



SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL DATA STRATEGY TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

Purpose of report: To provide an update on the Council's Data Strategy, the progress to date and to seek the views of the committee on how best to engage Members more widely in improving our management and use of data, as well as the culture change to support this.

Introduction

1. Data is a generic term that means many things to many people. Within the council we take a broad definition that encompasses data, information, and so it includes everything from numbers recorded in an IT system, to a sentence written in a report, to the words spoken during a meeting insight (Appendix A contains a definition of the terms data, information, and insight).
2. Council data therefore might be held within an IT system, like Liquid Logic, in emails sent to colleagues, in documents created or video recordings of meetings. But data is not only something that is recorded in digital format but also anything recorded on paper. Data is everywhere and growing in volume by the second.
3. Day in, day out officers across the council create and use data in their roles, whether its collecting information from a resident as part of their needs assessment, recording the location and size of a pothole so it can be repaired, or using data that's been recorded by social workers to understand what services might need to be commissioned in the future.
4. However, as an organisation we are not always very good at managing this data. It tends to be locked away in silos or held locally in spreadsheets. The same things are described differently across the organisation, and information is not recorded in a consistent way (e.g., needs of residents). Once we've recorded some data or created a document, we tend to file it and forgot about it and we don't actively work to understand the quality of our data.
5. This means that when we want to use our data to underpin policy, decisions, and actions in our effort to improve services and outcomes for residents, it is;

hard to find, difficult and time consuming to bring together, sometimes poor quality, and we are not confident in sharing it.

6. While poor data management can lead to bad experiences, poor decisions, and increased risks and costs to the council. Better use of data, can help the council to operate more efficiently, promote local economic growth, and deliver better outcomes for residents and communities.
7. The Data Strategy transformation programme is therefore a three-year programme of work to deliver a step change in how the council governs, manages, and uses data and thereby increase its overall data maturity. This programme delivers against the Council's published Data Strategy which was endorsed by Cabinet in February 2022.
8. Using the Local Government Association data maturity self-assessment tool, the organisation has rated itself as 'intermediate'. While this is in line with many other local authorities, we are noticeably lower on maturity in terms of how we use, manage, and govern data. Considerable change is required to move us into the next 'advanced' rating and the highest rating of 'expert'.
9. In line with the Council's vision to become a data-enabled organisation our objective therefore is to move the council's maturity into the 'advanced' rating over the course of the programme and into 'expert' over five to seven years.
10. To increase data maturity and address the barriers that stop us from getting the most from the council's data, the projects within the data strategy programme are being delivered against the three themes:
 - Building the foundations – putting in place the basics needed (governance, policies, processes) to ensure data is easier to find, high quality, consistent and well defined with clear ownership and accountability.
 - Increasing engagement and skills - 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. Driving cultural changes to improve how we value, share, and collaborate with our data.
 - Innovative approaches to insight - developing insight capability through collaboration and working in multidisciplinary teams to show how data analytics can be used to deliver the outcomes that the organisation wants to see.
11. Supporting the data strategy programme of work is a robust change strategy that seeks to alter the way people think about, and act around data, so that data

is given the same importance, consideration, and treatment as other assets (e.g., property) across the organisation

Programme Vision and Objectives

12. By 2025 the Council's vision is to "become a data-enabled organisation that uses data to underpin policy, decisions and actions in our effort to improve services and outcomes for residents, businesses and the county"
13. This means we will need to build and embed an organisational view of data. Currently the council often only consider things and makes decisions on data from a team, service or directorate level. However, the value of data can only be fully realised by creating an organisational view that champions quality and consistency in order to enable more seamless movement of data between directorates and IT systems.
14. As a truly data-enabled organisation the council will:
 - take an organisational view of its data;
 - know what data and information it holds and actively work improve it (high quality, consistent, well defined, with clear ownership and accountability);
 - govern and manage data, in the same way that it does for other vital assets and resources;
 - make data and insight more visible and accessible;
 - make it easier to share data across teams and systems;
 - build more collaborative ways of working between data teams;
 - ensure residents' data is used legally and ethically;
 - develop greater skills and understanding in managing, interpreting, and analysing data;
 - build a greater understanding of the value of data and
 - create insight that leads to tangible action and improvements to outcomes.

