

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING

EVIDENCE FRAMEWORK 2026-2028



*Using evidence,
Improving decisions,
Achieving better outcomes.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evidence-based decision-making is the process of combining the best available data and applying it to inform a decision. The London Borough of Havering has developed the following Evidence Framework, which sets out our expectations and approach to embedding the best available evidence across the whole organisation. By improving officer's skills and putting simple, clear processes in place, the Council will be able to run services more efficiently and save money. We will better understand what residents need and prefer, provide services that match those needs, and increase residents' satisfaction with the Council.

The Council's vision for evidence is **'a culture where consistent use of evidence-based decision-making drives better policy, practice, and community wellbeing'**. Evidence is to be used at every stage of planning, implementation and monitoring of services, not just at formal approval points, but embedded in the way services are designed and delivered. The framework sets out four aims to achieve the vision:

1. Use evidence to deliver better resident outcomes, manage resources efficiently, and operate as an accountable, effective Council.

This explains why the framework matters. It focuses on making decisions that are fair, effective, and based on what works.

2. Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

This covers what needs to be in place, training, tools, and clear processes, so officers feel confident using evidence in their work.

3. Foster a culture that values and routinely uses evidence in decision-making across the Council.

This focuses on leadership, expectations, and day-to-day behaviours that support evidence-based decision-making.

4. Collaborate internally and externally to generate, share, and use evidence, in line with the Council's iCare values.

This explains how the Council will work with others to learn from good practice, avoid duplication, and make better use of resources.

A two-year action plan sets out the specific activities, who is responsible for them, and how progress will be measured. The action plan and annual reviews will help ensure the Council achieves its vision for evidence-based decision-making.

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the London Borough of Havering's first Council-wide Evidence Framework.

Evidence is a powerful tool for change. When used well, it helps us understand what residents need, design services that work, and make decisions that deliver the greatest impact. It also enables us to use our resources wisely, something that is more important than ever as we navigate ongoing financial pressures. Evidence-based decision-making is not an additional task; it is a way of working that ensures we make the right decisions the first time.



This framework marks an important milestone for our organisation. It sets out a clear, practical and ambitious approach to how we generate, use and share evidence to inform the decisions that shape our borough. At its heart, this work is about improving outcomes for residents and ensuring we operate as an efficient, transparent and accountable Council.

Havering is aligning with the best of what is happening across local and national government, but this framework is firmly rooted in our local context. It reflects where we are now and it also sets out where we want to be: a Council where the use and generation of evidence is consistently embedded across the organisation.

We recognise the increasing needs in our borough and the subsequent pressures on our local services. With this comes complexity, but also opportunity to work more collaboratively across the organisation and build connections with local partners. Havering remains ambitious in using evidence during these challenging times, and we are equally committed to meeting all data protection and ethical requirements as we strengthen our evidence practices.

This framework has been written to be clear and accessible to all audiences, while the accompanying action plan provides the detail needed to ensure delivery. Together, they set out a practical path toward a more confident, capable and evidence-led organisation — one that learns continuously, collaborates effectively, and puts residents at the centre of everything we do.

Kathy Freeman
Strategic Director of Resources

INTRODUCTION

High quality evidence is essential for informed and effective decision-making in local government. Evidence strengthens accountability by providing reliable information on performance, progress, and whether defined outcomes were achieved. It also supports improvement by offering insight into what is working, why it works and where changes are needed. [1] Evidence-based decision-making improves the Council's ability to deliver desired outcomes and use resources in the best conceivable way.

Evidence is not only critical for governance and strategic decision-making, but also for the design, delivery and continuous improvement of services. Across the service lifecycle — discovery, design, implementation and live operation — evidence enables teams to understand resident's needs, test solutions, monitor performance and iterate responsibly. Embedding evidence within service design ensures that policy intent translates into effective, usable and inclusive resident experiences.

Local authorities make frequent and complex decisions. The topic and scale of these decisions vary including how to meet statutory duties, determine discretionary services, allocate limited resources, and operate efficiently. Using evidence strengthens the Council's ability to make quality decisions and is valuable at all levels of the organisation.

The UK Government expects public bodies, including local government, to use high quality, diverse forms of evidence. Under the Local Government Act 1999, local authorities have the statutory requirement to deliver 'best value'. This robust framework will support Havering to evidence our compliance to Best Value standards, assess the impact of our decisions and clearly show how we deliver continuous improvement.

Additionally, under the government's 10-Year Health Plan for England, the Better Care Fund is being reformed. The NHS' integrated care boards and local authorities must focus on outcomes for residents around integrated health and social care services. These changes will require better evidence to determine the right services are commissioned.

[1] Sanderson, I. (2002), Evaluation, Policy Learning and Evidence-Based Policy Making. Public Administration, 80: 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9299.00292>

The London Borough of Havering puts forth the following Evidence Framework to provide a shared vision for officers, partners, and residents about how we will use evidence to improve outcomes. A framework ensures a coordinated and efficient approach to creating, using and sharing evidence. Additionally, within the framework we describe what successful evidence-based decision-making looks like and how we will measure our progress towards that vision.

