

ITEM No ...2.....

REPORT TO: POLICY AND REOURCES COMMITTEE - 6 DECEMBER 2021

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT ON: OPEN DATA POLICY

REPORT NO: 332-2021

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform elected members of the need to develop an Open Data policy as part of how it delivers one of the objectives of the Open Data Project and seeks approval for the policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee approves the attached policy and agrees to its implementation.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 The Scottish Cities Alliance (SCA) launched a Smart Cities initiative in October 2015. In parallel with this the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 8th City Strategic Intervention, which is supporting a number of smart city projects across the Cities, included the development Open Data as a programme objective.

4.2 The policy document in the appendix outlines the key intentions and commitments of an open data policy to drive forward phase two of the project. It learns from the open data policies adopted by other Councils in the Scottish Cities Alliance and follows the Scottish Government Open Data policy.

4.3 A key aim is to encourage the Council and its partners to open up more data and continue to develop and maintain the open data platform. This will allow wider analysis and use of data from within Council and partners' systems to generate innovation and ideas for improvement, particularly around the City Plan and Council Plan priorities

4.4 This project has also brought resources to support the training of key staff in the use of analytics packages to ensure a richer level of insight of data is made available.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

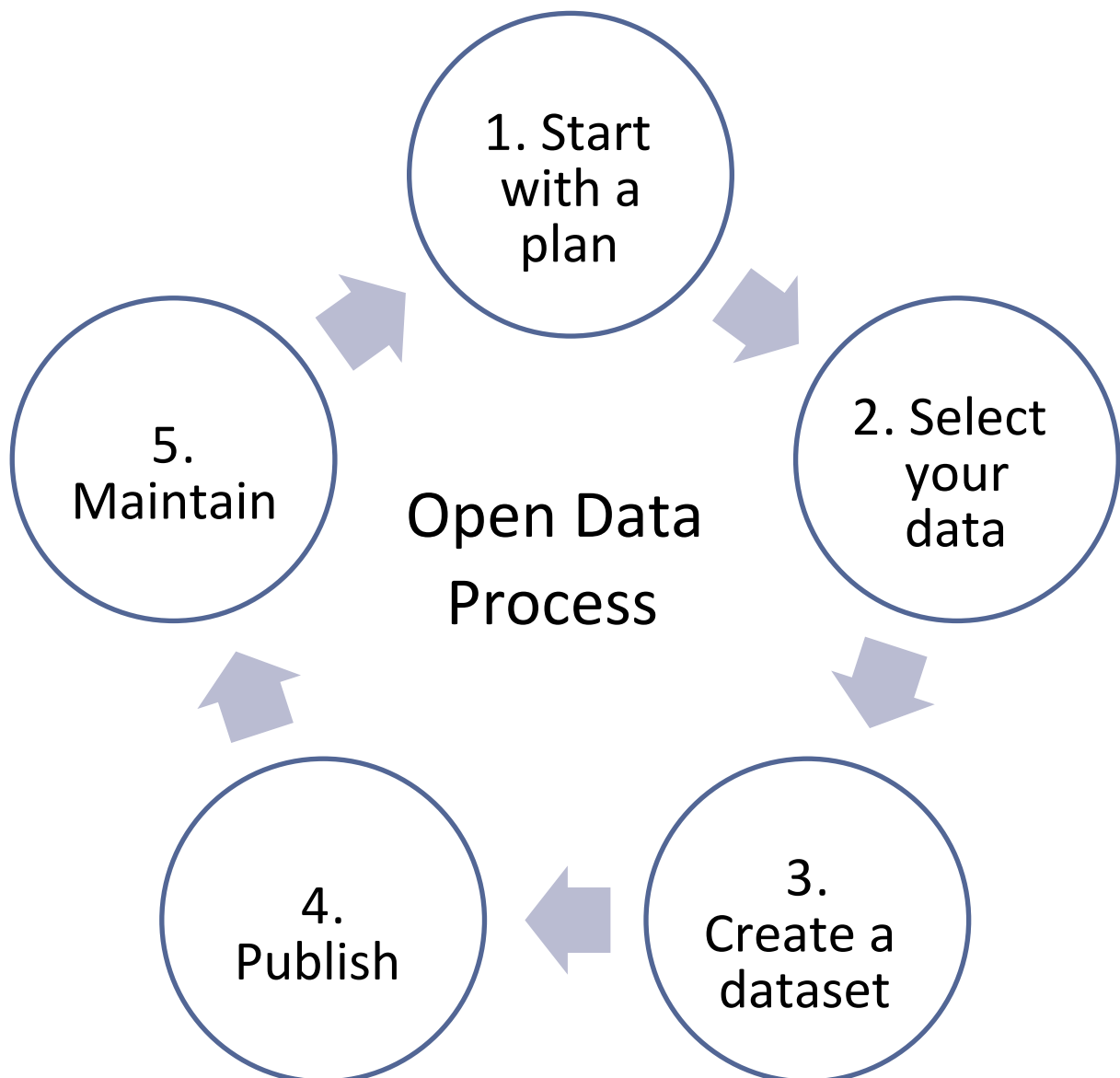
The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Scottish Government Open Data Strategy](#)

