

Newport City Council

Follow-up review of Data Quality Assurance Arrangements

May 2017

Background

- ❖ Our Data Quality Review in November 2015 concluded that:
 - our statutory recommendation (relating to the Special Educational Needs PI) had been addressed.
 - there had been some improvements but weaknesses remained in data quality arrangements.
 - weaknesses needed to be addressed to ensure that published performance data was accurate.

- ❖ Proposal for improvement: the Council needed to focus on the accuracy of its performance data by:
 - ensuring all nationally set indicators were recorded in VIEWS;
 - Checking the quality and accuracy of information provided in the self-assessment forms;
 - formalising and recording the risk assessment approach used to identify which indicators should be reviewed by Internal Audit;
 - providing members with results of Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to enable members to challenge the arrangements; and
 - improving the proof-reading of performance reports.

- ❖ In January 2017, we undertook a follow-up review of the Council's data quality assurance arrangements.

The Council's new system could help it improve performance management but continuing weaknesses in some data capture arrangements undermine its effectiveness

We came to this conclusion because:

- Management Information Hub is more visual and accessible
- Development plan in place to maximise functionality of the system
- Three data quality systems were effectively run

BUT

- Weaknesses in three of eight Council's data systems reviewed and areas for improvement in two others
- Data capture errors identified by ourselves and Internal Audit (IA) show further work needed to ensure data capture systems underpinning new Hub are robust
- July 2016 and January 2017, IA reported a 'significant issue' with EDU/015a highlighting poor data quality and incorrect application of the definition

Internal Audit

Data Quality Review findings – July 2016

- IA used risk based approach to identify high risk indicators for testing.
- IA found data quality was variable and there was a lack of secondary review resulting in significant errors.
- 5 of the 15 indicators reviewed had moderate or significant errors.
- Performance of seven indicators for 2015-16 was incorrect and amended.
- IA's overall 'reasonable' assurance rating was reported to Audit Committee in December 2016, but did not receive full findings of IA's review.

2016-17 Proposals for Improvement (PFIs)

The Council must improve the accuracy of its data capture systems by:

PF1: ensuring there are effective internal validation checks of performance data prior to data submission;

PF2: addressing the findings from Internal Audit's review of data quality arrangements to ensure data capture systems and performance reporting are robust, particularly those relating to National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) EDU/015a and EDU/015b; and

PF3: providing members with the full results of Internal Audit's review of the Council's data quality arrangements, thereby enabling members to challenge the arrangements.

Detailed findings of indicators reviewed

Quality descriptors for each performance indicator:

- The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run.
- The data system is adequate but some improvements could be made.
- The data system has some weaknesses which the Council is addressing.
- The data system has some weaknesses which the Council must address.

Performance Indicators selected for review

We examined the following indicators:

- STS/006 The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days; (NSI)
- WMT/009b Percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including course segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way; (NSI)
- THS/012 Percentage of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal © roads that are in overall poor condition (PAM)
- CHR/002 The number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence; (PAM)
- EDU/016b Percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools; (PAM)
- Local Number of young people accessing children and young people skills project;
- Local The percentage of victims satisfied with the service they received from the Youth Offending Team around the Family; and
- Local The number of people fully reabled.

Key to our assessment



- ✓ Indicates a particular positive aspect of data quality arrangements.
- ❖ Indicates shortcomings in data quality arrangements.

WMT/009b - Percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way

The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run.

- ✓ No issues identified with the transfer of data.
- ✓ Data recording arrangements captures all relevant information to calculate end of year performance.
- ✓ Sample testing demonstrated correct calculation and recording of PI and application of definition.

The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run

- ✓ Correct application of the definition and calculation of the end of year performance.
- ✓ Teachers use hand held devices to capture the register. Hand held devices are linked to SIMS (School Information Management System).
- ✓ Schools upload annual attendance figure into DEWI (Welsh Government system for capturing schools performance).
- ✓ Welsh Government checks validity of performance information provided via DEWI.
- ✓ SIMS captures and records specific information relevant for this PI.

THS/012 - Percentage of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal (c) roads that are in overall poor condition

The data system is fit for purpose and effectively run.

- ✓ Definition was correctly applied.
- ✓ There is no human input into identifying poor road conditions or calculating survey results.
- ✓ The only manual transfer of data is the end of year performance being inputted into VIEWS. No problems identified.

STS/006 - The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days

The data system is adequate but some improvements could be made

- ✓ Definition was correctly applied.
- ✓ Data recording arrangements captures all relevant information to calculate performance.
- ❖ Two minor discrepancies in end of year performance reporting due to human error in calculating and transferring information from paper-based records to electronic records.

Local – The number of people fully reabled

The data system is adequate but some improvements could be made

- ✓ Local definition is applied correctly
- ✓ Number reabled, as recorded in VIEWS, SWIFT (electronic case file system) and monthly spreadsheets, reconcile
- ❖ Sample testing identified one discrepancy regarding date closed (did not affect end of year performance). Accurate recording of 'date closed' crucial to ensure client has been recorded in correct reporting year

NB: The Council is no longer using this PI for 2016-17.

CHR/002 - The number of working days/shifts per full time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence

Weaknesses remain in the data system which the Council must address

- ✓ Definition was correctly applied.
- ✓ I-Trent automatically generates the number of days lost to sickness based on the working pattern of each employee removing a manual calculation of performance.
- ❖ Identified errors in manual transfer of data in four cases.
- ❖ No secondary check of data undertaken when data is put into I-Trent from the paper copies.

Local – Number of young people accessing children and young people skills project

The data system has some weaknesses which the Council must address

- ✓ Community based teams receive referrals and manually transfer data into single excel spreadsheet that all community based teams can access
- ✓ All information from excel spreadsheet is transferred by Community Evaluation Monitoring Programme (CEMP) team onto CEMP database.
- ❖ Unable to sample test during fieldwork as CEMP system not made available.
- ❖ Council unable to provide data necessary to meet the PI definition. Therefore, we were unable to recreate end of year performance.

Local – The percentage of victims satisfied with the service they received from the Youth Offending Team around the Family

The data system still has some weaknesses which the Council must address.

- ✓ Local definition is used correctly.
- ✓ Review of Child View Justice system confirmed all victims cases were closed in the correct reporting year.
- ❖ Unable to reconcile Child View Justice system and quarterly performance records as number of discrepancies identified. Unable to recreate end of year performance.
- ❖ Six (out of 34) differences between closure dates on Child View and on recording sheets.