Objectives

15. By 2025 the Data Strategy Programme will:

- Deliver 18 key workstreams identified by the Data Strategy, to address the root cause issues that stop us from getting the most from our data and increase the overall data maturity of the Council.
- Deliver behavioural and cultural change to develop an organisation that highly values data, where the activities (processes, systems and policies) the programme is implementing are sustained and improved over time
- Develop a data governance model and approach that best meets the needs and ambitions of Surrey County Council (SCC) based on the experiential learning acquired throughout the life of the programme
- Establish a business-as-usual data team (Strategic Data Group), and data governance structure (Data Board and Data Collaboration Council), that will work on an ongoing basis to continue lead on data topics for the organisation

Year 1 - Key projects and progress to date

16. For 2022/23 (year 1) the following projects and activities have been initiated under the three programme themes:

Building the foundations	Why this is important	Progress/What has been delivered
Data quality	The overall quality of data held within our systems is not known. Some services do a lot of work to understand and address data quality others do not. Data cleansing work is done manually and locally. To have confidence in our data and to use it for more advanced activities we need to understand and put plans in place to address data quality issues, where they exist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data quality tool has been procured and implemented. • Data quality dashboards for Land and Property on their core property data (e.g. addresses, primary use, gross internal area) to ensure data is complete and recorded consistently, in preparation for outsourcing contract. • A successful proof of concept has been delivered for Business Operations in support of the Digital Business & Insight Programme (DB&I) to help with data cleansing, in preparation for MySurrey, using the new data quality tool. • Data quality dashboard exploring supplier/provider data to support the reconciliation of data between

		Systems, Applications & Products (SAP) and MySurrey (Unit4).
Metadata	The council does not have an accessible, organisation wide view of the data it holds. We do not describe things in the same way, and we don't have owners for all data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data catalogue and business glossary tool has been procured and is currently in development. • First use case underway with Highways. Wider rollout to follow.
Information sharing	We lack sufficient understanding about when we can or cannot share data. We want to make it easier to share data between internal and external teams and make it possible to bring data together from across multiple systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A survey of staff to identify the barriers to information sharing has been completed. • A series of activities to address the barriers identified are being scoped.
Data ethics	It is important that we use data in ways that are both legal and ethical. We need to introduce and embed common tools to support decision making (e.g., the Open Data Institute ethics canvas/Central Digital and Data Office-part of the Cabinet Office -ethics framework) and the consideration of ethics in how we use data. We also need to retain service user and community trust in the use of their data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff workshop held with over 60 participants in Autumn 2022 identified the appetite for greater guidance and clarity around ethics. • Options building from good practice are being scoped.
Organisation wide data governance framework	There is a gap within the current council governance structures, which means that no-one has an organisation level view, and we have no mechanism for having conversations and making decisions at that level. Instead, decisions are made locally leading to greater fragmentation and lower visibility and control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Data Board, chaired by Rachel Crossley, has been established to provide the strategic lead for data. Supporting delivery groups have also been established. • Work on three organisation wide strategies has commenced: quality; metadata; documents and contents.

