SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

DATE:	**22 FEBRUARY 2022**
REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER:	**TIM OLIVER, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**
LEAD OFFICER:	**RACHEL CROSSLEY, JOINT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM**
SUBJECT:	**HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA**
ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA:	**GROWING A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY SO EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT/ TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITY/ENABLING A GREENER FUTURE/ EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

Purpose of the Report:

This report provides an overview of the Surrey County Council (SCC) Data Strategy, its ambition and purpose, and the progress made to date. It will also provide an update on the work of the Surrey Office of Data Analytics and the Surrey-wide Data Strategy. These initiatives are bringing partners together from across the county to look at how data sharing can be improved and what a collaborative analytics ecosystem might look like, to deliver better services to Surrey residents.

The SCC Data Strategy, and the activities required to deliver it, complements and enables other key strategies, namely the Surrey County Council Organisation Strategy and the Surrey County Council Digital Strategy. It also closely aligns with and will empower the Council to fully contribute to the Surrey-wide Data Strategy, which is currently in development. In addition, delivery of the strategy will support each of the organisation's four strategic priority areas which have a dependency on good quality, accessible data to achieve the desired outcomes.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Support the overall ambition outlined within the Surrey County Council (SCC) Data Strategy.
2. Support the recommended activities outlined in the strategy.
3. Agree to encourage the services within their portfolios to support and engage with the SCC Data Strategy.
4. Note the work with partners to develop a Surrey-wide strategy which improves data sharing to deliver better services to Surrey residents.
5. Note that the Data Strategy is currently funded through SCC's Transformation Fund and funding for the ongoing permanent costs of the strategy still need to be identified.

Reason for Recommendations:

Data is recognised in the Government's National Data Strategy as a strategic asset and the 'great opportunity of our time, offering the possibility of a more informed and better-connected future.' Surrey County Council also fully recognise the potential data brings and have big ambitions for how data is managed, governed, and used in the future. The Council aspires to be truly data-enabled; using data to not just understand the performance of

services and monitor what has happened, but also to help plan and prepare for the future, predicting issues before they arise.

To meet this ambition and harness the power of data for the Council, its partners and residents, the organisation needs to address the 'gap' in capabilities, skills and behaviours highlighted by a data review undertaken last year.

Delivering the SCC Data Strategy and building a sustainable data capability will enable the Council to fill the gap and tackle the root causes of the issues highlighted by the data review. It will build a data literate and data empowered workforce. Focusing on this work will be essential to enabling the Council to contribute fully to a wider partnership data and insight ecosystem, that the Surrey-wide Data Strategy is aiming to define and establish.

Executive Summary:

1. Data has been a lifeline during the global coronavirus pandemic. The fact that government, businesses, organisations, and public services have been able to share vital information quickly, effectively, and ethically during the pandemic has not only saved countless lives, but has kept the economy running, and enabled the Council to deliver services to residents during a period of unprecedented disruption. More than ever before, the Council understands the potential of data as a key enabler to delivering better outcomes for Surrey residents.

2. The Council's ambition therefore is to become a data enabled organisation, using data to underpin policy, decisions, and actions in its effort to improve services and outcomes for residents, businesses, and the county.

Missing capabilities

3. To become truly data-enabled, the Council need to have data that is high quality and fit for purpose, as well as an organisational culture that understands and values data and actively seeks to use it.

4. A data review, conducted last year with officers at different levels of the Council, assessed the data maturity of the organisation and highlighted some missing capabilities, skills and behaviours that currently stop the Council from getting the most from its data. Analysis of the review findings highlighted some possible root causes for these problems.

   I. There is a lack of common understanding about why data is important which leads the Council not to value it enough. As a result, the governance and management of data is not always prioritised in the same way that it is for other vital assets and resources such as finance or employees.

   II. There is a lack of understanding about how to get the most from Council data and skills to use it in a way that is effective and leads to action, are not available across the breath of the organisation.

