Service Definition: Data and Information Structure Design

About SOCITM Commercial Ltd

SOCITM Commercial provides independent, vendor-agnostic advisory and delivery support to local authorities, mayoral combined authorities and wider public sector organisations.

Acting as a trusted advisor and critical friend, we help clients navigate complex technology, service and organisational change. Our collaborative and evidence-based approach connects technology decisions with strategic priorities, service outcomes, affordability, deliverability and public value.

We bring an understanding of local government reform, devolution, shared services, digital transformation, ERP, CRM and EAM programmes, and data legacy modernisation. We work alongside client teams to simplify complex decisions, provide objective challenge and identify practical options tailored to each organisation's needs.

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1. Service overview

Our Data and Information Structure Design service helps local authorities, mayoral combined authorities and wider public sector organisations create secure, scalable and interoperable structures for managing, integrating and using data.

Acting as a trusted advisor and critical friend, SOCITM Commercial provides independent, vendor-agnostic data and information architecture design. The service supports ERP, CRM and EAM implementation, cloud migration, local government reform, devolution, shared services, reporting, analytics and AI by defining how data should be structured, described, governed, shared and protected.

We translate strategic, service and user needs into practical models, standards, flows and design principles. This provides a clear blueprint for procurement, migration, integration and implementation while supporting data quality, security, accessibility and public value.

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2. Who the service is for

The service is designed for public sector organisations that are:

- Designing target data or information architectures
- Preparing for ERP, CRM and EAM implementation or replacement
- Planning cloud migration or platform modernisation
- Responding to local government reform or consolidation
- Establishing shared services or common platforms
- Developing cross-authority or partner data sharing
- Improving reporting, analytics or AI capability
- Rationalising fragmented data models and interfaces
- Defining master and reference data standards
- Strengthening information governance and interoperability

3. Challenges the service addresses

- Fragmented data structures across systems and services
- Inconsistent definitions, identifiers and reference data
- Complex point-to-point integrations and manual workarounds
- Poor interoperability across authorities and partners
- Unclear ownership, lineage and governance
- Legacy models restricting ERP, CRM, EAM, data legacy or cloud transformation
- Data structures unsuitable for reporting, analytics or AI
- Inconsistent metadata, classifications and retention rules
- Security and privacy controls applied inconsistently
- Lack of an agreed target-state data blueprint

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4. Scope of design

The precise scope is agreed with the client and may include:

Area	Examples
Conceptual architecture	Business concepts, domains, relationships and strategic principles
Logical data models	Entities, attributes, relationships, keys, constraints and rules
Physical design guidance	Relational, non-relational, warehouse, lake and platform considerations
Master and reference data	Common identifiers, golden records, code sets and ownership
Metadata and taxonomy	Definitions, classifications, catalogues, vocabularies and naming standards
Data flows and lineage	Sources, transformations, destinations, dependencies and traceability
Integration architecture	APIs, events, interfaces, exchange formats and interoperability patterns
Security and lifecycle	Access, privacy, retention, archiving, audit and disposal requirements
Analytics and AI	Structures supporting reporting, insight, automation and responsible AI
Reform and shared services	Cross-authority alignment, consolidation and shared data foundations

5. Our approach

Our approach is collaborative, proportionate and evidence-based. It is tailored to the organisation's data landscape, delivery context and intended use of the designs.

1. Mobilise and agree scope: Confirm outcomes, stakeholders, design boundaries, governance and required artefacts.

2. Understand the current state: Review existing models, systems, flows, standards, governance and known constraints.

3. Define requirements and principles: Agree business, service, data, security, integration and non-functional requirements.

4. Develop conceptual design: Model key domains, concepts, relationships and target-state principles.

5. Develop logical structures: Define entities, attributes, identifiers, standards, metadata and relationships.

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6. Design flows and integration: Map data movement, transformation, interfaces, APIs and interoperability patterns.

