

	Cabinet 11 September 2023
	Report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services
	Lead Cabinet Member – Leader of the Council (Councillor Muhammed Butt)
Brent Data and Insight Strategy	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Brent Data and Insight Strategy
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to introduce the Brent Data and Insight Strategy and Delivery Plan (Appendix 1), which fulfils the commitment in the Brent Borough Plan 2023-27 to develop a dedicated data strategy that supports the council in becoming an organisation that maximises the value of data in all that we do.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to consider and endorse the Brent Data and Insight Strategy and Delivery Plan, as set out in the accompanying document.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

3.1.1 The Brent Data and Insight Strategy is our key strategic document for defining our approach to harnessing the power of data to improve the ways we work, collaborate, and deliver better outcomes for local people. The strategy has been developed in-line with our new Borough Plan 2023-27 and is designed to support delivery of its priorities over the next four years. It is an ambitious strategy that places Brent and partners at the forefront of innovation in local services, helping us to work in more modern, joined-up and agile ways, whilst staying true to our core principle of ensuring no resident is left behind.

3.2 Context

3.2.1 A robust data strategy should support an organisation's highest-level priorities. In Brent these priorities are set out in the Borough Plan 2023-27. The Brent Data and Insight Strategy has been developed to run parallel to the new Borough Plan and act as a catalyst for its delivery. At the highest level this is expressed in its vision statement: *By 2027 we will become an organisation that maximises the value of data to innovate, improve services and deliver better outcomes for Brent.*

3.2.2 The strategy sets out the approach for achieving this vision over three themes, each with an overarching data-goal:

Theme	Goal
Culture	Develop a culture that recognises and promotes the value of data in everything we do
Technology	Ensure consistent, joined-up and best use of data tools, technologies, and approaches across the organisation
Skills	Enable all staff to gain and use the skills they need to maximise the value of data in their role and throughout the organisation

3.2.3 These goals align with other key Brent strategies, including the Digital and Cyber Security strategies, and support related priorities for example, improving data quality, the ICT systems roadmap, and development of the Brent Data Academy.

3.2.4 The Data and Insight Strategy will be a public-facing document and is designed to be accessible to data experts and non-experts alike, including residents, elected members and all Brent staff. For staff in particular, it is intended as a tool to align and promote data-themed initiatives across the council - for example, the Financial Inclusion and Corporate Complaints dashboards and 2021 Census tools and products - and to increase awareness of the importance of using data ethically, responsibly, safely and well in all roles.

3.3 Background

- 3.3.1 A wide range of engagement work has informed development of the strategy, including a council-wide review of arrangements for performance and data functions. Through a series of in-depth sessions with managers, officers, and senior representatives of all performance and data teams, the review identified multiple data challenges and opportunities to be factored into and addressed through the strategy. This included developing data skills (at all levels), more effective use of data tools, improving access arrangements for reporting against key systems and databases, developing Brent's data architecture, increasing knowledge of data sharing arrangements, and ensuring a consistent approach to developing data products. Above all, improving data quality was identified as the top priority in need of a coordinated, corporate approach.
- 3.3.2 The Brent Data Network, a staff-led forum for sharing best practice and resolving common data challenges, have also been fully engaged in developing the strategy. This has included proposals to formalise the group as a key part of its governance structure, with attendees acting as data champions across the council and the Data Network being assigned responsibility for identifying data issues, challenges, and opportunities to be reported into the oversight board (currently the Information Governance Group).
- 3.3.3 A draft Data and Insight Strategy was considered by the council's Data Ethics Board, which consists of senior council officers and independent, external data experts. Board members provided feedback to help refine key elements of the strategy and have endorsed the final product. The Data Ethics Board will continue to be utilised throughout delivery of the strategy, providing guidance and challenge to ensure innovative use of data in Brent adheres to legal, ethical and best practice guidance.
- 3.3.4 Pending Cabinet approval, implementation of the delivery plan will commence with senior leadership and oversight provided by the council's Information Governance Group (pending a forthcoming review of strategic boards); ensuring all council departments are actively engaged in the strategy. The Transformation service, within Resident Services, will be responsible for coordination and ongoing development of the delivery plan.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The Leader of the Council is the lead member for this strategy and has been engaged in its development, including drafting of the lead member foreword and demonstrations of key data products and their role in achieving the overall vision.
- 4.2 The draft strategy has been approved by the Customer and Digital Board, which includes senior representatives of all council departments. Data leads and a wide range of other Brent staff have contributed to the development of the strategy as outlined above.
- 4.3 The Brent Data Network is open to all staff to attend, presenting further opportunities for staff in all roles to continue to actively engage in delivery of the

strategy. A key goal within the Delivery Plan is to increase attendance of the network, which will include exploring how representatives of partner organisations can engage with the strategy and effectively collaborate with the council.

