

Stevenage Borough Council
Data Quality Action Plan 2009/10

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Data Quality Objective	Action	Comments	Deadline and / or Completed
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Audit Commission Recommendations following audit of 2007/08 data quality

R1	Ensure new Partnership Toolkit clearly outlines data quality objectives for partnership organisations.	3	Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	To ensure that there are clear protocols in place where information is shared with partners.	<p>The Partnership Toolkit is being refreshed in May 2009. The Toolkit will outline the Council's data quality objectives as an example of standards.</p> <p>A data quality agreement for partners to sign up to will be developed and included in the toolkit. LSP partners will be asked to sign following the annual forum and election of new Board and Executive.</p>	<p><i>The Audit Commission note in the report that the Partnership toolkit will meet this criterion for 2008/09 data year</i></p>	<p>May 2009</p> <p>July 2009</p>
R2	Ensure lead members and officers are fully aware of the need for data quality when sharing information through partners.	2	Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	<p>To make clear what we expect from our staff and Members in terms of the standards of data quality, and communicate these expectations.</p> <p>To ensure that there are clear protocols in place where information is shared with partners.</p>	Roles and responsibilities of lead members have been set out as part of the ongoing development of an LSP Governance Handbook. This will include the data quality and information sharing agreement for partners to sign up to.		July 2009
R3	Develop a comprehensive training session for members to allow learning about the importance of data quality and the arrangements already in place.	2	Corporate Governance Group	To make clear what we expect from our staff and Members in terms of the standard of data quality, and communicate these expectations.	A training session on Corporate Governance is currently being developed that will include learning about the importance of data quality.		August 2009
R4	Ensure that the Partnership Toolkit incorporates a mechanism	2	Head of Policy, Performance and	To put in place arrangements council-wide to secure the quality	The refreshed Partnership Toolkit will set out how the Council is taking a lead in identifying methods to deal		

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	for dealing with any non-compliance with the Council's data quality policy so it can be pursued and rectified.		Partnerships	of data we use to manage our services and demonstrate our performance. To ensure that we have the right controls in place so that we achieve what is expected of us.	with non-compliance. The toolkit will provide guidance on how partnerships can address non-compliance through their performance management process.		May 2009
R5	Establish full co-ordination with partners to ensure systems used to provide data are secure.	2	Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	To ensure that there are clear protocols in place where information is shared with partners.	The Partnership Toolkit is being refreshed in May 2009. The Toolkit will outline the Council's data quality objectives as an example of standards. A data quality agreement for partners to sign up to will be developed and included in the toolkit. LSP partners will be asked to sign following the annual forum and election of new Board and Executive.	<i>The Audit Commission note in the report that the Partnership toolkit will meet this criterion for 2008/09 data year</i>	May 2009 July 2009
R6	Establish links with partners for data quality champions to provide feedback loops to identify potential data quality problems.	3	Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	To put in place systems, policies and procedures to ensure the highest possible data quality. To ensure that we have the right controls in place so that we achieve what is expected of us.	A process will be established through the refresh of the Partnership Toolkit. Awareness raising will take place with LSP link officers. The process will be reflected in the Governance Handbook. The process will include link officers providing feedback from LSP theme partnerships to Stevenage Borough Council's So Stevenage Partnership officers and Performance & Improvement Team. Feedback will be shared with data quality champions and actioned as appropriate.		May 2009 June 2009 July 2009

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R7	<p>In respect of housing benefit performance indicators, some general recommendations to consider are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor reports on a regular basis to ensure results are in line with expectations; and - Investigate anomalies to ensure they are correct and not a system error. 	2	Head of Revenues	<p>To ensure that we have the right controls in place so that we achieve what is expected of us.</p> <p>To put in place systems, policies and procedures to ensure the highest possible data quality.</p>	<p>The finance performance dashboard allows us to monitor performance on a monthly basis. Combined with daily monitoring of workload through the Anite@Work document management system, this provides an effective 'early warning system' to performance dips.</p> <p>The replacing of Pericles Benefits during 2009/10 will resolve current issues with data quality and remove the need for 100% data cleansing of the performance outcome figures.</p>		<p>In place</p> <p>October 2009</p>
R8	<p>In respect of void re-let times, some general recommendations for collection of data are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retain all work orders for major works projects to be used as an audit trail; and - Record all information about major works and other work carried out on the Northgate system. 	1	Head of Strategic Housing	<p>To ensure that our data quality arrangements are in line with the Council's policy on records management.</p> <p>To ensure that we have the right controls in place so that we achieve what is expected of us.</p>	<p>The following actions have been taken to address this recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification of the major works definition to ensure consistency across Stevenage Homes staff - building on the CLG guidance. - A template has been devised for recording and verifying the use of the major works code - All evidence is now centrally collated for use of the major works code – including all the works orders raised. <p>Stevenage Homes is due to have a further audit on BVPI 212 as agreed by Stevenage Borough Council on 2009/10 data, which should evidence that the record keeping is now robust.</p>		<p>In place</p> <p>August 2010</p>