This framework sets out how we will strengthen the capability of officers at all levels and across all service areas, while also supporting Councillors in their roles. All officers and leaders are encouraged to embed evidence-based decision-making into their everyday work.

Key Stakeholders & Partners

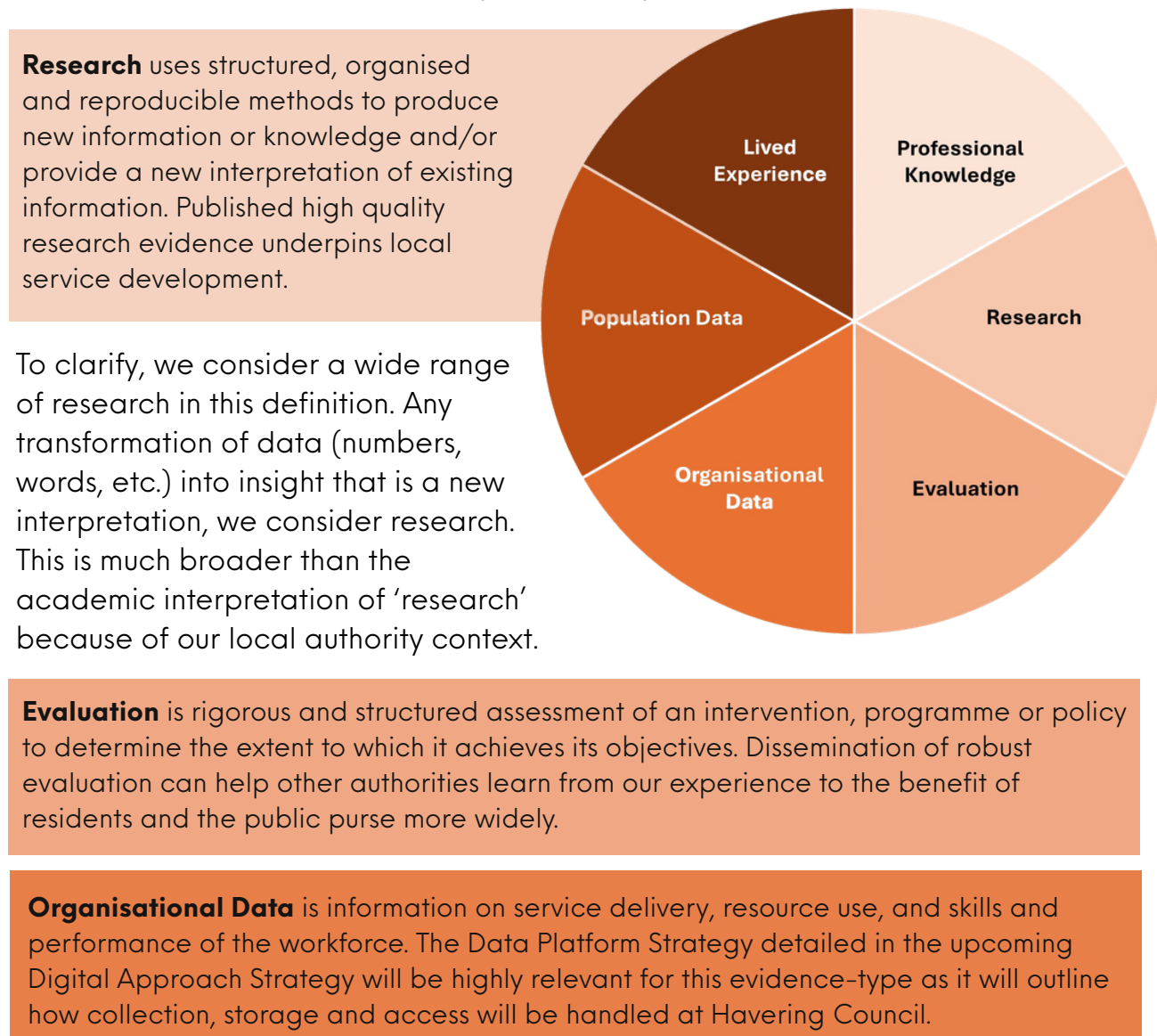
Decision-making in local government happens at all levels and in all service areas. Therefore, there are a wide range of stakeholders essential to the success of this framework. Examples of stakeholders within Havering, are included below but the framework is not limited to the following groups.