Increasing engagement and skills	Why this is important	Progress
Data Asks (behaviours)	We do not have a collective understanding of the council's data values, policies, processes and expected performance behaviour in relation to data. Staff are therefore not always clear what is expected of them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early thinking on behaviours for staff and leaders has been drafted and is currently being refined following feedback. • Work with Libraries and Cultural Services is being scoped to explore data

		behaviours and skills within the Directorate and understand what is meant by data literacy and how this applies to officers.
Skills audits and self-assessments	We lack understanding about how to get the most from our data and do not always have the skills across the organisation to use it in a way that is effective and leads to action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A skills audit tool is being developed. This will enable officers to assess their behaviours, knowledge and skills in relation to data and identify areas for development. • This will be explored as part of the work with Libraries and Cultural Services to help them assess their current data skills and knowledge. This will help inform the approach for the wider organisation.
Data Academy	As we need to improve data literacy and skills across the organisation at all levels, establishing a Data Academy will bring together the training and development into one place for ease of access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the current training offer is underway, and a first version of the Academy will be established early this year. The approach will be aligned with wider thinking on how to join-up all academies within the council.
Communications	We need to bring people along on the journey with us and enable teams and services to participate and shape how we will manage and use data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stakeholder analysis has been completed • Council wide and stakeholder focused communications are underway
Cultural and organisational change	Changing our processes and systems will not be enough to becoming a data enabled council. We need to change behaviours and mindsets as well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change readiness assessment has been completed • The Data Board have agreed an overall strategy and key actions for addressing the cultural elements of the programme.

Delivering new approaches to insight	Why this is important	Progress
Analytics priority work	The council sometimes struggles to ask the 'right questions' of its data which means that analytics work doesn't	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of projects are underway to demonstrate the potential of new analytical approaches and ways of working. This includes projects on prevention spend

	always help the council make the decisions it needs to make.	mapping, and home to school and service user transport.
Progress SODA (Surrey Office of Data Analytics)	We want to work with partners to tackle 'complex multi-agency problems. What we work on and how we work together needs to be defined and designed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An outline approach has been agreed with partners. • New terms of reference for SODA and work programme will be put in place.
Outcomes based pilots	We believe that there is good evidence that outcome-led methodologies to data analytics lead to greater insight and resulting action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two pilots, concerning domestic abuse and digital insights, have been completed and published on Surrey-I.

17. The programme has developed a set of benefit measures and wider success indicators that will demonstrate the improvements of both individual projects and the programme overall. The Data Board and the Transformation Programme Team have agreed these. They will be reported on from mid-2023.

Data Quality work on supplier information being moved across to MySurrey (Unit4)

18. Payment debt recovery currently requires working with multiple IT systems that handle many different aspects of the payment process. Where these systems do not reconcile because of data errors it can lead to delayed payments and in some cases to payments not being made at all. This impacts on both service users and providers as well as wasting officer time trying to identify and correct data errors.
19. As part of the Data Strategy Programme's Data Quality Project the team are supporting colleagues implementing MySurrey (Unit4) to reconcile data between three systems (ContrOCC, SAP and Unit 4) to understand what data needs to be cleansed before go live to ensure the migration of data is successful.
20. Previous attempts at trying to 'clean' data was a manual process which had relied on the use of spreadsheets. It was taking too long to produce any meaningful analysis of data errors. Manging data from multiple systems also generated an immediate complexity which increased the chances of human error.
21. The new system Unit 4 is also more exacting in how it 'reads' data in comparison to SAP. Therefore, if Unit 4 saw one error in 1,000 lines, it would reject all those lines. This was seen as a major issue at the beginning of 2022.
22. The aim of the data quality work therefore was to:

- examine important supplier/provider data that it was suspected would break the integration between ContrOCC, SAP and Unit4
- check all the cost centre codes and the general ledger account codes existed in Unit4 as well as in ContrOCC

In total this meant 137,772 lines of data needed to be examined

What was achieved?

