



# **Data Strategy**

## **2025-2028**

## **CONTENTS**

1. Introduction
2. Purpose of the Data Strategy
3. Strategic Alignment
4. Data Vision
5. Our Data Journey
6. Delivering our Data Strategy
7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Appendix 1 – Thematic Delivery Plan (Phase 1)

Appendix 2 - Monitoring and Evaluation: Performance Measures

## 1. Introduction

In today's world, the volume of data is growing exponentially, and data is being used to drive change and make decisions on an increasingly large scale. This digital / data revolution is creating new opportunities through the expansive generation of new data. Keeping pace with that revolution is critical to achieving success for organisations across all industries and sectors. At a time of very constrained resources within public services it is more important than ever that good quality data is used to inform the difficult choices which need to be made about how and where to use scarce resources.

Data is thus a vital asset for Angus Council to propel innovation, provide clear business insights, and help transform the organisation to meet ever changing business needs and societal demands.

## 2. Purpose of the Data Strategy

This data strategy outlines the overarching approach for driving greater value from the Council's wide-ranging and expanding data resource. Its primary purpose is to progress our use of data and analysis across the organisation in order to:

- target services/ interventions, **to improve the customer experience for people using Council services**, where this is possible and deliverable within Angus Council's finite resources; and
- inform strategic planning and better-informed decision making, **to improve impact and outcomes from the services the Council provides**, along with identifying opportunities for change and improvement.

The Strategy establishes a strategic framework for improvement and change activities that includes robust data foundations to build from; efficient systems architecture to manage information flows; effective governance controls that support the responsible, ethical and secure use of data; forward-looking investment plans to develop data skills and data analytics capabilities, along with a phased timeline that will guide the Council forward over the next three-to-four years.

This data strategy is therefore ultimately aimed at improving the value the Council drives from its data to support Angus Council deliver its strategic vision that:



## Case Study: making the case for changes to kerbside recycling

### Background

In April 2023 a bid was submitted to the Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund for capital funds to support changes to our kerbside recycling service, and we were awarded over £2.8 million. The bid required evidence to be provided in relation to how we would achieve our goals to improve the quality and quantity of recyclables collected.

### Using data to target services/ interventions

Data was analysed from each of the waste streams collected at the kerbside, looking at weight and composition over time to estimate the additional tonnage that we would recycle through the changes (and divert from the non-recyclable waste stream), and the carbon benefits.

Data was extracted from supplier reports, and also from a waste composition study of Angus resident's bins undertaken late 2022, which was instrumental in revealing the amount of recyclables being placed in the purple non-recyclable waste bin – this showed the scope for improvement in recycling and supported our decision to implement a ban on residents placing too many recyclables in their purple bin.

### Using data to better inform decision-making

Data was further required to present to the Council in relation to the proposed service redesign, which was agreed, and changes began in June 2024 when blue bins were introduced in Arbroath, Carnoustie and Monifieth for paper and card.

The grey bin which formerly accepted all materials mixed, changed to accept plastic bottles and containers, cans and cartons, and glass recycling points were significantly extended, with glass no longer accepted in kerbside bins.

### Delivering the project and benefits

The project is being rolled out in three phases during 2024/25 and is expected to save up to £0.5 million per year.

Without robust data, it would not have been possible to achieve funding, nor present the case for change to elected members.



### 3. Strategic Alignment

This data strategy is aimed at supporting Angus Council achieve its vision and priorities as set out in The Council Plan.

However, it does not sit in isolation and is intrinsically linked to a range of local and national plans and strategies which together support the Council's ambitions to be a data and performance led provider of public services. The key linkages are set out in the illustrations below.

