ITEM 6 - APPENDIX 1

Charnwood Borough Council

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy 2004

Charnwood
Leading in Leicestershire

April 2004

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope

The purpose of this document is to detail key aspects of the Council's ICT Strategy. It will be used as the basis for defining and funding projects, and as the framework for selecting products and partners.

The scope encompasses the full range of the ICT service:

- the provision of voice and data systems
- the provision of applications and other ICT services
- the maintenance and security of it's information
- all users (Members, officers, other organisations and the general public).

It is not intended to be a detailed technical document for a number of reasons. Firstly, too much detail would restrict its readership. Secondly, a number of initiatives are under way at the time of writing which may have a bearing on the ICT technological service requirements. And thirdly, the rate of technological change is such that detailed planning beyond 18 months is unwise.

1.2 Background

In July 2001 the Council issued its first *Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement* to central government, subsequently followed by the *Implementing Electronic Government Statement's 2 and 3.*

This strategy builds on these earlier ICT related publications, and is to be read in conjunction with :-

- The Community Strategy
- Corporate Plan "Charnwood Together"
- IEG3 Statement
- The Council's Strategic Risk Register

Fundamentally, the objective of the ICT service is to help the organisation to achieve its goals, either by conducting its business more efficiently, or in a different and more effective manner to meet our corporate aspirations. For this reason, the ICT Strategy is based on "Our priorities for change" detailed within the Corporate Plan :-

- A prosperous and vibrant local economy
- Leisure and cultural opportunities for all
- A clean safe and healthy Borough
- A sustainable environment
- Decent homes
- A well-managed Council

None of these are ICT objectives in themselves, however ICT will be used to support the council in delivering high quality and value for money services to all sections of the community. Particularly under priorities associated with "A well managed Council".

1.3 Relationship with other strategy documents

This strategy relates to a number of other strategy documents :-

- E-Government Strategy and Routemap
- ICT Best Value Improvement Action Plan
- Procurement Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- Information and Communication Services (ICS) Service Plan 2004/2005

A number of ICT related policies and procedures are also in existence or being developed. These include:-

- Internet access and code of conduct
- GIS strategy
- ICT procurement
- ICT disposals
- ICT disaster recovery
- Project management methodology
- User satisfaction
- Members ICT

These are regularly reviewed and updated.

1.4 Monitoring and update

The ICT Strategy document will be revised and published annually. Urgent changes may be made if necessary in order to support major decisions taken by the Council at any other time.

1.5 Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made :-

a) The Council remains committed to the intentions embodied in the *IEG Statement*.
b) The Council remains committed to the ICT funding identified in the *Capital Programme.*
c) There is no fundamental change in the structure of Local Government.
d) The Council will continue to provide similar services.
e) The Council's locations from May 2004 will comprise:

- the main offices at Southfields
- the depot at Limehurst Avenue and when in operation Granite Way, Mountsorrel
- Lifeline, Victoria Street

- MaCaulay House
- Town Hall
- Sheltered units
- South Charnwood Leisure Centre

f) The Council's main switchboard, Corporate Contact Centre and a range of customer-facing services will be provided from the main Southfield's office.

2 Management Summary

The Council has committed itself to significant and ongoing development of its ICT Services, with the needs of the citizens as the main consideration.

This document provides a framework for these developments, and it comprises the following sections:

Section 3: The main principles behind the ICT Strategy.

Section 4: The Applications, which manage the Council's information.

Section 5: The Corporate Facilities, which support officers and Members in their work, and which present the Council's information to users.

Section 6: The Technical Infrastructure, which ensures that adequate provision is made in terms of hardware, software and network.

Section 7: The Technical Architecture, which describes how the components of the systems hang together, how the service can be accessed by or on behalf of the public, and how the strategy relates to seamless service provision with other partners across the County.

Section 8: Management and Resourcing, which explains how the developments will be overseen and provided for.

In addition there is a glossary of terms.

