



East Northamptonshire Council

Policy and Resources Committee - 9 December 2009

East Northamptonshire Council and Borough Council of Wellingborough ICT Strategy

Summary

This report seeks Committee approval for the adoption of the ICT Strategy for East Northamptonshire Council and Borough Council of Wellingborough covering the period 2010 - 2013.

Attachment(s)

ICT Strategy 2010 - 2013

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The ICT Shared Service began on 1 April 2008 and has been a successful shared service that has delivered a number of savings for both authorities. ICT is recognised as a vital support and enabling service that is central to the Council's strategic aims and priorities.
- 1.2 There is an existing ICT strategy at the Borough Council of Wellingborough and a draft ICT Strategy at East Northamptonshire. Both predate the shared service and thus do not consider the benefits and opportunities a shared ICT Service has.

2.0 ICT Strategy

- 2.1 The ICT strategy will support and help enable the existing priorities and strategies at both authorities through the vision of *Contributing to Organisational outcomes through using technology to drive and support changes*. The strategy is seen as the vehicle to enable both authorities and the shared service to realise this vision, as can be seen from the Strategy summary sheet.
- 2.2 Currently the ICT Executive Board members have been the main consultation body for the ICT Strategy. Following any further consultation a joint prioritised action plan will be created and attached to the strategy. The action plan will be the main delivery method for the strategy with each outcome added to the ICT Service Plans.
- 2.3 A detailed action plan will be created independently by both Councils and then jointly agreed by the ICT Executive Board. Once this is done it will form the main part of the ICT programme plan.

3.0 Resources

- 3.1 ICT Services currently has a capital programme in place and centralised revenue budgets which will enable the delivery of the ICT Strategy. All of the actions will be delivered by the teams within ICT Services and no further resources have been identified at this time.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Joint ICT Strategy is approved and adopted

Implications:					
Corporate Outcomes or Other Policy/Priority/Strategy					
Good Quality of Life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good Reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Good Value for Money	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High Quality Service Delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Effective Partnership Working	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strong Community Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Effective Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of our Customers and Communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Employees and Members with the Right Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours			<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other:					
Decision(s) would be outside the budget or policy framework and require full Council approval <input type="checkbox"/>					
Financial	There are no financial implications at this stage				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be financial implications – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
	There is provision within existing budget				<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may give rise to additional expenditure at a later date				<input type="checkbox"/>
	Decisions may have potential for income generation				<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Management	An assessment has been carried out and there are no material risks				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Material risks exist and these are recorded at Risk Register Reference - inherent risk score - residual risk score -				<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff	There are no additional staffing implications				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Additional staff will be required – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities and Human Rights	There will be no impact on equality (race, age, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation) or human rights implications				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	There will be an impact on equality (see categories above) or human rights implications – see paragraph				<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	Power: sections 101 and 111, Local Government Act 1972				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers: None					
Person Originating Report: Head of ICT Services - Gareth Jones - 01832 742076 - gjones@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk					
Date: 2 nd November 2009					
CFO		MO		CX	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 19)



ICT Strategy 2010 – 2013

1. Vision

- 1.1 To contribute to Organisational Outcomes through using technology to drive and support changes which:
- Improve access to services for customers, especially through self-service channels
 - Improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and decision making, through improved information management and more flexible ways of working
 - Reduce costs for services and ICT support
- 1.2 To deliver this vision we will develop and agree a joint ICT Strategy which has strong links to other corporate strategies:
- Sustainable Communities Strategies (BCW/ENC)
 - Corporate Plans (BCW/ENC)
 - 2020 Plan (BCW)
 - PRIDE (BCW)
- 1.3 Appendices A summarises this vision and the key outcomes and strategies that will implement this vision.
- 1.4 This strategy will be supported by detailed action plans that will be developed separately but jointly agreed by the ICT Executive Board.

2. Key Elements of Joint ICT Strategy

2.1 **Shared service approach and organisation**

Policy:

- ICT Shared Service will create an environment which will enable other shared services to be created in the future as required
- Opportunities for shared services will be promoted, supported and led on by ICT
- Benchmarking and satisfaction surveys will be conducted and the results of these will be used to identify opportunities to improve.