#### 3.1 National Context



#### 3.2 Local Context

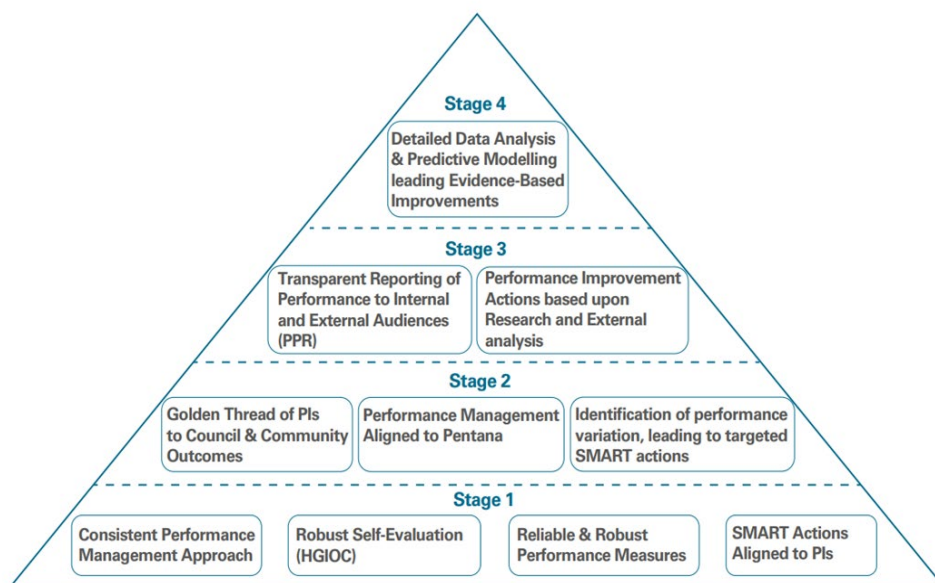


### 3.3 'Performance Led Council (PLED)'

A critical element within the local context, is the key link to the Performance Led Council (PLED) programme.

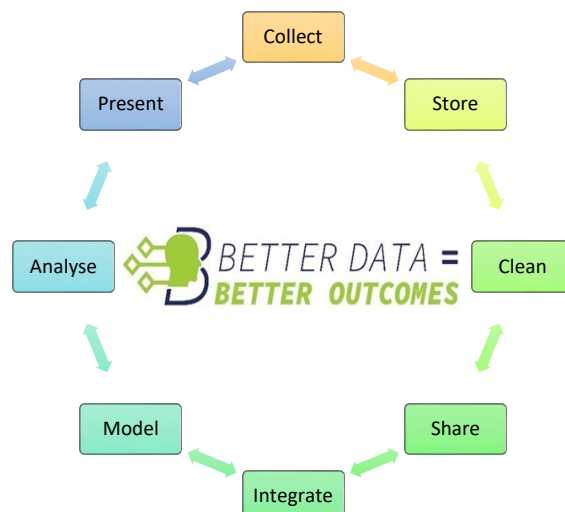
The PLED programme is fundamentally reliant on the Council making better use of its data, founded on the Best Value principle of seeking to secure continuous improvement in performance.

The implementation of this data strategy is therefore key to unlocking a wide range of enabling activity that will support the full implementation of the PLED programme, which is illustrated below.



## 4. Data Vision

Angus Council's vision is to improve outcomes for our customers through making better use of data:



## 5. Our Data Journey

### 5.1 How are we doing?...and how do we know?

The Council's data journey so far was assessed in Autumn/ Winter 2022 as part of the Scottish Government Data Maturity and Pathways Project (cohort#2). The findings were finalised in Spring 2023 and provided the Council with a baseline position.

Information covering seven themes and an assessment based on a '5-stage-journey', identified the Council to be closest to the **Developing** stage as per the illustration below. Some aspects of the assessment did however suggest that a number of themes were more aligned with the **Learning** stage.

