Making data speak for London
LIIA data & intelligence strategy 2022-2023

SUMMARY

Our vision is to use data & intelligence as the catalyst for improving the outcomes for outcomes for all children with a particular focus on the most vulnerable children, young people and their families living in London; To make data speak for London.

The London Improvement & Innovation Alliance has made great progress since it started in 2019, in part supported by a framework of shared data, disseminated on a quarterly basis to provide a benchmark and evidence base for identifying shared challenges and tracking headway.

There is bold ambition and potential that the LIIA is yet to realise and in order to support and drive this purpose our data & intelligence offer needs to evolve to equip the Directors of Children's Services with additional analytical and diagnostic tools to use on that journey.

We will also work collaboratively with our partners across London and beyond who share the same determination to improve and make a difference for children, young people & families. Together we will seek ways to create synergies with appropriate data sharing governed by strict ethical and legal principles, to harness the power of our data to drive beneficial change and to make data speak for London.

INTRODUCTION

In 2019 the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) launched its sector-led improvement programme, the London Innovation & Improvement Alliance (LIIA). From the beginning, data & intelligence have played an important role in this work.

From its inception a number of data products have been developed and shared across the partnership; a quarterly benchmarking report and an annual visualised report, coupled with analysis and data packs for peer review work. At the start of the pandemic, the LIIA developed a practical and efficient means for collecting the impact of the spreading Covid infection on each London LA and a clear & comprehensible visualisation to show the effect on service across London. This was quickly adapted for all council services and informed the London Resilience Group's management of the first phase of the crisis. Following the horrific murder of George Floyd in the US, a disproportionality dashboard was created to inform DCS' in their work to combat inequality linked to ethnicity.

The experience and learning from this work, showed both the potential and appetite for the creative use of data across the LIIA. It also revealed the limitations with the available data that could be used to build a picture of London and the individual LAs, in particular for the thematic workstreams of the LIIA programme. In response to this we created the child-level data (cld) project; an ambitious and creative response to overcoming those limitations in an ethical and legally responsible way.

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The cld project was also guided by the resource constraints that exists within the London LAs, with many data teams having just gone through a restructure or having one in progress or due to start. Cognisant of the 'squeeze' on resources generally in LAs, the project uses data that has already been collected and collated by each LA for statutory purposes. This project forms a key part of the ambitions for the LIIA project to address the challenges facing LAs in their use of data.

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE LIIA

London is a diverse and dynamic metropolis with a history going back to AD 47. Across the region the population of just under 9 million people speak over 300 languages and live in 33 local authority areas.

With this scale of diversity in a population living in the fourth most populous city in Europe, the challenge of delivering services that meet the constantly changing needs of its citizen's is considerable.

The LIIA has been set up by the ALDCS as its sector-led improvement partnership to achieve the following purpose:

- Facilitate collaboration to address ALDCS priorities
- Provide a platform for innovation and where appropriate, the mechanisms to enable innovation
- Identify and share effective practice
- Produce and make accessible shared datasets to drive informed strategy and practice.

The four key priorities of the ALDCS are:

Adolescent Safeguarding
Special Educational Need and Disabilities (SEND)
Resources & Commissioning
Workforce

And these are set within a framework of supporting the development of children's services as learning organisations and scaling up work to address racial disparities in outcomes for children and in the experience of our staff.

The aim of this strategy is to support this purpose and the four priorities within their framework, whilst recognising the challenges faced by the ALDCS due to the squeeze on resources, the ever-increasing responsibilities for local authorities and the complex and changing needs of the London population.

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE LIIA

Local authorities have a wealth of data that they use to manage the services that they provide to Londoners. Within each local authority, this data is used to ensure that the right services are delivered to the people who need it most when they most need it. A considerable amount of this data is supplied to the departments of the Government who have responsibility for the various elements of service delivery within a local authority. The data that these departments publish only partially serves the regional needs for data to help identify and inform regional issues.

