AUDIT COMMITTEE
22 MARCH 2013

ITEM NO. ....

ICT STRATEGY – IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The Chief Officer's Board (COB) is required to report six monthly to the Audit Committee on progress in relation to the implementation of the ICT Strategy.

Summary

2. The ICT Strategy focuses on five strategic priorities:

   (a) ICT Service Development
   (b) ICT Governance
   (c) ICT Strategic Architecture
   (d) Business Change Programme
   (e) ICT Competent Workforce and Members

3. This report summarises progress on key activities within each of these priorities.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that progress on the implementation of the ICT Strategy be noted.

Reasons

5. The recommendation is supported to provide the Audit Committee with evidence to reflect on progress in delivery of the Council's ICT Strategy.

Ian Miles
Head of ICT and Design & Print

Background Papers

Darlington ICT Strategy 2011 - 2013

Ian Miles – Extension 157012

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no specific crime and disorder impact.
Health and Well Being	There is no specific heath and well being impact.
Carbon Impact	Some of the initiatives contained within ICT strategy will help contribute towards the carbon reduction commitments.
Diversity	There is no specific diversity impact.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected equally.
Groups Affected	All groups are affected equally.
Budget and Policy Framework	Financial implications will be considered in the Medium-Term Financial Plan. This report does not affect the policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The ICT strategy supports the business of the Council in delivering ODPP
Efficiency	There will be efficiency savings generated as a result of implementing the ICT strategy. The introduction of new technology is key to providing efficiency savings within Council Services.

MAIN REPORT

ICT Service Development

6. This priority is about implementing best practice standards and procedures across ICT Services. ICT Services are certified to ISO27001 Information Security Management and ISO9001 Quality Management standards and have successfully retained certification in February 2013. ICT Services also operate a business continuity management system that is compliant with ISO22301.

7. The management systems identified above, work on the principle of continual improvement. Improvements identified as a result of the effective operation of theses management systems feed into an overall ICT Service Improvement Programme encompassing all improvement activities in ICT Services. These improvements can result from audit actions, service development initiatives, outcomes from major incident reviews, customer feedback and compliance with Government standards.

ICT Governance

8. The Chief Officers Board (COB) undertake an ICT Strategy monitoring role. Strategy projects and service related workplan updates are presented to COB, as are any proposals regarding major projects across the Council e.g. Printer Consolidation. Regular updates are also given to the Director of Resources and the Xentrall Executive Board on which he sits.

9. ICT are in communication with the Cabinet Office as part of the Authority's compliance with the Government's PSN CoCo (Public Services Network Code of Connection). Our action plan is being revised to ensure we comply with the revised standards and gain continued assurance following our submission in March.

ICT Strategic Architecture

10. A number of projects form an overall programme to improve the Council's underpinning ICT strategic architecture. The re-cabling of the Town Hall is about to commence and takes into account planned accommodation changes. Print Consolidation roll-out continues with the main sites already successfully completed. Recently, major works were successfully completed to elements of the core network and connectivity to Stockton and the disaster recovery facilities located there. There is also some work being undertaken to improve the performance of server backups which in turn will allow a robust archiving regime to be put in place.

11. Work is continuing on the domain upgrade and desktop optimisation strategy. All three domains (Darlington, Stockton & Xentrall) will be migrated by the end of March, with Exchange 2010 following in April and with it a new version of WebOutlook. Work is underway assessing the desktop estate and licensing as well as an application compliance piece in preparation for the rollout of Windows 7 and Office 2010 across all desktops (~5,000 including Stockton). A comprehensive communications and support programme will accompany the roll-out as it progresses during the coming year.
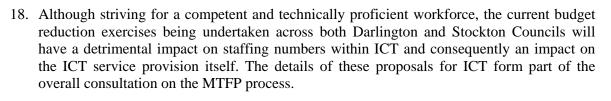
12. As part of the above programme, single sign-on will be deployed which utilises the fobs already issued during the printer consolidation roll-out. This makes the desktop both more secure and standardises the method of authentication across all desktops, office based and remote. Improved management tools are also being deployed which will allow ICT engineers and technicians to manage the desktop estate more efficiently, particularly in terms of issuing future patching and upgrades.

Business Change Programme

13. A Systems & Information Strategy has been developed by the Information & Insight team. This is to compliment the ICT Strategy by ensuring that the investment in service based ICT systems is correctly targeted, whereas the ICT Strategy is concerned with corporate systems and underpinning ICT architecture. The key themes of the Systems & Information Strategy are:

   • Facilitate efficient business processes
   • Development of key cross cutting plans and future gazing
   • Ensure systems purchase is aligned to the Council's strategic objectives
   • Ensure the management and development of systems is aligned to the Council's strategic objectives
   • Rationalise the number of systems and maximise the use of existing ones
   • Ensure that the objectives of the Customer Strategy are achieved

14. COB will drive the development and delivery of this strategy as the Systems and Information Governance Group chaired by the Director of Resources. As a result of the above points, in effect this group will approve the work programme requested of the ICT Service, thereby ensuring that this finite resource is correctly targeted for the objectives of the Council as a whole.

ICT Competent Workforce

15. An ICT user survey has recently taken place (as part of a Xentrall wide survey). Once the results are available, improvements will be identified as a result of this survey and will form part of the overall ICT Service Improvement Programme (see paragraph 7 above).

16. As part of the desktop optimisation strategy (see paragraph 11 above), training (refresher & conversion) will be promoted as part of the Windows/Office/Exchange roll-out to all ICT users. This will allow staff to develop an appropriate level of awareness and skill in these key desktop tools.

17. A comprehensive training programme exists for the ICT team which is a combination of professional and technical training. All the ICT team are trained to Foundation level in ITIL (a service management framework for ICT). Key team members are also trained to higher levels of specific service levels of ITIL. Those involved in projects are certified to Prince2 foundation standards and those leading projects to practitioner level. Technical training tracks changes in technologies, the adoption of new support and interrogation tools, as well as requirements arising from new applications, revisions in software etc.

18. Although striving for a competent and technically proficient workforce, the current budget reduction exercises being undertaken across both Darlington and Stockton Councils will have a detrimental impact on staffing numbers within ICT and consequently an impact on the ICT service provision itself. The details of these proposals for ICT form part of the overall consultation on the MTFP process.

Outcome of Consultation

19. There has been no formal consultation in the preparation of this report.