3 Main principles

3.1 Aims

To achieve our aims we will :-

- Ensure provision of appropriate business systems to support effective delivery to customers, including both operational functions and management information.
- Roll-out the Corporate Contact Centre to other frontline services.
- Make use of the Web site and telephony to support overall access to information and services.
- Use the Web site to provide information on the way the Council works, transparency of decision-making, and as one channel for influencing decision making (e.g. through consultations).
- Encourage use of self-service transactions and information through the Web site, in order to release staff time to support those who need help to access services.
- Explore how technology can be used to join up information across departments to make access to related services easier for the citizen.
- Explore how technology can be used to improve ease of reporting for key service areas (such as street cleanliness), and how different delivery channels can be used to enable citizens to check on progress.
- Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place to support effective systems and communications.
- Work with the County, City and other districts to explore ways of improving access to services and information.
- Develop policies and procedures on data protection, information security and freedom of information, so that the Council is compliant with the law, and data is securely, effectively and appropriately managed, and readily accessible to the public unless there is any reason to keep it confidential.
- Changing our business processes and the supporting IT systems to improve flexibility and efficiency. We will identify opportunities for these changes through Business Process Re-engineering exercise (BPR) and external assessment. We have already embarked on a programme to update or replace existing systems and expect to introduce the following systems over the next few years :-
    - common databases including a Local Property Gazetteer
    - an enhanced and generally accessible Geographical Information System
    - a fully electronic procurement system, from ordering through to payment
    - expansion of IP telephony
    - remote access to applications and services
    - expansion of the Contact Centre.
    - arcIndex – data matching module

3.2 Reliable service provision

In harmony with the Council's aim to achieve an excellent rating in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the aim of ICS will be to deliver significant improvements in that timescale in addition to those achieved during the period since its Best Value Review in 2002.

It is recognised that the ability of the organisation to introduce, resource and absorb change is a limiting factor. The potential impact on the quality of the operational service and the ongoing resource implications will be taken into consideration when projects are planned.

3.3 Prioritisation

The Council's four over-riding needs from ICS in 2004 and 2005 are as follows :-

a) To move all of the major back-office applications onto modern, well-supported systems which conform to industry and government standards.

b) To rollout the Corporate Contact Centre to other frontline services starting with Cleansing in April 2004.

c) To support phases 2 and 3 of the Web Development programme.

d) To support the establishment of the Customer Service Centre for callers in person. This will include making the most of the opportunities for service improvement presented by the office relocation, and will require the expansion of consistent service across the various access channels by use of a common Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and Knowledge Base.

Other developments are planned, but will take a lower priority.

3.4 Innovation and risk

The Council over the last few years has consistently invested heavily in the IT voice and data infrastructure and have also undertaken pioneering projects that has put it at the forefront in many areas of service within the county :-

- the first implementation of a Customer Contact Centre, originally piloted within Housing Services and now rolling out to other services
- the first District planned "Geoplatform" to provide the geographic infrastructure to join up departmental back office systems, their related information channels and support the sharing of data between all levels of Local Government and our partners using open standards
- the decision to implement a Document Image Processing system currently piloted in Revenues and Benefits
- Network Associates Anti-Virus and Remote Update services to ensure robust protection for our systems
- Use of IP telephony

As a result, Charnwood Borough Council has a reputation for taking bold strategic decisions in its ICT development, and making them work.

Risk assessment and management is included in the ICS project methodology by use of Project Initiation Documents and Capital Appraisals. Further details on risk relating to IT can be found in the ICS 2004/2005 Service Plan and within the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

3.5 Partnership

Private Sector partners will be appointed where they are able to provide skills and resources more efficiently than could be made available in-house, or where this would lessen the risk to the Council's services.

The Leicester-Shire Local Government Online Partnership (LGOL) working within the County is overseen by the E-government Coordination Group of senior officers from the County, City and District Councils. Underneath this, there are steering groups or project teams for the major areas of cooperation, such as the Community Portals project.

3.6 Funding

Capital and Revenue funding has been identified for the planned programme in the Council's Financial Strategy, and this will be reviewed during the normal budget planning process.

External support for ICT-related developments has included a capital grant of £200,000 from central government in 2002/3 and 2003/4 for IEG projects. A further £350,000 for 2004/5 and £150,000 for 2005/6 are expected.

A number of other smaller grants have also been obtained through specific partnership working and National Project involvement. We will work with our partners to identify potential sources of additional external funding.

4 Frontline Service Applications

4.1 Business Requirements

Information is one of the Council's critical assets, and it is at the heart of the Council's ICT service. The role of the frontline service applications is to facilitate the collection, validation, processing, storage and analysis of information in electronic form, and to make it accessible to all those with a need or a right to see it.

Many of the Council's information processes or business requirements are similar to other Local Authorities, because they result from legislation. As a result of this, there is a healthy market-place for Local Government application software.

