

# Application Form

## ICT and Business Improvement Projects For Business Improvement Sub-Committee



**Document:** BITICT Application Form  
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<b>New Project Name:</b>	Housing Market Intelligence
<b>Project Type:</b>	
<b>Supplier (if applicable):</b>	Hometrack
<b>Proposed Use:</b>	For housing market analysis
<b>Funding Source:</b>	Housing needs survey budget

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<b>Service:</b>	Strategic Housing
<b>Date Submitted:</b>	

**If you require help with completing this application form please refer to the guidelines at the end of the document.**

**Please also refer to the Policy for Introduction of ICT/BI Projects.  
(Also found at the end of this Document)**

## Section A - Use

A.1	<p><b>Please describe what it is you are applying for?</b></p> <p>Hometrack is an online database which provides housing market intelligence which is reliable and up to date to support the evaluation and development of housing and planning policies</p>
A.2	<p><b>What business problems and opportunities are addressed by the proposed project?</b></p> <p>The hometrack system allows immediate information on housing market issues which replaces the Strategic Housing Market Assessment which has been carried out by Fordhams and is costly and time intensive. This enables information to be produced from large sources of information which will enable an appropriate support to the implementation of planning policy and ultimately the delivery of the right housing for the district.</p> <p>This will allow the local housing market dynamics to be immediately accessed and provide data to fully assess the impact and sustainability of new developments.</p> <p>The Current system of a report produced by consultants is expensive to regularly update and relies on officers spending a considerable time sourcing different data sets to provide a minimal update. The data we end up with is usually not current to the existing market conditions</p>
A.3	<p><b>Who will be using the systems and/or new processes and at which location?</b></p> <p>The Housing team will be using this in Elizabeth house and there will be capacity for access to be provided to planners working on Breckland Applications. There is not a possibility of South Holland using it as the housing market area they cover is very different from our own. We will be able to access information on neighbouring authorities.</p>
A.4	<p><b>What are the likely or possible changes in working practices, which will result from the introduction of the proposed system/process?</b></p> <p>A better resourced housing team to influence the delivery of appropriate developments within the district which meet the needs of our residents in terms of affordability, size, tenure and rental levels where appropriate.</p> <p>More up to date information to support planning and housing policies when considering new applications for development</p> <p>The ability to consider the viability of schemes with up to date information without having to rely on data provided by the developer ensure a constant supply of housing</p>

## Section B – High Level Benefit Analysis

B.1	<p><b>Please list any expected benefits, particularly those with productivity, efficiency and cashable gains.</b></p> <p>Access to data and analysis tools to identify the optimal locations for development, evaluate the viability of sites, provide the evidence base for planning negotiations and to identify demand for new housing.</p> <p>The use of the toll will ensure sites are maximised for development which ultimately will bring investment to the district through the provision of that housing as well as the new homes onus which will be levied on the housing along with the CIL.</p> <p>Efficiency will be achieved by having better skilled staff rather than a reliance on external partners who do not deliver within a quick timeframe.</p>
B.2	<p><b>Please list any expected benefits, particularly those with improvements in accessing</b></p>

	<b>information for customers, staff, stakeholders, and members.</b>
	The information will be bang upto date for staff and members when making decisions on housing development
<b>B.3</b>	<b>How does the project deliver improved monitoring for performance (e.g. National Indicators)</b>
	As we enter the era of the new homes bonus and CIL we will be able ensure that the district maximises the opportunities to have additional resources for investment within the District and the communities we serve.
	Whilst there will not be a NI going forward there will be tangible monetary outcomes based on performance on the delivery of housing

## Section C – Relationship to the Corporate Business Plan

	<b>Please list and define known relationships to Corporate Business Plan/LAA.</b>
<b>C.1</b>	Currently :- Building safer and stronger communities Building prosperous communities Delivering the entrepreneurial council

## Section D – Risk Assessment

	<b>How will the system enable better management of risks identified in the Council’s Risk Register? Please provide comprehensive list.</b>
<b>D.1</b>	The delivery of housing especially affordable housing is reliant on private sector investment driven by policies set by the Council. These policies need to be robust and based on upto date information. At the moment we have to rely on data which is 3 years old and more challengable when ensuring that policy requirement are met
<b>D.2</b>	<b>How will additional risks introduced during or after the project be managed?</b>
	Through the risk register where appropriate
<b>D.3</b>	<b>What is the risk of doing nothing?</b>
	The reliance on data collected every 5 years and being challenged by developers on our approach to viability which will impact on the delivery of new homes going forward and limit the opportunity to maximise the new homes bonus and CIL

