



City of
Doncaster
Council

Data and Intelligence Policy 2025-2029

Jan 2025



INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, there is a need to harness the power of data and intelligence to drive informed decision-making and enhance public services. A forward-looking data and intelligence policy is essential for providing a frame in which we can maximise the use of our data and transforming raw data into actionable insights.

The benefits of leveraging more sophisticated data analytics will allow us to better identify trends, predict future challenges, and allocate resources more efficiently, ultimately improving the quality of services we provide for our residents and making us a more productive organisation.

Adopting a mission-led approach will help ensure the success of this data and intelligence policy. This approach ensures that data initiatives are aligned with the vision and allows us to make an assessment on each of these mission areas ensuring we make progress. We have also aligned these missions to the Local Government Association Data Maturity work so there is credibility both in terms of coverage, best practice and allows for a baseline of our work.

We are already building on significant existing work and pilot activity that is taking place within the organisation. However, the world of data and intelligence is moving rapidly with capabilities and technology changing quickly and in the next five years will continue to change – which means we will need to be dynamic to take advantage of the opportunities available to us.

Our vision is to be a data informed, insight led Council, that means maximising the opportunities to make better informed decisions, be more productive, be more future focussed and make Doncaster Council, and Doncaster the City, a place where this type of work can flourish.

VISION

Our vision is to be a data informed, insight led Council...

OUR MISSIONS

- 1) Make data everyone's business
- 2) Improve data skills everywhere and invest in data skills of the future
- 3) Invest in the right data infrastructure
- 4) Clear governance frameworks to use data securely, ethically and effectively
- 5) Quality data via an effective data life cycle
- 6) Turn advanced analytics into actionable insight and change
- 7) Be a leader in developing a wider data and analytics ecosystem in Doncaster

LGA Maturity Theme	Mission 1	Mission 2	Mission 3	Mission 4	Mission 5	Mission 6	Mission 7
Culture	X					X	X
Leadership & Governance	X					X	X
Skills, Capability and Capacity	X	X					X
Infrastructure, Technology and Systems			X				X
Information Governance & Security			X	X			X
Quality of Data/Data Life Cycle					X	X	X

Table 1: Coverage of Missions compared to Local Government Association (LGA) Data Maturity Model

MISSION 1 - Make Data Everyone's Business.

Why is this our mission?

Getting the most value out of our data begins with our own organisational culture. Our 'data culture' will inform our behaviour and consequently our level of data maturity as an organisation.

We need to see our data as an asset – something to be used to inform our activity and something that has huge potential in everything we do. But more than that we have legal responsibilities that are not 'nice to have' but we must adhere to. What we need is a consistency across the organisation, so we are all working together collectively to improve our data maturity and decision making – data is important at every level. We will need to re-state what data is, how we use it, how we maintain it and hold ourselves accountable to the standards we set ourselves.

MISSION 2: Improve Data Skills Everywhere and Invest in Data Skills of the Future

Why is this our Mission?

Every employee or partner who works with us will be collecting, working with, or analysing data each day of their working lives but on reflection we don't invest as much time in bringing up skills across the board and poor data literacy can sometimes just be accepted which cannot continue. In addition, the innovations and changes in data functions have accelerated in the past five years. Our ability to train, retain and increase our data capabilities from a data science / engineering perspective will be key to unlocking our data potential in the future. Equally to what could be considered more advanced skills is the general competency of data skills across the organisation which includes an ability to understand responsibilities linked to data that sits within their service areas e.g. data asset owners.

MISSION 3: Invest in the Right Data Infrastructure

Why is this our Mission?

Our approach should provide us with a single version of the truth and reduce data duplication. This means having the ability to bring all our relevant data together into one place, and then to combine and join this data together. To do this we need to make use of appropriate data storage, security and providing a single repository for the data we will use for intelligence and insight purposes. Off-System recording (excel spreadsheets) can, if replacing system recording, undermine our progress in this area. We have a five-year technology strategy that will guide this mission and help to deliver the outcomes we want to achieve.

MISSION 4: Clear Governance Frameworks to use Data Securely, Ethically and Effectively

Why is this our Mission?

We value and respect the data we hold and recognise the inherent danger of insufficiently robust data governance. Data governance is not only about optimising the value of data for service operations and decision making, but also about minimising the risks associated with poor data management. We need to ensure we comply with the legal duties upon us – it is not a discretionary extra but a must do. We have several existing governance arrangements and policies to build on and develop.

MISSION 5: Quality Data via an Effective Data Life Cycle

Why is this our Mission?

Data Lifecycle Management (DLM) is a policy-based approach of best practices to oversee the flow of an information system's data through its lifecycle, from creation to deletion. We want to define this approach for the organisation to bring a clear sense of consistency on how we develop and organise our data/insight that will improve our productivity and support the organisation to better construct products that will generate value and inform better quality decision making. It will also help to articulate how different council teams / services work together.

MISSION 6: Turn Advanced Analytics into Actionable Insight and Change

Why is this our Mission?

The Council has access to significant amount of data. This data can be used to inform service provision and assist with directing council activity towards best serving the needs of residents both now and into the future. To tap into the value within our data assets, the Council needs to invest in new skills and develop new ways to allow for the modelling and subsequent visualisation of the story within and behind the numbers – we cannot afford to be data rich and insight poor.

MISSION 7: Be a leader in developing a wider Data and Analytics ecosystem in Doncaster

Why is this our Mission?

The Council along with partners across Doncaster want Doncaster to be leader in the UK for Artificial Intelligence and advanced analytics. This will manifest via a Tech Hub in the City Centre but more widely across the

City as an industry cluster. The Council has a role to play in contributing to this future – how we invest in this work, how we develop systems and how we use our own data matters to achieve this.

The wider work to develop the Tech Hub and liaison with partners is covered in other governance work but ensuring that we are fit and ready for the future and working in partnership where it makes sense to do so is part of this mission in this strategies context.

Key Initial Activities

- Set up a baseline via the LGA Data Maturity Tool and Repeat this during the policy period
- Set up appropriate means to govern and assess progress in each of these missions
- Explore expanding data related apprenticeships
- Continue to maintain robust arrangements for mandatory training and information asset register arrangements.
- Continue to support the AI sector within Doncaster and work with businesses to make the most of the Governments AI Opportunities Plan for the UK.