23. The team created ten simple to use, dynamic data quality dashboards that gave a greater visibility to data errors and opened new routes of investigation. For example, while an initial 134 errors were found, this prompted further questions about data quality related to VAT numbers, truncated supplier names and bank account details which identified another 799 errors. The errors found only applied to 58 out of a total of 19,000 suppliers in SAP.
24. The match rate of 99 per cent gave the MySurrey project team confidence in the data that did not exist before. Crucially, it has enabled the team to focus on the small areas of data where issues exist.
25. The iterative approach to introducing and utilising the tool meant it became operational very quickly and the officers felt the work was manageable alongside other demands. As new data extracts are available these can be easily uploaded into the data quality tool for checking using the rules that have already been built.
26. The data quality tool was easy to use and gave officers a route to examining data issues in a visual way. As a result, it was easier for everyone to understand the problems caused by poor data quality.
27. Further work on contracts is being completed and additional work on employee data with the MySurrey project team is now also being scoped.
28. Overtime, the data quality work will raise the awareness of the problems caused by poor data quality and officers will begin to pay more attention to building and maintaining good quality data from the outset. Ultimately, this will save the council both time and money.

Roadmap

29. Appendix B contains a high-level programme roadmap of the 18 workstreams that sit within the programme. Also included in a separate table are the key milestones for 2023/24.
30. Key highlights to note are:

- Data quality projects are currently planned with the MySurrey Programme, Surrey Fire and Rescue, Land and Property. These will profile the data to understand where issues exist (e.g., missing email addresses, incorrect postcodes, duplicate entries etc) and then work with the services to help identify the root cause of issues in order to help fix them.
- Data deep-dives, which examine data from creation to disposal, within a specific area of focus, are planned with Adult Social Care (ASC) Market Management and Waste Management teams.
- The data strategy team works in close collaboration with colleagues on the Digital Discovery and Design Team ensuring activities are aligned and that we support opportunities to use digital (and data) to truly transform service delivery. For example, over the coming months the data strategy team will be supporting the Home to School Transport Digital Discovery and Design Project that is currently underway.
- The data strategy team are working alongside other strategic programmes within the Council, including the Relationship Management & Insight Programme (RM&I) to provide input and support on data.
- As part of the insight workstream the team, during 2023/24, will be supporting work on prevention spend mapping. This will involve:
 - Trying to ensure we can monitor spend on prevention (including better care fund); ensuring a process (mapping spend to broad outcomes)
 - Understanding how the spend links to outputs and health and social care outcomes (logic model)
 - Analysing the value for money by comparing relative spend (efficiency metrics)

31. Additional projects within each of the workstreams will be added across the year, where capacity, service engagement and strategic priorities align.

Changing the culture and developing the skills set

32. The journey to becoming a 'data-enabled organisation' is going to be as much about leadership and culture as it is about process and systems change.

33. The programme will take a supportive and collaborative approach that focuses on empowering officers with the right support, skills, guidance, and tools. The council need to ensure staff are more data literate and confident in their ability to record, read, manage, and understand the data they use, as well as continue to upskill its data analysts, managers and senior leaders.

34. There will, however, also be times when ways of working or specific policies may need to be driven from the top downwards.
35. It is also worth noting that many key activities the programme will undertake may not be visible to a wider audience. The work will also take time, and will often be complex, and unglamorous. How we make the links in people's thinking, maintain our focus and patience, and communicate the value of the work will be key in the Council's approach and the long-term success of the programme.

Culture, behaviours and skills

36. An essential building block supporting the development of a data culture is to establish a clear behaviours and skills framework which sets out how we work with data as well as the individual expectations on how staff need to behave in this context. This framework will function as a set of generic capabilities that will help support individual motivation and development. It will be designed for all staff, including those who use data as a feature of their work, as well as leaders.
37. To help people, assess their data skills and behaviours, it is proposed to introduce a self-assessment tool. This tool will be designed to help people examine their current attitudes and skill levels around data use and to identify what improvements they need to make. A Data Academy will be set up to curate, refine and develop our current learning and development offer and bring it into one place.
38. The programme is planning to work with a few service areas and groups to test and refine the data behaviours and skills framework and assessment with the intention that this is adopted by the whole council from September 2023
39. It is important to note that the programme, wherever possible, wishes to align with, or be part of, organisational thinking and approaches in this area. As part of this work therefore the programme is exploring opportunities to align (or embed) data with the new Surrey Way strategic framework and the People Strategy, the Digital Skills Framework and the new Leadership Framework (all of which are in development) so that staff see the relevance of data in the context of the wider organisation.

