



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: Learning & Development

Date of Meeting: Executive
05-May-2009

Public
Yes

Key Decision: Yes
Recorded in Forward Plan: Yes

Inside Policy Framework
Yes

Title: ICT Shared Service Strategy
Report of: Director of Corporate Services
Report reference: CORP12-09 ICT Shared Service Strategy

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive are asked to:-

- 1) consider the strategy and make any comments they feel appropriate
- 2) refer the report for Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny consideration

Summary:

This report presents the first joint Shared Service ICT Strategy with Allerdale Borough Council.

Contact Officer: John Nutley

Ext: X7250

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 As part of the process for developing a shared ICT service between Carlisle City Council and Allerdale Borough Council, it is necessary to develop a shared ICT Strategy which the new ICT service will seek to deliver on.
- 1.2 By adopting a single ICT strategy across both Council's the efficiencies in both operational and investment terms envisaged in the original business case for the service will be facilitated.
- 1.3 The ownership of the ICT Strategy, upon approval by both Councils, will move to the ICT Strategic Board and the Joint Operational Board the governance of which has been detailed in previous reports to this Executive.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Consultation to Date.
ICT staff at both Carlisle and Allerdale have had an opportunity to contribute and comment
ICT Shared Service Project Board
Allerdale Service Director has approved and signed off the strategy
- 2.2 Consultation proposed.
SMT - 21/04/09
JMT - 30/04/09
HOS - 05/05/09
CROS – 09/06/09
Executive – 29/06/09

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive are asked to:-

- 1) Consider the strategy and make any comments they feel appropriate
- 2) Refer the report for Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny consideration

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The approval of the joint ICT strategy will give direction to the new ICT service and enable it to operate across both Councils as a single service.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources –

None

- Financial –

Where costs associated with delivering the ICT strategy 2009/12 have not been covered by the business case, they will not be progressed until a report, including cost considerations, has been agreed by both Councils.

- Legal –

None

- Corporate

- Risk Management –

No new risks are introduced by approving the statement

- Equality Issues –

None

- Environmental –

None

- Crime and Disorder –

None



and



Working together in Partnership

SHARED ICT SERVICES

ICT STRATEGY 2009 / 2012

Version: V4

Authors: **Stephen Kirkpatrick**
Allerdale Borough Council
John Nutley
Carlisle City Council

Reporting to: **Joint Operational Board**

Date: 09/04/09

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Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Comment
V1	16/02/09	SK/JN	Initial version drafted.
V2	13/03/09	SK/JN	Second draft prepared for distribution to project board for review.
V3	19/03/09	SK	Incorporated feedback from ICT management team and added section for printing services.
V4	09/04/09	SK	Final version incorporating feedback from Carlisle City Council Communications Officer.

1. Introduction

Allerdale Borough Council and Carlisle City Council have developed this first Shared Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Strategy to drive and direct the development of the partnership whilst also ensuring that the new Shared ICT Service supports and underpins the transformational requirements of both organisations over the coming three year period.

This strategy is a statement of our aims and objectives which will be used as the framework within which we can operate and is to form the basis for making future decisions.

This strategy has been developed to support the principles and direction developed in the Shared ICT Business Case that was jointly agreed by both councils during 2008.

A specific action plan of projects and initiatives, together with appropriate service level and performance measures, has been developed as part of the three year service plan which should be read in conjunction with this strategy and which will be refreshed and approved on an annual basis by both councils.

2. Wider Partnership Objectives

With the approval of the Joint Operational Board, the Shared ICT Service will actively seek to engage with any partner or organisation, whose contribution will positively enhance the overall service and help meet the objectives of the ICT Strategy.

The Shared ICT Service will also, on a commercial basis, make available any spare capacity under its direct management to any third sector agency or organisation which has need of such a service. It should be noted that such activity is consistent with the overall thrust of this strategy which is to share and collaborate with other organisations where this is consistent with both Council's aims and objectives.

