SELECT COMMITTEE ON REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ADULT EDUCATION - 4th MARCH 2009

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

PROGRESS REPORT ON CORPORATE ICT STRATEGY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To report on progress with the implementation of the Corporate ICT Strategy 2008 – 2013 that was reported to this committee on the 5th March 2008.

ICT STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

2. The Council's Corporate ICT Strategy 2008 to 2013 sets standards for ICT services and equipment with the aim of

> **Supporting the Council in delivering its key objectives and to provide infrastructure and services necessary to drive the transformation of Council Services.**

3. The ICT strategy was split into two parts,: Business and Professional systems and ICT Infrastructure. The strategy is predicated on the need to develop a Corporate Transformation strategy which the ICT Strategy would support. Work is still progressing in this area by the Chief Executive's directorate.

4. The ICT strategy set out a series of ten Service imperatives, to ensure that the Council's ICT continues to meet its service needs, and I am pleased to report good progress most areas.

5. The ICT Infrastructure continues to be core to the delivery of Council services. We have extended the hours of the services desk to start at 8:00 am and provided a contact services for maintenance weekends.

6. The Authority's Microsoft software base has been audited by Microsoft to ensure that all the products in use are properly licensed and apart from a few minor anomalies our position was found to be satisfactory.

7. The ICT Service has been benchmarked by the Society of ICT Managers, SOCITM, who found that: "Dudley's ICT service has achieved significant success over a wide range of performance indicators. Indeed, it is in the top five of councils that have benchmarked their ICT service (over 45% of UK local government)."

8. Ongoing research and development work is being carried out to identify the steps that are needed to renew the Councils Desktop Infrastructure. This is a major piece of work and the costs associated with it could be significant. An interim refresh of certain core elements of the infrastructure will be carried out in 2009/10 to ensure the continued reliability of the infrastructure whilst a strategy is being developed.

9. An area where considerable progress has been made, that was not predicted by the strategy is in the adoption of Government Connects. This system, which will enable Councils and Central Government to communicate securely with one another, was given a high priority by the well publicised losses of information by Government Departments. This led to the Department of Work and Pensions mandating this system as the only means allowed for Councils to communicate with it electronically from the 1st April 2009. The government has created a Government Connect Benefits Realisation Fund, which allows Authorities to bid for packages of £25K to promote original uses of Government Connect. Dudley has submitted three bids and is a partner with other authorities in a fourth bid.

10. Limited progress has been made in the following areas pending development of a Transformation Strategy:-

   ▪ Systems Integration, where minor progress has been made, for example in linking Library Book Ordering to Agresso; linking the Housing stock Control system to the Mobile repairs system and developing the GIS-Mo Lite service to present information from several systems to the Agents in DC+.

   ▪ Information Management, where there has been considerable activity to raise awareness of the issues, and limited steps towards the overall objective of improving the management of this valuable resource.

   ▪ Adoption of flexible working practises and modernisation of the Customer contact strategy – home working is being developed and rolled out in Housing Benefits where 25 assessors will be working from home by the end of this financial year and work is currently underway within Dudley Council Plus to develop a Customer Contact Strategy.

11. One area of work, which has a considerable impact on the implementation of the Council's ICT Strategy, has been the need to vacate the Council's Tower Street premises due to Health and Safety issues. This was achieved in 10 weeks without causing serious disruption to any council services. However it has delayed some corporate infrastructure projects, and perversely brought some of them forward.

12. More detailed information on the actions proposed in the ICT Strategy and progress recorded against them is included in Appendix 1.

13. Overall the existing ICT Strategy remains a relevant framework for the development of ICT within the Council, but as the shape of the Council's Transformation Strategy becomes clearer the existing strategy should be renewed to focus on the new direction.

FINANCE

14. The costs of meeting the ICT strategy will have to be met from within existing resources or bids from new funding streams.

LAW

15. Section III of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything which is incidental to, conductive to or which facilitates the discharge of its functions.