## Section E – Other Reference Sites

	<b>What other reference site is the system/process currently in use? Please provide a list of references and contact details (e.g.: names, telephone numbers and/or e-mail addresses).</b>
<b>E.1</b>	The system is being used by the Homes and Communities Agency and a large number of Local Authorities. Locally it is being used by Kings Lynn and West Norfolk (Nikki Patton <a href="mailto:nikki.patton@west-norfolk.gov.uk">nikki.patton@west-norfolk.gov.uk</a> ) North Norfolk (Paul Cason <a href="mailto:paul.cason@north-norfolk.gov.uk">paul.cason@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a> )
	A login and access can be provided to the IT team to see system for themselves

[www.hometrack.co.uk](http://www.hometrack.co.uk) will provide information on the system and the site

## Section F – Alternatives Investigated

F.1	<b>What alternatives have been considered in reaching this recommendation? Please list.</b>
	There is not a similar system on the market. The alternative is to carry on undertaking the provision of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment through a consultant
F.2	<b>Please explain for each option why these are not the preferred solutions?</b>
F.3	<b>Has consideration been given to the underlying service processes before considering an ICT solution? Please explain giving detail.</b>
	Yes, the collation of the available datasets could be undertaken and analysed manually and will require a member of staff to do every three months and no other tasks. Some sources of data are not available without a further subscription to access this data from the relevant agency

## Section G – Costs & Support

G.1	<b>Please give an indication of expected overall project costs (capital &amp; revenue)?</b>
	The cost of the project is £8995 plus VAT per annum – training is free if attended in London This will provide the minimum number of licences which is 5
G.2	<b>Please indicate the expected source of funding? (e.g. Corporate, Service, ICT)</b>
	Service budget for Housing needs survey
G.3	<b>Who will provide annual maintenance and support?</b>
	Hometrack
G.4	<b>Will Steria be required to provide support for the project and the ongoing support?</b>
	No
G.5	<b>Please indicate how you intend to resource the project?</b>
	The project is resourced by housing team members. Funding for the project will be from the annualised budget for Housing needs survey
G.6	<b>Please indicate who will be sponsoring the project?</b>
	Portfolio Holder - Paul Claussen and Asst Director Anita Brennan
G.7	<b>Will the project impact on any other Service? Explain how?</b>
	No

## Section H – Impact on External Parties

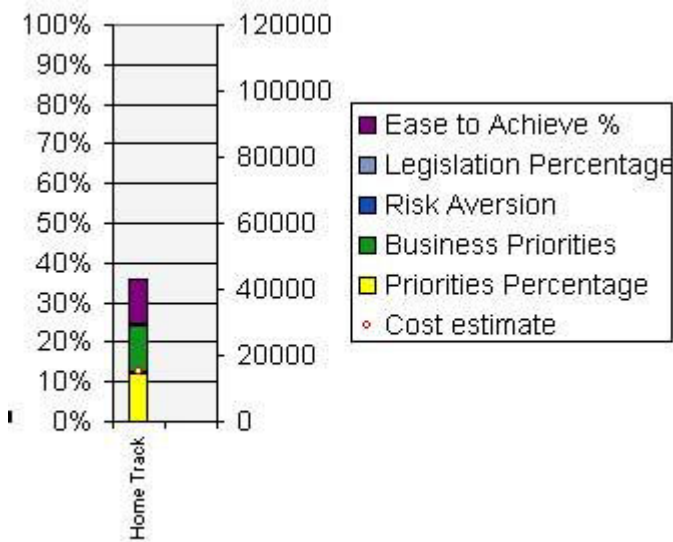
H.1	<b>Please provide details on any potential impact on external agencies &amp; partners which the new process/system is likely to affect.</b>
	The impact will be positive in terms of being able to provide better data for agencies we deal with. Less reliance on the District Valuer

H.2	<b>Please indicate where the project is required due to Government targets or Legal obligation? If yes, how and what are the timescales for compliance?</b>
	There is a legal requirement to provide housing need assessments

## Section I – Training

I.1	<b>Please provide any training/skills transfer information?</b>
	Training is provided free by Hometrack as long as staff travel to London otherwise there is a fee of £1180 for undertaking in the work place.
I.2	<b>Please explain how training will impact your current operation and workload.</b>
	The training will not impact currently delivery as sessions can be staggered for team members

Note: Sections J,K to be completed by ICT/BIT.