3. Shared ICT Service Objectives

Provision of quality **end to end** management of all Information and Communication Technology services used throughout both councils:

- Provide a premier ICT support and administration service for all areas of both councils, including members, officers and partners within a shared service environment.
- Provide a development service to implement new and updated systems that support all business areas in their role as service providers.
- To maintain a portfolio of services which include:
 - Design, delivery and maintenance of converged ICT infrastructure and business systems along with associated services.
 - Host and develop all partnership information channels, specifically but not limited to websites (Internet and Intranet), providing the tools and guidance

for all departments to enable direct access to their services and to relevant and accurate information.

- Maintenance and development of a converged Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) service together with associated GIS systems.
- Provision of a single corporate and departmental print and reprographics service.
- Ensure that all ICT Services and systems are delivered in a cost effective, responsive and secure way.
- Ensure that appropriate ICT Disaster Recovery arrangements are in place in order to support the overall Business Continuity requirements of both councils.
- Maintain excellent levels of management and cost control, in terms of ongoing service provision and the procurement and implementation of updated and new systems and services.
- Support and enable business and customer benefits through change, rather than simply the introduction of new technology.
- Provide innovative and strategic leadership for the both councils in terms of how ICT can be used to effectively deliver their services.
- Work in partnership, to support the delivery of all appropriate shared services agendas originating from any Council, public body, or third sector agency.
- Support service departments in achieving efficiency and transformational targets in ways that are of direct benefit to both councils and their customers.
- Support and deliver the objectives of the Joint Operational Board.
- Identify and achieve cost efficiencies and service benefits possible through the implementation of a Shared ICT Service.
- Facilitate the development of further shared services by laying the ICT foundations required.
- Implement **green** technologies wherever possible across all service provided and to support appropriate climate change initiatives.

4. Support for Transformational Change

The Shared ICT Service Business Case foresaw that a Shared ICT Service was a necessary precursor to subsequent delivery of further shared service initiatives and future service developments. Based on the overarching themes of sharing services, resources and outcomes, the Shared ICT Service will actively seek to assist in any transformational change that either Council singly or jointly approve.

The scope of these changes will not be limited solely to Carlisle City Council or Allerdale Borough Council but in the spirit of true transformational change will seek to build on existing, or look to create innovative new, services. Delivery and focus on both councils' aims and objectives will remain at the core these activities.

5. Rationalisation and Convergence

A cornerstone of the Shared ICT Strategy will be to seek to rationalise information and information systems and look at all times to ensure that any proposed developments or enhancements will result in both councils moving closer together in terms of software, hardware and infrastructure.

This specific element of the strategy will be carried out by a mixture of natural evolution, specific intervention and opportunistic investment. In all cases, the rationalisation and convergence activity will be supported by a sound business case highlighting the benefits, either financial or strategic, which will be endorsed by the Joint Operational Board and be consistent with the benefits detailed in the original ICT Shared Service Business Case.

6. Information Standardisation and Harmonisation

Both councils currently use a range of business systems, standards and processes to provide a predominantly mirrored service. An ongoing programme of convergence work will be undertaken, focusing on the following principle areas:

6.1 Desktop Systems

Both councils currently use industry standard Microsoft technologies for desktop software (Windows), office productivity systems (Office) and email (Outlook/Exchange) and filing systems.

The Shared ICT Service will standardise and converge these systems, giving flexibility for users to seamlessly work across both councils whilst also providing increased resilience of systems in terms of business continuity.

6.2 Web Services

Internet websites

Both the Allerdale Borough Council and Carlisle City Councils websites are managed using the Immediacy Content Management System.

The key focus will be on retaining and consolidating the classification of Allerdale Borough Council as having an 'Excellent'¹ website and on achieving Excellence for the Carlisle City Council website as soon as practicably possible.

Significant revenue cost savings will be made by bringing together all websites onto a single common infrastructure and software platform. Although all websites would be hosted in one server infrastructure, they would maintain their own identity and content as separate databases².