Shaping the leadership

40. The importance of leaders to delivering culture change cannot be overstated and will therefore be key to the successful delivery of the council's ambition to become truly data-enabled. As part of the change approach the data strategy programme has started to think about the role of leaders and Members in driving and supporting the change needed and what this will look like. While this

thinking will continue and evolve over the coming months initial thoughts are that leaders and members can provide support in the following ways:

- By helping to ensure a continuing organisational focus on achieving this evolutionary change;
- By thinking about their own use of data to inform decisions and policy;
- By thinking about how they might model new ways of working and any challenges that might create;
- By helping to maintain an ongoing dialogue across all levels of the organisation to help drive and shape the data-enabled culture as it emerges; and
- By reflecting on their own change capabilities, as well as on their current data skills and confidence to take a data-enabled approach to decision making.

41. The data programme would welcome the committee's views as to whether these are the right leadership areas to focus on and how we can engage with Members more widely in helping to lead and establish the County Council as a truly data-enabled organisation.

Surrey-Wide Data Strategy

42. The SCC Data Strategy is internally focused on transforming the Council's capabilities, skills and behaviours related to managing, governing, and using data. It also closely aligns with and will empower the Council to fully contribute to the Surrey-wide Data Strategy.
43. The vision for the Surrey Wide Data Strategy is to build a truly interoperable data and analytics ecosystem comprising of shared data across a range of Integrated Care System (ICS) partner organisations across Surrey (health, local authority, police, third sector) to help deliver better care/services to residents now, and in the future.
44. While the strategy defines the ambitions for data at a system level, there will be a focus at ICS level in the first phase
45. This will enable the aims of an ICS, strengthen collaboration, 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

- Support broader social and economic development

Using the new ICS legislation and framework to support the requirements and duties of an ICS, as part of the implementation of the strategy, work will be done to identify and catalogue existing data assets (people, process, and technology/ environment and licenses) as well as Information Governance and support functions.

The Surrey wide data strategy also set out options to create a data operating model and technical environments and an outline roadmap. Implementation of the strategy will be dependent on funding.

Conclusions

46. Good progress is being made on the implementation of the SCC Data Strategy and some tangible deliverables are now helping the programme bring the work to life and build momentum.
47. Many of the key activities included as part of the Data Strategy Programme may not be immediately visible to a wider audience and some will remain 'below the waterline.' However, this work is fundamental to the council achieving its outcomes.
48. The Surrey Wide Data Strategy is focusing on building an interoperable data and analytics ecosystem consisting of shared data across a range of Integrated Care System (ICS) partner organisations across Surrey. The SCC Data Strategy will enable the Council to contribute fully to this ecosystem.
49. The changes needed to achieve the council's ambition represent a significant shift in mindset and approach to data. How leaders and Members can help model, support, encourage that shift will be crucial.

Recommendations

38. It is recommended that members of the committee:
 - (a) Provide comments or feedback on the activities set out in this paper.
 - (b) Make suggestions on the best way to involve and engage Members in the Data Strategy programme moving forward.
 - (c) Highlight any data knowledge or skills they think Members might be interested in or require, for further exploration.

Next steps

We will continue to implement the Data Strategy programme as described in this paper.

We will develop our plans on learning and development needs for Members and reflect any thoughts or ideas made by the committee.

We would welcome an opportunity to provide a further progress report in the autumn of 2024.

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Sources/background papers

- (a) SCC Data Strategy
- (b) SCC Data Board 15 September 2022 Papers
- (c) SCC Data Board 23 November 2022 Papers

Appendices

Appendix A - What do we mean by data?

Appendix B – High-level Roadmap and milestones for 2023/24

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