

Data Support for Local Government

DIZ Conference

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www.local.gov.uk

The Local Government Association

The LGA is the national voice of local government. We work with councils to support, promote and improve local government.

The Data and Transparency Programme is a programme of support available free of charge to all councils.

Investing in data

- Most councils have reduced spending on data and analysis
- Meanwhile, private sector loves data
- Data is for insight and efficiencies
- But only if it is good quality
- Data management as important as finance and HR management

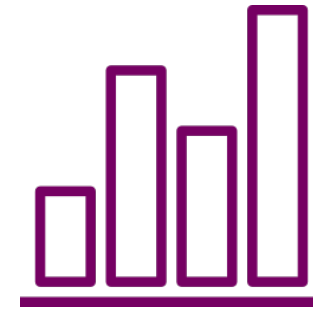
Gathering insight

- Brighton and Hove had 34 departments each using a different system
- Residents appeared many times over
- Linked core data to create a customer index
- Benefits included reduced staff processing time, annual cost savings of £300-400k
- But also better communication and decisions

Data and Transparency Programme

A programme of support available free of charge to all councils, to support better use of data.

- Data maturity
- Practical data skills training for councillors and officers
- Performance management
- Support around advanced analytics and AI
- Data standards and transparency



More information: [better use of data support programme](#)

LGA Data Maturity Tool

- Why it is useful to use a data maturity tool?
- What is the [local government data maturity tool](#) and model?
- Overview of the content and the process for completing the self-assessment tool.
- How you can make use of the results to drive change within your council.

Why use a data maturity tool?

Many different things must be working well for data to be used effectively in a council. For example:

- Wide range of skills needs – analysis, data science, information governance, communication and so on
- A culture that prioritises data and intelligence, and resources it properly
- Access to the appropriate software
- Systems and data standards that allow data sharing across the organisation and support data quality



Why use a data maturity tool?

- Because of this, good data use in councils is hugely dependent on relationships across many departments:
 - IT, legal and information governance colleagues, across different services, with software suppliers, with senior leadership
- If one thing is not working, that can derail the whole system. A wonderful system for storing data centrally is of little use if staff don't recognise the importance of data and input incorrect or out of date information.
- It's therefore important to take a holistic look at the whole data lifecycle and related issues such as culture, skills and leadership. Data maturity assessments provide this structure.

Local Government Data Maturity Model

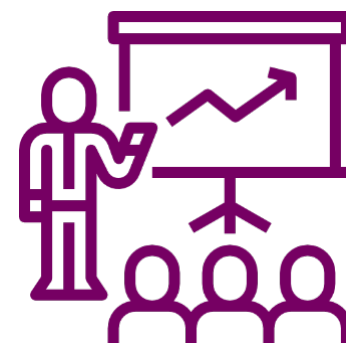
- Developed specifically for the unique local government context, in partnership with councils.
- Sets out a comprehensive description of the data related behaviours and practices that we would expect to see in councils at different levels of data maturity.
- Underpins the LGA's local government data maturity self-assessment tool which is available for all councils to use, free of charge.
- Refreshed in 2023 to take account of recent updates in the data landscape and feedback from councils.

The self-assessment tool – an overview

- Designed to be a quick and easy self-assessment tool that enables users to develop a shared understanding of how well your council uses data.

How it works:

- Give your individual assessment of your council's data maturity by answering questions across six themes.
- Understand your council's data maturity based on your and your colleagues' combined assessments.
- See how your council's data maturity differs across departments and identify any differing views by role.
- Find resources and support for your data maturity journey.