Because of this commonality of function and the established market-place, it has not always been necessary or cost-effective to perform very detailed analysis of the requirements before selecting a system. Most of them allowed for tailoring to fit requirements and the Council have procured such systems and staffed to support accordingly.

The Council's strategy when planning to migrate to modern systems is to select from the market-place products which are well accepted in similar Local Authorities and implement them in a way which best suits the end users.

When implementing a new system, It is now recognised that a BPR exercise should be carried out to ensure that efficiencies and improvements to services are **maximised**. Heads of Service are responsible for considering the options, in liaison with ICS officers as necessary, to identify potential service improvements or savings.

4.2 Standards for integration and service delivery

Application systems have to conform to a set of standards in order to be considered by the Council these cover five main aspects:

- the operating system (to avoid the need to support a wide range)
- access via a web browser (to simplify providing information or allowing transactions on the website or the intranet)
- the database (to ensure that information can be easily combined between different applications)
- compliance with published e-government standards such as the Electronic Government Interoperability Framework (e-gif)
- support for the Euro currency.

The requirements being:

- Windows **NT4** and **2000 server** compatible
- Windows **2000 desktop** and **Office 2000** compatible
- **Web enabled** and usable with any major browser
- Utilises a commonly used, industry standard, **SQL and ODBC compliant** relational database management system. Our preference is to use SQL Server, but an alternative will be considered if it can be justified

- **e-GIF** compliant
- **BS7666** compliant where applicable. This relates to property data standards
- **BS8766** compliant where applicable. This relates to person data standards
- **GIS** compatible/enabled. Cadcorp is our existing and preferred standard
- **User interface** which is well designed and easy to use
- **Easy to support**. A system administrator should be able to perform all the normal day to day functions required to support the system (add and remove users, manage security, produce reports, etc.) without any formal programming knowledge
- Fully functional and capable of providing a **complete solution** to the user requirements. Where changes are necessary it has to be possible and practical to change the user processes to fit the system and still provide the service required.
- Have **fully integrated** functions. Data should only need to be input once and is then shared; updates are only applied once; information is available immediately it has been input
- Be capable of integrating with our corporate **document image processing** system where appropriate.
- Have a simple and effective **report writing** function which can be used by Council staff who are IT literate but may not have formal programming experience. If the report writer is not an integral part of the application our preference is for it to be compatible with Business Objects and to have a comprehensive universe available
- Have a clear **upgrade path** and policy for future releases. Including on-going compliance with emerging and changing standards and best practice criteria
- Be **scaleable** to allow for expansion in the number of users and transactions, especially in relation to web usage where growth is likely to exponential
- **Secure**. Systems administration, control and security functions must be separate from other functions and not accessible to the ordinary users. There must not be any way of bypassing the security features
- **Proven** working package. The proposed version of the package must be fully developed and tested and implemented in other UK District Councils or similar organisations or be part of a National Project recognised by the ODPM.
- Established and proven **interfaces** with other major application software packages
- Caters for **the Euro** as well as Sterling (not as an alternative) for any financial components
- Supplier able to provide all necessary **user training** either directly or through a trusted and proven / recognised third party
- Include comprehensive on-line **user help functions**, telephone help desk support and internet help facilities such as FAQ’s, bulletin board, issues exchange forum. Printed reference manuals are optional
- An established **user group** with regular contact meetings which promote user networking and provides an effective interface to the suppliers development plans
- Supplier able to provide full **implementation support**. This includes defined processes and utilities required to **migrate existing data**

- Supported by a competent well run organisation with which the Council can form a long term **partnership** for mutual benefit
- Supplied by an organisation which is prepared to work with **other Charnwood Borough Council** "**partners"** to provide the optimum service to the end users.

In addition, the Council will buy families of related applications which share a common database (in preference to selecting individual packages).

4.3 Standards for procurement or development

All currently used application software will be evaluated against the standards in 4.2. Where it does not comply, it will be a candidate for replacement (or upgrading to a compliant version).

Application software will always be purchased rather than developed in-house unless specifically approved by the e-Government Working Party and Cabinet.

Software will not be procured if it requires bespoke development in order for it to be usable. The only exception to this is when such development is formally incorporated into subsequent versions of the standard product (as used by other customers).

The selection process will be managed by the ICS Service and the evaluation of product functionality and usability will be carried out in conjunction with the users and their managers

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules will be observed.