- **Councillors** act as the bridge between the local authority and the community. They can use evidence to support effective scrutiny and well-informed policymaking.
- **Senior Council leaders** rely on evidence to shape decisions about service delivery, commissioning, strategic planning, and resource allocation.
- **Council officers** generate, analyse, and apply evidence to assess performance and identify opportunities for improvement. This includes the Insight and Research Strategist, who will embed and maintain the cross-Council initiative, provide coordination, add capacity, and oversee progress.
- **External partners** such as voluntary, faith and community sector organisations, academic institutions, youth-serving organisations and businesses all create and share evidence that informs local priorities and service design. Havering Council's work increasingly depends on collaboration with these partners. The benefits of working together are stronger insights, reduced duplication, and better considered decisions.

Evidence Framework

The 'Evidence Pie', created by HDRC Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), provides an easy-to-understand framework for officers and partners. This framework has a broad definition of 'evidence', which has six, equally sized slices because all are equally important. [2] The proposed framework supports officers to think about where complimentary evidence types could strengthen their decisions.

The Evidence Framework complements and promotes the use of all evidence types and the best decisions draw on the combination of evidence types. Havering Council is especially strong in using 'Professional Knowledge' and capturing 'Lived Experience' evidence types. '**Research**' and '**Evaluation**' are currently underutilised, and therefore, are the areas of greatest opportunity for improvement. Furthermore, other strategies provide further details about the other forms of evidence (see section 'Aligned Strategies').



[2] Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC) Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT). Evidence Pie. <https://makeachange.rctcbc.gov.uk/how-hdrc-projects-work/widgets/124960/documents>

Population Data is information about the local population, their needs and how it changes over time. A common data source is census data.

Lived Experience pertains to feedback from and co-production with service users or residents on local services, support and key priorities. This includes consultations and surveys, but also usability testing, accessibility audits, service journey research, co-design workshops and analysis of service usage data. A broad interpretation ensures that resident voice, including children and young people, is embedded throughout the service lifecycle rather than only at formal consultation stages. The information from lived experience helps understand the nuances in the structure and processes related to a service thus is crucial in both refining the service and empowering the residents whom the service is intended.

Professional Knowledge refers to the insights from practitioners gained through their experience working with services. Conversations between practitioners within the Council and with external experts is a valuable evidence type that frequently occurs but is not always considered as evidence. Our definition intentionally includes this evidence type as it is valuable.

Current Evidence Use in Havering Council

To determine the current extent to which evidence is used to inform decisions a brief analysis was conducted. The Insights and Research team analysed Council Cabinet Reports, online consultation and survey platform reviewed ([Citizen Space](#)) (see Appendix B), conversations held with Council officers and teams and external partners. Additionally, a group of cross-Council officers used an Evidence Maturity Matrix to assess the Council's evidence maturity (see Appendix D).

The Evidence Maturity Matrix assesses the use of evidence, identifies improvement opportunities and plans next steps. Havering Council was assessed as 'Basic' and 'Early Progress' for most measures with no measure assessed as 'Mature'. The table in Appendix D summarises the maturity levels for each of the four aims and associated indicators.

Conversations with officers and partners revealed that when evidence is used, it tends to focus on "what" such as reporting numbers rather than "why" which explores the causation or trends in the evidence. A consistent challenge was the limited time and capacity to reflect or analyse evidence for decisions-making.

Aligned Strategies

This Evidence Framework compliments and expands upon other strategies at the local level.

Haverling Council Strategies

Upcoming Digital Approach Strategy | The strategy will provide a vision on how the Council intends to harness technology and its organisational data for the benefit of its residents by enabling insight, informing decisions and supporting continuous improvement. The Evidence Framework complements this strategy by detailing why and how data is used for decision-making by integrating multiple data sources and context to transform data into evidence.

Resident Engagement and Participation Strategy 2024-2027 | The strategy describes how residents and communities will be engaged in decision-making. This strategy is especially relevant when considering the 'Lived Experience' evidence type as the collection of diverse and representative experiences generates better outcomes.

Workforce Strategy –Refresh 2025-2027 and Beyond | The strategy outlines the commitment to develop the capability, skills, and culture needed for our future workforce. The Evidence Framework complements this strategy by focusing on building officer's evidence-based skills as well the reliance on 'Professional Knowledge' type of evidence in decision-making.

Upcoming Revised Children Participation Policy | This policy supports the wellbeing of children and young people by ensuring their voices are heard and acted upon. It is relevant to the Evidence Framework because it promotes the collection of lived experiences through age-appropriate methods and the consistent use of evidence that reflects children and young people's views in decision-making.

HAVERING COUNCIL'S VISION FOR EVIDENCE

This framework sets out how we will strengthen the generation, sharing and routine use of evidence across services, in a consistent and long-term way. Evidence-based decisions will reduce wastage and duplication; increase resource efficiency; accelerate learning; and increase accountability and transparency in decisions. Evidence-based decision-making is not about adding unnecessary tasks, but about shifting our approach so that work is done right the first time.

