

Harnessing data:

Leadership and data governance

BETA





BETA version

The content in this section is available in a BETA version and is currently being reviewed.

Please send any comments and suggestions, additional resources and/or case studies that may help to improve or update this content to:

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Leadership and data governance

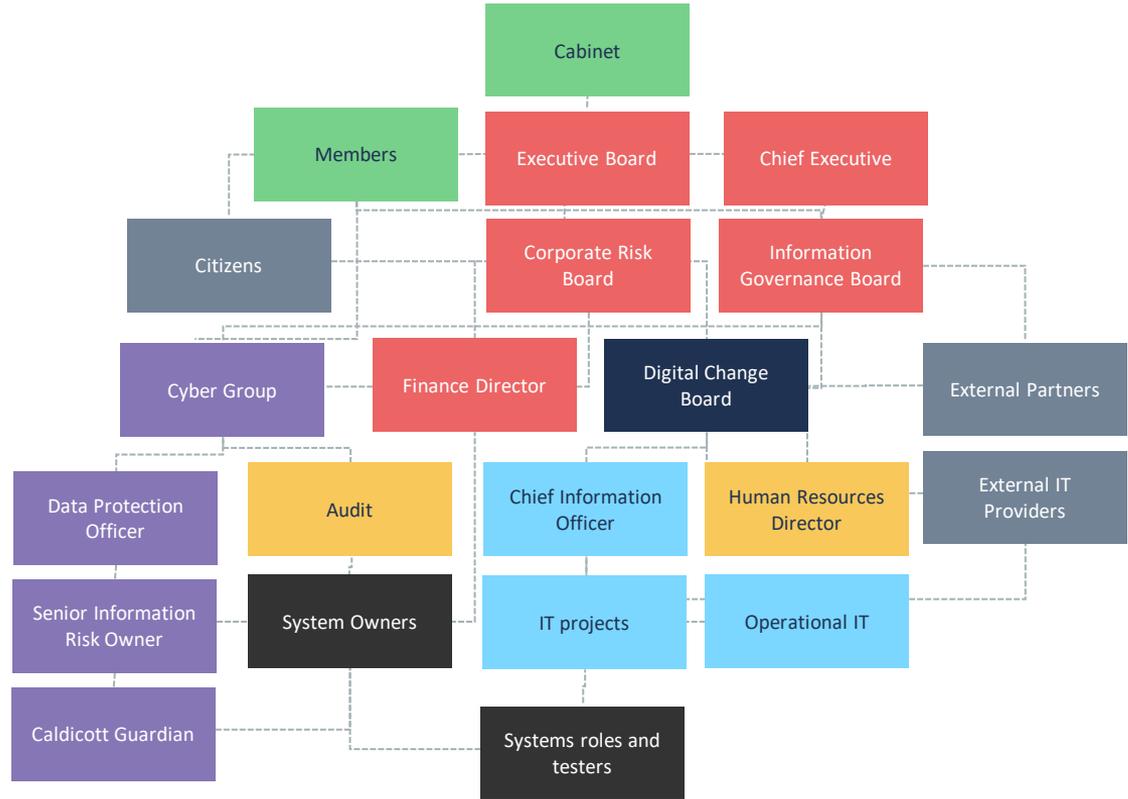
Defining the role of leadership and governance for an increasingly complex array of data responsibilities across a place and partners is not easy. Each organisation will be different, depending on factors such as scale, functions, and existing practices such as corporate risks management. But it is essential and will take time to get right.

Otherwise a range of problems can occur:

- Weak accountability and data decision-making (e.g. on matter such as data ethics)
- Poor management of data risk, with numerous ‘blind spots’
- A lack of knowledge about data assets and how they are managed and where they reside
- Limited corporate control of data and a resulting silo approach to data
- Too much dependency on IT leaders, and too much devolution of data activity
- Multiple different versions of data, even held in multiple websites for the organisations
- No control over resistance to data sharing – internally or externally
- The value of data is neither appreciated not exploited fully.



Typical governance structure in a local authority





Local digital declaration

The Local Digital Declaration is a joint endeavour initiated by the UK Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Government Digital Service (GDS), and a collection of local authorities and sector bodies from across the UK, with support by Socitm and the Local CIO Council. It invites all local authorities and the organisations with whom they collaborate to join by signing the Declaration and committing to deliver a first action for wider benefit. This declaration affirms collective ambition for local public services in the internet age, and commitments to realising it:

- design services that best meet the needs of citizens
- challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- protect citizens' privacy and security
- deliver better value for money

This includes a specific commitment to data:

“We will design safe, secure and useful ways of sharing information to build trust among our partners and citizens, to better support the most vulnerable members of our communities and to target our resources more effectively”

“Our transformation, information technology and digital teams will demand that every new IT solution procured must operate according to the technology code of practice, putting us in control of our service data, and using open standards where they exist.





Managing common data risks

This Data Field Guide is full of examples of data risks and how to manage them. Getting a grip of those risks and establishing an appropriate balance between data risks and data exploitation requires several factors to be in place:

- Clear and strong data governance, policies and practices
- Effective tools that can track risks and detect problems
- Investment in specialist roles to ensure data is well-managed in more complex areas
- Good data maturity across the organisations from executive leaders and politicians to front line staff
- Specific processes for data quality management – MDM, in testing, data asset management etc.





Additional resources

- Wise Council: Insights from the cutting edge of data-driven local government (Nesta-LGA) <https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/wise-council-insights-from-the-cutting-edge-of-data-driven-local-government/>
- ODI resources:
 - Lessons on supporting public sector open data leadership [report](#)
 - Open Data Leaders Network [project](#)
 - Managing the risk of re-identification [R&D project](#)
- Cyber risk – the challenge for local government (Socitm) <https://socitm.net/download/inform-report-cyber-risk-the-challenge-for-local-government-overview/>
- Modern leadership series (Socitm) <https://socitm.net/blog/modern-leadership/>
- <https://socitm.net/download/modern-leadership-introduction/>
- Leadership, technology and data (techUK) <https://www.techuk.org/insights/news/item/14430-guest-blog-leadership-technology-data-councilofthefuture>





Additional resources (continued)

- Local Digital Declaration (MHCLG) <https://localdigital.gov.uk/declaration/>
- Technology code of practice (GDS) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technology-code-of-practice/technology-code-of-practice>
- Make better use of data (GDS) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-better-use-of-data#how-minimising-data-collection-and-duplication-will-help-your-programme>
- Local Government Data Handling Guidelines (NLAWARP)
- <https://www.nlawarp.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/GDPR-V5-Final.pdf>