EQUALITY IMPACT

16. The development of electronic services is designed to improve customer choice and access to Council services and information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. It is recommended that members:-

- Note progress on the ICT Strategy for 2008 - 2013

- Recommend that the Corporate ICT Strategy is renewed in 2009-10 as a clearer view of Transformation is formed.

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List of Background Papers
Corporate ICT Strategy 2008-2013

Business and Professional Systems Targets

Target Area	Actions	Target	
National strategy	Ensure the new and existing systems are developed to comply with national e-gif standards and support National Initiatives	On-going	
	Enable measurement of "Avoidable Contact" for all service delivery channels		Currently being measured manually for transactions via DC+
Web site Development	Implement Content Management on the Council's Intranet site	2008	A Pilot for ICT Services was launched late in 2008, this design is currently being reviewed
	Support the introduction of Self Service Personnel functions on to the Intranet	2008-9	No progress in this area as yet.
CRM Integration of Systems	Review the Aspire CRM System and consider if alternative solutions are capable of significant improvements	2008	Awaiting the development of a Customer Contact strategy to identify requirements for this system
	If necessary procure and implement a replacement CRM system	2009	See above
	Develop and Publish an Integration Strategy setting standards for the procurement of new systems to facilitate future systems integration	2008	Awaiting transformation strategy
	Ensure that integration is consider as party of the process of bringing new service lines into DC+_	Ongoing	No integration required for Housing services transferred in 2008
Corporate GIS	Continue to ensure all directorate systems 'integrate' with corporate GIS	Ongoing	Good progress particularly with "Customer profiling" and the development of a special service for DC+ Agents

Target Area	Actions	Target	
	Integrate systems to support development of solutions based on life episodes	As required by Government Targets	No Government Target published as yet.
Directorate Operational Systems	Implement EDM in Planning Services	2008	Complete
	Ensure back office systems exploit features offered by mobile working	2010	Mobile working implemented in DACHS
Information management	Continue to respond to requests under FOI Act within legislative timescales.	Ongoing	Continue to met legislative targets
	Ensure business systems / back office systems achieve statutory targets for FOI / Data Protection / ISO 15489 during the life of this strategy	2013	No progress as yet
	Complete an inventory of all information held electronically across the Council	2008	Pilots have been conducted but no corporate initiative to complete as yet.
	Develop a File Plan capable of supporting the information Management needs of the whole Council	2010	Work to pilot the introduction of a Pilot Plan has started
Systems Exploitation	Continue effort to support the exploitation of the Corporate Office Strategy	Ongoing	A number of workshops have been held and Research and Development undertaken on the introduction of the Latest Microsoft 2007 products

Infrastructure Targets

Target Area	Actions	Target	
Server Software	Upgrade Core server infrastructures to the latest release of Microsoft Windows Operating system	Mar 2009	Partially complete
	Upgrade Exchange email system to latest release	Mar 2010	Investigative work started
	Enable core database servers to support the latest release of database software as required	Apr 2008	Complete
Data Centres	Pilot Server Virtualisation techniques	Jun 2008	Complete and in production service
	As servers need replacing utilise Virtualisation server technologies	From Oct 2008	Implemented, and service developed for our customers
	Investigate and implement Filestore archiving for general Filestore usage	Oct 2008	Investigations on-going – delayed by the Tower Street move.
	Relocate Ednam Road and Tower Street Data centres in line with accommodation developments	Unknown	A temporary solution was forced on us due to the issues with Tower Street. We are now working on a permanent solution at Pensnett Trading estate.
Desktop	Develop the services necessary to adopt thin Client solutions as the default desktop provision.	Sept. 2008	
	Commence deployment of office 2007	Apr 2009	Delayed due to review of funding implications and possible alternative options
	Commence deployment of Vista the next generation of PC operating system	Apr 2009	Will be available early in 2009/10 financial year where a business case can be developed
	Evaluate Open Source desktop exploitation software alternatives	Mar 2010	Initial investigations complete. Still monitoring market place to follow developments in licensing