

Data Strategy for Somerset Council

Executive Member(s): Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts -

Lead Member for Communities

Local Member(s) and Division: All

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1. Summary / Background

- 1.1** Data powers every part of the council's business. We must both protect it and exploit it, to retain public trust, and improve our services. This Data Strategy sets out practical steps as we establish the new Somerset Council, and ambitions towards a bold vision for data.
- 1.2** Data includes the case information that we collect and generate as we provide services, through to policy documents and minutes of decisions, with all manner of facts and statistics in between. It covers all the information that we create ourselves or receive from others; stored in electronic or paper form.
- 1.3** A new Data Strategy for Somerset Council is a product required under the Local Government Review Programme for Vesting Day.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** LGR Joint Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the proposed Data Strategy for the new Somerset Council and review the proposed deliverables to ensure compliance and give confidence that the Strategy can be practicably achieved.

3. Reasons for recommendations

- 3.1** From the 1st April 2023, the five principle local authorities in the administrative county of Somerset will be replaced with a single Unitary Somerset Council. Data has been managed independently across the five councils, so there is now a need to ensure that, from the outset, the new council meets its statutory obligations, as well as expectations from customers and partners when handling data.
- 3.2** There is an opportunity to build on the best of the practices found across the five councils, and to that end, the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme has established a series of workstreams and projects, some of which touch the scope of the Data Strategy and include Business Intelligence, Information Governance, Records Management etc. This Strategy brings the relevant outputs of the LGR programme together so that we tell a cohesive story about data, from the point that it first enters the organisation, though to its final archiving or destruction. The strategy introduces data professions such as Process Improvement, Information Governance, Records Management, Business Intelligence, and so on.
- 3.3** Up till now, data has been seen as a tool for computer specialists; this strategy is about inviting participation from our staff, managers, members, partners, local businesses and the public as we serve the place of Somerset. We will continually reach-out and engage with this 'data audience' to understand their needs and set an expectation that:
- It is simple to find out what data is available, and on what terms it can be shared
 - If they have a right to data, they should be able to access it
 - If data already exists, it is re-used, rather than being collected again
 - They are supported to meet their data handling obligations
 - Statistics and analytics are presented in easy-to-understand formats
 - They can call on expertise to make sense of the data.

In this way, the new Somerset Council will be

- Be open and transparent
- Retain public trust
- Provide efficient services
- Make better decisions

4. Other options considered

- 4.1** A new Data Strategy for our Somerset Council will enable the authority to both protect and exploit data. Protecting by meeting our legal obligations and ensuring that our data is fit for purpose. To this end we will comply with legal and regulatory requirements and give confidence to our public to trust us to handle their data which is often sensitive. We also want to exploit data by

safely reusing and sharing, use data to derive insight and foresight and to effectively and in a timely way deliver services, to support prevention via early identification as well as develop the skills to engage with data.

5. Links to County Vision, Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

- 5.1** The Data Strategy supports deliverability of the County Vision, Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan through the provision of data which will be used to evidence, operationally manage, monitor, evaluate and improve outcomes.
- 5.2** The Data Strategy sets out its own aims but also delivers against other corporate objectives including the Digital Strategy, Customer Strategy, Business Intelligence Strategy, and the UK Government's Data Strategy.

6. Consultations and co-production

- 6.1** The Data Strategy was co-produced by a range of contributors which are listed in Appendix B and cover a range of professional disciplines and areas of expertise. Two workshops were held with the contributors in the Autumn which helped shape the principles, values and deliverables identified.
- 6.2** The Data Strategy has been considered by the LGR Communities, Customers and Partnership Workstream, Asset Optimisation Workstream as well as received support from LGR Programme Board.

7. Financial and Risk Implications

- 7.1** No additional funding requirements are being sought for the approval of this Strategy.
- 7.2** Three risks have been identified:
- Risk of non-compliance and loss of public trust and potentially fines levied from the Information Commissioners Office.
 - Risk that the authority does not use data collected, either effectively or in a joined up and strategic way.
 - Reduced data availability or quality can adversely impact service to customers.

