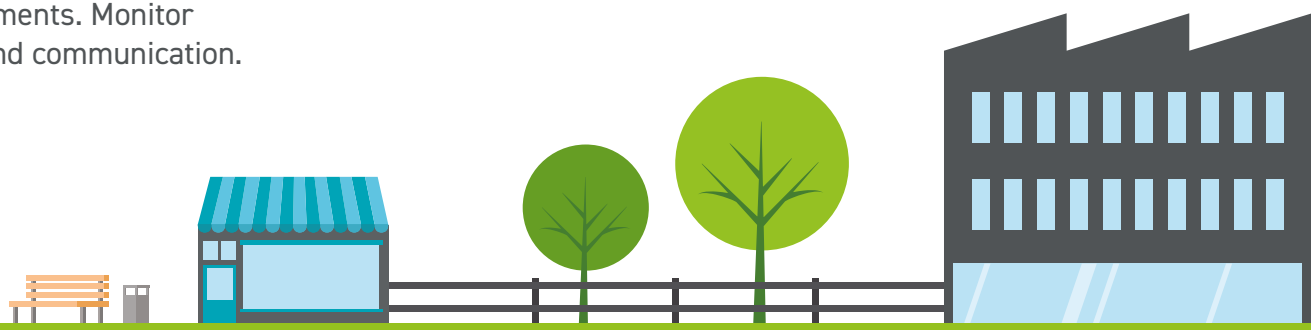
What we will do

- Commit to create a clear data standards policy that integrates these standards, outlining roles, responsibilities, and compliance measures to ensure alignment across services.
- Commit to conducting regular training to ensure staff understand and adhere to these data standards, with a focus on privacy, interoperability, and accessibility requirements.
- Commit to schedule periodic audits to evaluate compliance and effectiveness, updating standards as required to reflect new regulations, technologies, and best practices.

How will we measure success?

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's data standards initiatives, we will use the following metrics and methods:

- **Policy Development and Implementation**: Track the completion and adoption of a comprehensive Data Standards Policy, ensuring it is clearly communicated across all services.
- **Staff Training and Engagement**: Monitor participation and completion rates for training sessions on data standards. Use pre- and post-training surveys to assess improvements in staff understanding of privacy, interoperability, and accessibility requirements.
- **Compliance and Consistency**: Conduct regular audits to evaluate compliance with data standards across services. Track identified inconsistencies and improvements made following audits.
- **Interoperability**: Measure the success of seamless data sharing, where data protection allows, between systems and departments. Monitor feedback from staff on the ease of data integration and communication.
- **Accessibility and Usability**: Assess whether data is consistently formatted and accessible to all relevant stakeholders, including staff and residents. Gather feedback on usability and accessibility improvements.
- **Regulatory Alignment**: Ensure all data standards comply with current legal and regulatory requirements. Monitor and address gaps identified during updates or audits.
- **Updates and Continuous Improvement**: Track the frequency and effectiveness of updates made to data standards, ensuring they reflect emerging technologies, regulations, and best practices.



LEADERSHIP IN DATA

Investing in data-focused executive and operational leadership is critical for a successful Data Use and Analytics Strategy as it drives a culture of data-driven decision-making and accountability. Strong leadership ensures alignment between business goals and data initiatives, fosters cross-functional collaboration, and champions the adoption of data tools and best practices. With strong leaders at the helm, the council can unlock the full potential of its data, driving innovation and sustained growth.

Key principles / What we are trying to achieve

Cultivate an organisation-wide culture of data-driven decision-making by embedding data utilisation into operational practices, empowering leaders, and teams alike to harness strategic insights for impactful outcomes.

Oversight

ROLE

Designate a data specialist to lead on the Data Use and Analytics Strategy, ensuring data governance, quality, and alignment with organisational objectives.

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION

Work closely with Digital and Information Governance teams to support operational services on their data needs.

DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATION

Ensure data insights are relevant and actionable across departments.

Promote a Data-Driven Culture

DATA ACCESSIBILITY

Implement systems that make data readily accessible to all relevant stakeholders, ensuring insights can be supported effectively.

DATA-BASED DECISION PROTOCOLS

Encourage leaders to rely on data insights over intuition for decision-making, embedding data into core decision-making processes.

RECOGNITION OF DATA SUCCESSES

Celebrate successful data initiatives to reinforce the importance of data-driven decisions across the council.