7. Validate and assure: Test designs with service, data, architecture, security and delivery stakeholders.

8. Recommend and transition: Provide implementation considerations, priorities and an indicative transition roadmap.

6. Design principles and assessment framework

Design principles and criteria are agreed with the client and may include:

- Alignment with organisational strategy and service outcomes
- Clear data definitions, ownership and accountability
- Reuse of common identifiers and reference data
- Open standards and interoperability
- Security, privacy and least-privilege access
- Data quality, lineage and traceability
- Scalability, adaptability and performance
- Accessibility, usability and discoverability
- Lifecycle management and lawful retention
- Portability and avoidance of unnecessary vendor dependency
- Sustainability and proportionate technology choices
- Fitness for reporting, analytics and responsible AI

7. Deliverables

Deliverables are tailored to the requirement and may include:

- Data and information architecture design report
- Conceptual and logical data models
- Domain models and information taxonomies
- Master and reference data recommendations
- Metadata and data dictionary structures
- Data flow, lineage and dependency models
- Integration maps and interface principles
- Security, privacy and lifecycle design requirements
- Target-state architecture and design principles
- ERP, CRM, EAM, data legacy, cloud or migration design considerations

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- Implementation priorities and indicative transition roadmap
- Executive summary and governance presentation

Outputs are provided in accessible, commonly used formats suitable for incorporation into data strategies, enterprise architecture, business cases, procurement documentation, migration plans and technical delivery backlogs.

8. Example cases

Context	How the service can help
Local government reform	Design common structures across merging or reorganising authorities.
Mayoral combined authority	Define interoperable data models and partner exchange structures.
ERP, CRM and EAM implementation	Design master, reference, CRM, asset, transactional and integration data structures, including legacy mappings.
Shared services	Create common definitions, identifiers and cross-authority data flows.
Cloud modernisation	Define target structures for scalable cloud data platforms.
Analytics and reporting	Create consistent, traceable structures for trusted insight.
AI readiness	Design governed, discoverable and fit-for-purpose data foundations.
Legacy rationalisation	Replace fragmented models and interfaces with coherent standards.

9. Public sector standards and good practice

Where relevant, the design considers applicable legislation, public sector guidance and client policies, including:

- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Data and AI Ethics Framework
- Government Data Quality Framework
- Technology Code of Practice
- Government and public sector data standards
- NCSC security and cloud guidance
- Accessibility and inclusive design requirements

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- Open standards, interoperability and information-sharing principles

Applicable standards, legal interpretations and assurance requirements are agreed during mobilisation. The service provides design advice and recommendations; responsibility for formal compliance, lawful processing, security accreditation and implementation decisions remains with the client and relevant assurance bodies.

10. Co-design and governance

Design is undertaken collaboratively with relevant business, service, data, architecture, security and delivery stakeholders. Review points are agreed to validate assumptions, resolve terminology and confirm that structures are practical for implementation and ongoing governance.

Decision rights, ownership and design authority arrangements are agreed during mobilisation. This helps ensure that approved structures can be maintained and evolved after the engagement.

11. Engagement model

The engagement is scoped according to the number of domains, systems, interfaces and organisations involved, together with the maturity of existing architecture and evidence. Delivery can be remote, on-site or hybrid and may include workshops, interviews, document review, modelling and governance presentations.

Timescales, team composition, deliverables and commercial arrangements are agreed for each engagement, enabling either a focused domain design or a broader organisation-wide architecture assignment.

12. Knowledge transfer

Knowledge transfer is embedded throughout the engagement. We work alongside client teams, explain the design method and provide reusable artefacts where appropriate. This builds internal capability to govern, maintain and evolve the resulting data and information structures.

13. Why SOCITM Commercial

- Public sector focus across local government and combined authorities
- Independent, vendor-agnostic advice and objective challenge
- Trusted advisor and critical friend approach
- Understanding of reform, devolution and shared services
- Ability to connect data architecture with service outcomes
- Evidence-based designs supporting governance and procurement

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- Practical focus on interoperability, deliverability and public value

14. Service boundaries

Data and Information Structure Design is an advisory and design service focused on conceptual, logical and implementation-guiding artefacts. Unless separately commissioned, it does not include production data population, data cleansing, software development, interface build, platform configuration, testing, deployment, migration execution or managed data services.

Detailed physical designs may depend on the selected technology and delivery partner. This separation protects the vendor-agnostic nature of the service and allows build and implementation support to be commissioned through an appropriate route.

15. Client responsibilities

- Provide timely access to relevant stakeholders and documentation
- Provide available models, inventories, standards and interface information
- Confirm design scope, governance and decision authorities
- Identify applicable security, privacy and records requirements
- Validate terminology, business rules and target-state assumptions
- Retain responsibility for compliance, procurement and implementation decisions

16. Client outcomes

- A clear and governed target data structure
- Improved interoperability across systems and organisations
- Stronger foundations for ERP, CRM, EAM, data legacy, cloud and shared services
- Reduced integration complexity and duplicate definitions
- Improved data quality, lineage and accountability
- Better support for reporting, analytics and AI
- More confident procurement and implementation decisions
- A practical route from architecture to delivery

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