   III. There isn't a consistent, inclusive culture and way of working across the Council and with partners, which leads to fragmentation of data, lack of visibility, lack of access and a culture of overprotection. It results in a situation where the organisation doesn't have a full picture of the data that exists in

different services, how to access the data that each service holds, and teams have different interpretations and ways of describing their data.

5. The barriers to achieving the Council's ambition therefore can be considered from two perspectives, first in terms of the foundations that need to be in place to improve its data, and second the skills and behaviours that support its effective use.

6. A lack of maturity across both these areas currently means that the intelligence and insight that the Council produces from its data isn't as impactful as it could be.

Purpose of the SCC Data Strategy

7. The SCC Data Strategy has been developed in response to the findings from the data review and with extensive engagement with leaders and officers. It articulates a common vision for data and describes the outcomes that the Council needs to deliver to realise it.

8. The scope of the strategy covers data in a broad sense, from how the Council manages and governs it, to how it is used to create actionable insights. The strategy has been designed to be ambitious, as well as actionable and pragmatic and will demand a focus on people, culture, and governance, as well as data and technology.

9. The actions within the SCC Data Strategy are organised into three focus areas:
   I. Building the foundations and putting in place those basic fundamentals (governance, policies, processes, and systems) so that the Council can use its data more effectively for the benefit of residents.
   II. Developing innovative approaches to insight to show how data analytics can be used to deliver the outcomes that the organisation wants to see.
   III. Building the skills and knowledge of its workforce at all levels of the organisation, so that staff are confident in managing, analysing, and interpreting data.

10. Within these three areas there are several key projects which include:
   • developing an organisation-wide data governance framework,
   • building an organisation-wide data catalogue,
   • mastering the Council's business-critical data,
   • reviewing the organisation's data architecture,
   • delivering initial analytics pilots adopting tried and tested methodologies
   • establishing a data academy
   • embedding data ethics in data practices and processes across the Council.

11. To ensure the solutions in this data strategy effectively target underlying issues rather than just treating the symptoms short-term, the findings were analysed through a root cause analysis (RCA). Each of these projects will therefore build towards the outcomes the Council need to deliver.

12. It will be essential that once the projects have been delivered that the Council is left with a sustainable data capability, not only in the tools and processes that have been embedded but also through the establishment of several new roles to drive, co-ordinate and champion the activities described in this strategy. If data is to be treated as an asset within the Council, it will need to have a similar parity to other assets, e.g. finance and property.

13. The SCC Data Strategy is internally focused on transforming the Council's capabilities, skills and behaviours related to managing, governing, and using data. This work is not only essential for the Council, but it will also enable it to participate fully, effectively, and confidently within the wider system and place-based data work. It will also ensure the Council has better control and decision-making structures in place to drive and support this Surrey-wide work. Building strong links between both the SCC and the Surrey-wide data programmes is already underway to ensure we don't duplicate but can leverage and amplify activity, capability and learning across all workstreams.

Progress on SCC Data Strategy

14. Transformation funding from both the Digital and Data Insight programmes has been used to kick-start work on the three SCC Data Strategy workstreams. Work to date includes (with the focus area it relates to identified in brackets):

- The procurement of two new data governance tools which will be completed before the end of the financial year. These tools will enable the Council to better understand what data is held, where it is, how to get access to it and how it needs to be protected as well then being able to assess the quality of that data (Building the foundations)

- Testing a more outcome-led approach through the Surrey Office of Data Analytics (SODA). SODA is a coalition of partners across Surrey collaborating on data analytics to deliver insights. By working together SODA has focused on tackling common barriers to data sharing and collaboration and developed products that directly improve public services. Projects completed to date include:
  - A multi-agency understanding of Domestic Abuse in Surrey that gives a more granular picture of what is known by each organisation about the population currently affected by domestic abuse.
  - An analysis of Digital Inclusion in Surrey, that includes a 'persona' bank showing the different needs, experiences and barriers of people who are experiencing digital exclusion, an estimate of the size of each group, and a digital exclusion map to show the geographical spread of digital exclusion indicators. (New approaches to insight)