There is great potential therefore within the ALDCS if this data can be organised securely, ethically and legally in a way that will enable the LIIA to maximise its use to:

- Give a deeper understanding of the problems DCS' are trying to address
- Identify areas where, by working together, LAs can achieve synergies
- Highlight good practice which can be adapted and adopted regionally and locally
- Track the impact of changes on the outcomes that matter
- Provide an early warning of building pressures within the region
- Navigate a safe course through a crisis like the pandemic
- Work with partners to improve services delivered in partnership

WHY DATA IS IMPORTANT

In their report 'Local Government Use of Data During the Pandemic', published on 4 February 2021, the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation stated the following, *" … data and data-driven interventions have played an important part in cushioning the impact of the crisis, helping to inform public health measures, protect the most vulnerable in society, and keep public services running."*

The Department or Digital, Culture, Media & Sport stated the following in their National Data Strategy, *"Data can revolutionise the public sector, creating better, cheaper and more responsive services."*, and *"Our experience responding to the coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated that when we treat data as a strategic asset and improve coordination between organisations, the delivery of services can be more agile, more innovative, more effective and more cost-effective. Indeed, it has underlined the need for the public sector to move away from a culture of risk aversion towards a joined-up approach, where the presumption is that, with appropriate safeguards, data should be shared to drive better outcomes."*

The experience in London and the LIIA is in accord with these statements. One only has to watch the news to see how commonplace the use of data has become, with daily information on the number of our population testing positive for Covid, requiring hospital attention and sadly deaths, regularly referred to and informing the freedoms we are able to enjoy. Even complex data concepts such as R *(The reproduction number (R) is the average number of secondary infections produced by a single infected person.)* have become widely known and understood by the populace as a whole, allowing Health and government officials to use data to explain the need for restrictions.

This strategy is intended to map the LIIA ambition for using data, whilst adhering to the following core principles.

CORE PRINCIPLES FOR USING DATA

The following principles will guide the way that the LIIA uses data.

- **Collect once, use many times.** Local Authorities and their partners already have a wealth of data that is necessary to ensure that services are delivered to those who need them at the time that they need them. However, the potential use of this data is not being fully realised at present. Therefore, the first imperative will always be to find out what data we already have that we can use or reuse to gain greater insight.

- **Make the most of the creativity in LAs.** The data teams in London LAs are filled with creative, dedicated and hard-working data professionals. The are many data-driven projects and developments happening across London in individual LAs. The LIIA data & intelligence team has evolved from one of these in LB Waltham Forest. Supporting, encouraging and sharing this data innovation will be a key part in the LIIA aim to unlock the value and potential of our data.

- **Engage with partners across London.** The LIIA has many London Partners who are involved in providing, and committed to improving, services and ultimately outcomes of children, young people and their families in London. The recently published Integration White Paper gives a clear indication of the Government direction of travel regarding services for health and care, with a greater focus on integrating services at a local level. Central to this will be using data effectively between organisations and the LIIA will be a key force in London to both contribute to and enable integration relating to services for children, young people and their families. We will work with like-minded colleagues across other organisations to use data more efficiently, effectively and in an integrated way.

- **Learning from and collaborating with the other regions across England.** London is one of nine regions across England, who each have their own sector-led regional improvement programmes. Each of these regions has a data & intelligence group, made up of data & intelligence professionals from each LA in the region. In London this is the London Information Exchange Group (LIEG). The National Performance & Information Managers Group (NPIMG) is made up of representatives from each of these regional groups. We will work closely with these colleagues and the Data to Insight (d2i) project arm of NPIMG, to learn from them, collaborate with them and share ideas for ways that collectively we can improve our use of data & intelligence regionally and nationally.

- **Ethical, Secure and legal use of data.** We will never lose sight of the fact that the data that we hold and use within local government and partner organisations is about real people and some of the most vulnerable people in our society. We will use this data securely, with the utmost respect at all times and make sure that there are clear ethical and legal reasons underpinning its use. The requirements of the data protection act will always be followed .

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OUR STRATEGY

We will take a threefold approach to achieving our vision of using data & intelligence as the catalyst for improving the outcomes for all children with a particular focus on the most vulnerable children, young people and their families living in London.

Each strand being important in its own right but also interrelated with the other strands, the three combining in a way that enhances the individual power of each in a synergistic way.

Strand one – maintain and improve existing intelligence tools and analysis.

Strand two – develop a data platform to enable the development of new intelligence & analysis tools based on existing child-level structured data.

Strand three – explore new innovative uses of data, data alignment and linkage, working with partners in the region and local & national networks. Support LIIA initiatives and programmes.

Strand one – existing intelligence tools and analysis

The LIIA data & intelligence team already produce a range of analyses. These products use a combination of published and collected data, supported by the performance & data teams in the 33 London LAs. These established tools have already proved their worth in supporting the improvement conversations within the LIIA and the sub-regions, supporting Peer review and informing elements of the four priorities.

Our ambition is to maintain & expand this information suite, making it readily available through the LIIA website to authorised staff across London and iteratively improving each element.

Periodically we will review this catalogue to ensure that it remains relevant and fit for purpose, consulting with the relevant stakeholders as part of that process.