4.4 Projects for the 2004/2005 financial year

Financial Management System (FMS) replacement
Web Development phases 2 and 3
arcIndex
Unix and Ingres upgrades
Microsoft server licenses
Hardware replacement programme
IT security issues
Flexible working
Audio visual equipment

It is expected that these projects will be complete by April 2005. The e-Government project list will be kept under review and updated as appropriate.

5 Corporate Facilities

5.1 Email, Calendar, and standard office tools

Microsoft Office 2000 Professional will be used, and upgraded to maintain currency and support. This comprises:

- Outlook/Exchange for email (internal and via the internet) and calendar.
- Word for word processing
- Excel for spreadsheets
- Access for simple databases
- PowerPoint for simple graphics and presentations.

Network Associates Anti-Virus will be used to ensure robust protection of the Councils systems and services. Anti-Virus products are due to be reviewed this financial year at the end of the current software agreement. It is the intention to test the market in terms of functionality, support, integration and cost.

Users will be encouraged to take full advantage of the facilities available. The ICS Service will take a leading role in identifying potential uses and improvements.

5.2 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

The Contact Centre operates using a CRM system supplied by Orchard Information Systems. This system tracks all customer contacts and using workflow guides users through complex business processes to ensure that consistent services are provided.
The system processes contacts regardless of access channel and will be used in the Customer Service Centre for face to face contact and on the website for interactive transactions.

5.3 Intranet

The Council is looking to replace the current intranet and is investigating the development and potential use of a corporate knowledge management facility which would integrate with the current operating system infrastructure.

5.4 Website

The website is coordinated by the Council's Policy and Economic Regeneration Unit, However, most of the content will be supplied and applied by authorised officers in individual Council services.

Based on Open-Source software the site is hosted on a remote server which is owned and managed by a company called Cuttlefish.

A combination of the intranet and the website will form the Council's "Knowledge Base" for internal and external users, controlled by the Content Management System.

5.5 Web access

As of April 2004, there were currently about 420 members of staff who were authorised to access the World Wide Web from their PCs. Access is controlled by a combination of a Firewall and a filtering gateway (*Surf Control*, which blocks access to undesirable sites).

Internet usage over the last 2 years has increased as more web based user applications are accessed. As part of the Web Development project bandwidth will be increased in order to cater for current and future demand.

5.6 Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The corporate GIS is based on the Cadcorp SIS product and implemented throughout the whole authority at three levels dependant on the type of usage required i.e. full licence (development), embedded into back office systems (data owners/creators) and via the intranet (information only). All existing spatial datasets have been captured but new development work continues particularly in the creation of the Local Land & Property Gazetteer. The Cadcorp product was chosen for corporate use because of its ability to share data across organisations in the many differing formats in current use.

The corporate digital map base is supplied by Ordnance Survey under a nationally negotiated Service Level Agreement with Local Authorities and updated information is received at regular intervals

5.7 Voice

ICS is responsible for providing technical support and advice for the telephone systems. These are based on an Avaya Definity ECS Si telephony system at Southfields and caters for both digital voice over IP and analogue technology. IP technology is extensively used within the Corporate Contact Centre and will be rolled out to other appropriate areas such as the Customer Service Centre as necessary.

5.8 Remote working

The current "remote workers" comprise the following:

- 52 Members (of whom 43 have PCs or laptops supplied by the Council)
- A small number of officers working at home

The Council provides secure access to appropriate services and applications on the Council's network (such as the Intranet) via thin client using Secure Socket Layer (SSL) and ISDN for Members and officers and the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPN) for maintenance access by software suppliers.

The many aspects of flexible working are to be evaluated as one of the e-Government projects in the 2004/5 financial year. The ICS Service will provide technical support and advice in implementing the findings in due course.

5.9 User training

User training is offered to all users (officers and Members), and is delivered mainly by the Council's IT training unit. To date the IT training unit have provided training based around the Microsoft Office suite of products used within the Council. The unit is European Computer Driving License (ECDL) accredited and a large number of staff have attained this level.

Whilst the training unit has concentrated on, and been successful, in raising the skills base and productivity of frontline service staff through the provision of ECDL and MS Office training programmes we will be reviewing the existing portfolio and methods of delivery with a view to ensuring that IT Training is particularly focused on where the organisation needs it most. The programme may need to be more bespoke (e.g. aimed at specific service applications, Web Content Management etc.) and delivered in alternative ways.

