AUDIT COMMITTEE
13 APRIL 2022

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 revised ICT Strategy focusses on three strategic priorities:

    (a) ICT Governance and Service Development
    (b) ICT Strategic Architecture
    (c) Council Service Development and Transformation

3. This report summarises progress on the main 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
Assistant Director – Xentrall Shared Services

Background Papers

Darlington ICT Strategy 2022 (attached)

Ian Miles – Extension 157012

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no specific crime and disorder impact.
Health and Well Being	There is no specific health and well-being impact.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	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.
Council Plan	The ICT strategy supports the business of the Council in delivering the Council Plan
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.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

6. The ICT Strategy has been reviewed and a new version is appended to this report. Progress on the themes of the ICT Strategy is described below.

ICT Governance and ICT Service Development

7. The Systems and Information Governance Group (which is the Chief Officers Board of Assistant Directors but chaired by the Group Director of Operations) undertakes an ICT Strategy monitoring role as well as overseeing and approving the ICT Work Plan, which covers all service based and corporate ICT projects. As well as this forum, updates on major ICT projects are also given to the Group Director of Operations and to the meetings of the Xentrall Executive Board on which she sits.

8. In terms of ICT service development and related to the two ISO certifications ICT hold for Information Security and Quality Management Systems, all ICT service improvement activities are identified in the ICT Service Improvement Programme and this continues to be managed and monitored by the ICT Management Team, supported by the ICT Security & Process Excellence Officer. This group reviews the progress and priorities of this extensive and continual programme which is resourced through a combination of business-as-usual activities and planned projects within ICT. The majority of these activities relate to internal ICT procedures and standards which ultimately deliver improvements to the services ICT users receive.

ICT Strategic Architecture

9. Progress has been made on a large number of significant architecture projects during the last six months, many of which take place behind the scenes. Notable projects have included:

    (a) Procured new UPS (uninterruptable power supply) for the Darlington data centre.
    (b) Upgraded the operating system for the virtual server platform.
    (c) Renewed our contracts for the 10Gb links between the Darlington and Stockton data centres.
    (d) Implemented a tool whereby ICT can remotely isolate suspect laptops which may be virus infected and this also allows remote scan and repairs.
    (e) Migrated all web-based services to new BT Internet links, which have increased security services associated with them.
    (f) Achieved savings on the remote site network contract re-procurement.
    (g) Procured and deployed increased web-based security measures for public facing PCs e.g. libraries, which also reduces our effort in support these.
    (h) Procured a new contract for network monitoring and alerting services.

Council Service Development and Transformation

10. The service-based Information & Systems Strategies inform the ICT Work Plan, and this drives customer projects within the ICT service. As well as the management and monitoring of individual projects, the overall ICT Work Plan is monitored on a monthly cycle at the

Systems and Information Governance Group (as described in paragraph 7 above). These ICT projects underpin many of the Council's business change activities.

11. As well as some of the central ICT architecture projects listed above, a further seventeen service specific projects have been completed since the last progress report to this committee. These have included various system upgrades, plus:

(a) Capita ONE (Education & Children's Services) Technology Refresh – This involved major upgrades to all technical layers supporting this system and the migration of the database from a physical server.

(b) Employee Flu Vaccination Booking System – We stepped in at late notice with this in-house development when a supplier was unable to deliver this system.

(c) ENID Enhancements – We developed this in-house system for a resident request fulfilment solution which integrates to the CRM system and covers fly-tipping removal requests. It has been well received by both coordinators and operatives.

12. As part of the Microsoft Office 365 roll-out and the features this brings, ICT have been working with a task group and different services across the Council to migrate their shared data to Teams. This involves data analysis, cleansing and restructuring before migration. Services currently working through this process are: Comms & Marketing, Highways and HR.

13. Xentrall ICT are continuing to support the Council during the pandemic as services continue to work in an office/home hybrid situation and we are also assisting with the recovery process and blended working pilot.

Outcome of Consultation

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