# Data Quality Policy

**Document Control**

| Organisation | City of Lincoln Council |
|---|---|
| Title | Data Quality Policy |
| Author – name and title | Becky Scott, Legal & Democratic Services Manager |
| Owner – name and title | Becky Scott, Legal & Democratic Services Manager |
| Date | July 2018 |
| Approvals | July 2018 - Executive |
| Filename | Data Quality Policy |
| Version | V.1.1 |
| Protective Marking | Official |
| Next Review Date | May 2020 |

**Document Amendment History**

| Revision | Originator of change | Date of change | Change description |
|---|---|---|---|
| V1.1 | Becky Scott LDSM | July 2018 | Updated in view of the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") and the DPA 2018 ("the Act") and amendments to role |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

CITY OF Lincoln
COUNCIL

**Table of Contents**

**1      Overview**

This policy sets out City of Lincoln Council's approach to data quality.  It is a key element of the Council's Information Governance Framework.  Data is one of our most important assets - it is extremely important as we want to be sure that information on which we base decisions and inform our planning is robust.

The data held by the Council is subject to all legislation affecting the creation and processing of data. This includes but is not limited to:

- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation EU (2016)
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003
- Public Records Act 1958
- Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

Other related guidance and codes of good practice includes but is not limited to:

- Security Policy Framework (Cabinet Office)
- Public Service Network (PSN) Code of Connection
- Guidance and codes of practice published by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

The Council is committed to high standards of data quality.  We take every care to ensure that the data and information used throughout the organisation and in particular in performance management is **accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant, secure, accessible,** and **complete**.

**2      Purpose**

High-quality data is an integral part of the council's operational, performance management and governance arrangements so that it can drive service improvement and inform policy.

Our key objectives are:

- To ensure that service delivery is supported by good quality data.

- To ensure all staff understand and undertake their specific responsibilities in relation to data quality.

- To ensure that data produced, held and used within the council is of good quality.

- To enable effective, evidence based decision making supported by good quality data.

- To ensure that data quality is embedded across all services and is a key consideration for everyone dealing with data.

## 3    Scope

This policy document provides an overarching, corporate approach to the management of data quality.  Service specific procedures will flow from this corporate policy, where relevant and necessary, ensuring that standards outlined in this policy are maintained throughout the Council.

This policy covers the quality of all data held by the Council only. This can be structured or unstructured.  Structured data is based on a data model and is held in fixed fields in spreadsheets, databases and business systems.  Unstructured data can be in any format including hand-written, textual documents or information gained from other sources.

Appendix 1 shows a list of the Council's key business systems where the key structured data for the Council is held.

The Policy is mainly aimed at officers and members of City of Lincoln Council but it applies equally to data used by the Council's strategic partnerships.

## 4    Policy

### 4.1  Governance, Roles and Responsibilities

This Policy applies to all staff within City of Lincoln Council as data quality is everyone's responsibility.  However, where officers are assigned specific responsibilities in terms of data quality, these should be clearly defined and documented. The following table outlines the key roles and responsibilities for data quality:

| Role | Responsibilities |
|---|---|
| Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) | To be the Council's champion for data quality with responsibility for formulation, implementation of policies and overall review and audit arrangements. |
| Data Protection Officer | To fulfil all duties as required under the GDPR (a statutory function) |
| Directors | Overall responsibility for the reliability of data and information presented to senior management and Members. |
| Assistant Directors | Responsible for ensuring:<br>• that adequate, safe systems are in place which hold data of acceptable standard<br>• that the data for their service is accurate, timely and meets relevant guidance<br>• that actions arising from data quality audits are satisfactorily addressed<br>• the implementation of corporate policy and procedures<br>• training needs are identified |
| Internal Audit | Responsible for:<br>• co-ordinating risk assessments of systems and audits in service areas where still applicable<br>• ensuring improvements have been implemented<br>• communicating and promoting commitment to Data Quality<br>• providing training advice and guidance to services<br>• regularly reviewing compliance with the data quality policy and liaising with appropriate officers to rectify non-compliance<br>• Performance teams to carry out spot checks.<br>• reporting on Data Quality issues to performance review meetings to DMT and CMT |

| Role | Responsibilities |
|---|---|
| Information Asset Owners (Service Managers and Team Leaders) | Responsible for:<br>• knowledge of relevant data held within service areas<br>• inputting accurate information on council systems<br>• maintaining a robust control environment<br>• identifying and rectifying gaps in control environment<br>• providing information to their line managers/Head of Service and DMT as and when required |
| All employees | • Accurate and timely recording of data on appropriate systems<br>• Adhering to the Councils Data Quality Policy |

