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# **LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Information Management and Technology

LCC's Approach to Open Data

V1.0

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## Document Control

Reference	V 1.0 – LCC's Approach to Open Data
Date	01 November 2017
Author(s)	Thomas North - BI Team Leader Graham Williams – Reporting & Data Analyst
Approved by	Sue Cline – EDW & BI Manager Simon Oliver - Chief Technology Officer

## Version History

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document outlines the approach of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) for publishing council datasets for reuse and redistribution as Open Data, and the standards it will meet in doing so.
- 1.2. The document is intended to ensure effective decisions are taken by the council about data that must be published in Open formats as well as data that the council additionally chooses to publish.
- 1.3. This document applies to anyone who has access to Lincolnshire County council data, including but not limited to employees, temporary or agency staff, contractors, third parties working for the council, partners in joint ventures with the council, and elected members of the council.
- 1.4. This document is owned by the Business Intelligence Team Leader in the Lincolnshire County Council Business Intelligence Team. They hold the right to authorise changes to, or disposal of, this document. This team is responsible for ensuring compliance with this document and will be aided by the Information Governance Team.
- 1.5. This document will be reviewed at least annually or more often if justified by a change in circumstances. Should you have questions, please contact the Business Intelligence Team at: [opendata@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:opendata@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. Data that may be published online will fit the Government's working definition of Public Data:

*"Public Data is the objective, factual, non-personal data on which public services run and are assessed, and on which policy decisions are based, or which is collected or generated in the course of public service delivery."*  
[www.data.gov.uk, 10<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017]

- 2.2. When data is made available as Open Data it can be freely used, reused, and redistributed by anyone, anytime, anywhere.

## 3. Applicable Legislation and Guidance

### 3.1. The UK Transparency Agenda

The current and previous UK governments have been active in promoting the Open publication of public sector data. The UK is a founding member of the [Open Government Partnership](#), a global effort to make governments better by promoting transparency, empowering citizens, fighting corruption, and harnessing new technologies to strengthen governance.

### 3.2. UK Local Government Transparency Code

The revised [Local Government Transparency Code 2015](#) came into effect on 01 April 2015. The Transparency Code requires local authorities in England to

regularly publish information related to 14 themes as listed in the Code, plus the one-off publication of information related to a council's existing waste collection contracts (if applicable).

### **3.3. The 'Right to Data'**

The 'Right to Data' came into effect from 01 September 2013 following changes to the [Freedom of Information Act](#). The provisions are:

- 3.3.1. Any request to release a dataset must be in electronic form which allows data re-use where reasonably practicable
- 3.3.2. Datasets containing Copyright material (where the public authority holds the Copyright) must be available for re-use under a specific licence
- 3.3.3. Requested datasets must be added to publication schemes

### **3.4. Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015**

The [Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015](#) came into force on 18 July 2015. Re-use means use of public sector information for a purpose different from the initial purpose for which it was produced, held or disseminated.

- 3.5. The re-use regulations introduced the principle that public sector body information produced within its public task is presumed to be re-usable once access is obtained, unless the information is otherwise restricted or excluded. Also, that charges for re-use of data should be set at no more than marginal cost, with exceptions in certain circumstances (such as trading funds). It also sets out that there should be transparency around any charging mechanisms which exist.

## **4. Aims of Open Data**

- 4.1. Requirements of Government Transparency legislation are likely to increase greatly in scope regarding Open Data. There are three main reasons for that, relating to benefits of Open Data. They are transparent and accountable governance, improved public service delivery, and enabling economic growth and innovation. So a timely switch to Open data is essential to reap these likely benefits, both for the council and the Lincolnshire economy.
- 4.2. Analysis by Deloitte has estimated the economic benefits of Open Data to be worth £1.8 billion to the UK economy, with social benefits of £5 billion. Local Government Association research has shown that both local authorities and local people want to see Open data published to benefit local democracy. And other research by Ipsos MORI found that the more citizens feel informed, the more they tend to be satisfied with public services and their local authorities.

