

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance)	Executive Cabinet	24 October 2013

ICT STRATEGY 2014 - 2017

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To present the ICT strategy for consideration and approval, alongside results of consultation undertaken with councillors, services and ICT staff. In addition, the report gives an overview of the progress made in delivering changes and improvements to ICT over the past few years.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- The ICT strategy 2014-2017 is approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The council has made significant changes to ICT over the past few years, introducing a series of changes and improvements to the infrastructure and the software used to delivery services. These changes have enabled the organisation to make changes to business processes and achieved some significant savings which have in some cases been invested in further improvements.
- Following consultation with councillors and staff, a new ICT strategy has been drafted for approval. The strategy sets out the aims and objectives for the council in the coming three years, and a series of key actions which will be delivered in the next financial year.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- The new ICT strategy sets the aims and objectives for ICT over the coming three years. As a critical support service, it is important that the organisation has in place a clear plan which links with the corporate strategy and ensures that the organisation is well-served by technology and information.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- To not have an updated ICT strategy. This was rejected because it would mean that the organisation did not have an up-to-date and useful strategy to prioritise and inform the development of ICT.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

8. The council has undergone a significant change in ICT in the last few years, with significant changes to infrastructure as well as the consolidation of key applications used across the organisation. The aims of the work that has been undertaken since 2010 were:
- To upgrade the network to create an infrastructure capable of supporting the organisation's ambitions.
 - Consolidation of business applications to establish a more cost effective solution
 - Maximising the investment in Microsoft products
 - Making improvements to the way in which customer requests are received and handled.
9. The following section gives more details about the progress that has been made in achieving those aims.
10. Before developing the new strategy, a considerable amount of consultation has been undertaken to ensure that the new strategy reflects the needs of the organisation. The results of the consultation is summarised in this report and has been used in the development of the strategy.

THE JOURNEY SO FAR

11. In 2010/2011 a significant capital investment was made in ICT to reflect the need to invest in the infrastructure so that business changes could then be made. The investment included the upgrade of the infrastructure, server virtualisation, telephony and storage capacity and without it the subsequent improvements we have made would not have been possible.
12. The revenue spend (excluding staffing costs) over the three period between 2010/11 and 2012/13 has remained fairly static. The key change in the revenue budget is that the management and spend on software that was previously within service budgets has largely been consolidated, so that it has been possible to maximise the potential for renegotiation of ICT software and support contracts and to redirect and invest the savings achieved to support business change.
13. The key areas of change brought about through the capital investment and the centralisation of revenue budgets is set out below:
- a) Software consolidation
- Move from Goss Interactive content management system for the website to SharePoint – saving £4,800 per annum
 - Removal of TK dialogues through introduction of SharePoint – saving £6,000 per annum
 - Replacement of Flare with IDOX – saving £8,458 per annum for 5 year contract
 - Transfer of Land Charges to IDOX – saving £45,300 per annum with a further £12,300 per annum from 2013/14
 - Renegotiation of the Microsoft Licence Agreement – saving £24,715 per annum
 - Northgate Contract for EDMS – saving £9,550 in 2012/13

b) Infrastructure investment

- Reduction in Disaster Recovery support costs – saving £10,000
- Investing in the Unified Intelligent Desktop infrastructure – external funding of £200,000 to Chorley to establish this network and a platform to facilitate mobile technology solution for service delivery
- Photocopier/printer rationalisation – saving £48,000 over 2011/12 and an expected £72,000 over 2013/14, 14/15 and 15/16
- Introducing hybrid mail solution – immediate saving of £3,200 with further annual savings of £8,300 anticipated in 2013/14; £17,000 in 2014/15 and £19,100 in 2015/16
- To reduce the reliance on physical assets – infrastructure being created enables printing external correspondence from any building or from home without reliance on physical resources.
- Improved reporting facilities to enable managers to control personal productivity of staff more effectively

14. The savings achieved directly from these changes to March 2013 were £184k. Additional savings of £187k will be made of the lifetime of contracts, leading to a savings of £371k overall.

15. The direct savings that have been made to date have been reinvested into priority areas and improvement work:

- £40,000 corporate savings target contribution 2012/13
- £20,000 in 2011/12 to support establishment of Business Advisor post
- £31,375 Northgate EDMS including Public Access & GIM Connector
- £10,000 Digitisation of paper records to support rationalisation of accommodation
- £12,500 IDOX Total Land Charge
- £20,000 Asidua Mobile solution
- £5,000 Pro print Upgrade
- £24,400 Website and Intranet Design
- £10,000 Northgate System Configuration and Training
- £10,000 Microsoft Service Centre Upgrade to 2013 (ICT Helpdesk)
- £2,000 Miscellaneous i.e. Smartphones, Tablets

16. In addition to the direct savings that have been reinvested, the changes in ICT in the last three years have made a significant contribution to the achievement of significant savings elsewhere in the organisation. Between 2011 and 2013, restructures that have been enabled by the improvements in technology have saved £359k in staffing costs.

CONSULTATION FOR THE NEW STRATEGY

17. As part of the preparation work for the ICT strategy, consultation was undertaken across the organisation. The process included councillors, senior management and staff within the ICT service. The consultation gave people the chance to identify strengths of ICT; to raise issues they had with ICT and the approach that is taken by the service, as well as identifying potential areas for future development.