## 4.2  People and Skills

As an organisation we ensure that staff are in a position to undertake their responsibilities in relation to data quality.  Training and development of staff and an understanding of the importance of data quality for Members underpin the achievement of high quality data and information.  The following therefore has been considered across all service areas:

- Staff are made aware by their line manager of their responsibilities in relation to data quality.
- Staff have the relevant skills and competencies to fulfil their role in ensuring good quality data.  They will receive appropriate training and guidance.
- Commitment to data quality is clearly communicated through the Council.

## 4.3  Systems and Processes

The Council ensures that appropriate systems are in place for the collection, recording, analysis and reporting of data. The Council recognises the importance of these systems operating on a right first time principle.  Therefore, users are adequately trained and all systems have an appropriate training programme in place which is periodically evaluated and adapted as necessary.

The Council uses the principle of 'collect once and use numerous times' (COUNT) to underpin data collection and use.

## 4.4  Data Security

The Council ensures that data is stored in a secure environment with appropriate security and system backups for all business critical systems.  The access and use of data should be appropriate to the data user and comply with relevant legislation including but not limited to, the legislation, guidance and codes of practice listed in

CITY OF Lincoln COUNCIL

the Overview above and the Council's IT security policies.  Systems are regularly tested to ensure that they are secure.  The Council's Business Continuity Plan will make provisions for the business critical systems listed at Appendix 1.

## 4.5   Information Sharing

The Council will ensure that formal frameworks for data sharing with partners are in place.  Data quality requirements will be applied to data used by the Council and shared externally, or which is provided by partner or third party organisations.  These requirements will be in the form of Information Sharing Agreements, contracts or service level agreements which specify the responsibilities of partners to provide data which are fit for purpose.  This includes complying with all legal, compliance and confidentiality standards.

The Council will have regard to the Transparency Board's Public Data Principles as set out in Appendix 2.

## 5      Policy Compliance

## 5.1   Compliance Measurement

The Council will ensure that it has effective validation processes in place to ensure the accuracy of data used in managing services and service performance. These will include:

- An ongoing programme of data quality audits undertaken by the Internal Audit service.  The outcomes of these audits are reported to IT and Information Governance Board
- Reviews of systems and process undertaken by Internal Audit.
- The development and implementation of service specific Data Quality Assurance frameworks.
- Data returns are supported by clear and complete audit trails and subject to directorate and corporate verification checks.
- Any shortcomings identified during audits are corrected within agreed timescales.

Independent audits of data are reported to the IT and Information Governance Board.  Improvement recommendations arising from internal and external audits are acted on so that there is continuous improvement to the Council's approach to data quality.

## 5.2   Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with this Policy could have a significant effect on the efficient operation of the Council and may result in financial loss and an inability to provide necessary services to our customers.

### 5.3    Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and updated in the interim as required.

## 6        Related Standards, Policies, and Processes

The primary legislation governing the Council's information management activities is described in the Legal Responsibilities Policy.

## 7        Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will be used:

- **Data**: Numbers, words or images that have yet to be organised or analysed to answer a specific question.

- **Information**: Produced through processing, manipulating and organising data to answer questions, adding to the knowledge of the receiver.

- **Knowledge**: What is known by a person or persons? This involves interpreting information received, adding relevance and context to clarify the insights the information contains.

The Council takes guidance from and uses the Audit Commission's "Standards for Better Data Quality".  These are:

- **Accuracy** – data should be sufficiently accurate for their intended purposes.

- **Validity** – data should be recorded and used in compliance with relevant requirements, including the correct application of any rules or definitions.

