

Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Information & Communication Technology (introduced by the Executive Leader)	Executive Cabinet	12 January 2006

IMPLEMENTING E-GOVERNMENT STATEMENT 2005

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To gain Member approval of the Councils IEG5 eGovernment return which details the Councils progress in terms of the Governments defined Priority Outcome programme, BVPI157 and efficiency targets.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- The IEG Statement relates to a programme of work that will contribute significantly to the delivery of each of our corporate priorities. The programme is already delivering notable improvements in service accessibility, efficiency and enhancing the capacity of service units.

RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy	✓	Information	
Reputation	✓	Regulatory/Legal	
Financial	✓	Operational	✓
People	✓	Other	

- Failure to deliver the Councils IEG programme will have a serious impact upon the delivery of its corporate efficiency and service improvement programme. This would impact upon the Council strategically, financially, operationally and in terms of reputation.
- The implications of failing to meet the Governments Priority Outcome and BVPI targets are also significant. The Government have reserved the right to reclaim IEG funding for undelivered outcomes (although it is thought unlikely to happen) and future CPA assessments will incorporate Priority Outcome performance with 4 star status only being possible if all outcomes have been delivered.

BACKGROUND

- Government requires all local authorities in England to submit an IEG return on an annual basis. The IEG statement is an essential part of the Government's national monitoring process for assessing electronic local service delivery capability against the 2005 target and supports the delivery of priority outcomes for local e-government. It is an important feedback mechanism for assessing progress towards realising the benefits from the



investment in e-government and the use of IEG funding. The return is in a strict format determined by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

7. The Governments Priority Outcome programme comprise 73 outcomes that help councils to improve the delivery of services to citizens and business, enhance business process efficiency and embed e-government within the mainstream of organisational culture. The priority outcomes are grouped into ten priority service areas derived from the seven shared priorities for local government and four cross cutting themes designed to help councils realise the transformation of working practices through the application of technology.
 - Schools
 - Community information
 - Democratic renewal
 - Local environment
 - E-Procurement
 - Payments
 - Libraries, sports & leisure
 - Transport
 - Benefits
 - Support for vulnerable people

 - Supporting new ways of working
 - Accessibility of services
 - High take-up of web-based transactional services
 - Making it easy for citizens to do business with the council
8. E-Government is about exploiting the power of information and communication technologies to help transform the accessibility, quality and cost effectiveness of public services. It is about placing citizens and customers at the heart of the Council and building service access, delivery and democratic accountability around them. We are in the process of radically transforming the way we do business with customers, suppliers and partners alike.
9. The Council is currently reviewing its information and communications technology (ICT) strategy and has an eGovernment strategy in place. This strategy includes a work programme to deliver e-Government in line with the Government targets. The Council also recently approved a Customer Focussed Access and Service Design Strategy, which takes forward the programme to consider issues such as accessibility, efficiency and take-up.

PROGRESS

10. The Council has made significant progress against the targets set. At the time of submitting the return we had e-enabled 97.95% of services with an expectation of meeting 100% by 31 December 2005.
11. In terms of Priority Outcomes, of the 29 'required' outcomes with a target date of 31 December 2005, we have achieved 27 (one is the responsibility of the County Council). The second category of outcomes, which are classed as 'Good' have a target date of the 31 March 2006. Of these 25 we have already completed 16. The remaining 19 are classed as 'excellent' and earlier in the programme, high performing local authorities that had already achieved, or largely achieved, the defined required and "good" e-government outcomes, were asked to agree a baseline and targets for promoting awareness and take-

up of e-services. In the IEG5 submission the Council have been asked to comment on a number of the 'excellent' outcomes.

12. There is still a good deal of work to do as the remaining outcomes are very likely to be the most difficult, encompassing national issues such as authentication and the numbering schemes to identify businesses.

13. The work we have done to achieve our eGovernment targets has already contributed to the delivery of high quality services. In August 2005 the Council achieved the highest possible inspection rating for Customer Access and Focus following a Best Value Inspection. In their report that detailed their decision to award the Council a 3 star rating with excellent prospects for improvement, the Audit Commission commented that;

'Sophisticated technology and e-government initiatives provide high quality access and speedy response and deliver efficiency savings which are passed onto the customer in the form of improvements.'

