Report to:	*Cabinet*
Date of meeting:	*05 June 2023*
Report author:	*Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead*
Report sponsor:	*Associate Director of Customer and Corporate Services*
Portfolio holder:	*Cllr Mark Watkin*
Report title:	*Business Intelligence Strategy 2023-26*
Nature of report:	*For approval*

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 The Council Plan 2022-26 makes a commitment to *"deliver a step change in how we use our data and information so it strengthens our drive for endless improvement".* The development of the council's Business Intelligence Strategy is a central plank in realising that commitment, setting out the strategic direction of the council's Business Intelligence function, its place within the wider commitment to continuous improvement and an accompanying Delivery Plan covering the three years up to the end of the current Council Plan.

1.2 Business intelligence can transform the way in which data and information is used. It can be defined as the use of technology to combine data, software tools and best practice data analytics to support more data-driven decision making. It allows organisations to learn more about customers' needs, to monitor performance and inform decision making. In short, business intelligence gives us more information to enable us to provide the very best services to our customers; the residents, businesses and community of Watford.

1.3 The council's first Business Intelligence Strategy is attached at Appendix 1 and is presented to Cabinet for endorsement and approval.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet are requested to:

- Approve and formally adopt the Business Intelligence Strategy and Delivery Plan.

3.0 Decision Pathway

3.1 Final decision-making body: Cabinet
3.1.1 Indicative date: 5 June 2023

Contact Officer:

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Reviewed and signed off by: *Liam Hornsby, Associate Director of Customer and Corporate Services*

4.0   Detailed Proposal

4.1   The council holds a huge amount of data within IT systems, reports and service documents. Making sense of this data and translating it into useful and insightful information which can improve our services for customers, support decision-making and aid transparency can be challenging. The Council Plan 2022-26 recognises that there are currently untapped opportunities to harness this data more effectively to improve how the organisation operates and provides high quality services.

4.2   The first step in improving the corporate use of data was the implementation of the council's Business Intelligence platform two years ago. This system has provided the organisation with a different way of collating information from across the council and presenting it in a way that adds value and can assist the organisation to achieve its wider objectives. Whilst significant progress has been made, it is, however, important to note that the build and implementation of a system does not, in itself, fundamentally change the way in which data is used to drive improvements. How the council uses this insight, the areas it elects to focus on and the embedding of a data driven approach is all integral to ensuring that the additional capability provided by the system leads to better outcomes for our residents, businesses and community.

4.3   As such, the Business Intelligence Strategy seeks to set out how the council will manage and maximise the use of data and information to achieve the following proposed vision:

> *"An information rich council which captures data accurately and efficiently and uses the insight gained from data analysis to drive performance, decision-making and transparency"*

4.4   The strategy sets out a range of objectives that the council hopes to achieve through its implementation:

- Enable an information-rich organisation that is able to pro-actively and rapidly respond to emerging customer demand.

- Enable rapid, evidence-based decision making.

- Enable consistent delivery of more informed communications to customers.

- Support the organisation to deliver new initiatives, innovations and service improvements aligned with customer needs.

- Drive the development of the corporate performance framework and enable better scrutiny of council wide performance by officers and councillors.

- Help services to develop their use of data as a key tool to support the delivery and development of services for customers.

4.5   These objectives are underpinned by a range of draft principles which will be applied to the data that is collected and used by the organisation:

- Driven by customer insight

- Up to date, accessible information, collected once and used multiple times

- Single version of the truth

- Data valued as an asset to be utilised

- Drive value quickly, then build on it

- Open, shared data supporting transparency

4.6   It should also be noted that the Business Intelligence Strategy, and the council's approach to data and information, should not be considered in isolation. The Business Intelligence Strategy is driven by our Council Plan 2022-26 and will support the delivery of key strategies, such as our Customer Experience Strategy, whilst being underpinned by the organisation's values and behaviours which will support the culture change required to embed a more proactive approach to business intelligence.

4.7   The Business Intelligence Strategy will form part of the council's wider approach to continuous improvement, providing data in a compelling and valuable way which allows the organisation to make clear and well-informed decisions and identify ways in which to improve performance. As such, the recent review of council Key Performance Indicators, effectively forms the first stage of delivery of the new strategy. A Delivery Plan has been developed and has been included for approval alongside the Strategy. It sets out where resources will be focused to drive value as soon as possible. The Delivery Plan activities will be delivered as part of a programme supported by the council's Enterprise Programme Management Office with reporting on progress to the EPMO Assurance Group on a 6-weekly basis to provide ongoing oversight.

4.8   The Delivery Plan sets out a programme of activities split in to 5 workstreams:

   1. **Driving Performance**

Develop a corporate performance framework using Business Intelligence tools to collect, analyse and present information and insights in a way that enables better scrutiny of council wide performance by officers and councillors.

2. **Enhanced Decision Making**
Support the organisation to deliver new initiatives, innovations and service improvements aligned with customer needs. This will be achieved by combining data from several different sources and developing reports, based on need, that provide a clearer picture of customer requirements, and their experiences when interacting with the council.

3. **Data-driven and Insight Focused**
Help services to develop their use of data as a key tool to support the delivery and development of services for customers. Through engagement and feedback with service leads, continue to improve data quality throughout the organisation and ensure dashboards continue to evolve in line with changing services and customer needs.