There are several outcomes that will occur as a result of a more skilled workforce and efficient, supportive processes for evidence-base decision-making. Our ability to deliver on corporate priorities will be improved by deepening our understanding of residents' needs and preferences. Strategy, service design and commissioning will all be strengthened by grounding decisions in robust evidence and demonstrating their impact. These outcomes will ultimately lead to higher satisfaction with Council services.

From a financial perspective, evidence-based approaches support more cost-effective service delivery and more accurate financial modelling. They also open the door to additional funding opportunities, including direct research and evaluation grants, as well as collaborative bids with partners.

Investing in officer's capability is another key advantage. By upskilling colleagues to use and generate evidence, we increase their confidence, job satisfaction and effectiveness in making informed decisions. This not only helps retain high-quality officers but also positions Havering Council as an attractive employer for candidates with strong analytical and evidence-based practice skills.

A culture where consistent use of evidence-based decision-making drives better policy, practice, and community wellbeing.

Evidence Across the Service Lifecycle

To achieve this vision, evidence must be embedded consistently — not only at governance checkpoints but across the service lifecycle.

This includes:

- **Discovery:** Understanding resident needs, demand patterns, behaviours and persistent or recurring problems through research, lived experience and data analysis.
- **Design and Implementation:** Testing ideas, validating accessibility, and ensuring solutions meet real-world needs before scaling.
- **Live Services:** Monitoring performance, digital adoption, service quality and outcomes through dashboards, feedback loops and evaluation.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Using insight and evaluation to refine, scale or stop services, for example where a service is not meeting its objectives or is no longer cost effective.

Embedding evidence in this way ensures that strategy, service design and operational delivery remain aligned and responsive to resident needs.

Evidence Framework Aims:

1. **Use evidence to deliver better resident outcomes, manage resources efficiently, and operate as an accountable, effective Council.**

Using evidence systematically is essential to delivering better outcomes for residents, especially in a context of tight budgets and rising demand. Evidence helps the Council target resources where they have the greatest impact and avoid ineffective activity. Decisions that use evidence are clearer, easier to explain, and focus more on what matters most to Havering's communities. It also ensures that services build on what already works by using existing evidence first and generating new data only where clear gaps exist. Evidence Impact Statements in key decisions are one way to capture how evidence achieves better outcomes.

By embedding evidence into routine decision-making, the Council can improve value for money, strengthen accountability, and ensure decisions genuinely improve outcomes for Havering's communities.

2. Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

Building the right skills and processes is essential for enabling consistent, high-quality evidence use across the Council. Officers need the knowledge and confidence to identify, assess, generate and apply evidence. Organisational processes must make this easy, safe and routine, while abiding by data protection requirements. This includes creating space for thinking time, requirements into decision-making pathways and putting in place the practical supports that enable officers to succeed.

The Council will explore opportunities to use emerging technologies, including AI-supported tools, to synthesise data, automate thematic coding and generate real-time insight dashboards. This will help ensure that evidence processes remain scalable, proportionate and efficient as demand grows.

The views of children and young people will be gathered and used in decision-making through age-appropriate engagement and co-production. The framework will support the skills, capacity and processes needed for this.

Improving awareness of where to find evidence, building confidence in assessing evidence quality and establishing clear processes ensures officers can use evidence. When this is achieved officers will be able to make better decisions, which will improve service delivery and use of Council resources more efficiently.

3. Foster a culture that values and routinely uses evidence in decision-making across the Council.

A culture that encourages using evidence is necessary for successful evidence-based decisions. Decision-making improves when officers are enabled to question assumptions, reflect on what works, and seek out robust evidence. Crucially, leadership must model this behaviour and create the conditions for officers to succeed.

When officers feel supported to use evidence and think critically, they are more engaged and more likely to stay. The organisation then becomes better positioned to attract and retain talented employees.

4. Collaborate internally and externally to generate, share, and use evidence, in line with the Council's iCare values.

Collaboration strengthens the quality and impact of evidence. Working across services and with external partners improves insight, reduces duplication, and helps the Council use limited resources more effectively. This framework therefore focuses on building stronger links across directorates. The framework also works to build and strengthen partnerships with organisations such as the Integrated Care Board (ICB) partners, National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), universities, voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) groups and other local authorities.

The Council's iCare values (Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect and Everyone) guide how evidence should be generated, used and shared. Our values ensure our approach is ethical, transparent, inclusive, and focused on improving outcomes for residents.

Finally, by sharing and disseminating evidence more routinely, the Council enhances openness and supports continuous learning across the organisation and with partners.

As defined by the Framework's Aims, the focus of this work will be to strengthen officers and senior leadership's capability and build processes to support evidence-based decision-making. When this is successfully done, the positive benefits of improved delivery of corporate priorities and financial outcomes will be realised.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

The accompanying action plan includes measures for progress and outcome for each action item. Identified leads for each action item are included and they will be responsible for gathering, maintaining and reporting the status of the measure.

These measures will be reported to ELT on a quarterly basis. After which, the framework owner and authors will review and, if needed, refresh the action plan.