Implement Data Governance and Security

DATA QUALITY AND INTEGRITY

Enforce rigorous standards for **data quality** and regular auditing to maintain accurate and reliable data.

SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

Ensure leaders are accountable for upholding data security protocols, especially concerning sensitive or customer data.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

Set guidelines for ethical data use, ensuring compliance with data protection legislation (UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) while also aligning with relevant privacy regulations, including the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) where applicable. This promotes responsible data practices and safeguards individuals' rights in both general data processing and electronic communications.

Encourage Innovation Through Data Experimentation

AGILITY AND EXPERIMENTATION

Cultivate an environment where leaders can test hypotheses, initiate pilot projects, and quickly scale successful initiatives.

FEEDBACK AND LEARNING

Promote a feedback loop where leaders analyse data from projects to refine and improve strategies continuously.

Regularly Review and Adapt the Data Strategy

QUARTERLY / ANNUAL STRATEGY REVIEWS

Periodically assess and adapt the data strategy to incorporate new data sources, technologies, and business objectives.

EVOLVING SKILLS AND ROLES

As data needs expand, consider adding specialised roles (e.g. data scientists, machine learning engineers) or upskilling leaders with advanced analytics expertise.

What we will do

- Redesign public decision-making documents to include evidence-based data.
- Provide leadership training focused on data-driven strategies.
- Develop a calendar of statutory and non-statutory reporting.
- Review data roles across the council to maximise use of skills.

How will we measure success?

- **Leadership Engagement**: Track participation in leadership training sessions focused on data-driven strategies. Assess improvements in data-related knowledge and confidence among leaders through surveys and evaluations.
- **Evidence-Based Decision-Making**: Monitor the integration of data insights into public decision-making documents. Evaluate the percentage of decisions and policies supported by evidence-based data.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration**: Measure the frequency and quality of collaboration between the data specialist, digital leads, and information governance leads. Collect feedback from departments on the relevance and utility of data insights provided.
- **Data Accessibility and Usage**: Assess the availability and ease of access to data systems for relevant stakeholders. Track usage rates and satisfaction with data tools and systems implemented.
- **Recognition of Successes**: Document and celebrate successful data initiatives through internal communications and public reports. Track the number of successes shared and their impact on fostering a data-driven culture.
- **Data Quality and Security**: Conduct regular audits to ensure data quality, security, and compliance with ethical and regulatory standards. Measure the number of data quality issues identified and resolved.
- **Experimentation and Innovation**: Monitor the number of pilot projects initiated and scaled based on data insights. Evaluate feedback and learning loops from these projects to ensure continuous improvement.
- **Adaptability of the Data Strategy**: Review and adapt the data strategy quarterly or annually to incorporate new data sources, technologies, and objectives. Track the number of updates and their effectiveness in meeting evolving organisational needs.
- **Skill Development and Role Expansion**: Measure the upskilling of leaders in analytics and data tools through training participation and skill assessments. Evaluate the effectiveness of newly introduced roles or expanded responsibilities within the data team.
- **Statutory and Non-Statutory Reporting**: Track the completion and timeliness of the reporting calendar, ensuring both statutory and non-statutory reports are delivered as planned.

WHAT NEXT?

With the foundational framework of the Data Use and Analytics Strategy established, the next steps focus on implementation and continuous improvement.

Key actions include:

- Finalise the **Data Maturity Assessment** and review conclusions / recommendations. Track improvements on how teams score their competency after outlined improvements have been delivered.
- Produce action plan to bring together the immediate actions that we are taking forward and tracking.
- Introduce targeted training programs to increase **data literacy** across all teams and Councillors ensuring that staff and Councillors at every level become more confident and competent in using data. This could include workshops, online courses, and role-specific training sessions.
- Invest in and roll out advanced analytics tools and platforms that enable teams to extract deeper insights from data. Provide guidance and support to ensure these tools are effectively utilised across the council.
- To begin to see a shift in how our staff become more data literate and our customers and how our customer experience is improved.
- Acknowledge and celebrate early wins in the implementation process to motivate teams and build momentum. Share success stories to reinforce the importance of data-driven approaches.

By focusing on these next steps, the council will position itself to achieve its vision of utilising data to deliver transparent, efficient, and impactful public services.

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