Councillors

18. Councillors were invited to give their views through an online survey which was included in In the Know on 14 June. 21 councillors took part and completed the survey. A summary of the responses is set out below:

Systems and support

- In terms of availability of systems, understanding of needs and technical support there was a positive response, with no respondents saying they were dissatisfied.
- Reliability of systems was an area where some respondents identified they were dissatisfied, with four either fairly or very dissatisfied.
- Respondents generally felt that the help desk was useful in terms of the length of time to respond and the communication on fault fixing. Two respondents, however, did rate the ease of reporting as 'fairly poor'.

Importance, cost and future

- All of the respondents felt that ICT was important in terms of delivering efficiencies, flexible working and service improvements.
- 78% of respondents felt that the current investment in ICT was about right, with 22% feeling that it is not enough.
- There was support for the ambition to create a paperless business, with only two of the respondents being 'fairly non-supportive'. When asked about attending council meetings that were conducted without paper agendas, two indicated they would be unhappy with 14 supportive.
- Councillors were asked an open-ended question about where they thought technology could be used more effectively. Six Members responded, with five mentioning introducing the use of iPads and/or smart phones to support councillors in their role.

Senior management

19. The Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service were interviewed and had the opportunity to submit responses to a set of questions sent prior to the meeting. Their views are summarised below:
- There was support for the consolidation of software, although the solutions needed work for services.
 - Training and helping staff to become familiarised with new systems needs to be factored into the introduction of new solutions.
 - Services need to be more closely involved in the development and implementation of systems and processes, and discussions at an earlier stage need to be encouraged.

ICT staff

20. Each member of the ICT team were interviewed and asked for their views about how the ICT service could be developed in the coming years, and any issues that need to be considered. The summary of the responses is:
- Need to ensure that team members are consistently trained or familiarised in systems prior to them being rolled out.
 - Need to develop simple user guides to support colleagues in other services and reduce the number of calls for support.
 - Need to ensure that system security and compliance with the public sector network is maintained, particularly with the introduction of tablets.
 - Support for strengthening the internal development team
 - GIS was identified as critical to improving the information provision available internally and externally, which will include a need to ensure there is clarity about how information is managed.
21. The consultation has been used in developing the ICT strategy. From the feedback, some specific issues have been identified that needed to be addressed:
- Ensuring that systems are robust and reliable
 - Ensuring that communication and engagement about change is more effectively undertaken so that services and individuals understand the rationale and understand the implications.

- Improvement in engagement between services and ICT to understand business needs.

ICT STRATEGY 2014 TO 2017

22. The ICT strategy is included as Appendix A to this report.
23. The overall aim of the strategy is to provide trusted and robust ICT that enables the delivery of high quality services to our customers. In addition, it will drive down costs through more efficient processes and effective management of information.
24. The strategy has four strategic objectives with associated long term outcomes. They are:
- Objective 1: High quality customer experience
- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Long term outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Customers able to access and request high volume services online b. Information and services available through popular devices c. Technology enables direct and targeted communications with customers d. Customers can contact the council easily through a range of channels e. Customers can access information about their local area and service request online |
|-------------------|---|
- Objective 2: Robust and reliable infrastructure
- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Long term outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Effective network and digital telephony is in place and reliable for council office sites. b. Reliable and cost-effective solution for storage c. Effective business continuity and disaster recovery in place d. Integrated telephony system in place e. Secure network, compliant with the Government Public Sector Network |
|-------------------|--|
- Objective 3: Accessible and well-managed information
- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Long term outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Effective and efficient information management processes in place b. Business related information digitised and stored efficiently and effectively c. Integrated digital document and records management in place d. Data capture in place for council assets and work scheduling e. Business and performance intelligence is easy to access and well used |
|-------------------|---|
- Objective 4: Coordinated and appropriately resourced support for ICT
- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Long term outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ICT understands the business needs and processes of services b. Staff in place with the right skills to deliver in-house expertise for key systems and infrastructure c. Arrangements in place for external support where it is more effective d. Effective procurement, making full use of systems that deliver a variety of business solutions |
|-------------------|--|
25. The strategic objectives and long term outcomes will be delivered during the course of the strategy, at the end of 2016/2017. However, to ensure that progress can be managed and ensure that the ICT programme of work is clear, the actions will be refreshed more regularly. The actions set out in the strategy will be delivered in the period to April 2015. The actions will be managed using the council's project management methodology.
26. In addition to the key actions, a series of key measures has been identified to measure the success in achieving the long term outcomes.
27. The delivery of the strategy will be reported through the organisational plan, which includes the key actions and projects for the organisation during the year. This is reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel on a six-monthly basis.
28. The strategy will be reviewed and refreshed at the end of 2014/2015 to update the key actions and make any further changes that are necessary.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

29. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	✓
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	✓
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	✓

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

30. Members will be aware that resources have been committed to improving the Council's ICT infrastructure previously. The key objectives in the strategy represent the opportunity to build on what we have done to date and manage some of the risks more effectively. For that reason the resources required in terms of budget at this stage will be minimal, however, should further budgets be required this will be dealt with through the normal budget approval process.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

31. There are no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

32. The ICT strategy proposed should support the organisation in achieving some of the priorities of the corporate strategy, particularly around providing easy access to high quality services. As an important strategy affecting a key service, an integrated impact assessment will be completed.

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Asim Khan / Chris Sinnott	5448	13 September 2013	ICT Strategy Exec Cabinet report