Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2014-2017

Summary

This report sets out the proposed ICT Strategy for the period 2014-2017. It aims to set out how we will develop ICT within the Council, making the best use of new and emerging technologies to improve the delivery of services and enable Members to be more effective as community leaders. It usefully also consolidates the Council's policies for ICT, which have been updated to reflect organisational change, the culture the Council seeks to promote and Government guidance, particularly that around protecting data.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Nick Collinson, Community Leadership and Communications

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the need and importance of ensuring the security of personal data of customers and residents.

2. Approve the draft ICT Strategy at Appendix A and the way forward outlined in paragraphs 33-45 of this report.

3. Delegate the approval of the ICT policies to the Director of Governance& Corporate Services

4. Endorse the Council's approach in meeting the Public Services Network requirements set by Government; and

5. Endorse the Project Plan.

6. Task the Cabinet Advisory Group to consider Members use of ICT to inform final arrangements for elected Members from May 2014.

Reason

To provide good governance for Information and Communications Technology in contributing to the delivery of the Council's objectives and to ensure that the service is its most effective in supporting the business needs of the organisation and Members in their Community Leadership role.

Introduction

1. This report provides Members with a non-technical appraisal of the Council's ICT arrangements and through a combination of a suite of documents attached as appendices to this report, sets out the strategic direction for the next three years. The objective is to support the Council's businesses in delivering more effective services to customers and improving efficiency by a

process called "channel shift" whereby customers are able to serve themselves via the internet and to access those services 24 hours a day. In addition to improved access to services, the cost of providing services in this way is a fraction of that for dealing with customers by telephone or face to face.

ICT Strategy

2.   The previous ICT Strategy has served the Council well. Wealden has developed sound systems which support the delivery of services, and employed technology which has encouraged home working and enabled the Council to operate from a single office. Those same arrangements make us resilient in times of bad weather and our mobile web strategy is just one way in which we have already adapted to serve our customers better and at times to suit their lifestyles. This report combined with the Strategy document which underpins it provides the blueprint for the things we need to do so we can continue to improve service delivery, help Members to serve their communities better by adapting the ways we work and making the best use of new and emerging technologies.

3.   The key document underpinning this report is the draft ICT Strategy (Appendix A). This is a technical document used to guide the service over the coming three years. Coupled with the Roadmap – essentially a bar chart showing when projects will be implemented, the Strategy sets out what the ICT Service will do and how it will be delivered.

4.   In preparing the draft strategy, all Council services have been consulted. This has helped to determine what currently works well, where there are problems, and what technology and systems are likely to be required in the future. The objective throughout is to provide the best possible systems and technology to support Council businesses with the resources we have available. The role of the ICT team is to facilitate the development and use of technology and systems to improve access to, and availability of services and to help deliver these in the most effective manner.

5.   The consultation identified many strengths in what we already do as a Council and an enthusiasm to develop these further. All services identified the internet and the Council's website as the most important channel to develop. Self-service at times to suit the customer is the single highest priority and with the increased use of smart phones and tablet technologies particularly, it is important that we develop our services in ways which match demand. If we do not, customers will disengage and revert to more traditional routes such as the telephone and personal visits which are more expensive and which we are not resourced to provide. The development of our web and mobile strategy, launched in 2013 is therefore a key part of our future ambitions.

ICT Policies

6.   ICT has developed very quickly in the last few years. Increasingly, services are accessed and delivered via mobile devices and the range of technology purchased by, and used within the Council has therefore widened. Procurement has been carefully managed throughout and equipment is purchased to trial where it has not been previously tested. This has helped to avoid investment in technologies without a business case. However

discussions with service users has identified that this has reduced our efficiency in some areas and outdated software on old equipment has given rise to some compatibility issues not just on how we provide services but also when working with partners.

7.   This report anticipates some significant changes to the equipment staff and Members will use by May 2015. The various ICT policies have not been reviewed for some time and the review of the Strategy presents a good opportunity to refresh these and to ensure that they support both the Council's ambitions and its governance arrangements. The policies have been considered by the Employee Consultative Group on 24 January 2014 and an oral update will be provided to Cabinet at the meeting at which this report is considered.