Data Maturity Themes

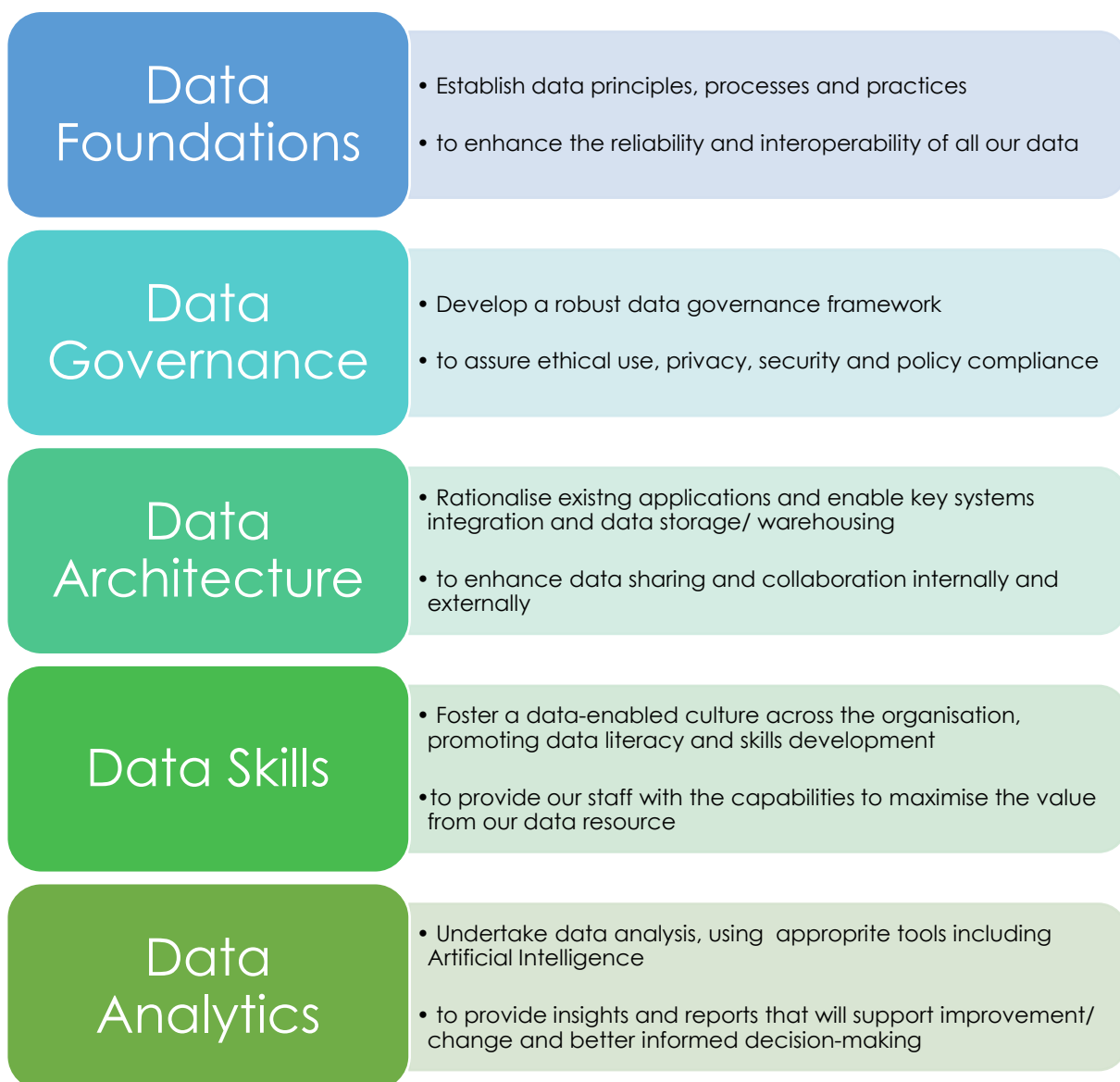


In summary, the findings suggest the Council is making reasonable progress on its data journey, however to improve further will require greater focus and investment.

### 5.2 What will we do next?

It is planned to build from the data maturity assessment baseline position through developing and delivering a programme of data improvement and change activities. This plan will be implemented over a three-to-four-year timescale, with the ambition to achieve the **Mastering** stage by the end of that period.

Five themes have been identified to provide the framework for delivering the plan. The key aims and objectives for these themes are illustrated below.



There is significant cross-over between the various themes, and this will be co-ordinated through a strong governance framework. The initial phase of actions anticipated for each theme are included in Appendix 1 - Thematic Delivery Plan (Phase 1).

The mechanism for progressing these actions will be by implementing a variety of 'Tests-of-Change'. These will be used as the key tool in our approach to identifying and addressing the practical changes required to the ways we currently operate, with the benefit of addressing the actions while progressing improvements in our current use of available data.

Four tests-of-change have initially been identified in relation to council operations and more will be identified as the programme of work progresses.



