



## SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2007

### CORPORATE ICT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

##### Purpose of Report

1. This report updates the Commission on the progress being made in implementing the corporate ICT Strategy.

##### Background

2. In 2006 an independent review of the County Council's ICT service was undertaken by Deloitte, in order to ensure that the service is fit for purpose to fulfil its role as a major contributor to the corporate change programme.
3. The main finding of the review was that the County Council ICT function performed well based on user satisfaction and cost benchmarks.
4. The review did however note a number of areas where improvements could be made. The key issues were as follows:
  - The organisational structure for ICT, whilst in line with best practice, was configured for a steady state rather than the major change expected to take place in the County Council
  - There will be a need to exploit more fully across the business the opportunities ICT can provide for increased efficiency, particularly in the area of common systems
  - There has been limited capacity for the ICT service to act as a "business partner" which may have resulted in lost opportunities to improve service delivery through the innovative use of ICT
  - Whilst there were many commendable aspects to the Council's existing ICT strategy, it required updating and alignment with current corporate priorities

## **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

5. On 31st October 2006 Cabinet approved a new ICT Vision and Outline Strategy for the County Council (copies are available upon request).

## **Revised ICT Strategy**

6. The key recommendations incorporated in the Corporate ICT Strategy may be summarised as follows:
  - Restructure within ICT Services to create a specific team to support change and corporate projects, led by a senior manager
  - Refocus on getting activities in the right place, with some staffing transfers around support, procurement, information management and business analysis
  - Extra focus on technical architecture (to drive savings), mobile and flexible working (to meet service needs) and research and evaluation (to help service efficiency)
  - Re-engineering of ICT procedures – changes to support the revised organisational structure and around other strands of the strategy such as security
  - Protection of current support levels is key in making the above changes
7. Whilst the proposed strategy will give the County Council a sound platform and direction for the next 2 to 3 years, given the challenges the authority faces and the ever-changing nature of ICT it is inevitable that there will be developments and extensions to the strategy over time.

## **Implementation of New ICT Organisational Structure**

8. Significant progress has been made in the development and implementation of a new organisational structure for ICT Services, which came into operation on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007.
9. The new structure has been designed to address the following aspects of the agreed ICT Strategy:
  - Separation of applications support and strategic development, increasing the alignment of the latter with the corporate change programme. Doing this will ensure there is a sharp focus on delivering the ICT projects to support the changes which the County Council views as high priority.

- Establishment of an Enterprise Architecture function. A technical architecture will be developed which describes the most appropriate permutation of hardware, software and networking to support the Council's business needs, and then ensuring that architecture is adhered to and exploited to best advantage.
- Development of a "business partner" role for ICT through the creation of Business Development Manager posts
- Increased resources for the development of ICT resilience and disaster recovery facilities

10. In parallel new service management processes, based upon best practice, have been developed to support the new structure and these will also commence operation during June.

### **Implementation of New ICT Strategy**

11. The new ICT strategy sets out strands of strategic development which align with the National e-Service Delivery Standards for ICT (NeSDS), which is becoming widely accepted as the framework for measuring ICT service performance. The immediate priorities are as follows:

- Concluding the development of a detailed ICT strategy implementation plan
- Establishment of Enterprise Architecture function and the "as is" and "to be" architecture models
- Establishment of a project control framework to ensure that existing project management practice is strengthened, extended and fully integrated with the corporate change programme
- Support to the flexible and mobile working programme through the identification of appropriate technical options which address corporate business requirements
- Development of a framework for effective communication of the strategy to staff and stakeholders
- Establishing a formal approach to performance management in ICT
- Developing an ICT career pathway to ensure that technical staff are skilled to meet the demands arising from an ambitious programme of corporate change
- Commissioning improved facilities for ICT resilience and disaster recovery, followed by a review of information security policies and procedures

12. Further information on implementation may be found in the ICT Service and Strategy Implementation Plan, an extract from which accompanies this report.
13. During the course of the implementation of the new ICT Strategy it has become clear that the corporate governance arrangements for ICT need to be addressed in order to “mainstream” the ICT Review work. A critical part of those arrangements is the establishment of a Corporate ICT Steering Group, to oversee the development and implementation of ICT strategy and policy, and to advise on corporate ICT priorities. This group met for the first time in mid July.

#### **Resources Implications**

14. The costs of implementing the new strategy will be met from budgets allocated to ICT Services and the Change Programme.
15. Any ongoing costs will need to be met from the ICT Services revenue budget.

#### **Recommendation**

16. The Scrutiny Commission is asked to NOTE this report.

#### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

17. Implementation of the agreed ICT Strategy will help the County Council to provide better services to all of its customers.

#### **Circulation Under Sensitive Issues Procedure**

None.

#### **Officers to Contact**

Andy Roberts, Head of ICT - ext. 57800  
Liz Clark, Head of Organisational Development - ext. 56236