- 2.1.1 The shared service has delivered a platform which is affordable, reliable, flexible, efficient and is driven by business requirements.. The Shared Service will deliver the vision by “providing an excellent ICT Service that is central to the successful transformation of services based on the needs of our customers.” Our aim is to become more proactive in the transformation of services rather than being reactive.
- 2.1.2 As the councils change due to business transformation and tailoring services to customers needs it is important that ICT is flexible and does not restrict how we re-structure and operate in the future.
- 2.1.3 Both councils are increasingly living and working in a partnership world and this will be a key dimension of our future ICT strategy. Whether we consider inward focused partners delivering support services, those which are the face of the services provided on behalf of the councils,



or partners that co-operate with the council to generate better outcomes for our communities, we need to ensure that organisational barriers do not get in the way.

2.1.4 ICT Services currently only undergoes limited benchmarking with similar sized organisations and services. The Society of IT Managers (Socitm) has a long established programme of benchmarking ICT services across the Local Government sector in the UK. It is expected that as ICT Managers are members of Socitm we will participate in at least one of their benchmarking groups during 2009/10. Internal satisfaction surveys for the ICT service have shown year on year improvements and have maintained an 'excellent' level since 2005.

2.1.5 Once the Socitm benchmarks have been completed the recommendations and lessons learned from the benchmark will be taken forward in the service plan. The wider implications will be used as a benchmark for cost and quality of the service.

2.1.6 User satisfaction will be measured in two ways in future:

- Socitm staff satisfaction questionnaire which will take the place of the existing internal satisfaction survey.
- Random sampling of staff using the service desk.

3.0 Improve Access to services for customers through self-service channels

3.1 Single view of the customer and place per council

<p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of databases outside of ICT is not permitted • All customer data will be held within a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System • All property data will be held and maintained in a BS7666 Gazetteer • All employee data will be held centrally by Human Resources. • Where possible paper records will be digitised to reduce administration costs and improve the service to the customer

3.1.1 ICT Services will focus on using the data and information held in our systems to help deliver better services To achieve a single view we need to be sure that we recognise where and how many times a customer is entered on any of the councils' strategic systems. A Master Data system is required to clean the data, align it and keep track of customers and match the information against mosaic types. This will allow information to be built in to a business warehouse to report on how a customer interacts with all parts of the council.

3.1.2 The CRM implementations continue to be a cornerstone of the ICT strategy and will be enhanced during the next four years. The CRMs are the preferred place to hold all customer data and our ability to use that data to better understand our customers will be vital. It is central to our drive to collapse systems and wherever possible systems that hold customer data will be required to move this onto CRMs.

3.1.3 The implementation of CRM has helped the councils to recognise that a master data management solution is required to bring together and standardise key customer data across all strategic systems. This will have benefits for customers as they will not need to advise the council many times of changes in circumstances and for council staff as we will not need to re-key data across multiple systems.

3.1.4 Historically councils have focused on properties rather than individual customers. As a result the councils maintain a number of systems that rely on accurate property based information in



order to make decisions. Both councils consistently achieve close to 100% accuracy in our gazetteers, and significant work has been completed to make the gazetteers the central reference point for all property addresses. There is still a need to centralise the support for the gazetteers and the property based systems into ICT to improve the resilience and support.

3.1.5 The councils have a number of disparate systems that hold information on employees. Projects are underway to identify these systems and centralise the information so that staff are utilised and developed in the best way possible.

3.2 Improved website functionality and design

Policy:

- The websites will meet all of the required legislation.
- Service areas will have at least one designated officer who is responsible for maintaining and updating their service areas web pages (website and intranet).
- All website or intranet development requests will be co-ordinated through the service desk in the first instance and then by the relevant ICT department.

3.2.1 As more emphasis is placed on self service and integration between systems the importance and potential of the websites and intranets are constantly increasing. Over the last six months work has been carried out to migrate the councils onto the same website software and content management system (CMS). With this work due to complete in February the foundations will be in place to move the councils' website forward together. The websites will continue to be developed and updated in line with national and corporate strategies surrounding information management. In order to meet the requirements of equal access to council information, further work will be done on the websites to make sure that it meets the local and national requirements.