Please see *Schedule One* for details of the current catalogue.

Strand two – develop a data platform (reference LIIA Child-Level Data Analysis phase II)

Phase II of the child-level data project has two core elements;

1. **Develop and roll out the Infrastructure needed to make the sharing of child-level data from the 33 LAs in London possible within an ethical, legal and secure framework**

   a. Produce standard Information Governance (IG) documentation in consultation with Information Governance for London (IGfL).

   b. Prepare the 'pipeline' to take in and clean large datasets ready for analysis.
   c. Develop a pan-London data network to allow for the safe transfer of data from LAs to the LIIA data & intelligence team working with colleagues in London DataStore (LDS).

2. **Develop Analyses Valued by London's Children's Services Leaders**

   a. Supporting the LIIA Workstreams on Adolescent Safeguarding and Workforce. This would mean supplying more detailed analysis than it is possible to do from the SFRs alone (eg segmentation by age, ethnicity and gender of London adolescent cohorts for our Adolescent Risk work including Child Exploitation).

   b. Expanding analysis possible

   c. Supporting other programmes

   d. Supporting research and work with partners in this region and sector

In the pilot phase of the child-level data project, the LIIA data & intelligence team worked with our partners Social Finance, to ingest the CiN census return for 2019/2020 from five LAs and produce analysis that was useful to the DCS' of those five LAs.
The pilot was a success, proving the concept and also showing that this could be, *" ….. a very welcome addition to the DCS toolbox."*
It also identified two partners with which we need to work very closely in phase II; the Information Governance for London (IGfL) group made up of Information Governance leads from across London, the GLA London DataStore project a secure pan-London data platform.

IGfL - Information Governance

Key to the project is developing a standard set of IG that can be used across the 33 London LAs with minimal or no amendment. IGfL is the recognised pan-London forum for creating/ vetting pan-London IG/ Data-sharing agreements.

London Datastore – Secure data transfer

The London Datastore is a secure pan-London data platform meeting rigorous data security standards. Its purpose is to allow data-sharing for the benefit of Londoners. In addition to the public-facing aspects of the platform, it also offers London organisations secure data-sharing and collaboration facilities.

The aim of this project

The plan for this part of the data strategy is to use the infrastructure created (or platform) to take existing structured datasets and produce sophisticated analysis to support the aims of the LIIA. This will be done by sharing the data in four ways;

- Back to each LA in a form that they can use for their own analysis
- Through a Power BI platform allowing a London-wide view of the data down to an LA level
- As a pseudonymised dataset to be used by approved researchers for the benefit of children, young people and their families in London
- To support other work, programmes and initiatives in London at the direction of the LIIA Steering Board and ALDCS

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Three forms of transformation

To maximise the usefulness of the structured dataset analysis our intention is to transform the data in three forms, each building on the previous transformation.

- **Single year transformation –** initially we will work with each of the structured datasets in turn, transforming the data from the 33 London LAs into a single dataset on which to build multi-layered analysis

- **Longitudinal transformation –** we will work to join consecutive years of each dataset together in order to provide a child/ young person's eye view of their journey through the part of the care or special educational needs system 'described' by each collection. In the case of the social work census this will be the social work view of each LA. This introduces a further level of complexity to the transformation process so there will be a further learning step that we need to go through to achieve this goal, particularly since the structure of each of the datasets is different, each reflecting the individual evolution of the scope and purpose by the DfE. The ultimate aim of this form of the transformation will be to have a five-year dataset for each of the structured datasets on which to build multi-layered longitudinal analysis.

- **Cross-cutting transformation** - the aim of this element is to join different datasets together to form a child/ young person's eye view of their journey across the care and special educational needs system. This may not be appropriate or possible for all the child-level datasets. As the most technically ambitious part of this project it is also possible that it will not be achievable within the span of the project or without additional resource or only partially achievable *eg it's only possible to link datasets across the same collection period or only parts of some of the datasets.* As such it represents a valuable opportunity for learning the 'art of the possible' for this approach.

We will consult with our stakeholders, the DCS' and senior managers across London to learn, remind ourselves and tailor what we do to provide DCS' and decision makers with the insight they need to: understand the problems they are trying to address, identify good practice they may be able to adopt locally, track the impact of changes they make on the outcomes that matter to them and identify & adapt to the changing landscape locally, regionally and nationally.

We will take guidance from the LIIA steering board and ALDCS on the sequencing, order and priority of the different aspects of each of these transformations. For all of these, the intention will be to share the data in the four ways described in the project aim section wherever possible.