## Section J - Scoring

J.1	<b>Project Score</b>
	36%

## Section K – Comments

K.1	<b>ICT</b>
	<i>A2: What is the associated cost of the current (As is) process?</i>
	<i>A3: The only IT issues are around connectivity to certain websites since the 4mb line going in some sites are restricted.</i>
	<i>D: The risk is the quality of the data being provided by an external party deteriorating or not</i>

	<p><i>being reliable having spent £8k (£40k over 5 years)</i></p> <p><i>G7: IT if there are some configuration settings required on the firewall to allow access</i></p> <p><i>Other:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1) Does Breckland provide any data to this supplier?</i></li> <li><i>2) If it goes ahead ensure there are uptime commitments from the supplier and obtain contingency/DR arrangements in the event they lose their data/servers on which it resides</i></li> <li><i>3) Is the information provided sensitive?</i></li> </ol>
<b>K.2</b>	<p><b>Steria</b></p> <p><i>I don't see any major problems with this at all.</i></p> <p><i>My only comment is that although it is indicated there will be no Steria support I would anticipate that there will be some interaction required when this is first installed.</i></p> <p><i>If nothing else to allow the new website to be viewable to identified users etc.</i></p> <p><i>I would only see this as minimal time being required.</i></p>
<b>K.3</b>	<p><b>Business Improvement Team</b></p>
<b>K.4</b>	<p><b>Performance &amp; Value for Money</b></p> <p>The Application Form appears to present a more effective solution than that currently in place.</p> <p>Only queries are:</p> <p>A2 – To understand VFM benefits it would be helpful to see a cost comparison against the current situation and the proposed solution</p> <p>A3 – Whilst South Holland will not be able to use our system if this is the best solution for Housing in general would there be an opportunity to collaboratively procure the system and derive savings?</p> <p>B3 – Whilst the NI's have been scrapped I fully expect there to be a national indicator on the new reduced set due to be published.</p>
<b>K.5</b>	<p><b>Finance &amp; Procurement</b></p> <p>This is from an existing budget and there are no implications and its just going to bisc for other reasons than needing finance but mandy can do a proforma that states this.</p>
<b>K.6</b>	<p><b>Service Manager (if not the applicant)</b></p>

## Internal Checks

		Ref:	
<b>1</b>	Completed Form		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	Service Manager Approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	ICT Checked		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	Steria Checked		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5</b>	BIT Checked		<input type="checkbox"/>

