The data landscape — 1,460 requests, 11 indicators, 940 hours

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12 months of request log, reconciled against five applications and 340 spreadsheets · fictional document

Fictional document — demonstration example

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Fictional document, produced for the demonstration. **The measurement covers the department's QUEUES and LEAD TIMES, never what a named member of staff does. The 11 indicator sheets are written, each with its scope, its cut-off date and its plain-language query: the department reads eleven sheets, not 1,118 answers.**

Where the year's 1,460 figure requests come from

Requester	Requests	Share	What it costs today	What changes
Elected members — committees and full council	**486**	**33.3%**	**6 days average lead time; the answer mobilises 3 people**	**Within the minute for the 11 indicators, with scope and cut-off date**

Requester	Requests	Share	What it costs today	What changes
Chief executive's office	312	21.4%	Urgent requests that displace the rest of the queue	Served without displacing the queue
The 14 operational departments	524	35.9%	Each department rebuilds its own figures in its own spreadsheet	One point of entry, one figure, one written scope
Audit bodies and external organisations	138	9.4%	Rebuilt on demand, with no trace of the query used	Query attached, rerunnable identically
Total	**1,460**	**100%**	—	—

The 11 indicators covering 1,118 requests — and the dated source of each

Indicator	Requests	Reference source	Scope written into the sheet
Real operating expenditure	**214**	General ledger + final accounts	**Main budget, excluding ancillary budgets and social action centre, chapters 011/012/65/66/67**
Budget execution by department	**186**	Commitments and payment orders in the finance software	14 departments, main budget, cut off at month end
Payroll	**142**	Chapter 012 of the finance software	**Full chapter 012, including elected members' allowances and statutory insurance**
Headcount	118	HR system	**Staff in post at 31 December, all statuses, career breaks included**

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Indicator	Requests	Reference source	Scope written into the sheet
Absence rate	104	Time and absence management	**Working days, excluding annual leave, minimum grouping 5 staff**
Supplier payment time	92	Finance software	**From receipt of the invoice to its settlement**
Capital carry-forwards	78	Finance software, capital section	Main budget, cut off at 31 December
Grants to associations	64	Account 6574 + community life department's table	**Cash grants; in-kind support is counted separately**
Facility attendance	48	Booking software + tills	Entries counted, school entries distinguished
Meals served	42	Catering software	**Meals served, of which meals billed to families**
Contracts awarded	30	Procurement module of the finance software	**Initial contracts; variations counted separately**
Total of the 11 indicators	**1,118**	**76.6% of the 1,460 requests**	—

The remaining 342 requests go to the management controller — with the file already assembled. The question as asked, the sources concerned, the possible scopes and the figures already extracted. **She answers knowing, instead of answering while searching**, and that is where most of the returned time is won: it is not the hard question that costs, it is the consolidation that precedes it.

The three items in the fiche's « the gain » section, costed against your own diaries

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Item	Share of time today	After	In time	Annual volume	Hours returned
Preparing a committee dashboard — extraction, consolidation, formatting	**60%**	**18%**	**15 h 36 → 4 h 40 out of 26 h**	**32**	**349 h 26**
Cross-referencing several source files — reconciling identifiers, scopes and vintages	**23%**	**10%**	**1 h 09 → 30 min out of 5 h**	**240**	**156 h 00**
Answering an elected member's figure request — actual keying	**8%**	**6%**	**32 min → 24 min out of 6 h 40 of circuit**	**1,460**	**194 h 40**
Statutory reports — gathering and formatting the data	—	—	38 h → 11 h out of 62 h	6	162 h 00
Monthly budget positions	—	—	9 h → 2 h 30	12	78 h 00
Total	—	—	—	—	**940 h 06**

> **On the third item the fiche is cautious — 8% to 6% — and rightly so: what shifts is not the keying time, it is the LEAD TIME. An elected member's figure request comes back in 6 days today because it crosses three people and two applications, not because it requires six days of work. After: within the minute for the 1,118 requests that fall under the 11 indicators. The hours gained on this item are modest; the credibility gained in the chamber is not.**

940 h 06, rounded down: 940 hours returned over the year. On the statutory working-time basis — **1,607 hours a year, 151.67 hours a month, 35 hours a week** — that is **more than six months of work**, or **more than twenty-six weeks**, returned to a nine-person department. **Rounding is always taken downwards:** a gain rounded

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up is a gain an elected member can dispute in the chamber. **No post cut, no post created** — it is time returned to analysis, budget preparation and management control, which until now existed only as an intention.

What reconciling the five sources surfaced — and what year-end closing never leaves time to measure

Finding	Volume	What it costs	What fixes it
Indicators presented to committee carrying two values depending on the source	**9**	**5 of them have already been presented in both values over three financial years**	**Scope declared at the top of every figure**
Arithmetic errors within those 9 gaps	**0**	—	**The problem is not the addition, it is the missing word**
Departmental spreadsheets reconciled once a year, at closing	340	Corrections discovered too late for committee	Monthly reconciliation proposed for 3 departments — 118 spreadsheets
Scope divergences found across 36 months of released figures	**447**	**96 dashboards and 18 reports examined**	**4 control rules, 414 covered — 92.6%**

> **The rule this demonstrator defends, and which holds up everything else: NO FIGURE LEAVES WITHOUT ITS SCOPE DECLARED AT THE TOP** — which budget, which departments, which employment statuses, which cut-off date. **And two different scopes are never compared in the same chart. A change of scope is announced BEFORE the commentary, never after an elected member's question.** This is not a matter of form: **it is what makes it possible, in the chamber, to argue about what the figure measures rather than about where it came from.**

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Version of the 11 indicator sheets settled by the director of finance and performance, on: _____

Next review of the indicators and their volumes — proposed at six months — set for: _____

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