Please see *Schedule Two* for the details for the structured datasets for which we intend to transform for analysis.

For more detail on strand two please read the 'Business Case – LIIA cld analysis phase II' document.

Strand three – new innovative uses of data

In 2021 the LIIA bid for a number of grants and was successful in securing funding from the DfE as part of the 'Recovery fund' programme, from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUCH) as part of their 'Data accelerator programme' and from the Home Office, the Mayor of London's Violence Reduction Unit and the Youth Endowment Fund for the 'Your Choice' programme.

This success has made a range of projects and initiatives possible across London, some in clusters of LAs and with partners in this sector and region, some pan-London in scope and endeavour. Many have a data component implicit in their design, purpose or necessary to evaluate progress.

The LIIA data & intelligence team will play its part in supporting these programmes and projects, working with stakeholders to develop the most appropriate data offer to support the aims of each. Wherever possible that support will be linked into strand two and the development of the data platform building on the development of information governance, the pipeline/ data sharing network and the analyses being developed, whichever elements are most pertinent to the programme or project.

Where this is not possible or appropriate the team will work with colleagues to find the most efficient means to support the needs of the programme or project.

We will approach working with partners in the sector in a spirit of collaboration, adhering to our core data principles, led by the aims and objectives of the LIIA & ALDCs and to achieve improved outcomes for all children with a particular focus on the most vulnerable children & young people whom we serve.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES

Good data is only truly useful if it can be used to communicate the story behind the data, about the real living, complicated and beautiful children & young people it represents. In short if you can make data speak. One of the key elements of this project will be to present the data in ways that help decision makers to understand the data story and use it to improve outcomes for all children with a particular focus on the most vulnerable children, young people and their families living in London, using the data as a catalyst, a framework and a stepping-stone to this goal.

It will help accelerate the LIIA and our partners in this sector from recovery from the impacts of the pandemic to realising the bold ambition and potential in London.

It offers the promise of creating a template for using this type of data in a way that can be replicated across different parts of the country and across different sectors and disciplines, enabling others to benefit from a low cost approach to using data already collected more effectively and efficiently.

It will also set the platform for ongoing LIIA initiatives, open possibilities for future collaboration with partners using data and research to continually improve the outcomes of children, young people and their families and to make data speak for London.

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Annex A: DELIVERY PLAN

	April 2022 – September 2022	October 2022 – March 2023	April 2023 – March 2024
Strand One - existing intelligence tools and analysis			
Maintain information suite	Quarterly (Q4 2021/22 & Q1 2022/2023) Dashboards produced & published 2021 Annual Dashboards refreshed with revised source data	Quarterly (Q2 & Q3 2022/2023) Dashboards produced & published 2022 Annual dashboards produced & published	Quarterly (Q4 2022/23 & Q1-Q3 2023/2024) Dashboards produced & published 2022 Annual Dashboards refreshed with revised source data 2023 Annual dashboards produced & published
Expand information suite	Review quarterly dashboard – incorporate ADCS RIIA changes for 2022-2023 Add to existing dashboards as agreed by LIIA steering group	Add to existing dashboards as agreed by LIIA steering group	Review quarterly dashboard – incorporate changes for 2023-2024 Add to existing dashboards as agreed by LIIA steering group
Support LIIA peer challenge/review framework	Produce data packs for 2-3 peer challenge sessions – one per sub-region Produce data packs and provide other data support (as agreed with LIIA peer review team) for one peer review	Produce data packs for 2-3 peer challenge sessions – one per sub-region Produce data packs and provide other data support (as agreed with LIIA peer review team) for one peer review	Produce data packs 5 peer challenge sessions – one per sub-region Produce data packs and provide other data support (as agreed with LIIA peer review team) for two peer reviews
Strand Two - develop a data platform (reference LIIA Child-Level Data Analysis phase II)			
Develop data platform	Information Governance framework in place across London CiN census 2021 Pipeline review & lessons learned Develop pipeline for SSDA903 Develop pipeline for Children's SW Workforce census	Develop pipeline for Ofsted Annex A data Start development of SEN2 pipeline	Review IG framework – revise if required Complete SEN2 pipeline Start development of method for combining datasets longitudinally/ cross-cutting
Develop cld analyses	CiN census 2021 analysis produced and shared via PBI with 33 London LAs SSDA903 2022 analysis produced and shared via PBI with 33 London LAs Children's SW workforce analysis production started using 2021 data	CiN census 2022 analysis produced Children's SW workforce 2022 analysis produced and shared via PBI with 33 London LAs SEN2 analysis methodology prepared	CiN census 2023 analysis produced SSDA903 2023 analysis produced Children's SW workforce 2023 analysis produced SEN2 2023 analysis produced
Design Longitudinal/ Cross-cutting analysis			Start work on designing longitudinal/ cross-cutting analysis