3.2.2 Both councils make extensive use of online forms that enable customers to submit a service request or information and an e-mail will be sent to the relevant council services. As part of improving access to services, improving communications and removing duplication of work the forms are being redesigned and fully integrated into back end systems. Through completing this work customer service staff and services that rely on a high volume of transactional services will see a considerable increase in staff efficiencies as the customer updates the systems directly with their requirements or information.

4.0 Improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and decision making

4.1 Enabling flexible working

Policy:

- All future ICT system business cases need to consider flexible working and applications will need to be mobile enabled.
- Strategic back office applications should use their own mobile enabling tool if available.
- All other applications and front office requirements should use Citrix.

4.1.1 Home working demand is set to increase significantly in the future, especially as a way of reducing the demand for office space and reducing Co2 emissions. Work is nearing completion that will allow both councils to access their normal applications and work from home or remotely. Strong security measures are also being established and policies are in the process of being reviewed to further support this initiative.

4.1.2 The corporate application delivery method which uses Citrix allows staff to login and access their applications and data from anywhere on the network. With the introduction of VoIP phones at East Northamptonshire (planned for Wellingborough in 2011/12) staff can also log into any phone in the council as if it was their own with all of the same functionality. Hot desking will allow the councils to release office accommodation; this is used in a number of services including ICT. Further work needs to be done on wirelessly enabling buildings in accordance with security standards.

4.1.3 Mobile working will become increasingly important as a means of delivering services in people's homes or businesses. The high level requirement is to have secure and fast mobile access to council databases and resources both on the move as well as in non-council offices and client's own homes. Standards for mobile devices will need to be regularly reviewed and agreed. Again strong authentication devices are required for mobile access and all hardware will need to be able to meet the agreed council standards.

4.2 Better disaster recovery and business continuity

Policy:

- ICT Services will create, maintain and test a joint business continuity plan that delivers against the councils' priority services.
- ICT Services will continue to meet the requirements of the Government Connect Code of Connection as well as working to align with ISO 27001 security standards

4.2.1 There are two aspects of business continuity that need to be considered:

- Specific arrangements such as hot standby to react to emergencies
- Design features in the systems we use every day that protect against emergencies

The ICT business continuity plan is part of both Councils' business continuity plans. All systems and applications will be put into virtual environments to greatly enhance their resilience and speed with which they can be brought back into use in an emergency. During 2009 a significant amount of work was carried out to enable real time data copying between two storage area networks at both councils. This has greatly enhanced the backup arrangements by keeping exact copies of up to date information for both councils at both locations. There is still more work to do to continue this work and virtualisation, but the final aim is to reduce the potential for systems becoming unavailable either through an incident or emergency or through planned work to an absolute minimum based on affordability and practicalities.

ICT Services has been working towards gaining and maintaining the Government Connect standards as well as complying with international security standards. There is significant work to do in these areas, especially for the Borough Council of Wellingborough where patching has not happened on a number of systems. A new ICT Security policy has been developed and is in the process of being adopted at both councils.

4.3 Improved Member use of technology

Policy:

- Members will be provided with opportunities for ICT training in line with the needs of their role.
- Support will be provided to Members in line with the service desk policies.



- 4.3.1 Technology can greatly assist Members in four key areas; saving time, keeping in touch with a wide range of people and issues, balancing the councillor role with other commitments, and getting people to engage with the local council and their councillors. These are the four areas that ICT will concentrate on with Members through: remote access to relevant information and applications, providing and supporting electronic communication and working methods, selection of training courses to help Members maximise the opportunities technology can bring them.

4.4 Better information management

Policy:

- ICT will maintain and archive electronic data based on best practice and legislative requirements
- ICT will work with the Business Analyst and Service Improvement Officers to identify opportunities to improve the accessibility of information for the benefit of the service and the customers
- ICT will administer and develop a centralised records management system
- ICT will create and maintain a data sharing protocol and well as maintaining the councils data protection and freedom of information requirements
- Geographic Data will be administered, controlled and developed centrally by ICT Services and will meet all of the required local and legislative requirements