- The first training offer for staff was launched in the autumn. This analytics-focused apprenticeship, delivered by the Data Analytics Centre of Excellence within IT and Digital saw 33 officers graduate from the Data Visualisation with Tableau course, at the end of last year. (Engagement and skills)

15. Recruitment of additional expert capacity to support the delivery of the strategy is also underway. New roles include data stewards, a data architect, and a new head of data as well as some programme roles.

16. Most roles will be recruited on a fixed term contract, but the ambition will be to mainstream some, where capabilities do not currently exist, to ensure the long-term sustainability and focus for the organisation is realised.

Surrey-wide Data Strategy

17. Collaborative data sharing and analytics presents a unique opportunity to harness the breadth and depth of data held in partner organisations across Surrey, to ensure all organisations do the best for residents, patients, and communities. The achievements of SODA, the collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the work on Population Health Management (PHM), has shown that by working and learning together it is possible to identify what great practice looks like and work to develop the necessary capabilities to achieve collective outcomes.

18. Collaboration can address issues that transcend organisational and geographical boundaries by strengthening cross-department and organisational sharing and collaboration with data. If partners improve the way they collaborate across the system, they can also provide better skills development opportunities for staff, and shape the technology market by speaking with a collective voice.

19. The Health and Wellbeing Board and Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System Executive have therefore commissioned a Surrey-wide Data Strategy to underpin models of service delivery and care in Surrey. Part of this work is exploring how partners can make appropriate information sharing and collaborative data analytics frictionless across organisations.

20. The steering group for this work is being chaired by Gavin Stephens, Surrey Police Chief Constable. The ambition is to develop a strategy to benefit Surrey residents and support informed decision making and evidence-based recommendations to:
    - Improve population health and health care
    - Reduce health inequalities
    - Enhance productivity and value for money
    - Improve commissioning and operational decision making at a county level.

21. There are four active workstreams driving the development of the strategy:
    - stakeholder engagement – which is working with partners at a system and placed based level, to define the high-level vision and opportunities for appropriate data sharing and collaboration
    - data and technical infrastructure – which is using the outputs of the stakeholder engagement to design high-level options/recommendations for an infrastructure that supports the vision
    - data/analytics operating model – which is mapping the analytics capability across partners before looking at operating model recommendations.
    - communications and engagement – which is focussed on ensuring partners, workforce, patients, and residents are involved and kept up to date on progress and plans.

22. The stakeholder workshops held in December 2021 and January 2022 have been well attended and have shown that there is a real desire to work together at scale. High-level principles to guide a common approach in areas such as data architecture, ways of working and information governance have had broad agreement within workshops, signalling that this work is moving in the right direction and is beginning to establish a common ambition and clear focus.

23. Practically, the workshops have highlighted many areas, including population and emergency planning, or tackling complex problems such as poverty or improving mental health support, which would benefit from a collaborative approach, and these provide an opportunity to develop solutions that could be scaled.

24. The workshops have also been useful at highlighting the inherent complexity of working at a system and place-based level and the challenges that will need to be addressed. Some of the emerging themes coming out of the workshops include:
   - The various levels of data maturity across the organisations in Surrey which impact on things like availability and quality of data, mechanisms for sharing and levels of risk tolerated.
   - The different ways of describing things between different sectors (e.g., vulnerabilities, risks, addresses) and the use of acronyms and specialist terminology
   - A lack of understanding of the capabilities, roles, responsibilities, and data that is collected/available for use
   - Unclear processes around the retention of data after sharing and the link to ethics.

25. Key to the success of this work is ensuring there are agreed principles supporting the culture and mindset to work collaboratively as well as frameworks for decision making and implementation. Partners will need to focus on specific and measurable areas for improvement to create a future blueprint for ways of working, that can be scaled once established.