RESOURCING

Like many Local Authorities, Havering Council is facing significant financial pressures. To navigate these challenges, we must maximise the value of every decision we make. Evidence-based decision-making, when embedded fully into our processes and culture, enables us to use resources more efficiently by improving our ability to make the right decision the first time.

This means grounding decisions in evidence, piloting initiatives and measuring key indicators before scaling, and continuously feeding insights back into practice to refine and improve our approach. Evidence-based decision-making should not be viewed as an additional task, but as a core element of business-as-usual. Every officer has a role in making this shift successful, and in ensuring that evidence informs our actions at every level of the organisation.

Where possible, we will continue to pursue external financial resources. However, it is equally important that leaders support their teams to make full use of existing development channels, such as the 10 Days of Learning and Apprenticeship programmes, to build the skills, capabilities, and confidence needed to work in an evidence-led way. Additional materials will be developed and shared, as outlined in the Action Plan, to support all officers in this transition

GOVERNANCE

Necessary to support creating and using high-quality evidence is the Research Governance Framework. The purpose is to ensure research activities are safe for everyone involved, research is methodologically appropriate, and in-line with organisational values and policies. This process will support officers and partners to conduct ethical, rigorous and strategic critical research. The accompanying Action Plan details the expansion of a Research Governance Framework across the entire Council under Goal 2.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 1: Use evidence to deliver better resident outcomes, manage resources efficiently, and operate as an accountable, effective Council.				
Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
1.1 Increase explicit references to different types of evidence (including research and evaluation) in Cabinet and ELT papers.	By Q4 2026	60% had less than 3 types	- Insight and Research team - Democratic Services - All officers	% Cabinet Report papers with ≥ 3 evidence types; Case stories of cost-effective service delivery and financial models; £ saved in improved service delivery
1.2 Use evaluation to challenge the status quo where appropriate, demonstrating when activities should be stopped, adapted, or scaled to optimise outcomes and costs by integrating evidence sections in ELT/Cabinet templates.	By Q1 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - All officers	% of ELT and Cabinet papers with evidence
1.3 Embed "Evidence Impact Statements" in procurement and strategy templates (expected outcomes, alternatives considered, Value for Money, risks, customer readiness) for $\geq 80\%$ of relevant papers.	From Q2 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Procurement Team - Policy & Strategy Team - All officers	% with Evidence Impact Statements

Goal 1: Use evidence to deliver better resident outcomes, manage resources efficiently, and operate as an accountable, effective Council.

Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
1.4 Delivery of training to Councillors on evidence-based decisions and scrutiny.	By Q1 2027	Non-existent	• Insight and Research team • Learning and Development team • All officers	Training attendance; learning objectives
1.5 Define three to five Areas of Research Interest (ARIs) with each service area to prioritise key evidence gaps and establish clear collaborative relationships. Share these on website so that external partners can contact about collaboration.	By Q3 2026	Non-existent	• Insight and Research team • Community partners • Service area leads and teams	Areas defined

Goal 2: Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
2.1 Launch a Council wide Evidence & Evaluation Toolkit and workflow. Include content on presenting findings in plain language, how to evaluate the quality of evidence, practical advice on integrating evidence into work and more.	By Q2 2026	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Communications & Engagement team	Toolkit, Number of visits/clicks
2.2 Update Research Governance Framework to include all research & evaluation activities delivered by council services and/or external organisations (also linked to 2.7 repository).	By Q4 2026	Research Governance for social care only	- Insight and Research team - Executive Leadership Group - Research Governance Panel - Communications & Engagement team	Adopted Council-wide Research Governance, Number of applications per year; # of recognition or awards for evidence-based
2.3 Establish an Evidence Champions Network with ≥ 1 champion per service, enabling hands on support, peer challenges and reusable assets (survey banks, evaluation templates, dashboards). Link the champions with those participating or completed in relevant Apprentice programmes as well as promote programmes to interested officers.	By Q1 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Evidence Champions - Executive Leadership Group	≥ 1 champion per service area

Goal 2: Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
2.4 Map the evidence, research and evaluations skills of Evidence Champions.	By Q4 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Evidence Champions	Skills map
2.5 Integrate Halo for standardised evidence/data requests, routing to the right experts, tracking, and reporting.	By Q2 2026	Non-existent	- Head of User-Centred Design and Digital Experience - Insight and Research team - Insight Manager	Halo request form process, Number of requests regarding evidence
2.6 Deliver or promote >15 per year evidence use or creation training opportunities as part of '10 Days of Learning' to improve officer's skills to use, create and share evidence.	Calendar year	Non-existent	- Learning & Organisational Development Manager - Insight and Research team - Evidence Champions	>15 per year; % of officers reporting confidence in evidence-based skills
2.7 Create and promote a single evidence hub (repository) linking to Citizen Space items, dashboards, reports and publications; including structured taxonomy, metadata tagging, search capability and integration with dashboards to avoid becoming a passive document repository.	By Q2 2028	Non-existent	- Assistant Director - Digital - Customer Insight Officer - Director of IT - Head of Information Governance - Insight and Research team - Insight Manager	Evidence hub (repository)

Goal 2: Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
2.8 Compile list of professional bodies and networks Havering Council are members are to maximise access to Professional Knowledge Evidence.	By Q3 2026	Non-existent	• Insight and Research team • Learning & Organisational Development Manager • Insight Manager • Assistant Director of Resources & Organisational Development	Number of networks and professional bodies on list, Number of views/clicks

Goal 3: Foster a culture that values and routinely uses evidence in decision-making across the Council.

Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
3.1 Embed "evidence use" prompts into service planning and quarterly performance reviews (what changed because of the evidence?).	From Q3 2026	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - All officers	Evidence prompts in templates
3.2 Promote thinking space (reflection time) as legitimate professional practice, linked to "10 Days of Learning". Build as part of the standard process by including in flow-charts, standard timelines and templates.	By Q2 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Learning & Organisational Development Manager - All officers	Attain approval for logging reflection time as part of '10 Days of Learning', Number of officers utilising this reflection time as part of 10 DoL, Update timelines and templates to appropriately allocate reflection time
3.3 Publish >10 per year plain language impact summaries of research or evaluation modelling the "you said / we did" format; cross post via intranet (and Viva) and, where appropriate, website the consultation quarterly summaries.	Calendar year	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Evidence Champions	Number of impact summaries
3.4 Create and disseminate quarterly evidence bulletins to promote evidence use and sharing.	Calendar year	Non-existent	Insight and Research team	Number of evidence bulletins per year

Goal 4: Collaborate internally and externally to generate, share, and use evidence, in line with the Council's iCare values (Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone).

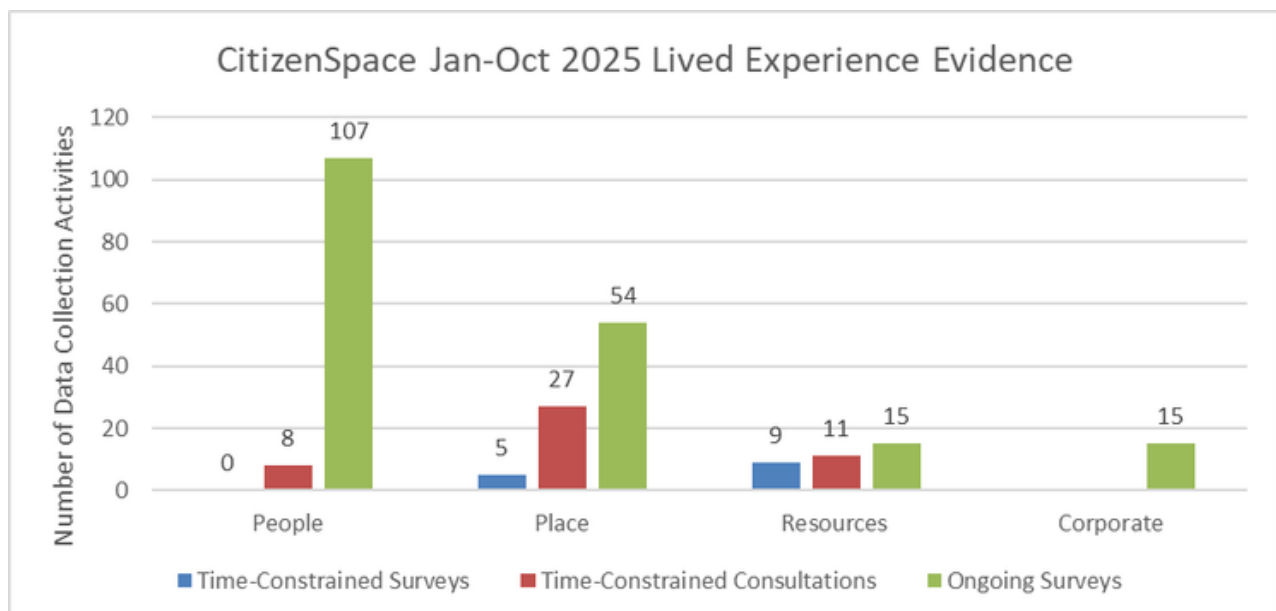
Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
4.1 Agree shared research priorities and ways of working with ICB partners, NHS, universities, and VCFSE; initiate ≥ 3 coproduced studies. (Related to GIO5 about ARIs)	By Q4 2026	No shared research priorities and unclear for co-produced studies	- Insight and Research team - Community partners - Service area leads and teams	Shared research priorities, Number of co-produced studies, Number of cross-partner events; £ of secured external funding to conduct evidence-based work
4.2 Implement a shared repository & dissemination cadence (Citizen Space for consultations; open dashboards for public-facing insights) with standard accessibility and feedback routes. (Related to 2.7)	By Q2 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Assistant Director - Digital - Customer Insight Officer - Director of IT - Head of Information Governance - Insight Manager	Process and cadence of sharing evidence, Number of evidence pieces shared, Number of visits/clicks; # of citation of Council work in external publications or reports
4.3 Explore the potential for joint posts or embedded researchers.	By Q1 2027	Non-existent	- Insight and Research team - Assistant Director of Resources & Organisational Development	Number of joint posts or embedded researchers

Goal 4: Collaborate internally and externally to generate, share, and use evidence, in line with the Council's iCare values (Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone).