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Open Data Policy



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Introduction

The amount of data that the public sector holds is continually growing. The data ranges from sensitive personal information held to allow delivery of personalised services (e.g. health and social care) to non-personal information (e.g. environmental data). This data has value for the organisation collecting and holding it but there is potential to add value by making appropriate data available to others to re-use. **We call this making data “open”.**

Open data is non-personal and non-commercially sensitive. Open data is easily discoverable, accessible to anyone and able to be freely used, re-used and redistributed by anyone. Open Data is data made available, via the internet, in an electronic format which supports its ready re-use, and with open licensing which allows its reuse.

Dundee City Council continues to aspire to be as open as possible with its citizens. This fundamental objective goes beyond our legal responsibilities. It takes us towards a culture where we share data held by the Council in a way that allows our citizens to discover, compare and interact with it.

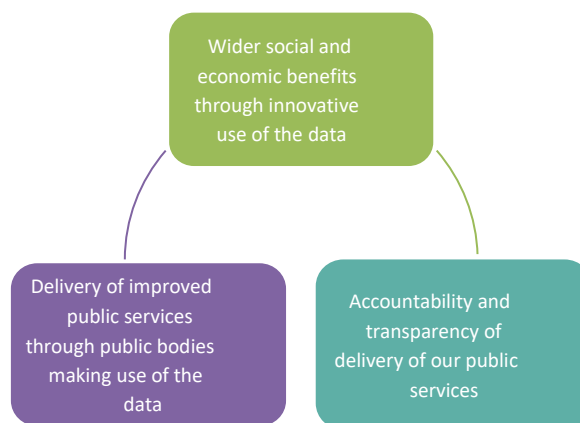
Open Data is a way of achieving this. In recent years we have established an open data platform within the Council and by working from the principles in this policy we will further develop an openness with our citizens and partners to encourage improvement in our services and the building blocks for innovation.

1. Background

Why make data open?

Continually people expect to be able to access information and services electronically when and how they want. Increasingly, this is true of government data as well. This can be used to generate insights, ideas, and services and increase transparency about what governments and businesses are doing.

And yet, while governments and businesses collect a wide range of data, they do not always take the opportunity to share these data in ways that are easily discoverable, useable, or understandable by the public.



