Committee:	Cabinet	**Date:**
Title:	Revenue Bid – Reporting Tool for Development Management, Enforcement, Building Control, Environmental Services including Licensing	Thursday, 2 November 2023
Portfolio Holder:	Planning – Councillor Evans, Portfolio for Planning	
Report Author:	Ann Howells, Performance and Business Manager (Planning). ahowells@uttlesford.gov.uk	**Key decision:** No

Summary

1. The council has been approached by an IT Service provider – IDOX plc. IDOX provides the database and document management systems, remotely for Development Management including Enforcement and Building Control, Licensing and Environmental Services.

2. IDOX have created a powerful performance tool called Idox Insights – basically Power BI where '*create rich, interactive data visualisations from multiple data sources and share important business insights that drive success/es.'* The initial creation is for Development Management.

3. This report considers the benefits of this opportunity and any risks.

Recommendations

4. Cabinet approves the opportunity and agree to the funding of £45,600 which covers a two-year period from the MTFS reserve.

Financial Implications

5. Cost of £45,600 to be paid in phases:
   - £22,800 in year 2023/24
   - £22,800 in year 2024/25
   From the Revenue MTFS reserve which supports the wider change of Blueprint Uttlesford.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
   - Uttlesford Peer Review Report – June 2023

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Impact

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Communication/Consultation	Communication with relevant Service Heads of departments, approval from Cllr Evans, approval from Strategic Director of Planning. Discussions with IDOX
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Any legal agreement of the new contract will mirror previous agreements entered into with IDOX
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	Will improve performance reporting across the relevant departments.

Situation

8. Reporting from IDOX is mostly through Microsoft Access reports. These are written, run and then pasted into an excel spreadsheet to interrogate the data. At best the existing data is siloed, disparate and out of date as soon as the report has been run. At worse, data is clunky and inaccessible. The absence of an effective reporting tool prevents effective performance management.

9. Power BI (or IDOX Insights) will turn this around and at the press of a button, the most up to date information will be at officers and management fingers. Working better and more efficiently.

10. Planning recently had a Peer Review and one mention was of the manual processes which impede the service having up to date data. An example from another local authority showed exactly how the software would become key to effective management and provide accountability, transparency and democracy across the services using IDOX.

11. IDOX have created a reporting tool for Development Management and are seeking a local authority to work with them to carry out a 'case study' on how

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we have used the tool, created other relevant reporting and how it has improved or performance and become more efficient.

12. Alongside the 'case study' they are seeking an authority who will help them develop the 'tool' to other service users – Building Control, Enforcement, Licensing and Environmental Services. There would be a dedicated 'project team' to move this program forward. IDOX would support the team and teach them how to create these 'tools'. All of which will mean that moving ahead the authority could become quite self-sufficient.

13. To be funded from MTFS reserve.

14. Council Priority – Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027

- Implement a corporate change programme to increase accountability, transparency and democracy at the council
- Deliver cost-effective and efficient services that live within the council's means
- Constantly seek to improve the quality of our services whether provided in-house, in partnership or contracted out

15. Benefits:
- More reliable data
- Enhanced analysis
- Cost cutting by automating routine tasks
- Improved staff efficiency
- Increased or measured office productivity
- Low cost at this stage, the Authority is seen as taking a lead in a project – good publicity.
- It is anticipated that there will be considerable officer time saved, not having to write, run and integrate the data as well as management time.
- Improved assessment of time spent on task that facilitate/improve cost recovery and the setting of fees and charges
- Allow managers to immediately address workload imbalances
- Provides managers to allow rapid reporting
- Effective oversight of officer workloads that will reduce the number of complaints from delayed or unactioned service requests
- Provides managers with the tools to realise the service demands allowing for better planning and management of workstreams
- Quicker access to performance data at service, team and individual level

16. If we do not accept this opportunity the authority misses out on the chance to formulate/mold the software and the potential cost is likely to increase because we would need to pay for each module which could see an increase in cost to the authority of approx.. £26,000 per annum on top of the £22,800.

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Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Not accepting the opportunity to work with the provider at this time will eventually cost UDC more money in the future.	2	2	Accept the opportunity and work with the provider.

1 = Little or no risk or impact
2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

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