

Audit Committee
15 January 2008

Report to: Audit Committee

Date: 15 January 2008

Report from: Chief Auditor

Title of report: Review of Data Quality

Purpose of report: To advise the committee of the outcome of a review of data quality carried out by external auditors (Pannell Kerr Forster) during November 2007.

Recommendations: To note the report.

Local authorities need reliable, accurate and timely information with which to manage services, inform users and account for performance. Good quality data is the essential ingredient for reliable performance and financial information. The data used to report on performance must, therefore, be fit for purpose, representing an organisation's activity in an accurate and timely manner.

For the first time, external audit carried out a review of Data Quality against a set of Key Lines of Enquiry during November 2007.

External audit concluded:

- Our overall conclusion is that Hastings performs **well and above the minimum requirements specified by the Audit Commission in establishing arrangements for securing the quality of its data.**
- The Council has continued to make progress in developing its corporate arrangements for data quality. Our work shows that there is clear

management commitment to ensuring data quality and evidence of a strong corporate approach to this important agenda. The Council has the necessary policies and procedures in place to secure the quality of data recorded and reported. Nonetheless, there is scope to develop the data quality policy further.

- We found that the systems and processes in place for securing the quality of data across the Council are effective.
- We found that the Council has put in place effective arrangements to ensure that data supporting performance information is used to manage and improve the delivery of services.
- The Council has been successful in raising awareness of the importance of data quality across the organisation and has prepared policies and detailed guidance that are fit for purpose.

An action plan for continuous improvement has been agreed and is shown in the full report (attached).

Policy implications

Please tick if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities & Community Cohesiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic / Financial implications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Rights Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisational Consequences	<input type="checkbox"/>

Report written by

Tom Davies, Chief Auditor

Ext 1524

The attached report could not be published on the website. A hard copy may be obtained for Elaine Wood, Principal Committee Administrator, telephone no. 01424 451717.