

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE
CABINET

Date: 10th December 2014

REPORT TITLE ICT Strategy

Submitted by: Executive Director (Resources & Support Services)

Portfolio: Communications, Policy and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: Non specific

Purpose of the Report

To seek Cabinet approval for the ICT Strategy.

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the ICT Strategy.

Reasons

1. The current ICT Strategy has been in place since 2008. Following the significant changes that have taken place within the ICT Service and the business as a whole since that time, the Strategy has been reviewed and updated to reflect this.
2. The Strategy provides high level guidance in describing how ICT will continue to support the needs of the Council in delivering its Council Plan and aims to build on some of the themes identified in the previous Strategy.

1. **Background**

- 1.1. The time period since the adoption of the current ICT Strategy has seen significant change in the ICT service itself; the Council's priorities and in customer needs. Outside influences such as the national data security standards for the holding and sharing of data, the reduction in government funding to local authorities, and the increasing expectation that more services will be delivered on line are all relevant factors to be considered in producing an up to date ICT Strategy.
- 1.2. The Council is going to be increasingly dependent on ICT solutions to deliver outcomes that match the needs of the business at reduced cost whilst enabling more end to end transactions¹ and joined up services to customers.
- 1.3. The new ICT Strategy is a high level strategic document that summarises how ICT will meet the business requirements of the Council in the coming years; focusing on a number of key strategic areas that will underpin delivery of the Council's overall priorities.

2. **Issues**

¹ End to end transactions are defined as those that enable a request to be submitted electronically and the request to be progressed through systems without additional manual intervention, to satisfactory completion

2.1. In both the medium and long term, ICT need to address many challenges in ensuring that it continues to deliver quality services that support the business. These include:

- Financial pressures – maximising the usage of the Council’s current investments in technology; testing affordability and efficiency.
- ICT Governance – ensuring that robust, effective governance is in place that provides the means to develop technology related services, determines what decisions must be made, the priorities of initiatives that bring about change and how these decisions are monitored.
- ‘Easing the burden’ – simplifying technology for users, simplifying the approval process for initiatives.
- Supporting change – supporting the Council in achieving technological and business change that has high impact at low cost.
- Newcastle Project 20/20 – ICT need to offer solutions that support service delivery in more efficient, streamlined ways and work with business areas to achieve this.
- Co-ordinated Service Plans – work needs to be done to ensure that ICT understand and incorporate all elements of proposals from individual service plans at the beginning of its own service plan creation.

2.2. To address these challenges, the ICT Strategy contains a set of five principles, which aim to ensure that ICT maximise the investment in existing technology and assets; reduce the number of assets it has and ensure that technology solutions are affordable and efficient. The five principles are:

Principle 1: Services should put technology at the core of their service transformation and any technology based business case should be tested for appropriateness and value for money.

Principle 2: Users of ICT systems should have the correct technologies to aid them in their work and an appropriate level of skill to use these effectively.

Principle 3: Migrating service on-line should be the default position of any service development and in the procurement of ICT systems, and these services/applications should support as many end to end transactions as possible.

Principle 4: Existing ICT assets will continue to be reviewed under the Council’s ICT Consolidation programme, to exploit their usage as far as possible to maximise gain and eliminate waste.

Principle 5: A corporate approach will be considered where several services have similar ICT requirements.

2.3. The ICT Strategy focuses on four key themes for delivering ICT for the business and customer the Council serves. The Strategy deliberately does not detail projects or delivery mechanisms such as technology as this is constantly changing. However, ICT will endeavour to provide the current best fit solution in all cases. The key themes of the Strategy are:

Theme 1: ICT Governance

Theme 2: Enabling Change

Theme 3: Flexible Delivery

Theme 4: Value for Money

2.4. Wherever possible, ICT has sought to reduce the number of technical terms used in the Strategy. However, a Glossary appears at the end of the Strategy which helps to explain the meaning of any unusual words or phrases unfamiliar to the reader used in the Strategy.

3. **Outcomes linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

The ICT Strategy in its entirety provides the technical foundations to support each of the Council's priorities.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

There are no direct legal or statutory implications directly resulting from the adoption of the ICT Strategy.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no direct equality implications resulting from the adoption of the ICT Strategy.

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

6.1. Whilst there is no direct financial or resource implications in adopting the ICT Strategy, its acceptance will result in the development of a number of corporate initiatives. The financial and resource implications of these specific initiatives will be documented as part of those specific proposals, in support of the overall Strategy.

6.2. This Strategy has been produced using existing staff time and resources.

7. **Major Risks**

No major risks have been highlighted.

8. **Earlier Cabinet Resolutions**

ICT Strategy 2008 – March 2008.

http://svint/Documents/committeepapers/cabinet_cc/cabinet2008_03_26m.doc

9. **Recommendation**

That Cabinet approves the ICT Strategy.

10. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A: ICT Strategy

11. **Background Papers**

The previous ICT Strategy is available to view on the Intranet at:

http://svint/Documents/Policies%20and%20Strategies/ICT%20Strategy_SXD915-A78004F4.pdf