POLICY AND RESOURCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18TH JUNE 2009

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 At Performance Management Scrutiny's risk workshop in October 2008, members asked for a report on the current position of the Councils Performance Information Management system (PIMS) and whether we would change to the new system (called Ffynnon) brought in by the Wales Assembly Government. This report is to answer the question above and inform members of the current position

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The Council has a duty to improve its services as part of the statutory requirements of the Wales Programme for Improvement 2006. PIMS is a way of showing whether we are achieving this or not.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 In 2004/05 the Authority purchased a Performance Information Measurement system (PIMs) from a company called Corvu, as part of its approach to strengthening performance management arrangements across the Authority. It is a centralised 'electronic' approach to the collection, monitoring and reporting of both national and local performance indicators through the use of performance scorecards. PIMs is currently used in every service across the Authority. It plays an increasing role in communicating performance information across the organisation.

2. Towards the end of 2007 the Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with the Data Unit Wales also purchased a performance information measurement system from Sungard Public Sector (SPS), called Ffynnon. Ffynnon is available to every local authority in Wales, free of charge until 2013, to help Authorities improve performance management, accountability and service standards in Wales.

3. The current version of Corvu that we use (4.3) is at least 3 years out of date and no longer supported by Corvu. This means we would need to upgrade to Corvu (version 5.1) or look at Ffynnon as an option. Because the Ffynnon system could replace Corvu as the platform upon which PIMs runs, the Performance Team carried out an options appraisal to see which would be the best choice for the Authority as there could be financial savings by moving from Corvu to Ffynnon.

4. The options appraisal identified the advantages and disadvantages of moving to Ffynnon as noted below:

Advantages

- The system is available to the Authority free of charge from WAG with no annual maintenance costs until at least 2013.

- There is no cost for the initial 2,000 licenses allocated to authorities. The license allows up to 2,000 users across the Authority's services to access and use Ffynnon at any one time.

- Formal training has already been received from SPS for the Performance Management Team. Free training for all users

- Future system upgrades will be scheduled and dealt with by SPS. There will be less impact upon future PMU and IT resources.

- A generic training course and materials are also available to use with service users, this will minimise the time needed to develop a training course for service users across the Authority.

- Ffynnon contains a basic reporting function. The initial development time of which is anticipated to be small. There is also a commitment from SPS to enhance the reporting features at some point in future, although timescales are not known at present.

- As web based not on our server so if the system goes down we can still use

- As the system is web based Community Strategy partnerships can build scorecards that (if given permission by CCBC) can be accessed by partners outside the local authority. The local service board can have access to a 'dashboard', which means they can see at a glance how the partnerships are performing against their set criteria and measures

- Ffynnon includes additional features, such as a module for managing risk and the ability to record base data, both of which could be very useful to the Authority.

- Ffynnon is currently receiving publicity and exposure pan Wales, and this is likely to increase further in the future. Most other Welsh Local Authorities along with Fire & Rescue services and Parks Authorities are developing Ffynnon. We can learn and exchange ideas and problems with our neighbouring Authorities, to further enhance PIMs.

Disadvantages

- Ffynnon is web-based; this means SPS, and not the Authority would contain the Authority's performance information on a server held and owned by SPS. However there is strict data confidentiality protocols in place and IT and Legal services have confirmed that these protocols offer an acceptable level of assurance.

- We do not know what the Ffynnon costs will be after 2013. The Wales Assembly has been vague on this aspect. We know we will be expected to share the maintenance costs with other users after 2013. Our contribution will be dependant upon how many users there are at this time.

- There may be a perception from service users that Corvu/PIMs has failed if the Authority chooses Ffynnon, although this will be counteracted by the increasing awareness amongst all public services of Ffynnon pan Wales and by the way in which we communicate and manage the project within CCBC.

- There are a few different words contained in Ffynnon, which may confuse service users but again this can be managed by the training.

- Potential loss of autonomy – although there is strength in majority of organisations requesting the same improvements as an individual organisation there could be limited influence that the Authority can realistically expect to have over future enhancements, as the Ffynnon system developments are discussed at a regional forum before going on a prioritised list.

- During testing, Ffynnon was on occasions very slow to use. We have identified that the cause is with those using PC's that are older than 3 years old. Due to the software being new, PC's older than 3 years may struggle to operate at optimum speed and other authorities have had similar experiences to those witnessed by the PMU. The speed at which Ffynnon operates could be an issue for users across the Authority if their computer is older than 3 years old. IT have a 3-year replacement programme so hopefully this will mitigate the risk.

Outcome

Following the consideration of the options appraisal it was decided to move to Ffynnon as it has greater advantages to meet the needs of the business at no additional cost (within the next 4 years) to the authority. It is planned to take a staged approach to the transfer of information with completion no later than December 2009. This will mean that for a short period both the Ffynnon and Corvu systems will be operational.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council currently pays a maintenance cost of £10,000 per year for Corvu. By moving to Ffynnon this cost will be saved between 2010-2013. As stated previously, maintenance costs for Ffynnon post 2013 are unknown.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are none identified.

7. CONSULTATIONS

7.1   There are no consultations that have not been included in this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

That member's note the change to the performance information system and use this change to re-emphasise their commitment to the process across the authority.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1   To inform members of the change of provider for the Councils PIM System.

10. STATUTORY POWER

10.1   The 1999 Local Government Act charges Authorities with responsibility to demonstrate continuous improvement.

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