### **4.3. Likely benefits of Open Data:**

- 4.3.1. Open Data enables opportunities for innovative evidence-based policies, operational efficiencies and service improvements. These are likely to produce economic benefits for the council.
- 4.3.2. Providing Open Data will greatly improve the council's internal data sharing. A comprehensive Open Data portal that makes data searchable and easily accessible in one place should increase staff productivity, reduce the need for meeting time-consuming Freedom of Information requests, and enable ready access to information to support council work, such as commissioning.
- 4.3.3. Open Data can help improve the flow of information within and among government organisations, and make decisions and processes more transparent. Increased transparency promotes accountability and good governance, enhances public debate, and helps combat corruption.
- 4.3.4. Open Data enables governments, citizens, businesses and voluntary sector organisations to make better informed decisions. Effective and timely access to data helps individuals and organisations develop new insights and innovative ideas to generate economic growth and social benefits.
- 4.3.5. Sharing and open access to datasets using common technical and data standards among public and private sector organisations will turn data into intelligent and smart information. This supports better decision-making and innovation by businesses, and can potentially accelerate business growth and increase entrepreneurial opportunities in Lincolnshire.

## **5. Open Data Commitments**

- 5.1. Availability of datasets will be advertised through the Lincolnshire Open Data platform [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/opendata](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/opendata) and the UK government's register of Open Data [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk)
- 5.2. Lincolnshire Open Data is committed to high-quality publication of Open datasets. This will be ensured by:
  - 5.2.1. Where possible, the Business Intelligence Team will aim to ensure data published is in at least 3-star Open format. Further information on format ratings can be found at <http://5stardata.info/en/>. It will be assumed that not all users have software that can read proprietary formats, so we will aim to publish our Open data in a non-proprietary machine-readable structured format.

- 5.2.2. Open data will be published with relevant metadata (and where required further documentation) to help ensure the data can be exploited effectively.
  - 5.2.3. Datasets will be published using nationally-recommended Local Government Association (LGA) guidance where available.
  - 5.2.4. All external data published will only be sourced from reliable high-quality data sources such as government or industry portals.
- 5.3. There will be an ongoing shared understanding and promotion of Open Data across the council supported by the Business Intelligence Team. Training and support for individuals and service areas will be available to build Open Data skills and capacity.

## 6. Approach to Identifying and Prioritising Data for Publication

- 6.1. Clear methods and feedback will be used to identify key data sets and the datasets that users are interested in. An approach using selection criteria will generate the most productive datasets to work towards publishing, rather than focusing resources on datasets that may be of no interest or value to anyone.
- 6.2. Lincolnshire Open Data will identify datasets to publish based on the following criteria:
- 6.2.1. Transparency Code datasets**  
Not all information required to be published under the Transparency Code will need to be published on Lincolnshire Open Data, instead only information in machine-readable dataset format.
  - 6.2.2. LCC-accountable datasets**  
Any datasets LCC are responsible for collecting or maintaining that should be put into the public domain. Additionally this may include externally-published datasets to which LCC can add extra useful detail, such as lower-level geography data.
  - 6.2.3. Demand-led datasets**  
Datasets may be identified for publication based on user demand and service area insight. Such datasets might support the work of the council or be useful to users in the wider community. Additionally, datasets available from external sources may be re-published on Lincolnshire Open Data if they are deemed of high importance (for example, datasets that directly influence LCC strategic decision-making). Re-publishing datasets from external sources will only occur if there is sufficient rationale.

## 7. Privacy Considerations

- 7.1. Processing of personal data will be done in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 1998](#).
- 7.2. Personal data will be anonymised before being published on Lincolnshire Open Data. Under no circumstance will any individuals be identifiable.
- 7.3. Exceptions will be applied in line with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office, and will consider a number of factors such as the principle of fairness.
- 7.4. Service areas must consider privacy when publishing their dataset, referring to the information asset owner where necessary.