The National Cyber Security Center (NCSC) provide guidance to assess data security and resilience focusing on assessing risks for confidentiality, integrity, and availability. These assessments are naturally carried out as a part of a Data Protection Impact Assessment, but mission critical data also need to be assessed even if it does not contain person-identifiable data. The assessment leads to requirements for controls and technology solutions to safeguard data

which are set out in our Cyber Security Strategy and Framework.

- 7.3** The three risks identified will be mitigated by the delivery of the Data Strategy and achievement of the key deliverables contained within. Review and monitoring of the data strategy on a regular basis will also provide assurance of mitigation along with an assessment as part of the annual governance review process.

Information Governance offer advice, guidance, and training for staff in this area and monitor noncompliance is reported through appropriate Governance Boards.

The establishment of the Council provides a new opportunity to focus on using data more effectively supported by Business Intelligence colleagues.

8. Legal and HR Implications

- 8.1** There are no legal or HR implications arising directly from this report. The adoption of a new Data Strategy sets out the approach for protecting and using data and therefore ensures compliance with legal requirements.

9. Other Implications

9.1 Equalities Implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment has completed and signed off. The Data Strategy is a key enabler in providing quality evidence to decision makers about protected groups.

9.2 Community Safety Implications

There are no Community Safety implications arising directly from this report.

9.3 Sustainability Implications

There are no Sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

9.4 Health and Safety Implications

There are no health and safety implications arising directly from this report.

9.5 Health and Wellbeing Implications

There are no health and wellbeing implications arising directly from this report.

9.6 Social Value

There are no social value implications arising directly from this report.

10. Scrutiny comments / recommendations:

- 10.1** To date the proposed Strategy has not been considered by a Scrutiny

Committee.

11. Background

11.1. The attached Data Strategy sets out the new authority's approach to protecting and using Data. It considers legal and regulatory requirements, the importance of public trust and using it to deliver quality services with quality data. It also sets out our approach to using data from sharing with partners, our commitment to openness and transparency, turning data into insight and foresight, as well as covering the data lifecycle and data capabilities. The Strategy sets out key deliverables to ensure it can be practicably implemented.

12. Background Papers

12.1 Digital Strategy, Customer Strategy and Technology Strategy are tabled at the same meeting.

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer

Version	V1	Date	20 th December 2022
Description of what is being impact assessed			
Data Strategy for the new Somerset Council			
Evidence			
<p>What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the Office of National Statistics, Somerset Intelligence Partnership, Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), Staff and/ or area profiles,, should be detailed here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK Government Data Strategy • Range of internal data specialists across the County and District Councils, trough workshops have contributed to this strategy. These are identified at Appendix B in the Data Strategy. • The Data strategy provides the framework and controls to ensure the new authority complies with key legislation documented in the strategy including the Equalities Act. • The Data Strategy enables us to have high quality evidence to demonstrate that we are considering and protecting these particular groups in our operations, commissioning, decision making and impact on outcomes. • Data in its most basic level forms can be repurposed to ensure accessibility for protected groups. 			

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

Builds on existing arrangements Data Strategy arrangements across the five authority's and builds on best practice. Range of internal data specialists have contributed to this strategy. These are identified in the Data Strategy at Appendix B

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	□	☒	☒
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be repurposed and therefore is accessible to those with a range of disabilities. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence 	□	□	☒

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	effective decision making.			
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	☐	☐	☒
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	☐	☐	☒
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	☐	☐	☒
Race and ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	☐	☐	☒

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Religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	□	□	☒
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	□	□	☒
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	□	□	☒
Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data about how customers use our services and analysing and using that data to drive positive outcomes. Data can be analysed across the range of all protected characteristics and enables our services to evidence effective decision making. 	□	□	☒

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Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

Completed by:	Paul Davidson & Jan Stafford
Date	28 th December 2022
Signed off by:	
Date	
Equality	



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Lead/Manager sign off date:	
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	
Review date:	