Objective	Timeline	Baseline	Lead and partners	Measure
4.4 Work collaboratively with Commissioning, Procurement, Service design and digital delivery governance and Project Management Office teams to integrate evidence into service and programme design as well as evaluation plans.	By Q3 2026	Undefined	• Insight and Research team • Commissioning and Procurement team • PMO team	Templates, Number of programmes designed with evaluation plan
4.5 Use our values to guide collaboration—Integrity (ethics & transparency), Creativity (innovative methods), Ambition (impact focus), Respect (for lived experience), Everyone (inclusive co-production).	From Q24 2026	Undefined	• Insight and Research team • All officers	Value-aligned practice check during research governance framework

LIVED EXPERIENCE EVIDENCE COLLECTED VIA CITIZEN SPACE

Havering Council uses Citizen Space for online consultations and surveys. The 250 different 'Lived Experience' evidence generation activities from January to October of 2025 was analysed. There were three types of activities, time-constrained consultations, time-constrained surveys, and ongoing surveys, which are used for evaluation feedback of ongoing services or similar. The following graph depicts the data collection activities by directorate to explore where there are opportunities for further collection of 'Lived Experience' but is not intended to penalise any Directorate. The People Directorate had the most activities with 115 followed by Place with 86. Due to the different statutory requirements regarding consultation for each directorate, we would expect to see variance in the number of activities.



EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE IN ACTION

What: The Programme Management Office (PMO) regularly conducts evidence-based analysis to identify opportunities, costs, and options for Council-wide initiatives. Recently, a team completed a review of the Online Booking Project to understand how a new system could support improved service delivery. While the project focused primarily on a solution for the Registrar's Office, it also has the potential to scale across other areas of the Council.

How: The review process involved discussions with officers, benchmarking against other local authorities, and market research into alternative solutions. Through this work, four potential options were identified and assessed for their suitability for Havering Council.

Outcomes: Following the review, the team concluded that a phased approach would be the most effective. In the short term, an off-the-shelf solution should be implemented to meet immediate operational needs. In the longer term, as internal capacity grows, the Council could consider developing an inhouse system to provide a more tailored and sustainable solution.

So what: Their thorough and systematic approach highlights how evidence-based decision-making strengthens our ability to choose solutions that deliver the greatest value for the organisation.

BASELINE EVIDENCE MATURITY MATRIX ASSESSMENT

A group of 24 cross-Council officers were invited to be part of a Co-Design Group for the f. They each reviewed the Evidence Maturity Matrix and then participated in rating the Council during a facilitated conversation using an online facilitation tool, Miro. Additionally, officers who were invited to be on the Co-Design Group but could not attend the session as well as Executive Leadership Group were able to vote via a Microsoft Forms version of the Evidence Maturity Matrix. A total of nine officers voted during the facilitated conversation and six officers participated via the MS Forms. It was not compulsory to rate each indicator

Goal 1: Use evidence to deliver better resident outcomes, manage resources efficiently, and operate as an accountable, effective council.				
	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Understanding and use of evidence	The need to use evidence is generally understood.	Officers understand the need to use a range of evidence in decision-making.	Understanding a good quality and relevant evidence is wide BUT there needs to be further development in the use and creation.	Officers understand and use a wide range of evidence in identifying issues and considering interventions effectiveness.
Votes	6	7		

Goal 1: Use evidence to deliver better resident outcomes, manage resources efficiently, and operate as an accountable, effective council.

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Leaders' confidence in using and challenging evidence	Leaders are confident assessing the relevance of some evidence presented.	Leaders are confident assessing the quality and relevance of some evidence presented.	Leaders are confident assessing the quality and relevance of most evidence presented (e.g. research, data, stakeholders views, practitioner experience). AND they provide challenge if the evidence is not good quality or relevant.	Leaders are confident assessing the quality and relevance of the evidence presented (e.g. research, data, stakeholders views, practitioner experience). AND they are clear on the questions they want answered, provide challenge, and request more evidence as appropriate.
Votes	7	5		

Goal 2: Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Oversight of research & evaluation activity (governance)	Some services submit proposals for review.	More than half the services submit proposals for review AND over half are retrospective submissions.	More than half the services submit proposals for review AND the majority are prior to their start.	All research and evaluation activity is reviewed prior to implementation through research governance processes.
Votes	11		1	

