



# Data Quality Policy

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**Not Protected**

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#### Document Governance

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Circulation	This policy is to be made available to all CBC staff and observed by all members of staff
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## **1. Background**

In recent years there has been a shift nationally away from reporting performance centrally to Government towards an increased accountability to the local communities local authorities serve. There is increased emphasis on transparency in the public sector and local authorities are now required by central Government to publish certain data, under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

In April 2011, Government abolished the National Indicator Set and replaced it with the Single Data List, which is a catalogue of all data local authorities are required to submit to central Government. Councils do not have to provide anything that is not on the list unless additional funding is provided. The Single Data List represents a reduction in reporting requirements and unlike the National Indicator Set, local authorities are not obliged to use the data for their own performance management.

In spite of the changes in performance management, data quality remains a high priority. The Council reports over 50 separate items of data to Government under the Single Data List. In addition, the Council has selected Key Performance Indicators for the monitoring of its own corporate health, has a number of contracts and agreements with external partners which rely heavily on accurate data reporting and holds a number of databases.

## **2. Principles of Data Quality**

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to ensuring that the data it produces adheres to the seven principles of good quality data.

Good quality data is the raw material - the statistics, facts, numbers and records which can then be organised and analysed to provide information in order to make informed decision and monitor progress. The quality of data is vital, if data is poor, anything based on that data is unreliable. Therefore, the Council is committed to the seven principles of good quality data:

Accuracy	Data should be sufficiently accurate for their intended purposes.
Validity	Data should be recorded and used in compliance with relevant requirements.
Reliability	Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes across collection points and over time.
Timeliness	Data should be captured as quickly as possible after the event or activity and must be available for the intended use within a reasonable time period.
Relevance	Data captured should be relevant to the purposes for which they are used.
Completeness	Data requirements should be clearly specified based on the information needs

	of the body and data collection processes matched to these requirements.
Secure	All data should be stored securely and confidentially where appropriate.

### **3. Responsibilities**

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that data is of the highest quality and complies with the above seven principles.

The key components of our governance and leadership arrangements for data quality are:

- A Chief Information Officer (CIO) who is advised by an Information Assurance Group (IAG) comprising senior officers with lead responsibility for aspects of information management or information systems.
- All systems and databases have designated information asset owners who are responsible for the quality of data held on those systems with respect to primary use (service delivery).
- The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for corporate data quality with respect to secondary use (analysis, performance reporting, statutory returns, etc), including overall responsibility for this strategy.
- All performance indicators and datasets are assigned owners within CBC, who are responsible for data quality with respect to that indicator or dataset.
- Where data is provided by an external partner delivering services under a contract or service level agreement, the relevant contract manager is responsible for building the necessary data quality standards into the contract or SLA and, where appropriate, building in the necessary audits and checks to assure the quality of that data.
- The audit team carries out regular data quality audits with respect to specific indicators or datasets.

### **4. Monitoring & Review**

4.1 Ownership of this policy rests with the Chief Information Officer, supported by the Information Assurance Group, who are responsible for agreeing, monitoring and reviewing its implementation.