4. **Delivering Change**
Engage across the organisation to develop a program of culture change which will enable the whole organisation to recognise the value of business intelligence and develop capabilities to exploit it as a key decision-making tool. Develop tailored, small group training sessions to help staff to get the most out of the tools we have available to us. Work to improve data literacy across the organisation and support staff at all levels to feel more confident when working with data and empowered when making data related decisions.

5. **Resilience**
Ensure the right structure, staffing and line management arrangements in place to sufficiently support the implementation of Business Intelligence. Ensure the Business Intelligence tools the council relies upon are well managed, well utilised, user friendly and fit for purpose.

4.9   Whilst the Business Intelligence Strategy will be led by the Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead role, there will be a requirement for services from across the council to feed into the development of information, data and its use within services. Recognising that services already have limited capacity, development of dashboards will be on a needs basis where maximum value can be added and will build on the existing KPI review and Customer Experience work already undertaken to build dashboards with valuable information, utilising data already in the system.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that all costs in relation to the development and implementation of the strategy are included within existing budgets. It should be noted that a saving of £20,000 a year was agreed for the 2023/24 financial year, increasing to £25,000 a year from the 2024/25 financial year as reliance on consultancy diminishes and internal skills and resilience is increased. As such, delivering against the Delivery Plan as set out within this Strategy will be important in ensuring that the ambitions are achieved prior to the further reduction in budget.

5.2 Legal issues (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that when developing individual dashboards the council will need to be mindful of any Data Protection implications.

5.3 Risks

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested control measure	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate, transfer)	Risk rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Business Intelligence approach proceeds without an approved strategy	Business Intelligence is not aligned to wider approach to continuous improvement, other strategies and the council value and behaviours	Develop strategy for approval, incorporating these factors and ensuring alignment. Sufficient engagement on strategy prior to completion.	Treat	2 x 4 = 8
Corporate Business Intelligence system is unable to meet the ambition	Data and information can't be used as envisaged to deliver ambition set out within the strategy	Learning from past two years used to inform the strategy and subsequent delivery.	Treat	2 x 3 = 6
Culture change required is not successful	Business Intelligence is not embedded across the organisation as envisaged	Culture change work stream, aligned to values and behaviours, forms an	Treat	3 x 3 = 9

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested control measure	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate, transfer)	Risk rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
		additional work stream within the programme. Engagement on the strategy and wider programme.		
Data sets are not accurate or is inaccessible	Data is reported in silos or requires significant manual extraction, leading to challenges in relation to staff capacity	Clear briefs are developed for each part of the programme before data is identified	Treat	2 x 3 = 6
Approved strategy is not delivered	Limited improvements to insight and improvement across the organisation	Additional resource agreed and EPMO resource allocated to delivery of strategy	Treat	1 x 4 = 4

5.4   Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

5.4.1   Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

In order to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the council's commitment to equality and diversity, an equalities impact analysis for the Business Intelligence Strategy is currently being undertaken.

Some key points noted to date -

- Business intelligence will be used to present information in a variety of ways, that are often more visually engaging that traditional reporting methods. Dashboards are developed in a way that give users more than one way of interacting with the information presented, e.g. the same

data could be viewed as a table or pie chart depending on what the user finds easier to engage with. Filtering can also be done several ways. More visual learners may prefer to click on a bar within a bar chart, whereas those who prefer to engage with larger tables of data can filter within the table.

- Business intelligence will be a key tool to help understand our customers (the residents, businesses and community of Watford). Using business intelligence tools will be used to analyse a number of different internal and external data sets to gain valuable information about the make-up of our community. As a result, the council will be better equipped to ensure services and support provided are meeting the needs of everyone, and advancing equality of opportunity between all groups.

- Business intelligence can also be used to better understand those who work for council, to help ensure all staff members are getting the support they need to thrive at work.

5.4.3 Data Protection Impact Assessment

5.4.4 Advice has been sought from the Data Protection Team at Hertfordshire County Council, who currently advise WBC for all data protection matters. It was confirmed that a DPIA is only required if the strategy deals with personal information from which an individual can be identified. There is no such information with the strategy, however as part of the implementation of the strategy reports and dashboards will be developed that could potentially surface personal information. Therefore, an assessment will be made as part of the development process for each dashboard to assess if a DPIA is needed. DPIA's have been successfully signed off by the Data Protection team for a number of dashboards already in use, including the HR dashboard, and reporting on Freedom of Information requests.

5.5 Sustainability

5.5.1 There are no sustainability implications as part of this report.

5.6 People Implications

5.6.1 The Business Intelligence Strategy will be led by the council's Intelligence, Performance and Improvement Lead and supported by project support from the Enterprise Programme Management Office. These are both existing roles. Further internal technical support in terms of delivery will be provided by the council's Digital Improvement Team allowing the council to build in-house expertise and resilience. It is also acknowledged that there will be a requirement for services from across the council to feed into the

development of information, data and its use within services. Recognising that services already have limited capacity, development of dashboards will be on a needs basis where maximum value can be added and will build on the existing KPI review and Customer Experience work already undertaken to build dashboards with valuable information, utilising data already in the system.

5.7   Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

5.7.1   There are no community safety implications from this report.

6.0   Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Business Intelligence Strategy