Goal 2: Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Use of processes to embed evidence	The need for processes and tools to prompt the routine access and use of evidence has been identified.	Officers sometimes use processes and tools to prompt the routine access and use of evidence in policy development.	Officers usually use standard processes, templates and checklists that prompt the routine access and use of evidence in policy development.	Officers consistently use standard processes, templates and checklists that prompt the routine access and use of evidence in policy development.
Votes	5	8		
Use of processes to embed evidence	The need for processes and tools to prompt the routine access and use of evidence has been identified.	Officers sometimes use processes and tools to prompt the routine access and use of evidence in policy development.	Officers usually use standard processes, templates and checklists that prompt the routine access and use of evidence in policy development.	Officers consistently use standard processes, templates and checklists that prompt the routine access and use of evidence in policy development.
Votes	5	8		
Ability to identify research and evaluation questions	Officers search for evidence if required.	Some officers can define the questions they want the evidence to answer.	Most officers can define the questions they want the evidence to answer (e.g., context, rationale, effectiveness of interventions).	All officers define and refine the questions they want the evidence to answer (e.g., context, rationale, effectiveness of interventions)
Votes	5	8	1	

Goal 2: Build the skills and processes needed to embed evidence use, creation and sharing across the Council.

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Ability to assess research evidence quality and relevance	Some officers can assess quality or relevance of evidence.	Most officers can assess quality and relevance of evidence or can ask for support.	All officers can assess quality and relevance of evidence or can ask for support.	All officers can assess quality and relevance of evidence. AND where specialist skills are needed, colleagues provide support.
Votes	8	5		

Goal 3: Foster a culture that values and routinely uses evidence in decision-making across the Council.

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Sharing of evidence	Officers responsible for collating evidence share findings when asked, BUT there is no requirement or standard process OR this process is under-resourced.	Officers responsible for collating evidence usually make findings accessible to colleagues, BUT there is no requirement or standard process OR this process is under-resourced.	Officers responsible for collating evidence usually make finding accessible to colleagues AND there is a process for this.	Officers responsible for collating evidence consistently make findings accessible to colleagues to inform future work, archiving and updating information. This includes a systematic approach for how evidence is stored and accessed.
Votes	10	3		

Goal 3: Foster a culture that values and routinely uses evidence in decision-making across the Council.

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Ability to deliver research and/or evaluation projects	Some officers have experience designing and delivering projects led by internal teams and/or external partners	Some officers have experience designing and delivering projects led by internal teams and/or external partners OR know who they can go to for support.	Some officers have experience designing and delivering projects led by internal teams and/or external partners OR know who they can go to for support AND the support is provided.	All officers are confident in designing and delivering research or evaluation projects led by internal teams and/or external partners
Votes	2	7	4	

Goal 4: Collaborate internally and externally to generate, share, and use evidence, in line with the Council's values (Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone).

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Build and strengthen effective research collaboration across teams within the Council	Collaboration across boundaries (service areas and directorates) is limited.	There is some understanding of other Council staff partners. Collaborative behaviour is not yet commonplace.	Many research projects are completed across boundaries (service areas and directorates). Shared outcomes are starting to be developed.	Partners work together doing effective research to achieve a shared vision.
Votes	2	8	2	

Goal 4: Collaborate internally and externally to generate, share, and use evidence, in line with the Council's values (Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone).

	Basic	Early Progress	Substantial Progress	Mature
Build and strengthen effective research collaboration with external partners (including academics)	Collaboration across boundaries is limited.	There is some understanding of stakeholders. Collaborative behaviour is not yet commonplace.	Many research projects are completed across boundaries. Shared outcomes are starting to be developed.	Partners work together doing effective research to achieve a shared vision.
Votes	8	4		
Engage community in the research process	Community is not engaged in research.	People who use services may be asked to share information and input, but they do not have the power to influence or affect change.	There are opportunities to express their views and may be able to influence some decisions, but this depends on what the people responsible for services will allow.	Research is an equal relationship between people who use services and the people responsible for services.
Votes	2	2	8	

OVERVIEW OF EVIDENCE MATURITY MATRIX BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Goal	Measures	Maturity Level
Goal 1	Understanding and use of evidence	Early Progress
	Leaders' confidence in using and challenging evidence	Basic
Goal 2	Oversight of research & evaluation activity (governance)	Basic
	Use of processes to embed evidence	Early Progress
	Ability to identify research and evaluation questions	Early Progress
	Ability to assess research evidence quality and relevance	Basic
Goal 3	Sharing of evidence	Basic
	Ability to deliver research and/or evaluation projects	Early Progress
Goal 4	Build and strengthen effective research collaboration across teams within the council	Early Progress
	Build and strengthen effective research collaboration with external partners	Basic
	Engage community in the research process	Substantial Progress