Open Data promotes accountability and good governance, enhances public debate and helps to combat corruption by;

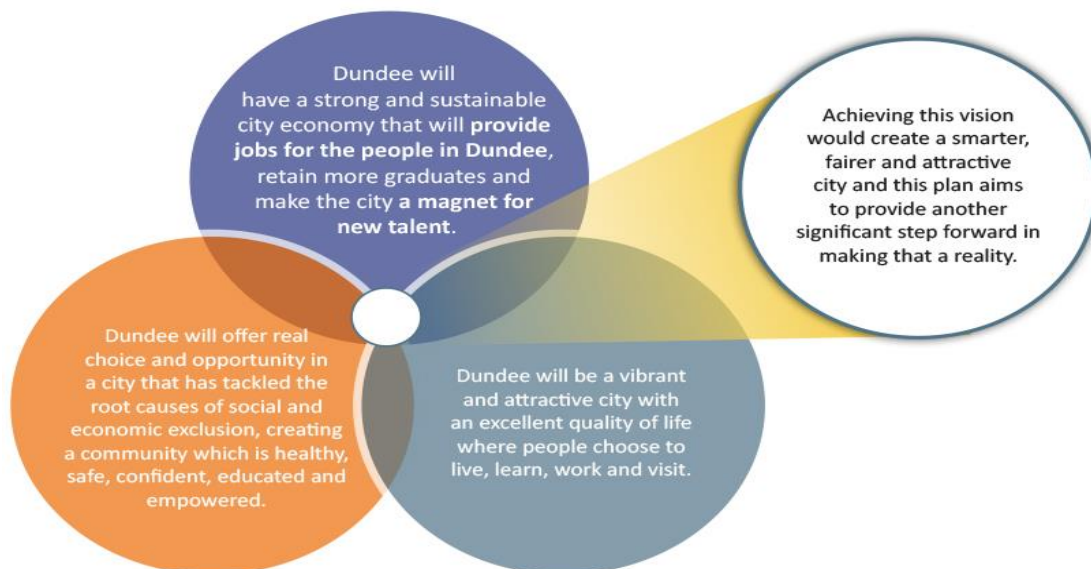
- showing how and where public money is spent, providing strong incentives for that money to be used most effectively;

- enabling people to make better informed choices about the services they receive and the standards they should expect.

Freely-available government data can be used in innovative ways as a catalyst for innovation in the private sector, supporting the creation of new markets, businesses, and jobs. These benefits can multiply as more businesses adopt open data practices modelled by government and share their own data with the public.

An Open Data policy will contribute to the delivery of Dundee City Council's Strategic Priorities across Fair Work and Enterprise; Children and Families; Health, Care and Wellbeing; Community Safety and Justice; and Building Strong and Empowered Communities and our commitment towards the vision of the Dundee Partnership.

The Dundee Partnership Vision for Dundee:



2. How we will make our data open

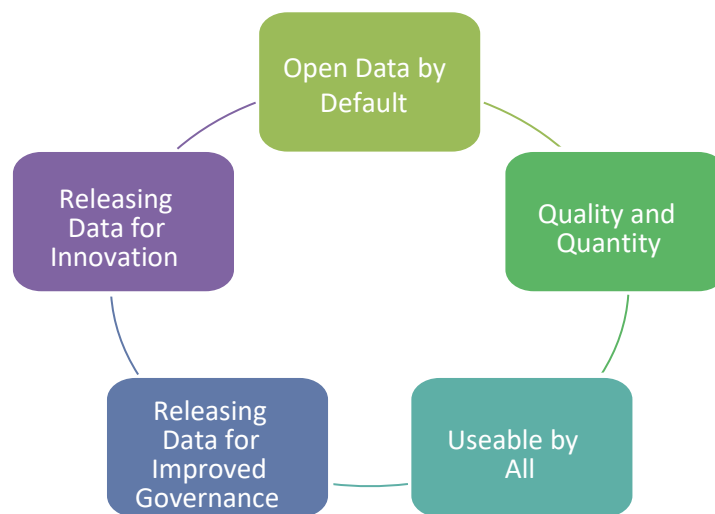
This policy is informed by the [Scottish Government Digital Strategy 2021](#), [Data Standards in Scotland's Public Sector 2021](#) and the Scottish Government Open Data Strategy published in 2015.

The newly updated Scottish Government Digital Strategy outlines within its main principles ***“the value and the transformational role that data can play in increasing transparency, empowering communities, transforming products and services, fuelling innovation, and improving outcomes”***.