The themes

1. **Culture and structure** – looking at the values of the council which shape its use of data, as well as the structural arrangements that support data use.
2. **Leadership and strategy** – how senior managers and Cllrs value data, the behaviours they exhibit and how strategy is developed in the organisation.
3. **Data life cycle** – how data projects are planned, how data is collected and stored, used, shared and finally archived or destroyed.
4. **Systems and tools** – the extent to which there is a fit for purpose data infrastructure, and data scientists have access to the tools that they need.
5. **Skills and capability** – overall data literacy in the council and the recruitment and retention of and support for people with specialist data skills.
6. **Governance and compliance** – looking at information governance, compliance with privacy legislation and other statutory requirements, as well as cyber security considerations.

The maturity levels

For each theme, the model describes behaviours and practices of councils at five different levels of data maturity. The tool questions are designed to assess against these levels:



- **Level 5** - organisations that innovate in terms of techniques and approaches and are considered leaders amongst their peers.
- **Level 3** - organisations that are developing their capacity and capabilities in terms of data.
- **Level 1** - organisations that have poor and inconsistent practices around data.

The process

- Works best when a key person within the local authority coordinates – usually an officer with responsibility for data.
- A light touch process – they circulate the link to the tool to anyone who they would like to contribute and send prompts encouraging people to respond.
- Users simply log in and respond to a series of questions. These are in the form of statements about various aspects of data use, which respondents can agree or disagree with. We estimate it will take users up to 30 minutes to complete the tool.
- The key user would then work with relevant colleagues to use the findings to plan follow up action.
 - The tool directs to relevant resources
 - LGA data maturity panels to help with action planning

Who should participate?

- This depends on what you want to achieve. It can be used by just one or two key people, go just to senior management, cabinet members or heads of service, or much more widely.
- The assessment questions can be completed by councillors and officers in any role. Respondents do not need to be data specialists - they should be encouraged to answer the questions from their own perspective and to the best of their knowledge.
- The scoring process is set up so that people who only know about one or two aspects of data use in the council – such as leadership and culture - can answer just those themes without skewing the overall results.

Who will see your results?

- ONLY people inside your authority.

Your responses

- Your name will be displayed in results visible to other users from your authority, but only if you have agreed to this. If you have not agreed, your response will be anonymised.



Your authority's overall data maturity rating

- The purpose of the tool is for internal self-assessment.
- Results for your authority, including overall data maturity, will not be visible to users from other authorities.
- The LGA won't publish or share your results with any other organisation or government department.

Why use the tool?

Start a conversation about the use of data in your local authority, identify specific actions or feed into the development of a data strategy or working groups.

- “[The tool] has been instrumental in challenging our thinking about how we can best make the improvements we need to make to become a data enabled council. It has also been extremely helpful to have an objective measure of success...”
- “We're going to use the results to draw together an action plan to support our performance, data and digital strategies.”
- “[We are investing in] new training in analytical tools and methods to expand analysts’ knowledge and experience.”
- “The results are supporting a new approach to data governance.”
- “Used the tool to identify opportunities to improve the council's data infrastructure. This supported a business case for investment in a data architect role.”

Performance management

- [Performance management](#) is about using data to inform actions that will improve outcomes for residents. We offer a range of resources to help councillors and officers do this:
 - Guides for councillors and officers
 - E-learning module for councillors
 - Case studies
 - Training for councillors on data and the role it plays in managing council performance
 - Panels and action learning sets

Advanced and predictive analytics

- [Advanced and Predictive Analytics Network](#)
- [ONS Data Science Campus training](#)
- [LG AI network](#)

Additional LGA data support (1)

- [LG Inform](#) data benchmarking tool, including ready-made, [themed reports](#)
- [LG Inform Value for Money](#)
- [LG Inform Plus](#), including tools for:
 - Viewing data at ward and other geographies
 - Records retention, powers and duties, ROPA
 - API (data feed) from LG Inform/LG Inform Plus

Additional LGA data support (2)

- [Data standards](#) and open data – standard lists and schemas to support the publishing and sharing of data in consistent formats
- [Guide to help you use UPRNs](#)

Conclusion

- Persevere
- Undertake the data maturity assessment
- Use the [LGA's data support](#)
- Give me a great case study!