

**Meeting: AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item: 10**

Portfolio Area: Resources

**Date: 16 March 2010**

## **DATA QUALITY ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

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### **1. PURPOSE**

To advise Members of progress made against the actions set out in the Data Quality Action Plan as appended to this report.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the progress made against the actions set out in the Data Quality Action Plan be noted.
- 2.2 That the revised officer monitoring arrangements from monthly to quarterly on progress against the Data Quality Action Plan with annual reporting to the Audit Committee be endorsed.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Audit Commission developed a new approach to the audit of performance indicators from 2005/06. The approach was revised slightly from 2006/07 and comprised three stages:
  - A review of overall management arrangements to secure data quality
  - An analytical review of national performance indicator information
  - Spot checks of particular performance indicators.
- 3.2 From 2008/09 a new joint inspectorate method of assessing local public services was developed - Comprehensive Area Assessment, which comprises:
  - An Area assessment – County wide assessment of delivery of quality of life for the area
  - An Organisational Assessment – comprising two scored assessments of individual councils, Managing Performance and Use of Resources.

- 3.3 As part of the reviewed arrangements, the discrete assessment of data quality was abandoned and replaced as a Key Line of Enquiry (KLoE) in the assessment of a Council's Use of Resources.
- 3.4 No recommendations were made relating to the data quality KLoE following the 2008/09 assessment of the Council's Use of Resources. The Council was considered to be 'performing well' for this KLoE.
- 3.5 At the Audit Committee meeting on 8 June 2009, officers agreed to monitor the Data Quality Action Plan on a monthly basis and report progress to the Committee on a six-monthly basis.
- 3.6 Progress against the Data Quality Action Plan to September 2009 was reported to the Audit Committee on 22 September 2009.

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

##### 4.1 Progress against actions identified in the Data Quality Action Plan

- 4.1.1 The action plan at Appendix A reports progress to the end of February 2010 and includes:
- The recommendations made, and priority assigned, by the Audit Commission as a result of the 2007/08 Audit
  - The actions outstanding from recommendations made as a result of the previous year's data quality audit
  - Actions identified as a result of internal audit of performance information Improvement actions identified by the Corporate Performance & Improvement Team.
- 4.1.2 For effective monitoring of each recommendation the action plan sets out:
- A reference to the appropriate Data Quality Objective of the Council
  - Actions agreed to address the recommendation, with responsible officer assigned
  - Milestone for completion and progress to end February 2010.
- 4.2 Revised monitoring arrangements
- 4.2.1 Just 2 actions remain to be completed on the current action plan. These actions are set out below with due completion date:
- R8 - In respect of void re-let times, assurance is to be provided by Stevenage Homes on the arrangements for audit to ensure collection methods are robust i.e. whether this is conducted by SBC internal audit or external provider of internal audit, or a management statement from Stevenage Homes. Audit to be completed by August 2010.

- R11 - Consider the number and skills of staff in respect of data quality when undertaking workforce planning. Workforce Plan to be developed by January 2011

Revised quarterly officer monitoring arrangements will align with the performance reporting schedule and provide robust controls for ongoing monitoring of data quality.

- 4.2.2 In addition, as no recommendations were made relating to the data quality KLoE following the 2008/09 assessment of the Council's Use of Resources and measures have been taken by officers to continue to enhance arrangements, significant recommendations are not anticipated for the revised action plan in March 2011.
- 4.2.3 The Performance and Improvement Team will continue to monitor progress against these actions outstanding on the current Action Plan and report progress to the March 2011 Audit Committee.
- 4.2.4 A new action plan will be presented at the March 2011 Audit Committee. Any outstanding actions from the existing plan will be carried forward and any actions recommended as a result of audit will be included.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications within the recommendations of this report.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications to the report recommendations.

### **5.3 Policy Implications**

The Data Quality Review contributes to the Audit Commission conclusion on arrangements to secure value for money and informs the Use of Resources assessment.

### **5.4 Other Corporate Implications**

Arrangements to secure data quality require explicit referral in the Council's Corporate Plan.

### **5.5 Other Implications**

Delivery of the Data Quality Action Plan will require the commitment of all services.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- Stevenage Borough Council Data Quality Policy
- Audit Commission Data Quality Report (2007/08 data)
- Audit Commission Organisational Assessment Report for 2008/09

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: 2009/10 Data Quality Action Plan (attached)