26. The Surrey-wide Data Strategy was presented at the Surrey Forum on 18 January and endorsed by those in attendance, with enthusiasm to align this work with the collective priorities of the Forum. The Surrey Local Resilience Forum and a number of the organisations represented on the Surrey Forum are also embedded in the data strategy workstreams.

Consultation:

27. The development of the Council's data strategy was the result of input from over 250 officers that took part in the data maturity survey, over 120 officers from across all directorates that attended eight different workshop and every member of the Council Leadership Team (CLT).

28. In support of the Surrey-wide Data Strategy, four placed-based and three system level workshops were held in December 2021 and January 2022. These have included more than 80 attendees from partners across the county including District and Boroughs, Surrey Heartlands, Surrey Police, Surrey County Council, and members of the third sector. Further workshops are also taking place this month (February). In addition, a feedback mechanism and surveys have also been developed to ensure the capture input from colleagues and partners across the system, including District and Borough councils and the Voluntary and Community sector.

29. At the end of January, residents were consulted about their expectations on the use of their data by partners within the county via the citizen's panel. The purpose was to understand more about residents' trust in organisations to look after and share their

data appropriately. The findings will be used to inform and support work around data sharing and ethics both for the SCC Data Strategy and the wider Surrey data work.

30. In June 2021 the Health and Wellbeing Board endorsed the need to renew the ambition around data and intelligence, to inform and monitor the ambitions of the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy and agreed that Chief Constable Gavin Stephens (Surrey Police), leads on behalf of the wider system.

Risk Management and Implications:

31. There are reputational, productivity and resident experience risks associated with not managing and governing the Council's data. These risks include but are not limited to: duplication of work and resources, making decisions and developing policies based on poor quality data, asking residents to continually repeat core information about themselves and being unable to contribute to Surrey-wide data work confidently and effectively. The implementation of the Data Strategy is the mitigation for these risks.

32. There is a risk that the Council treats the SCC Data Strategy as a project that needs to be completed, rather than a capability that needs to be built and embedded long term. To mitigate this risk focus will be given to building data thinking into existing processes and establishing the long-term operating model and funding.

33. There is a risk that the organisation gets impatient and loses faith in the direction of travel. It needs to be acknowledged that this work will be incremental, complex, and unglamourous but is essential for the Council if it is to harness the power and value of data for future benefit. To mitigate this risk, benefits will be tracked and communicated. A change manager will also be recruited to help ensure good quality, regular communication and change activities support all projects.

34. There is a risk that services won't want to engage with this work, through fears about data privacy, additional workload, or an assertion that their service data needs to be handled differently. The mitigations for this risk are to:

- continue engagement at all levels within the Council, ensuring that services and directorates can input into the delivery of the strategy and feel ownership of it,
- build the data governance framework for the organisation to create space to have collaborative conversations about data and make organisational focused decisions,
- maintain CLT sponsorship and involvement with this work,
- ensure the principle of privacy by design is at the heart of all projects.

35. In recent years there have been several examples, including the Covid-19 pandemic, that have highlighted the need for a joined-up public service response in which urgent or timely data sharing can make a huge difference to public health and safety. There is therefore a risk that not sharing data (or not doing it quickly), in certain circumstances, can lead to more harmful consequences. The delivery of both the SCC and the Surrey-wide Data Strategies are the mitigation for this risk.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

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36. The Council aims to create a strategic capability within the organisation to drive the work required to govern and manage its data in the same way that it does for other vital assets and resources. To do this the Council will need additional expert capacity and will need to invest in some additional data governance tools.