¹ As awarded by the SOCITM following the 2009 Better Connected annual review of all local government websites.

² Utilising SQL database technologies.

Both councils recognise the importance of web services as a major and cost effective, access channel and therefore the convergence and further development of the Internet sites will be a major focus for the Shared ICT Service.

Intranet/SharePoint

The current Allerdale Borough Council intranet is based on a bespoke .Net application and Immediacy Content Management System, both of which enable staff to easily add/edit content. The current Carlisle City Council intranet is based on Microsoft Office SharePoint 2007.

The Shared ICT Service will develop a new Intranet service for both organisations that would use the best of both councils' current intranets.

SharePoint will be used as the primary Intranet user interface for corporate, collaborative, staff policy documents (i.e. non-back office system/process documents).

The new service will share common platforms and standards but will maintain segregation of data and branding required by both organisations, whilst also supporting any move to further shared services across the councils.

This new Intranet service will be developed and implemented in conjunction with the relevant Communications & Marketing departments at both councils.

6.3 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

The two councils currently use CRM systems from different suppliers. The Shared ICT Service will work with Customer Services Management at both organisations to actively encourage and help develop the business case for convergence to a single CRM system and potentially a shared customer service strategy across the two councils.

6.4 Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRMS)

Both councils currently have Electronic Document Management systems in place with Allerdale Borough Council having a corporate system in place whilst Carlisle City Council operate a different system only used within the Revenues and Benefits Service.

The Shared ICT Service will work with corporate / senior management teams at both councils to actively work towards a convergence to a single system to support corporate wide use across both councils.

Records Management systems are not yet in use by either Council (although procured at Allerdale Borough Council). Again, the Shared ICT Service will work with records and information officers at both councils to implement as required in conjunction with Intranet and SharePoint strategies detailed earlier in section 6.2.

6.5 Telephony Services

Both councils have previously undertaken a joint procurement of telephony systems and are therefore in an excellent position to move forward with convergence of the best of breed CISCO telephony systems in use.

Working with external specialists, initial integration will enable inter council (free) call routing across both networks to allow continued use of short extension dialling to all users. Further integration will then be undertaken to fully merge the two telephony systems to allow services such as contact centre, call reporting and call recording to operate effectively across both councils. A further key benefit of full convergence will be the ability to support true mobility of users between and across the two organisations.

Whilst giving increased business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities, the convergence of systems and maintenance contracts will help to reduce annual revenue expenditure across both councils.

The mobile phone and Blackberry smart phone arrangements in place will also be managed jointly and will ultimately be converged in to a single and cost effective service.

6.6 Geographical Information and Gazetteer Services

Both councils currently operate Land and Property Gazetteer (LPG) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) from different suppliers. These, in turn, support suites of Land and Property based systems such as planning and environmental health, again both from different suppliers.

The Allerdale Borough Council Gazetteer does not have the required capabilities and functionality, whereas the Carlisle City Council (Plantech) system works well and satisfies business needs.

The medium term strategy is to migrate to both councils using the current Carlisle City Council Plantech Gazetteer and also to ultimately to converge on a single GIS platform.

Subject to the approval of an appropriate business case and in-line with the overarching theme of convergence, the Shared ICT Service would encourage and support the rationalisation of the Land and Property suite of systems in use across both councils to a single suite of products which would enable the development of further shared services in the appropriate business areas.

6.7 Back Office Systems

There are currently 88 applications in use at Allerdale Borough Council and 92 at Carlisle City Council of which 21 are the same system across both councils, including areas such as Cash and Income management, Human Resources, Payroll and Licensing systems.

Priority will be given to convergence of common systems in order to ease administration overheads and standardise procedures.

Major focus will also be given to the convergence of Financial and Revenues and Benefits systems, with the latter being considered for the creation of a shared service involving Copeland Borough Council as a third partner.