- **Reliability** – data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes across collection points and over time.

- **Timeliness** - data should be captured as quickly as possible after the event or activity and be available for the intended use quickly and frequently enough to support information needs and to influence service or management decisions.

- **Relevance** – data should be relevant to the purposes for which they are used. This entails periodic review of requirements to reflect changing needs.

- **Completeness** – Data requirements should be clearly specified based on the information needs of the organisation and data collection processes matched to these requirements.

## Appendix 1 - The Council's Business Critical Systems

This Appendix lists systems used to create, process, and store data that are critical to the council's business.

| Business System | Information Asset Owner (IAO) |
|---|---|
| Agresso Business World | Financial Services Manager |
| APP | Service Managers for each module |
| Autocad | Property Services Manager |
| Banking | Financial Services Manager |
| Benefit Debtors | Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits |
| BIDs Debtors | Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits |
| Building Control | Planning Manager |
| Cadcorp GIS | Business Development and IT Manager |
| CCTV | Community Services Manager |
| Choice Based Lettings | Housing Solutions Manager |
| Committee Management System | Legal and Democratic Services Manager |
| Contaminated Land | Environmental and Corporate Safety Manager |
| Council Mortgages | Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits |
| Council Tax | Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits |
| Electoral | Legal and Democratic Services Manager |
| Email | Business Development and IT Manager |
| EstatePro | Investment Manager |
| Gower – crematorium | City Services Manager |
| Housing Benefits | Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits |
| Housing Rents | Tenancy Services Manager |
| ICES Parking | City Services Team Leader |
| IMPS Performance Management | Principal Policy Officer |
| JONTEK | Housing Support Services Manager |
| LACHS | Financial Services Manager |
| Land Charges | Business Development and IT Manager |
| LloydsLink | Financial Services Manager |
| Metric Parking Office | City Services Team Leader |
| Midland Payroll | HR Manager |
| Mobile Device Management | Business Development and IT Manager |
| NNDR | Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits |
| P2.net | Property Services Manager |
| PCF Bacs | Financial Services Manager |
| Planning | Planning Manager |
| Repair Locator | Tenancy Services Manager |
| Repairs Scheduling | Maintenance Manager |
| Safety Organiser | Environmental and Corporate Safety Manager |
| Servitor | Maintenance Manager |
| Snap Survey | Principal Policy Officer |
| Universal Housing | Tenancy Services Manager |
| Voice Recording | Business Development and IT Manager |
| Website CMS | Business Development and IT Manager |
| WFM | Customer Services Manager |

**Appendix 2 - Transparency Board's Public Data Principles**

(1) Public data policy and practice will be clearly driven by the public and businesses that want and use the data, including what data is released when and in what form

(2) Public data will be published in re-usable, machine-readable form

(3) Public data will be released under the same open licence which enables free re-use, including commercial re-use

(4) Public data will be available and easy to find through a single, easy-to use, online access point (www.data.gov.uk)

(5) Public data will be published using open standards, and following relevant recommendations of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

(6) Public data from different departments about the same subject will be published in the same, standard formats and with the same definitions

(7) Public data underlying the Government's own websites will be published in re-usable form

(8) Public data will be timely and fine-grained – Data will be released as quickly as possible after its collection and in as fine a detail as is possible. Speed may mean that the first release may have inaccuracies; more accurate versions will be released when available.

(9) Release data quickly, and then work to make sure that it is available in open standard formats, including linked data forms – Linked data standards allow the most powerful and easiest re-use of data. However most existing internal public sector data is not in linked data form. Rather than delay any release of the data, our recommendation is to release it 'as is' as soon as possible, and then work to convert it to a better format.

(10) Public data will be freely available to use in any lawful way

(11) Public data will be available without application or registration, and without requiring details of the user

(12) Public bodies should actively encourage the re-use of their public data

(13) Public bodies should maintain and publish inventories of their data holdings

(14) Public bodies should publish relevant metadata about their datasets and this should be available through a single online access point; and they should publish supporting descriptions of the format provenance and meaning of the data

Source: https://data.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Public%20Data%20Principles_For%20Data.Gov%20%281%29_10.pdf