- 4.4.1 Information is as much a key business asset as our staff and buildings. It is expensive to create, maintain, store and retrieve, and the potential risks associated with its loss, misuse, or unauthorised destruction are substantial. Managing information from its creation to archive or deletion is critical to the delivery of high-quality and customer-focused services.
- 4.4.2 The councils are very good at collecting data and information, but we have not invested enough in the systems to convert this into useable management information. The councils' have vast amounts of disparate data held in independent systems or paper records, some information held in semi-accessible areas and knowledge is held by individuals. The ICT strategy will support the standardisation of information and making it readily accessible to all authorised users, ideally through electronic mediums. The resulting major changes in the way we work will give us significant options in how services are provided in the future.
- 4.4.3 We will begin a significant programme of work to address this need which will cover all data and information; this will be a centrally driven programme and will bring the councils up to the same standards. This programme will be a joint effort with the GIS data team, Business Analyst and Service Improvement Officers. The outcome of this programme will be a structured and documented flow of data and information that can then be stored and exploited with a degree of confidence.
- 4.4.4 Records Management operates on guiding principles for the systematic creation, access, retrieval, use, storage and destruction of resources. We need to manage the records we create more effectively and consistently in order to:
- Find information we need quickly to meet customer and business needs
 - Enable others to find information we have created quickly
 - Avoid re-creating and duplicating existing information
 - Meet our obligations under the Access to Information legislation
 - Make efficient use of our investment in technology



- 4.4.5 Paper records account for large areas of floor space as well as significant officer time in maintaining and accessing them. The electronic document management system and Content Management System will be further developed at both councils.
- 4.4.6 The procedures we adopt for the management of information and records across the council will reflect existing standards for the public sector, best practice guidelines and codes of practice. This will ensure compatibility across both councils and potentially with other public sector organisations.
- 4.4.7 Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is central for both councils to be able to make informed decisions for the benefit of the communities. Through geographically representing our data and making it widely available both internally and externally council resources can be targeted to the areas most in need. Significant work has been done at East Northamptonshire over a number of years to put make GIS a key system and establish a culture that understands the importance and benefits from an integrated GI system. There are projects underway at Wellingborough to move GIS forward and position this as a major strategic tool for the council

4.5 Improved employee ICT skills

Policy:

- A comprehensive ICT training program will be offered to all employees based on the needs identified through the PDR process.

- 4.5.1 Basic ICT skills are now fundamental to every job in the council. We simply cannot do business without ICT and the more we invest in people's ICT skills, the more we will reap the benefit in increased productivity. In the future we will need staff to develop their ICT skills so we can deliver more of our services electronically.
- 4.5.2 A major success for both councils was successfully achieving and retaining Investors in People (IiP) accreditation. A key aspect of IiP is investment in the learning and development of staff and making sure that staff maximise their potential not only for their own personal satisfaction and career enhancement, but also for the benefit of the councils.
- 4.5.3 As part of the employee appraisal process at both councils, peoples' level of ICT competence is being identified and through a comprehensive training program employees are being given the opportunity to improve the way they work with the ICT systems they rely on.

4.6 Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Compliance

Policy:

- All existing and future ICT management systems (systems used solely by ICT) will align to the ITIL standards
- Systems administrators will follow the principles of ITIL when administering their systems.
- Policy creation will be done jointly

- 4.6.1 Since late 2003 the ICT industry has aligned their service delivery models to the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) standard. The ITIL standard supports the BS15000 standard which has recently received international recognition in the form of ISO 20000. The ITIL Standards themselves are centred on ICT delivery at the operational level and is something the ICT Service is working hard on being aligned to. All employees are ITIL certified and all ICT management systems are assessed against ITIL criteria.



4.6.2 The ICT Policies have been recently reviewed in light of new legislation regarding Government Connect. All future policies will be developed jointly in order to maximise the economies of scale from joint working.

4.7 Maintaining existing systems and the Service Desk

Policy:

- ICT employees will maintain their skills to be able to support all of the ICT systems
- The ICT Service Desk is the focal point for all interactions with ICT Services. This system will be maintained and developed in order to improve the quality of service offered
- Change management will be used to maintain the integrity of all ICT systems whether they are administered in ICT or not.