Rationalising these and all other systems is a major programme of work which will extend beyond the initial term of this strategy, with each being subject to an individual business case, however it is recognised that the rationalisation and convergence of these systems will be the greatest source for potential revenue, and ultimately capital, savings for both councils over the long term.

6.8 Infrastructure

The joint ICT infrastructure owned by both councils under the new sharing arrangement is a key strategic asset. This will be managed, maintained and developed by the Shared ICT Service to ensure maximum value is extracted by both councils from their ICT investment. The Shared ICT Service will ensure that this joint ICT infrastructure is developed in a cost effective and positive manner in relation to the demands of both councils and in alignment with the technological development and direction of the wider ICT industry.

The initial, detailed plans for such development are contained in the document entitled "Technical Convergence Report" which was created and approved during the project to set up the Shared ICT Service.

6.9 Printing Services

Printing services will be converged across both councils to build on current strengths and further develop a cost effective corporate and desktop printing strategy to serve the needs of both councils.

Both councils currently operate internal corporate print rooms which undertake the majority of council printing, including democratic minutes and agendas etc. Both councils also utilise external print services for high volume printing such as the quarterly magazines.

The Shared ICT Service will maintain the two print rooms and will look to increase the capabilities for printing to be completed internally, whilst rationalising the infrastructure required across the two sites. The long term requirements for, and efficiency of, maintaining two print rooms will be considered although there will be no automatic assumption that a single print room will be the most effective way forward to serve the local needs of each Council.

It is recognised that there will always be a need for external printing support; however we will seek to minimise and better control this external expenditure.

6.10 Security

Security and integrity of information and systems will remain a top priority for both councils with specific focus on sharing of appropriate information whilst maintaining segregation of council specific information and systems.

As part of plans to merge the underlying infrastructure across both councils, a programme of work will be undertaken to rationalise security systems and practices to a single set of standards and systems.

The implementation of Government Connect services will also be completed, initially to support the requirements across the Revenues and Benefits services, but ultimately to enable secure communications with other local and national government organisations.

6.11 Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BC/DR)

One of the principle drivers for the creation of a Shared ICT Service was to achieve improved business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities with specific emphasis on telephony and website services.

All changes, be they infrastructure, application, procedural or staff will be undertaken with a view to achieving improvements to the BC/DR capabilities across both councils. The Shared ICT Service will maintain two data centre operations and will deploy services across both, giving resilience across two geographically dispersed locations. The projects to converge telephony and web services will enable enhanced resilience of these two principle customer access channels.

7. Partnerships and Commercial Engagements

7.1 Partnerships

The principle focus of the Shared ICT Service will be to effectively implement and develop the ICT partnership between the two councils in order to support the transformational change required by both councils in terms of service improvements and efficiency savings.

This further development of the wider council business partnerships could be through the development of further shared services or simply through the convergence of business systems and processes.

The Shared ICT Service will also actively seek opportunities to work jointly with other organisations on specific areas/initiatives and potentially to expand the ICT partnership to include other local authorities, either as a true partnership or on a client/contractor basis.

7.2 Commercial Engagements

The Shared ICT Service will continue to support the current third party clients and will strive to develop these arrangements further whilst seeking to win additional commercial business across both the public and 'third' sector.

The initial strategic direction for continuation of current, and development of additional, commercial engagements will be:

- The provision of IT services to the "Third Sector" (voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, cooperatives and mutuals), enabling the sector to deliver public services, promote social enterprise and strengthen communities.

- All work for this sector will be chargeable either direct to the organisation concerned or to a sponsoring council department.
- The current standard contracts for maintenance and additional services used by Carlisle City Council will be adopted, with appropriate amendments, as a standard contract for the new shared service.
- To enable the new shared service to charge accurately for all services, a business service catalogue/portfolio (customer view) and a technical service catalogue (internal view) will be implemented.