6 Technical Infrastructure

6.1 Desktop hardware and software

Since 2003, the minimum desktop configuration made available to all officers and Members has comprised the following:

- A desktop PC with a minimum processor speed of 300Mhz and 64MB of memory, running Windows NT, Office 2000 Professional and Mcafee Antivirus software
- New PCs are supplied to the prevailing industry standard configuration and will include the deployment of 15" TFT (flat) screens as the Council's adopted standard.
- Printers are normally Hewlett Packard DeskJet or Lexmark laser printers..

Remote management and support for PC's will be provided by using the LANDesk Desktop Manager product.

It is intended to replace PCs and/or the standard software after no less than 3 years, and only when the service requires it. Provision has been made in the budget for this to start on a rolling basis in 2004/5. Where possible, lower-specification PCs will be "cascaded" to users with lower requirements.

The use of "thin client" over broadband has been adopted for remote users and Members. Previously they were connected by ISDN and will be migrated to "thin client" in the financial year 2004/2005 to reduce costs and make better use of "personal" equipment.

6.2 Mobile hardware and software

Where it is appropriate, officers and Members may be issued with laptop PCs from Toshiba of a similar specification to the desktop PCs. Normally these will be instead of a desktop PC rather than in addition.

A number of officers/members have been issued with Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) for general personal productivity tools such as an electronic diary which is synchronised with the online Outlook diary. The use of these will be reviewed in quarter 4 of 2004, with a view to producing a policy and standards.

The use of specialised mobile hardware for field staff is evaluated as the opportunities arise.

6.3 Server hardware and software

The Council's standard for new servers is as follows :-

- Supplied by Dell (unless there is a specialised requirement which is not available from them)
- Windows 2003 operating system
- Rack-mounted

There are currently 3 Sun servers running the Solaris operating system and 5 ICL/Fujitsu Team Servers running older applications which will be decommissioned when no longer required.

It is intended to replace servers and/or the standard software after no less than 3 years, and only when the service requires it. Where possible, lower-specification servers will be "cascaded" to systems with lower requirements and / or be moved on to existing servers where possible / practical.

The servers are all currently located in the ICS computer room in Southfield Offices.

6.4 Network hardware and software

The objective of the network is to provide an adequately fast and reliable link between the workstations and the servers. Currently this comprises the following elements :-

- Within the Council's buildings there is a Local Area Network (LAN) using cabling to each desk (called UTP, to a standard called Category 5), and links between floors and buildings connected by switches from Extreme.
- Between buildings there are fast links comprising of fibre optic cabling within council owned ducting. These run between Southfield Offices, Victoria Street, Macaulay House and Southfield Annex.
- There is a link to the Internet provided by UUNet via a Firewall to protect the Council's network from intrusion.
- The firewall is currently being replaced with an IPSEC EAL4 compliant device, to be completed in 2nd quarter of 2004, the link to the Internet is to be reviewed with a requirement to provide additional bandwidth and contingency.

Management of the network (including monitoring its utilisation and reliability) is provided internally by ICS.

The demands on the network will increase with the expansion of GIS and further development of the website and the intranet. The usage and performance will be kept under review, and upgrades will be made as required.

The following changes are being planned :-

- A number of officers and Members are able to log in to the network from their PCs at home via their Internet Service Provider using a "thin client" secure connection. Further expansion of this facility to all members and key officers is planned during 2004.
- There will be a connection into the LGOLNet, to provide better links for customers to the County Council, neighbouring District Councils, and Central Government .
- Additional links will be setup with a number of Government Agencies as required by the e-government framework.
- All third party support to the councils systems will be provided by the vendor over the internet using secure VPN's

6.5 Voice hardware, software and services

The Council in September 2003 invested in an Avaya Definity ECS Si telephony system. This will be expanded to provide voice over IP (which is piloted by the Customer contact centre at present) to other sections of the council as and if required.

6.6 Disaster Recovery

The Council must be able to recover from disasters within an acceptable timescale. Business Continuity Plans are being compiled. An ICT Resilience Strategy will be completed by the end of the summer 2004.

6.7 Procurement

The ICS Division is responsible for the procurement of all ICT hardware and software in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules.

7 Technical Architecture

7.1 Databases and Back Office Systems

The ideal is to for all systems to run off a common database, but this is impractical because no supplier provides all of the required applications.

