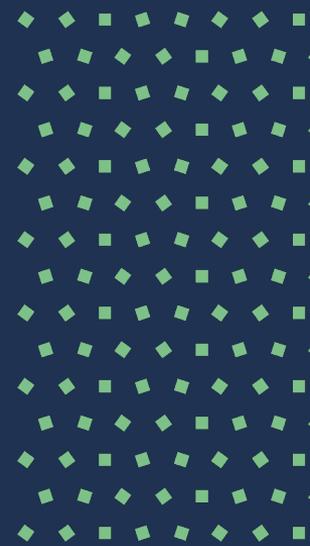**Harnessing data:**

Suppliers and partners *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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The role of suppliers and partners

The roundtable discussions which helped to inform this work indicated that models of procurement and delivery of IT can be barriers to data exploitation. Many respondents talked about outsourcing as being a specific blocker, as well as proprietary systems that lock data into non-standard formats, making sharing difficult. There was criticism about the exploitative methods of some suppliers:

- Refusing to allow open APIs and data format so that systems lock data in

- Adopting contracts that prevent wider system use, in preference for their own add-on systems

- Controlling or inflexible outsourcing contracts that prevent change or data movement because of cost or contract terms.

But also criticism from suppliers in the lack of data maturity in public services that makes it difficult to exploit full value of supplier offerings. They note that requires often change, and that opportunities to extract greater value from data tools are often lost because councils do not adopt a corporate approach to data exploitation and systems procurement. Some also report that the public sector does not understand the role of 'data processor' when commissioning a supplier, thinking wrongly that this takes away all responsibility for data use, accuracy or even GDPR compliance.

Guidance for IT purchasing

- No public service organisation can operate without IT supplier tools, systems, and hosted cloud services as well as range of outsourced service solutions. This means that a mature approach is needed to supplier engagement from procurement to maintenance, development and finally retirement of systems. It requires trust and openness, as well as clarity in areas such as data standards and future flexibility needs (which often cannot be foreseen) e.g.:

- Social value in procurement should be specific, measurable and prioritised in all IT purchasing and tendering

- Sharing best practice should be mandated, openly helping the sector as a whole to seeing the value (and issues) with specific solutions

- IT suppliers with legacy systems that prevent data sharing must be required to do so

- Systems that do not comply with modern standards or limited data sharing should be planned for retirement

- IT procurement should not be just about buying process function (e.g. functions of an ERP), but about managing data as well

- IT procurement cannot be driven in department silos – centralisation or at least central visibility is essential for master data management

- Be clear about GDPR and cyber responsibilities for suppliers in procurement, and their role in delivering data value.

Platforms for harnessing data

- https://www.mastodonc.com/

- https://xantura.com/what-we-do/

- https://www.mysense.ai/about-us

- https://dynamics.microsoft.com/en-gb/

Additional resources

ODI resources:

- The Data Ecosystem Mapping tool (as part of the Data and Public Services Toolkit)

- Data insights, citizen engagement, and performance optimization (Tyler technologies) https://www.tylertech.com/products/socrata

- Helping startups transform the public sector (PUBLIC) https://www.public.io/