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Outstanding actions carried forward following audit of 2006/07 data quality							
R9	Retain evidence of verification of SHL data.	2	Head of Strategic Housing	To ensure that there are clear protocols in place where information is shared with partners	Maintain audit trail of quarterly verification checks to validate	<p>Officers are currently in discussion with SHL to develop and implement a new data quality and verification process to update the audit trail in relation to Landlord Service PIs that are reported through the Council's Balanced Scorecard.</p> <p>SHL has completed data quality assurance checklists for the Landlord Services KPIs that are reported through the Council's Balanced Scorecard.</p> <p>Random data checks on SHL outturn data for 2008/09 completed. Ongoing quarterly process to be established.</p>	<p>June 2009</p> <p>PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED</p>
R10	Develop a data quality training programme and roll out training to relevant staff.	2	CPU/HR	To ensure that we put in place the right resources, and in particular have the right people with the right skills, so that we have accurate and timely performance information	Develop Member training	Member training is being developed as part of the planned activity to raise awareness of all elements of Corporate Governance.	August 2009
R11	Consider the number and skills of staff in respect of data quality when undertaking workforce planning.	1	Head of Human Resources	To ensure that we put in place the right resources, and in particular have the right people with the right skills, so that we have accurate and timely performance information	The Council's adopted Workforce Development Plan will be reviewed following the revision of the Council's People Strategy. The updated Workforce Development Plan will incorporate generic data quality requirements, based on identified skill levels	The Workforce Development Plan is in place until 2010.	December 2009
		1	Contracts	To put in place systems,	Set up a formal procedure to ensure	SBC are required to use County	

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R12	BV82a (i) Ensure accurate audit trail provided		Manager	policies and procedures to ensure the highest possible data quality.	that Weighbridge tickets support recycling weekly summary. Managers confirmation of reasonableness of variance between waste collected and waste sent for recycling needs to be noted Information to support adjustment to county figure needs to be available	weighbridge ticket detail for Waste Data Flow. Recycling Officer (RO) compares the figures for collected waste and waste sent for recycling and speaks to Contracts Manager regarding any discrepancies to ensure that they are valid and reasonable. RO has evidence of discussion but may need some further formalising. The process requires a formal procedure.	Original target March 2008 (new deadline to be advised)

Recommendations from Stevenage Borough Council Internal Audit of 2007/08 data

R13	It is recommended that completed Data Quality Assurance Checklists should be submitted to the Corporate team by a pre-determined date and non submissions be chased up.	2	Performance & Improvement Manager		Agreed. Data Quality Checklists drafted for all indicators in the Balanced Scorecard. Checklists will be verified accurate by Heads of Service and collected by Performance and Improvement Team following end of data year.	The Council's network of Data Quality Champions are assisting with the final completion and collection of Checklists for 2008/09 data.	June 2009
R14	It is recommended that there may be potential to improve performance for National Indicator 192 by applying the Audit Commission definition of excluding fly tipping and investigating the inclusion of recycled tyres, wood & metal.	2	Street Scene and Open Spaces Manager		Agreed.		July 2009
R15	It is recommended that for National Indicator 192 spot checks of prime documents are undertaken	2	Street Scene and Open Spaces Manager		Agreed.		July 2009

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	this may help to reduce the risk of errors.						
R16	It is recommended that for National Indicator 192 a second person should check the arithmetic on the recycling spreadsheet, this may help reduce the risk of errors.	2	Street Scene and Open Spaces Manager		Agreed.		July 2009
R17	It is recommended that for National Indicator 192, some figures on the recycling spreadsheet are reliant on third party figures (e.g. Herts CC and private recycling companies), there should be a reasonableness check to ensure that these figures are accurate. In particular where the Council are paid for recycling materials.	1	Street Scene and Open Spaces Manager		Agreed.		July 2009

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Additional Actions identified by Corporate Performance and Improvement Team

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R1 8	Improve Data Quality Status where there are issues of concern.	2	Heads of Service and Performance and Improvement Team	To put in place systems, policies and procedures to ensure the highest possible data quality.	Work with Heads of Service to increase performance indicators that are not subjective and have a one star status data quality (more than one issue to address) to a two star status (one issue to address)		March 2010