



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Review of Business Intelligence provision |
| Date: | 22 nd May 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Rose Crozier, Head of ISB extn 4200 |
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Background Information

The Council's recently adopted IS Strategy has highlighted that information is a key asset of the Council. Data is held in many databases across the organisation supporting corporate, departmental and service requirements.

Applications have been acquired over time and typically reporting capability has been developed alongside the application as a point solution at the time of procurement. This has resulted in the Council using a number of different reporting applications creating an overhead in administration and maintenance of skills. Without further investment none of these tools would be suitable for corporate use.

To manage services more effectively and to support decision making it is important that the Council can retrieve, join and manipulate data at all levels in a timely and cost effective manner.

As technology has advanced to bring new reporting or Business Intelligence (BI) tools to market to meet these objectives more effectively, a review has been undertaken:

- to examine current BI tools used in the Council
- to assess the indicative costs for such a tool to be used corporately
- to identify the potential for saving on the maintenance of such products.

This review ties in with the "Organisation fit to lead and serve" theme of the Corporate Plan which aims to improve the council's capacity to deliver excellent service.

The council is striving for standardisation of BI tools which in turn will allow for increases in efficiency and improved availability of information. Corporate BI rather than point solutions can deliver on this promise if deployed successfully however there are a number of factors which dictate how successful the uptake is and includes cost of ownership, ease of use and innovative use of current and emerging technologies.

The main points from the review are as follows:

- Tools exist which take advantage of new technology allowing for a lower total cost of ownership than currently experienced by the council
- Indicative costs from market research has shown that there is potential for saving £20k per year in perpetuity on existing licence costs for point solutions.
- There is the potential for reducing staff time and costs associated with running reports and manipulating data.
- There are scalable solutions that can be expanded to suit the councils changing needs and can be supported and developed in-house.
- There are solutions available which will provide key decision makers with the tools that allow them to draw upon financial and non-financial data.
- Solutions exist where there is a reduced time to production thus significantly reducing implementation costs.

Resource Implications

The staff resources required on the part of the Council to procure and implement a new BI tool will be drawn from within the existing establishment.

The cost of procuring BI licenses is estimated to be in the region of £80,000 and provision is made for this expenditure in the revenue budget.

Recommendations

Committee is asked for permission to tender for a corporate business intelligence tool which avails of advancements in technology.

Decision Tracking

Key to Abbreviations

BI – Business Intelligence

Documents Attached