The Data Standards in Scotland's Public Sector published in October 2021 states that ***“unlocking the potential of Scotland's public sector data is vital if Scotland is to succeed in its economic, social, and environmental ambitions. Widespread adoption of data standards which support the creation and management of high-quality data, and enable public sector data to be reused, is essential to create the environment for success”***

The Scottish Government published an [Open Data Strategy](#) for Scotland in February 2015 which establishes targets for the publication of data by public authorities in Scotland. The Scottish Government Data Management Board established 10 guiding principles that help deliver their vision for Scotland. Two of these are particularly relevant in the context of open data:

- **Availability:** Make public service data (historic and current) available and readily discoverable, in formats which are easily re-used (e.g. machine readable). This will allow and encourage others to make re-use of the data to develop new products and services. In turn, this will create wealth and jobs, as well as better services for people in Scotland
- **Innovation:** Support effective and timely research that brings different data sets together easily and with minimal bureaucracy. This will enable more responsive service development, contribute to Scotland’s reputation for research and development, attract business and make Scotland the “come to place” for innovation in data science and analysis.¹



Building upon the ambitions expressed at national level we therefore propose to follow a set of principles that will build on the already established foundations for access to, and the release and re-use of, data made available by Dundee City Council

These principles are;

1. **Open Data by Default**
2. **Quality and Quantity**
3. **Useable by all**
4. **Releasing data for improved governance**
5. **Releasing data for innovation**

Open Data by Default

We recognise that free access to, and subsequent re-use of, open data are of significant value to society and the economy. We aim to orient the Council towards open data by default and adhere to the **FAIR** principles as encouraged by the Scottish Government Data Standards framework

F – findability
A – accessibility
I – Interoperable
R - reuse

We recognise that there is national and international legislation, in particular pertaining to intellectual property, personally-identifiable and sensitive information, which must be observed.

We will aim to:

Further establish an expectation that all Dundee City Council data be published openly by default, as outlined in this policy, while recognising that there are legitimate reasons why some data cannot be released.

Further develop and publish a plan for the publication of data. Initially focusing on those which contribute to the outcomes of key strategic plans of the Council and its partners.

There are a number of pieces of legislation which require public bodies to publish data. Existing legislation includes:

- [EU INSPIRE Directive](#),
- [EU Directive on the re-use of Public Sector Information](#) (PSI Directive),
- [Freedom of Information Scotland Act](#) (FOISA)
- [Environmental Information Regulation](#)

However, we do not need to be limited by these requirements. Taking a proactive approach to the publication of data offers benefits to both the organisations publishing data and those who will make use of it. In doing so we can take advantage of the increasing volumes of data being created. We are using digital technologies to deliver services e.g. sensors on waste bins or to measure traffic flow. Such data, some real time, can provide insight for wider city management.

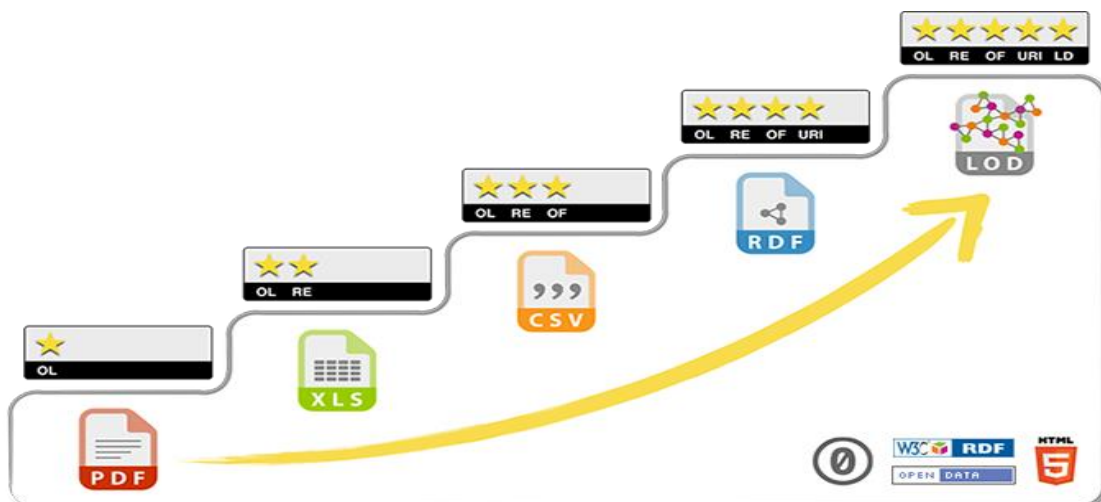
We will aim to:

- **establish guidelines** on the publication of data which explain why certain confidential or legally restricted data cannot be made available. For example, data may be exempt from disclosure under FOI legislation, subject to copyright restrictions, or constitute personal data which, if disclosed, would breach Data Protection principles.

Quality and Quantity

We recognise that governments and the public sector hold vast amounts of information that may be of interest to citizens.

We also recognise that it may take time to prepare high-quality data and will therefore continue to seek to achieve the optimal balance between timeliness, quality and usability. We are already adopting the five-star deployment scheme for open data within our platform, currently achieving a three-star rating for the majority of datasets.



One Star: make data available on the Web (in any format) under an open license
Two Star: make it available as structured data (e.g. Excel instead of image scan of table)
Three Star: make it available in a non-proprietary open format (e.g. CSV instead of Excel)
Four Star: use URLs to denote things so that people can point to the data
Five Star: link your data to other data to provide context

We will aim to:

- **further release high-quality open data that is timely, comprehensive, and accurate.** To the extent possible, data will be in their original, unmodified form and at the finest level of granularity (level of detail) available;
- **ensure that information in the data is written in plain, clear language,** so that it can be understood by all.
- **Provide training in data standards** used across the Council and its partners to ensure that data is useable and
- **make sure that data are fully described,** so that consumers have sufficient information to understand their strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations, and security requirements, as well as how to process the data; and
- **release data as early as possible,** to allow users to provide feedback, and then continue to revise ensure the highest standards of open data quality are met.

Usable by All

We agree to release data in a way that helps all people to obtain and re-use it.

In making data open we need to take account of the different audiences who will be accessing the data and the different needs and skills they have.

- Seeker** – People who need the data presented in an easily accessible and digestible ready to use format, such as visualisations or tables
- Enthusiast** – People who lack formal skills but will try using available tools
- Specialist** – People who will use their own skills to analyse and interpret the data

We recognise that open data should be available free of charge in order to encourage their most widespread use.

Open Data should be released without bureaucratic or administrative barriers, such as registration requirements, which can deter people from accessing the data.

Open Data will generally be published under the current version of the Open Government Licence² which for example, allows free use and reuse of the material for any purpose including commercial exploitation, but applies some conditions including acknowledging the source and avoiding misrepresentation. It also makes it clear that the information is provided "as is", without any liability for errors or omissions and without any guarantee of continuing availability.

We will aim to:

- **release data in open formats wherever possible,** ensuring that the data are available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes; and

² <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>

- **release as much data as possible**, and promote the benefits and encourage the allowance of free access to data. In many cases this will include providing data in multiple formats, so that they can be processed by computers and understood by people.

Releasing Data for Improved Governance

We recognise that the release of open data strengthens our democratic institutions and encourages better policy-making to meet the needs of our citizens.

We also recognise that interest in open data is growing in other multilateral organisations and initiatives.

We will aim to:

- **provide tools for governance** and authorisation prior to releasing of data on an open data system
- **share technical expertise and experience** with each other so that everyone can reap the benefits of open data; and
- **be transparent about our own data collection, standards, and publishing processes**, by documenting all of these related processes online.

Releasing Data for Innovation

Recognising the importance of diversity in stimulating creativity and innovation, we agree that the more people and organisations that use our data, the greater the social and economic benefits that will be generated. This is true for both commercial and non - commercial uses.

We will aim to:

- work to increase open data literacy and encourage people, such as developers of applications and partner organisations that work in the field of open data promotion, to unlock the value of open data;