37. The process of building this capability, and essentially initiating a shift in mindset, culture, behaviours, and ways of working requires a range of staffing and non-staffing expenditure on data tools, sharing platforms and external specialist expertise. These costs have initially been financed by transformation funding, which is currently secured up to 2022/23. A further request for transformation funding has been prepared for 2023/24, although this will need to be refreshed as part of the formal bidding process for the 2023/24 budget. Some of this additional capacity will be needed long term and will therefore need to be mainstreamed over the next few years, resulting in c. £468,000 of ongoing permanent costs for which Council funding is yet to be identified and confirmed.

38. The table below summaries the actual and planned expenditure on SCC's Data Strategy.

Type of expenditure	Transformation funding approved		Transformation funding requested	SCC funding to be identified
	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 onwards £000
Strategy staff costs	114	618	437	338
Metadata and data Quality tools	120	120	120	120
Data sharing agreement tool and technical capability (supporting Surrey-wide work)	0	80	80	10
Information Governance specialist support	0	28	28	0
Change management	0	20	20	0
Total	**234**	**866**	**685**	**468**

39. The requirement for c. £468,000 of ongoing permanent expenditure on staffing, tools and resources will need to be factored into future years planning as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy process (MTFS). As part of this, work will be undertaken to identify potential efficiencies derived from the strategy. This will be taken forwards through Track 2 of the Council's Twin Track MTFS which focuses on the longer term cross organisational benefits derived from initiatives such as SCC's Data Strategy in 2023/24 and beyond.

40. Key expected benefits will include reduction in corporate and reputation risk, reductions in the time and cost of finding and cleaning data and better accessibility to good quality data for insight purposes, policy and commissioning decision making as well as supporting the Council's wider partnership ambitions and collaborative analytics ecosystem. Whilst it will be challenging to pinpoint specific cashable efficiencies, there will certainly be financial benefits through reducing time taken to access data and improving decision-making based on enhanced data insight.

Section 151 Officer Commentary:

41. Although significant progress has been made over the last twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium term financial outlook beyond 2021/22 remains uncertain. The public health crisis has resulted in increased costs which may not be fully funded. With uncertainty about the ongoing impact of this and no clarity on the extent to which both central and local funding sources might be affected in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.

42. In this context the Section 151 Officer recognises the importance of SCC's Data Strategy in improving the Council's access to and ability to gain the most insight from data, but also cautions that a permanent sustainable funding solution for this strategy has not yet been identified. This will need to be identified through agreeing SCC's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24 and beyond, to enable the objectives of the Data Strategy to be embedded.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer:

43. There are no significant legal implications arising at this stage, although as the report indicates, the Council operates within a significant legal framework under which data and information must be managed including its governance, transparency and security which the strategy will incorporate.

Equalities and Diversity:

44. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken, where relevant, as policies and projects are designed, to ensure they do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.

Other Implications:

45. The potential implications for the following Council priorities and policy areas have been considered.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	Not applicable, but delivery of the SCC Data Strategy will support better management, governance and use of data for the benefit of children and their families
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Not applicable, but delivery of the SCC Data Strategy will support better management, governance and use of data for the benefit of children and their families
Environmental sustainability	Not applicable, but delivery of the SCC Data Strategy will support better management, governance and use of data to help support environmental decision making

Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience	Not applicable, but delivery of the SCC Data Strategy will support better management, governance and use of data to help understand and monitor compliance against net-zero targets
Public Health	Not applicable, but delivery of the SCC Data Strategy will support better management, governance and use of data to support the work of Public Health.

What Happens Next:

46. In total there are 22 proposed projects within the SCC Data Strategy which will take place over the next three years to build, establish and embed data as a sustainable capability within the organisation.

47. Recruitment of the additional capacity and expertise to drive the delivery of the SCC Data Strategy is planned for completion by March 2022.

48. Procurement of the new data governance tools will be completed by March 2022

49. The Surrey-wide data strategy will be drafted by March 2022.

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Annexes:

Annex 1 – Surrey County Council Data Strategy

Sources/background papers:

- National Data Strategy
- Surrey-wide data strategy highlight reports

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