The strategy is to achieve as much commonality as possible, by implementing families of products.(Such as revenue related systems from Academy and planning related systems from MVM).

In pursuit of closer integration and re-use of common core data, certain reference databases are developed. One of these is the Land and Property Gazetteer (LPG) which will be used by all application systems which require access to property information, where it is practical to do so. These databases will conform to established and emerging government standards.

7.2 Electronic Document Management (EDM)

An EDM system from Valid is currently implemented in Revenues and Benefits. This includes Document Image Processing (DIP) and the ability to pass documents between officers for processing ("workflow").

EDM is essential to support electronic service delivery and the Council will investigate the expansion of the existing Document Management system either through the extension of our current system or through the provision of alternatives that might support the information infrastructure

7.3 Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Knowledge Base

In order to support the Customer Contact Centre (supplied by Orchard Information systems), the Council needs to keep track of its contact with its residents. The CRM is the system that holds contact details so that the contact history for a person or event is available to those who need it. This provide a more complete set of information which can be used to better assess and deal with the customers needs. The CRM is an integral part of the Contact Centre service by Charnwood Borough Council.

The CRM is supported by a Knowledge Base, which enables Contact Centre or other frontline staff to answer a high proportion of queries or requests for service at the first point of contact. This is built up as part of the Contact Centre project.

7.4 Integration

There is a requirement for integration between the Council's systems and with other agencies (such as Leicestershire County Council).

Several technologies will be used to achieve this, which are beyond the scope of this document. The underlying standard which will be used is the Extensible Markup Language (XML) which has been adopted by the government. We will use the same technology as is used by LGOLNet to ensure full integration.

7.5 Service Delivery Channels to the public

The Council will provide a number of channels for electronic access to services. All of these should be supported by the same Knowledge Base and associated systems.

The channels are as follows -:

- Assisted service
  - One –stop-shops where members of the public can visit in person are being developed.
- Telephony service
  - via the Contact Centre based in Southfields.
  - Investigation of SMS text messaging from mobile phones is to be carried out as another means of contacting the Council.
- Self-service
  - PC access to the website.
  - Interactive Digital TV access to a version of the website will be considered when the technology has matured.

The Council will provide these channels, and will continually enhance them over time.

The Council will also work with other agencies to deliver the service in such a way as to overcome confusion by members of the public about who provides which service. These initiatives will include the following projects :-

- Contact Centre
  This was formally launched in Jan 2003, initially providing Housing Services. Cleansing Services have been added and other services will be added as appropriate.
- Portal
  The Council's website will be developed in such a way that the public can access it via the Leicestershire Community portal.
- One-stop-shops
  Where appropriate, the Council's one-stop-shops will be run jointly with other partners to provide a full range of services to customers.

7.6 Service Delivery Channels to Officers and Members

The Knowledge Base and other systems will be available to all officers (whether front-office, back-office or field) and Members as appropriate to their roles.

8 Management and Resourcing

8.1 Sponsorship and oversight

The main sponsors within the Council for the ICT Strategy and its implementation are the e-champions (currently Cllr Max Hunt Lead Member of the Cabinet, and the Deputy Chief Executive) and Steve Horner Head of Information and Communication Services.

The Lead Member and Head of Information and Communication Services meet on a regular basis

8.2 ICS organisation

The current ICS establishment comprises :-

- Computer Services
- Corporate Contact Centre
- Telephony
- Corporate GIS
- Printing
- IT Training
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information
- E-Government Programme Manager

The service establishment is due for review following recommendations in the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) report, an external assessment carried out in February 2004.

8.3 User involvement

Although ICS plays a strong central role in ICT Strategy, development and procurement, the users are the "customers" of the service and are involved in a number of ways.

They are responsible for :-

- articulating their requirements
- managing projects (with support from ICS)
- the accuracy and timeliness of information and data
- defining which users can access which functions ("application-level security").

Liaison with users is achieved by the following groups :-

- CMT (Corporate Management Team)
- Web Development Project Team

8.4 External product and services suppliers

The main hardware suppliers are Dell (servers), Stone (PC's), Lexmark (laser printers) and Hewlett Packard (inkjet printers).