## 8. Licensing and Reuse Rights

- 8.1. Publication of Open Data will be authorised formally in writing by the relevant Information Asset Owner (for example, service area).
- 8.2. Data published by the council at [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/opendata](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/opendata) is open for anyone to reuse within the parameters set by the licensing terms and conditions specific to each dataset.
- 8.3. Most data will be published under the [UK Open Government Licence \(OGL\)](#) meaning it can be used free of charge by individuals, businesses and other organisations.
- 8.4. Upon accessing or "reusing" licensed data a user will be deemed to have accepted the terms and conditions of the UK Open Government Licence.
- 8.5. Use and re-use of LCC data is subject to the user publishing the attribution statement and publishing a URL link to the [OGL v.3.0 Licence](#):

*"Contains public sector information licensed from Lincolnshire County Council under the Open Government Licence v3.0"*

- 8.6. Several other datasets, including datasets that contain geographic data, are subject to their own licensing agreement. The Lincolnshire Open Data portal Terms & Conditions will contain a statement requesting users to check individual dataset licensing agreements to ensure all datasets are used correctly.
- 8.7. The Business Intelligence Team will provide additional supporting guidance and documentation for internal service area practitioners around licencing and re-use rights.

## **9. Publishing**

- 9.1. Where appropriate, datasets will be made available according to a schedule which will be published with the data on the Lincolnshire Open Data portal. Additionally, dataset versions will be clearly labelled to ensure that the public can see how up to date it is.
- 9.2. Service areas may publish data in PDF format, but this should be in addition to .csv.
- 9.3. The Business Intelligence Team will explore the publication of Open Data in Linked Data formats.
- 9.4. Archived versions of key datasets may be available on request to support historical analysis.
- 9.5. To facilitate linking of datasets across multiple systems, where appropriate datasets will be published using Unique Resource Indicators (URI's).
- 9.6. The Business Intelligence Team will provide additional supporting guidance documentation for internal practitioners with specific standards and principles of publishing.

## **10. Management Arrangements**

- 10.1. Open Data provision is a key success factor and should be included within service redesign work and major systems replacement.
- 10.2. Responsibility for maintaining the content of datasets lies with the individual service areas.
- 10.3. Responsibility for provision and maintenance of the Open Data platform lies with the Business Intelligence Team.
- 10.4. Datasets will only be published following written authorisation from the service area (data owner), so dataset Handover Agreements between the individual service area and Business Intelligence Team will be in place for all published datasets.
- 10.5. Responsibility for ensuring compliance with mandatory and recommended Open Data principles lies with the Business Intelligence Team.
- 10.6. Open Data must always be published on the Lincolnshire Open Data portal, and can be linked to from a service area's own webpages. The Lincolnshire Open Data portal's Terms & Conditions will contain a statement that the data is published under the Open Government Licence (OGL) with no disclaimers or qualifications. Open data on the Lincolnshire Open Data portal that is referred to on service area websites will not include any copyright or licence statements that conflict with the Open Government Licence.



- 10.7. Where required, published datasets will contain advice or additional information in their metadata to help potential users of the data to understand the nature of the data, its source or validity, or any other aspects of the data that might help its being re-used effectively.
- 10.8. The currency and validity of published Open datasets will be reviewed regularly by the Business Intelligence Team, and any issues will be raised with the Information Asset Owner or designated data custodian.
- 10.9. The Lincolnshire Open Data portal will contain a link to the appropriate person, council service area or source who can deal with any queries, issues or complaints about the published data.

## **11. Measuring Success**

- 11.1. Key metrics will be measured to review the success of the Lincolnshire Open Data portal.
- 11.2. Metrics and goals are reviewed and may be adjusted over time, to continue to stretch the organisation and ensure that Open Data goals remain consistent with those of the council.
- 11.3. Key metrics relating to all Open Data publishing efforts will be routinely measured to assess demand for datasets and identify those with high value. Future dataset publications and Lincolnshire Open Data website developments will be led by user demand.