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	April 2022 – September 2022	October 2022 – March 2023	April 2023 – March 2024
Strand Three - new innovative uses of data			
Create a data analysis ecosystem	Develop LIIA data standards Develop a framework for regular consultation with DCS and other stakeholder groups to understand future data needs Develop the methods for sharing data for individuals LAs Develop the methods for sharing data for researchers	Implement consultation framework Produce individual LA datasets as standard with each single-year analysis Produce research datasets as standard with each single-year analysis	Start work on design of longitudinal/ cross-cutting individual LA datasets Start work on design of longitudinal/ cross-cutting research datasets
Support LIIA initiatives and programmes	Support the data elements of Your Choice programme Pilot phase – data for evaluation, LA monitoring, programme monitoring	Support the data elements of Your Choice programme transition from Pilot Phase to Full Efficacy phase – data for evaluation, LA monitoring, programme monitoring	Support the data elements of Your Choice programme Full Efficacy phase – data for evaluation, LA monitoring, programme monitoring
	Care Leavers compact – CL baseline data collection Develop methodology for supporting CL concessions	Further work on CL compact as required	Further work on CL compact as required
Support and nurture data networks across London	Develop LIEG network – support LIEG data sub-group Identify link DCS for LIEG Work with, link to, help create pan-London data networks	Work with, link to, help create pan-London data networks	Work with, link to, help create pan-London data networks

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SCHEDULE ONE – Current LIIA data & intelligence catalogue

LIIA Quarterly dashboard – data provided by LAs every quarter for a range of metrics, which includes the regional improvement & innovation alliance (RIIA) dataset agreed between ADCS and DfE
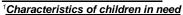
LIIA Annual visualised report – data from DfE statistical first releases *eg Characteristics of children in need[1], children looked after in England including adoptions[2]* – based on annual statutory returns

LIIA Disproportionality dashboard – data from DfE statistical first releases using the relative rate index *(as recommended in the Lammy Review[3])* to explore disproportionality in the children's services populations – based on annual statutory returns and other annual data sources

LIIA London contextual dashboard – data from a range of government sources *eg ONS mid-year estimates[4], January school census[5]* to provide some context about the unique characteristics of every London LA – based on annual statutory returns and other annual data sources

LIEG Assessment factors – data from LA CiN census returns mapping the prevalence of key factors across London, identified through an assessment of need, which affect a child or young person's health & development and mean that the child or young person may be at risk of harm – based on annual CiN census data

LIIA Adolescent safeguarding dashboard - data from a range of government sources about the adolescent part of each London LAs children's population – based on annual statutory returns and other annual data sources

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[1] *Characteristics of children in need*
[2] *Children looked after in england including adoptions*
[3] *The Lammy Report* – page 11
[4] *ONS Mid-year estimates*
[5] *January school census*

SCHEDULE TWO – Structured datasets to be transformed for analysis

Children in Need Census – The children in need census[6] is an annual statutory census for all local authorities. It collects data on children referred to local authority social care services because their health or development is at risk.
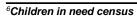
SSDA903 – The aim of the SSDA903[7] return is to collect information about children who are looked- after by local authorities; and for those who have recently left care.

Children's social Work Workforce Census – The children's social work workforce census[8] is an annual statutory census for all local authorities. It collects data on all children and family social worker staff employed during the census year.

Annex A[9] – Is 'short-hand' for the structured child-level data lists that Ofsted requires from LAs as part of the 'inspecting local authority children's services (ILACS)' regulatory framework. It provides inspectors with the latest list of children for the selection of cases for further sampling. It also provides the most recent overview of a local authority's data.

SEN 2 *(from 2023)* – The SEN2[10] survey is a statutory data collection that takes place every January. The survey collects information on: education, health and care (EHC) plans

Other structured datasets at an individual level – directed by the LIIA steering board and ALDCS we may use the platform and this approach with other individual-level structured data sets to transform them for analysis. This could include existing areas such as youth justice or new developments *eg there is current work in the Early Help space on data and similarly in connection with public law outline (PLO) cases amongst others.*

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[6] *Children in need census*
[7] *SSDA903*
[8] *Children's social work workforce census*
[9] *Annex A*
[10] *SEN 2*