

## **Somerset Intelligence Partnership – Data Sharing**

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### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To update members on SSDC's membership of the Somerset Intelligence Partnership (SIP) and to seek agreement to the principles of data sharing in support of its work.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 1) To confirm that data supplied by SSDC can be published via the Somerset Intelligence Partnership up to and including at postcode level;
- 2) To note that the cost and benefit to the council of continued membership of the Somerset Intelligence Partnership will be reviewed by the Strategic Director (Place and Performance) by April 2015.

### **3. Background**

The Somerset Intelligence Partnership is co-ordinated by Somerset County Council. The SIP facilitates the sharing and analysis of data for social and economic policy evaluation and development across Somerset. Membership is open to all public sector agencies covering local authorities, police, fire and health. SSDC joined the partnership in December 2014. The annual fee of around £4600 goes towards costs of the SIP team who provide analysis, advice, maintain public access to data and issue newsletters. It also includes a licence fee to use Mosaic household segmentation datasets.

### **4. Mosaic**

Experian's 'Mosaic' is a segmentation of the UK at household and postcode level. It divides the UK population into 15 Groups and 66 more detailed types. It uses over 400 data variables (with sources ranging from the 2011 Census and crime and NHS statistics to bespoke large-scale surveys) and paints a unique picture of UK consumers based on their demographic characteristics, lifestyles and behaviour.

By segmenting people according to their characteristics and behaviour, you can develop the capacity to talk confidently with everyone about the things that matter to them, by the most relevant channel. Local authorities can use Mosaic to inform customer access strategies, to examine where best (and where not!) to locate services and to develop cost-effective communications with particular service user groups.

The bespoke Somerset household segmentation was developed by Experian in 2011. It combines Mosaic with SCC service user data to bring new insight into the combined service needs of the different types of people living in the county alongside existing knowledge of service users.

Other partners using Mosaic (each with their own licences) include housing associations, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and South West Commissioning Support.

### **5. Benefits of SIP membership**

Whilst the partnership is still to be fully developed there are clear potential benefits in sharing costs for data sharing and analysis. For example, to inform the important work of the Health and Well-Being Board, the SIP team provide the evidence in support of the Joint Health and Social Needs Assessment. The network between officers responsible for policy and performance, customer access and service design can also provide a good opportunity to share resources, and develop detailed insight for future changes to the way in which services are delivered across Somerset.

## **6. Local Government Transparency Code**

The Government published a new code of practice in May 2014 – the Local Government Transparency Code. It applies to English Local Authorities and will be for each local authority to consider the requirements for publications (some are required some are advisory).

In essence the code seeks to extend public access to data. *“In principle all data held and managed by local authorities should be made available to local people unless there are specific sensitivities (e.g. protecting vulnerable people or commercial and operational considerations) to doing so. It encourages local authorities to see data as a valuable resource not only to themselves, but also their partners and local people.”*

## **7. Sharing of data at post code level**

From time to time SIP will co-ordinate research to help inform local, regional or national policy-making.

Before SSDC participates and to avoid doubt, Councillors are asked to confirm the principle that data held by SSDC can be provided for publication via the SIP team at a postcode level. Of course this will still be in compliance with our existing Data Protection policies.

Recently SIP agreed to undertake research to provide local evidence of the impact of the Government’s Welfare Reform programme. The intention is to present the analysis of both evidence quantitative and qualitative gathered at a district level, using post code level data where possible.

Each partner has been asked to share existing relevant data. For the district councils this includes data relating to the uptake of welfare benefits, customer enquiries, levels of council tax debt and recovery. This evidence should add value to the work of the South Somerset Together Welfare Reform Task and Finish Group, which has already gathered a series of case studies and other data.

At this stage only district level data has been provided, however where possible sharing data at post code level would add to the quality of analysis.

## **8. Financial Implications**

The cost of membership of SIP is met from existing budgets for 2014-15.

## **9. Council Plan Implications**

Contributes towards the delivery of the SSDC Council Plan through the effective use of data and information.

## **10. Background Papers**

SIP Memorandum of Understanding