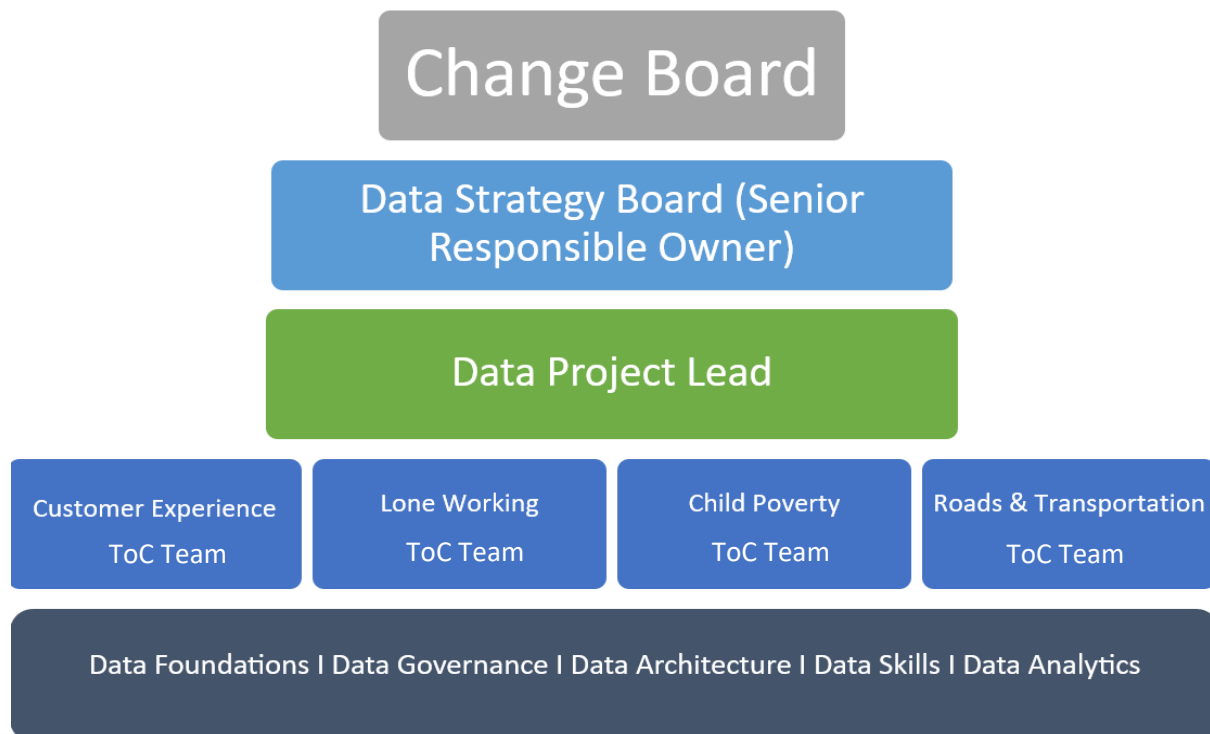
The initial four are in relation to:

- Customer Experience
- Lone Working
- Child Poverty
- Roads & Transportation

## 6. Delivering our Data Strategy

### 6.1 Governance Framework

To support delivery of the ambitions set out in this data strategy, a strong governance framework will be established, including a Data Strategy Board and Project Teams. This is illustrated below.



The Data Strategy delivery activities collectively form a key enabling programme of work for the Council. The Data Strategy Board will therefore report and be accountable for progress to the Council's Change Board.

The Chair of the Data Strategy Board will be the Senior Responsible Owner for the delivery of the programme. The Terms of Reference for the Data Strategy Board, along with the remits of the key officers identified to support the governance framework, will be clearly set out to ensure there is clarity in relation to roles and responsibilities.

## 6.2 Resources

The delivery of this data strategy requires strong commitment to allocate the appropriate resources and investment to make the improvement and change that supports the Council's ambition.

The Data Strategy Board will be responsible for identifying those resources and investment that is required to deliver the programme of activities.

Specific 'business case' proposals will be developed from time to time to support the Data Strategy Boards decisions.

Where the authority to commit resources and investments lies out-with the scope of the Data Strategy Board's Terms of Reference, such matters will be escalated in the first instance to the Change Board. Thereafter, if required, to the Council's Policy & Resources Committee for formal approval.

The Council's Capital Plan includes provision of up to £200,000 (as at 2024/25 budget) for capital related investment relating to 'Data Foundations and Data Architecture'.