14. Looking back, we have achieved a great deal through our eGovernment Programme, not only providing immediate benefits but building the foundations upon which we can deliver further efficiencies and service quality improvements. Notable developments include: -

- A 'state of the art' one stop shop for customer service
- 'Content Plus' Rated Web Site (SOCITM Better Connected 2004)
- On line payments
- On-line access to Councillor details, the forward plan, committee agenda, reports and minutes
- Re-engineered business processes
- Partnership working at local, sub-regional, regional and national levels,
- A business case driven approach to change
- 97.95% of all services are available electronically (at the time of submission), with the expectation of 100% by the end of December 2005
- e-procurement including reverse auctions
- Re-engaged community through new methods of voting at two pilot elections producing the highest turnout in the UK local elections in 2002 (63%)
- Comprehensive 24/7 access to local planning services via our web site
- Efficiencies and service quality improvements through mobile working
- Integration of front and back-office systems
- Shared Services Contact Centre providing a single point of contact for district and county services
- A County wide Community Portal

15. Whilst this illustrates a good deal of technical progress, it is important that the progress is translated into real improvements for our customers. I believe real change has been achieved, a view reinforced by the Audit Commission who felt that the Council

'provides a good range of access channels that fit well with local needs. These include well-developed electronic access and a modern, one-stop shop with excellent facilities. Standards are high and there is a strong customer-focused culture across the Council with staff and councillors clearly committed to continuously improving the experience of service users.'

They also recognized the lead role played by the Council in eGovernment, not only in terms of the Shared Services Contact Centre but also regionally.

'It is influential in the development of e-government across Lancashire and in the North West region and has a lead role in the delivery of the Lancashire-wide Shared Contact Centre project which aims to deliver wide ranging customer benefits through partnership working.'

16. The Council continues to apply technology to deliver efficiencies and service quality and accessibility improvements. The implementation of eGovernment projects both in the front and back offices have made a significant contribution to realized and projected efficiencies. Contributing schemes include;
- Democratic Services administration system that allows on-line search and enquiry facilities and applies workflow technology to the creation and publication of Council agendas, reports and minutes.
 - A Council wide electronic document management system
 - Mobile working facilities for Neighbourhood Wardens and Benefits staff.
 - New integrated Financial Management system
 - An on-line flexible working hours system
 - Home Working

LOOKING FORWARD

17. We will continue with the work required to deliver all the Priority Outcomes. Delivery remains a significant piece of work that will continue beyond the March 2006 target date as technologies and systems are implemented across the authority.
18. The Audit Commission has stated that Councils aspiring to achieve 4 stars must have achieved all Priority Outcomes.
19. It is not expected that there will be further IEG grant funding for the remainder of the Priority Outcomes programme.
20. Work will soon begin on developing an action plan to implement the recently approved Customer Focussed Access and Service Design Strategy, which provides the vision for the continued delivery of efficiencies, service quality improvements and increased take-up of eGovernment facilities.
21. The statement shows a strong position. The Council has achieved the vast majority the achievable outcomes and fully expects to meet the 100% 2005 BVPI target.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

22. Taking into consideration the significance of this programme and the benefits relating to its successful delivery, it is essential that the capacity and workflow of the unit is reviewed on a systematic basis to ensure that corporate objectives can be achieved.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

23. The report sets out what the Council has achieved through its policy decision to invest in new technology, which by any standards is commendable. The IEG Statement contains information on what the Council proposes to spend in the financial years 2006/07 and 2007/08 and these costs are contained in the Capital Programme already presented to Members.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

24. It is recommended that Executive Cabinet approve the Council's IEG5 Statement.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) (If the recommendations are accepted)

25. Guidance states that Council should approve the IEG5 statement.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

26. None

TIM MURPHY
HEAD OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
IEG5 Statement	19 December 2005	Chorley IEG5 Statement1.pdf	http://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.asp?bcr=1&sch=doc
Customer Focus and Access Best Value Inspection	August 2005		http://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.asp?bcr=1&sch=doc

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Tim Murphy	5455	20 December 2005	Executive Report IEG5 12Jan06