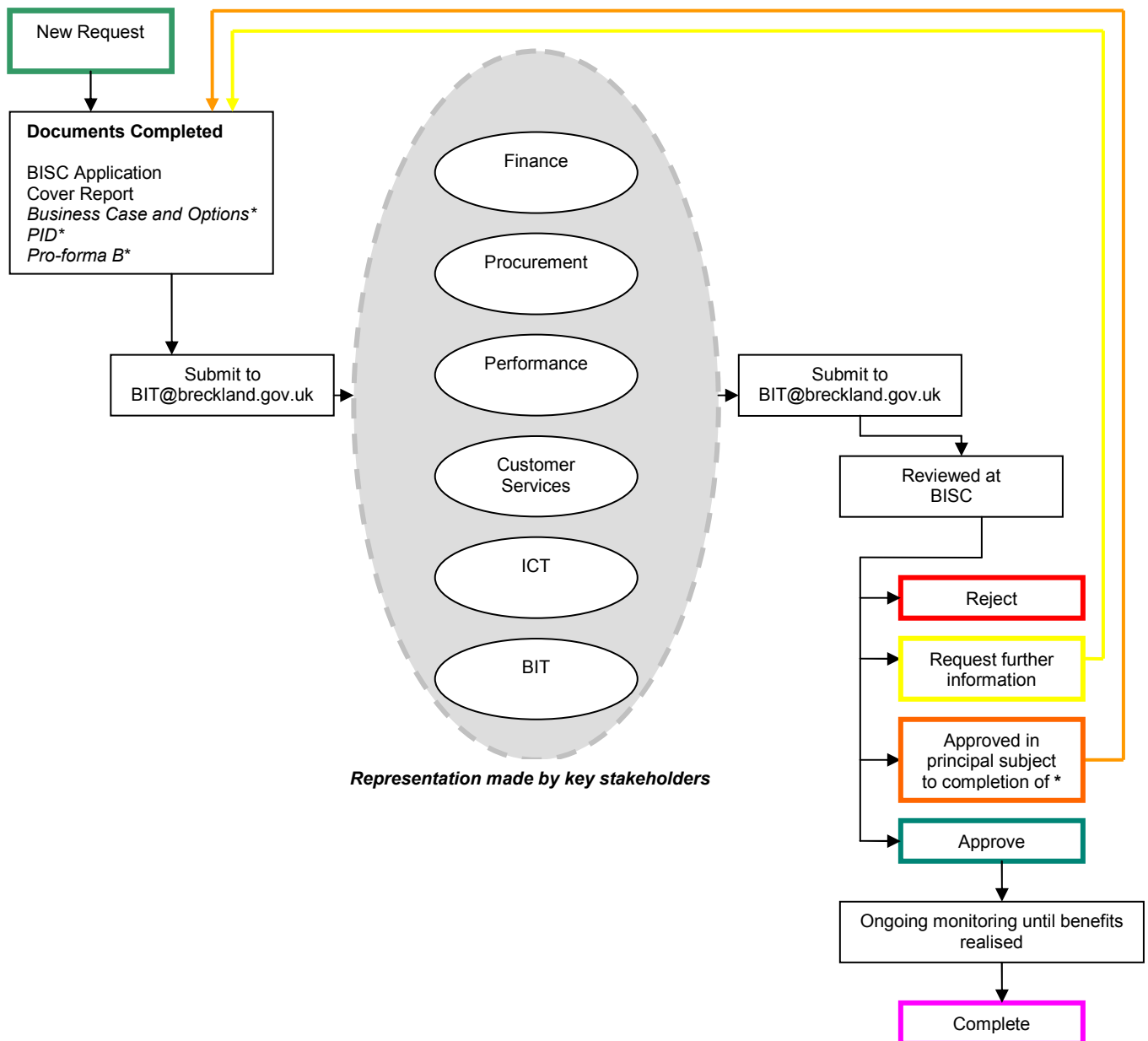
<b>6</b>	Performance & Value for Money Check	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7</b>	Finance Checked	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>8</b>	Service Manager Checked	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>9</b>	Application Verified	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Policy for Introduction of ICT & BI Projects

In order for an “idea” to become a resourced approved Project it will need to follow the steps below. This Application Form is step 1 only.

- Staff wishing to obtain either new ICT systems or Business Solutions must make a written application, using this application form, to the Chairman of the Business Improvement Sub-Committee Board.
- The completed application must be based on sound evidence, giving full details.
- The application must be supported by the Portfolio Holder and Head of Service.
- Any incomplete application will be rejected



### **Application Forms are required for:**

- New software/hardware, including those provided initially at “no cost”
- Replacement software/hardware (including any upgrades)
- Integration and interfacing
- Significant increases in software support expenditure
- Strategic Service Reviews/End to End Business Process Re-engineering
- Business Process Improvements

The Business Improvement Board will consider the application, employing external expert advisers where necessary, and make one of the following recommendations:

- Further investigation and research required
- Reject application
- Accept Application and progress to Step 2: Feasibility Study

The ultimate decision on the introduction of new projects involving ICT and Business Improvement will rest with the Business Improvement Board.

The introduction of service review/project must be monitored and audited against an agreed protocol and regular audit reports must be made available to the Board to ensure the expected benefits of the investment are realised.

## **Guidelines for Form Completion**

### **Before passing the application for approval, please be sure to:**

- 1) Complete all sections. This will ensure that all relevant information is available so that an early decision can be made. Incomplete sections may result in the application being refused or returned.
- 2) Attach any supporting evidence which the Business Improvement Board should take into account.
- 3) Ask your finance representative to calculate the impact on the budget of your own and any other Service.
- 4) Obtain the approval of your Service Manager.
- 5) Send the completed application (as an e-mail attachment only) to the following recipient to [BIT@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:BIT@breckland.gov.uk)
- 6) When required, you should be prepared to brief a representative on the Board in order to support the application and answer questions. You may be required to attend meetings in person.