Other 'one-off' funding could potentially be available via the Council's Change Fund or other monies set aside in reserves to support 'spend-to-save' and additional capacity needs. All use of funding will be based on clear business cases so that the impact and expected benefits of investment is known before it is made.

## 6.3 Council Operating Model

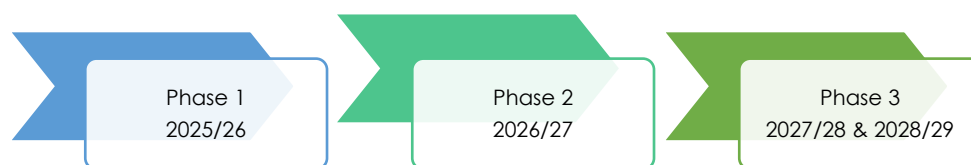
Delivery of this data strategy is likely to impact all services of the Council, albeit to differing degrees.

As a consequence, and as the work progresses, there may be benefits in changing the current service operating model to improve alignment of functions.

Any such changes will be managed through the governance framework set out above, and in accordance with the Council's managing workforce change policies.

## 6.4 Phased Timeline

The initial actions for each theme are included in Appendix 1 - Thematic Delivery Plan (Phase 1). While detail is likely to change during implementation, the overall timeline is illustrated below.



Thematic Delivery Plans for Phases 2 and 3 will be included as part of monitoring reports prepared to reflect progress at check-points at the end of each phase.

## **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The framework to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this data strategy is founded on the approach to our Data Maturity Assessment.

That provides an objective baseline position, and interim monitoring checks/ reports will be undertaken at the end of phases 1 and 2.

A final evaluation will be undertaken at the end of phase 3.

The Performance Indicators for reporting progress will utilise the measures set out in Appendix 2.

The interim monitoring reports and the final evaluation report will be presented to the Council's Policy & Resources Committee. This will ensure that the Council's elected members are informed on progress throughout the programme.

### Thematic Delivery Plan (Phase 1)

**Data Foundations:** establish data principles, processes and practices, to enhance the reliability and interoperability of all our data

- Implement FAIR principles / Align to Digital Nation principles
- Design and create roadmap / PID
- Identify Data Owners and Data Stewards
- Develop and create data standards

**Data Governance:** Develop a robust data governance framework, to assure ethical use, privacy, security and policy compliance

- Prepare and agree overarching Data Strategy
- Incorporate a data ethics assessment in all project work
- Review and update Council Privacy Notice, reflecting any changes to potential use
- Develop data management policies, guidance, etc.

**Data Architecture:** Rationalise existing applications and enable key systems integration and data storage/ warehousing, to enhance data sharing and collaboration internally and externally

- Develop and create data storage platform (data warehouse)
- Identify key/ critical datasets
- Undertake a council-wide systems audit
- Develop a systems capability map

**Data Skills:** Foster a data-enabled culture across the organisation, promoting data literacy and skills development, to provide our staff with the capabilities to maximise the value from our data resource

- Undertake a corporate skills audit
- Identify critical skills gap
- Develop a workforce data skills plan

**Data Analytics:** Undertake data analysis, using appropriate tools including Artificial Intelligence, to provide insights and reports that will support improvement/ change and better informed decision-making

- Undertake customer research to identify issues/ needs
- Create and encourage cross-service working practices through 'tests-of-change'
- Produce list of publicly available datasets (e.g. contact centre)

### Monitoring and Evaluation: Performance Measures

To measure impact, we will re-use the Performance Indicators from the final section of the Data Maturity Assessment to understand any changes that are occurring as a result of the improvement and changes being implemented. The results will be compared over time to measure the progress achieved.

The Performance Indictors will be informed by employee survey feedback based on a series of questions and categorisation of responses as follows:

To what extent has your service's use of data and analysis influenced the following in relation to your services:

☐

☐ Targeting of services/ interventions to customers

☐ Reach/ engagement with customers

☐ Customer/ environmental outcomes

☐ Evidencing impact to customers

☐ Design and delivery of services

☐ Evidencing needs/ problems your service seeks to address

To what extent has your service's use of data and analysis influenced the following capabilities:

☐

☐ Strategic planning and decision making

☐ Income generation

☐ Improving impact

☐ Efficiency savings

☐ Credibility and influence

☐ Strength of partnerships/ networks

☐ Levels of knowledge and expertise