- 4.4 Throughout the life of the strategy an ongoing data-conversation with Brent residents will be developed. This began in July 2023 where Brent council, in partnership with the London Office for Technology and Innovation (LOTI), participated in London Data Week. This included a data-focussed resident workshop, designed to better understand Brent residents' expectations for how the data they provide when accessing council services is (and could be) used. Learning from this session has been included in the strategy. Further work with LOTI and other partners will help develop this approach.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 Pursuant to s1 of the Localism Act 2011, the council has the power to do anything which an individual can do unless it is expressly prohibited (the power of general competence).
- 6.2 In accordance with s111 of The Local Government Act 1972 the local authority has ancillary powers to do anything conducive or incidental to its functions.
- 6.3 The Data Protection Act 2018 imposes 7 principles when processing personal data, which the Council is under a duty to comply with, namely:
1. processing must be lawful, and fair and transparent.
 2. processing must be for a specified, explicit and legitimate purpose; and must not be processed in a manner incompatible with the purpose for which it is collected.
 3. personal data must be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is processed.
 4. personal data must be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
 5. personal data must be kept no longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it is processed.
 6. personal data must be processed taking appropriate security measures for the risks that arise from the processing.
 7. being able to demonstrate compliance with the above (accountability).
- 6.4 Furthermore, the council as a Data Controller is responsible for "implementing appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure and be able to demonstrate that processing is proportionate in relation to the processing of personal data". Compliance with these key principles are fundamental for good data protection practice and ensures compliance with the detailed provisions of the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR.

6.5 Failure to comply with the principles can result in substantial fines being imposed by the Information Commissioners Officer. Pursuant to Article 83(5) (a) infringements of the basic principles for processing personal data are subject to the highest tier of administrative fines which could result in a fine of up to £17.5 million, or 4% of your total worldwide annual turnover, whichever is higher.

6.6 The Data and Insight Strategy seeks to build on, embed and comply with the Data Protection principles and implement good governance in data management. Implementation of the various elements of the Data and Insight Strategy will need to comply with the specific requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

7.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 The Data and Insight Strategy is designed to improve the quality of data across all Brent services and systems. This includes data that will help to build a greater understanding of residents (and Brent staff), which will enable more comprehensive analysis to support improved EDI outcomes for all areas of council work.

7.2 Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for individual Data and Insight Strategy Delivery Plan projects as required.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 The council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and set out to do all in its gift to become carbon neutral on a borough-wide basis by 2030. The council has subsequently adopted a Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030) which sets out the council's route map to achieve this aim.

8.2 The three themes set out in the data strategy should enable greater support to the delivery of the council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and associated delivery plans. This should manifest itself through:

- Improved monitoring and accuracy of the sources of data which can be analysed to indicate the direction of travel towards Brent's Carbon neutrality goal;
- Supporting the development of new Green Neighbourhoods programmes and ensuring that both the decision-making around selection of the localities and the creation of localised action plans are evidence-led; and
- Supporting improved data management systems relating to the council's corporate buildings and operations, as part of the council's plan to decarbonise its own estate and operations by 2030

8.3 The physical data infrastructure, which is required to facilitate council operations at present, and through the duration of this strategy, should be carefully considered in relation to the amount of energy required and associated carbon emissions from council sites which host data centres. Oversight of this strategy should seek to include both the energy team and IT operations team

and ensure that these practical considerations are fed into the development of the council's plan to decarbonise its own estate and operations by 2030, which is currently ongoing.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 There are no specific HR implications.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 The strategy will be published on the Brent website. Targeted external communications will be developed to support delivery plan initiatives as required.

10.2 An internal communications campaign, designed to engage Brent staff in all roles, will commence with the launch of the strategy.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Corporate Director of Resident Services