8. The Shared ICT Service

8.1 ICT Service Management

The Shared ICT Service will be operated in line with recognised ITIL³ best practises for the provision of operational areas such as ICT Service Desk, Service Level Management and Change Management.

A single shared ICT Service Desk will be implemented during the first year of the new Shared ICT Service and will use an ITIL compliant service management tool that will be operated in accordance with the incident and request service levels set out in the three year service plan.

8.2 Project and Programme Management

Projects will be delivered using the OGC⁴ recognised *PRINCE2* Project Management methodology⁵ and to local organisation specific requirements where needed. Project boards will be created for all significant ICT related projects made up of both ICT and business representatives. The project lead for each project will be determined for that project; however the standard will be for business based project managers to lead all projects.

The ICT Management team will be responsible for the delivery of the ongoing programme of ICT projects and developments that will be required by both organisations using the OGC recognised *Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) Framework*⁶ as appropriate.

The Joint Operational Board will act as the overall sponsoring group.

8.3 Performance Management

The performance of the Shared ICT Service will be measured in accordance with the local performance indicators as set out in the three year service plan and will be monitored and reported on using the Covalent Performance Management system.

³ ITIL stands for 'Information Technology Infrastructure Library' which is part of the IT Service Management best practices developed by OGC.

⁴ Office of Government Commerce. See www.ogc.gov.uk

⁵ Projects in a Controlled Environment. See www.ogc.gov.uk/methods_prince2.asp

⁶ MSP. See http://www.ogc.gov.uk/guidance_managing_successful_projects.asp

8.4 Organisational Development

The creation of a new Shared ICT Service will require the convergence of the two current ICT teams and will require the merger of staff in to the new and agreed single organisational structure. Additionally, it is recognised that the services, processes and policies in use across both ICT teams will need to converge.

The success of the Shared ICT Service ultimately rests on the people within the new structure and the processes and products used by that service. It is imperative that appropriate focus is given to the organisational and procedural development of the new team, therefore key focus is given to these areas in the ICT Service Plan.

Focus will also be given to the merger of GIS and printing services in to the new Shared ICT Services structure and operation.

8.5 Staff Development

To make the best use of ICT services, the Shared Service recognises that staff need to have the right knowledge and skills to use them effectively. To this end:

- Shared ICT staff will receive ongoing training and development in line with the annual appraisal process.
- The Shared ICT Service will support corporate training initiatives and programmes across both councils.
- The Shared ICT Service will review and update their contribution to the officer and member induction programmes.
- It will also become mandatory that all project plans for implementing new or revised ICT systems will include training tasks appropriate for the staff who use and maintain those systems.

8.6 Procurement and Asset Management

The implementation of the new Shared ICT Service will require the convergence and rationalisation of a range of support, infrastructure and technical systems. Many of these changes will require the effective procurement of a range of goods and services on a commercial basis.

The key driver will be to undertake efficient and cost effective procurement using innovative channels, specifically including joint procurement with other agencies and bodies where appropriate.

The move to a Shared ICT Service will, by its very nature, allow greater economies of scale to be achieved through procurement which the service will seek to maximise.

The Shared ICT Service will introduce common standards wherever possible across both councils and will look to ensure the maximum use of all software and hardware assets.

As detailed earlier (see section five), the convergence and rationalisation of business applications is outside of the scope of the Shared ICT Business Case, with each project to be considered as a business case on its own merits, either as part of a further shared service or simply as a system replacement/update project.

As discussed in the Shared ICT Business Case and as approved by each Council, both councils are committed to undertake software rationalisation and convergence as it is recognised that this process will achieve significant further revenue cost savings and also will help to support the required transformation in the way council services are provided.

8.7 Strategy Approval and Review

The Shared ICT Strategy will be initially approved by the Joint Operational Board before seeking approval from both councils. The strategy will be updated on a three year cycle.

The Shared ICT Service Plan (including project and initiative action plan) is also based on a three year timescale but will be updated and approved annually by both councils.