4.7.1 ICT Services currently maintains in excess of 100 different ICT systems. An important part of the roles in ICT is to keep these systems operating on a day to day basis and maintain their integrity through a managed change management approach. Due to the nature of information technology employees are expected to keep their skills up to date through knowledge transfers, internal training and mentoring and professional courses. Without regular training systems would not be properly maintained and services would be adversely affected.

4.7.2 The Service Desk is the focal point for all ICT related incidents, problems and requests as well as containing all of the councils' ICT asset information and management approaches. It is vital that this is properly maintained and developed to enable ICT Services to continue to deliver a support function to the councils.

5.0 Reduce costs for services and ICT support

5.1 Common systems and hardware

Policy:

- All new ICT systems will be installed into virtual environments were possible
- Desktop hardware will continue to be standardised
- Desktop applications and the delivery method will be reviewed and standardised
- Joint contracts, where possible, will be created

5.1.1 The focus for the next four years is to consolidate systems into strategic systems and virtualise them. This will be critical to achieving efficiency savings and our information management goals. Microsoft Office is the office productivity tool of choice for the councils and through the Shared ICT Service Microsoft recognised the shared service as a single entity, the first it had formally done in the country. This provided both councils with a single Enterprise Agreement which has realised significant cost saving benefits. ENC = £10,000 in first year, BCW = £25,000 in the first year. Future savings will also be realised throughout the life of the agreement.

5.1.2 There is a significant need to replace all of the desktops at Wellingborough Council and the majority of the servers. Several projects are currently addressing these requirements. Citrix is also being developed to simplify the way applications are delivered and accessed, as well as reducing licenses and support costs. It is important to make sure the foundations for future ICT developments are in place and that the same technologies (hardware and software) are used at both councils to enable efficiencies and the transformation programmes to be successful



5.1.3 The performance of our ICT demands a set of robust contracts that meets the councils' current and future business requirements. It is critical to service delivery to the citizen that the support of key applications and back office systems are of the highest quality. The integration of corporate systems and rationalisation of existing solutions will be a key factor in our success. Work is being carried out to review all of the existing contracts and where possible move both councils onto a single contract that will save money. Where this has been done so far there has been both a saving and an improvement to the terms and conditions of the contracts.

5.2 Centralised servers and storage.

Policy:

- Central data storage device will be put in place for both councils that is highly resilient and easily expandable to meet current and future demands.

5.2.1 There has been a lot of work at East Northamptonshire to put in place a highly resilient, high speed infrastructure that is secure. The experience from this is currently being used to put in place a similar infrastructure at Wellingborough Council. Capital funding is available to continue the development of the ICT infrastructure through replacement schedules at both councils and also create synergies between the councils were possible to simplify administration and support and gain economies of scale.

5.3 Centralised systems administrators

Policy:

- Where possible all system administration roles will be centralised within ICT to make sure standards are maintained and that resilience of skills are improved

5.3.1 Centralising systems administrator responsibilities and roles into ICT services will allow there to be a greater degree of resilience for those systems. Where this has happened this has proven to be of significant benefit to the users of the system.

5.3 Centralised ICT budgets

Policy:

- All ICT purchases have to be approved by an ICT manager
- Larger purchases that affect both authorities (above £25,000), approval must go through the ICT Executive Board.

5.3.1 Centralising all ICT budgets and purchasing through ICT will enable savings to be made and compatibility issues to be addressed.

5.3.2 The councils have committed substantial investment which needs to be properly managed and reported on. The structure for ICT is currently being reviewed with a proposal to centralise roles to gain efficiency and realise the full benefit of the shared service. The day-to-day management of ICT is led by the Head of ICT who manages the ICT Service. A monthly meeting of ICT managers ensures that the programmes, activities and day-to-day operational management are effective and that service standards are being maintained.

6.0 Action Plans

6.1 ICT Projects will be funded from the ICT capital programmes which will use action plans to identify all of the significant ICT investments and projects that the councils are undertaking



over a five year period. All projects will need to demonstrate that there is a sound business case, that options have been investigated and that the approach demonstrates best value for the councils. All projects are co-ordinated and prioritised by the Head of ICT Services and the ICT Programme Manager. Regular updates are provided to the ICT Executive Board.

6.2 Indicative Action Plans will be developed and included in Appendices B