The main software suppliers are Microsoft (operating systems, office systems), Academy (revenues and benefits) Wealden (financial systems), Cadcorp (corporate GIS), Orchard (arcCentre for Contact Centre CRM), MVM (planning and environmental systems), Aaeron (housing) Valid (document image processing) and Network Associates (AntiVirus)

The Internet Service Provider is UUNet (2mb leased for networked users). This will be upgraded as part of the 2004/5 Web Development project.

8.5 Benchmarking

The ICT service was formally benchmarked for customer satisfaction against other Local Authorities by SOCITM in 2001 and 2003. ICS will join the SOCITM benchmarking club early in the 2004/5 financial year in order to extend the range of benchmarked criteria.

9 Glossary of terms

BPR
Business Process Re-engineering. Taking a customer-focused systems view and changing the organisation.

Browser
Software which accesses websites or the intranet. The Council's standard is Microsoft's Internet Explorer.

CRM
Customer Relationship Management (sometimes Citizen is preferred to Customer). This is a software application which is used to track details of an organisations dealings with its customers.

DIP
Document Image Processing. This is a system for scanning and indexing paper records, in such a way than they can be accessed by users or the public.

ECDL
European Computer Driving License. This is a test of practical skills and competencies and consists of seven separate modules covering computer theory and practice based around the Microsoft Office suite of products.

EDM
Electronic Document Management. This is related to DIP, but it includes all forms of documents including those which are created on computers. It includes the management of ownership, access, archiving, searching and version control.

e-gif
Electronic Government Interoperability Framework. This is a set of government standards produced to ensure that all levels of government are developing or installing systems in a consistent way, to facilitate access and integration in the future

GIS
Geographic Information System. This is an application which links data to maps, and enables presentation and analysis on the basis of location.

IEG
Implementing Electronic Government. To meet targets for e-government by the 31 December 2005 deadline.

ICT
Information and Communications Technology

IP telephony
Internet Protocol Telephony. This is a general term for the technologies that use the Internet Protocol's packet-switched connections to exchange voice, fax, and other forms of

information that have traditionally been carried over the dedicated circuit-switched connections of the public switched telephone network (PSTN).

ISDN
Integrated Services Digital Network., This is an international communications standard that allows ordinary phone lines to transmit digital instead of analogue signals, allowing data to be transmitted at a much faster rate than with a traditional modem.

Legacy systems
These are applications which were developed in the past, and are not able to support electronic service delivery.

LAN
Local Area Network. The network which links workstations to servers (normally in the same building) at high speed.

LGOLNet
Local Government Online Net, The network which links all Leicestershire Councils together.

LPG
Land and Property Gazetteer. This is definitive register of addresses for land parcels and for properties. There is a national version under construction (the NLPG) which is derived from local versions maintained by local authorities (the LLPGs). Each property is assigned an unique property reference number (UPRN). The NLPG will be used for a number of national initiatives and the Council's provision of an LLPG is of high priority.

Metadata
This is "data about data" and is an important part of how an organisation manages and publishes its information. It is also essential for organisations which intend to share information (such as the Council and the County Council) to have consistent metadata, so that we mean the same thing.

ODPM
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

One-stop-shop
This term has a variety of definitions. In this paper it means a physical location where people can come to receive a number of services without having to go elsewhere.

Portal
This is a website which provides access to information or transactions in a number of other sources (such as other websites). It can be personalised, so that only relevant services are presented.

SOCITM
Society of IT Managers. This is local government's association for heads of ICT (in a similar way to SOLACE for chief executives). It provides consultancy services as well as acting as a lobbying group and advocate of best practice.

Thin Client
A thin client is a machine that only functions when connected to a central server, as compared to a networked PC, which can store and process information on its hard drive. The function of a thin client is to centralize data transmission and storage in a local area network environment.

UTP
Uninterrupted twisted-pair. This is a cable configuration and is made up of a maximum of 90 meters (328 ft) of uninterrupted solid-copper twisted-pair cable with a termination connection on each end and with a patch cord to connect to the communications cabinet.

TFT
Thin Film Transistor, a type of LCD flat-panel display screen

VPN
Virtual Private Network. This is a network that is constructed by using public wires to connect nodes, set up solely for the users of a single organisation. These networks use encryption and other security mechanisms to ensure that only authorized users can access the network and that data cannot be intercepted.

WAN
Wide Area Network. This is the link between an organisation's sites.

XML
Extensible Markup Language. This is a technology which enables different applications and programs to exchange data without having special interfaces written. It has been adopted as part of e-gif (see above).