8.   Policies are important in setting out how things must be done and the rationale but can be cumbersome and ignored if they are too prescriptive. The draft policies have been revised to be shorter, simpler and to promote a culture of trust, but still need to be communicated in a simpler form again to ensure understanding and compliance. A simple guide for users will therefore be produced when the policies have been finalised and approved under delegation by the Director of Governance and Corporate Services in conjunction with the portfolio holder. The policies will apply equally to officers, Members, agency staff and any third party acting on the Council's behalf.

9.   In making the changes that this report envisages, there will need also to be some changes to the Council's Conditions of Service and the Home Working Policy which currently sets a threshold of 40% for homeworking before the Council would provide equipment for the employee. These will be considered at a future meeting of the Employee Consultative Group but this report anticipates the removal of the threshold in order not to be in conflict.

Consultation

10.   In setting the Strategy and preparing this report, the ICT Service undertook to consult with users. If the service is to fulfil its role of supporting the Council's businesses it must understand the needs of the respective services. We therefore asked senior managers about the strengths and weaknesses of the current service, planned system changes and any ambitions within the period covered by the strategy including hardware needs and how they saw their services using new and mobile technologies to improve efficiency.

11.   As indicated above, senior managers were very supportive generally of the service they already receive. Many have been employed with the Council for long periods and commented on how well the service now functions compared to five and ten years ago. The quality of the ICT staff was particularly praised as was the speed of resolution to most issues. Most were sympathetic to the PSN constraints (see below) and accepted that this was something the Council had to work with, but those responsible for front line services showed frustration that this conflicts with their ambitions to develop improved services to the customer.

12.   The more negative feedback was around the age and functionality of some of the equipment and the compatibility issues already referred to. This could be addressed by the proposals discussed in the "Way Forward" section of this report.

13.   There was a mix of views on equipment provided for home working. Some felt the current policy of providing equipment only when the home working threshold (currently 40%) was reached was unfair and the Council should provide equipment to assist home working. Others felt that they should not have equipment forced upon them. There is an argument for providing equipment individually to staff so that they have appropriate technology which they can use at the office, out in the field, or for home working.

14.   Many of the services have bespoke software (such as Orchard for housing and Academy for local taxation and benefits). All of these systems are now well established and there is no planned procurement of new systems in the three year period covered by the Strategy. The major cost is therefore that of annual licences and some upgrades or procurement of new modules.

15.   A recurring theme from the consultation is the need for notebooks and, occasionally, tablets. Discussions have confirmed that there is not one solution that fits all. There has been a policy of not investing in notebooks since 2010, consequently those which the Council owns are becoming very outdated and many of the older notebooks run on Windows XP which is not supported by Microsoft beyond April 2014. Using them beyond this date would make the Council non-compliant with PSN, which forbids the Council from connecting devices with unsupported software to the network. We must therefore, as a minimum, embark on a series of software or notebook replacements. With notebook life cycles of 3-5 years generally and hardware which is already four years old or more, hardware replacement would be the most cost effective. It is feasible also that this could form part of a wider solution (paras 43-44).

The Public Services Network

16.   The Public Services Network, or PSN, governs the controls which the Council must have in place to protect personal and sensitive data "owned" by the Government (https://www.gov.uk/public-services-network). An example would be the Electoral Roll or Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) data held in our benefits systems. Any systems or services provided through the networks on which that data sits are governed by PSN. Wherever that data is held or used on the Council's networks, the Government requires the same level of security to be applied.

17.   The PSN team is imposing a higher level of constraint on how data is secured and protected which in increasingly impacting on our ability to provide effective and efficient services and how we network our systems. The challenge annually is to demonstrate to the Government that Wealden's ICT systems are compliant. Where they are not, there is a risk that the Government could cut a local authority off from its secure connection – a trusted ICT link between the Government and the Council. The Cabinet Office – the sponsoring Government department for PSN has yet to use these powers, the consequences of which would have a significant and, in some cases, have a catastrophic effect on Council services.

18.   This is a fast changing environment and the Council's recent experience has been a significantly increased workload in developing solutions to help ensure compliance when this is tested annually. However, with the desire by services to use mobile technology to improve service quality and efficiency, the Council

has also found itself constrained by these requirements in rolling out the use of tablets and smartphones and rather than supporting progress.

19. The refresh coincides with a possible tender to replace Citrix (a system which enables us to run all our systems from servers rather than individual PCs) and a range of related opportunities. Preliminary work has been undertaken on the Citrix replacement tender, however this has attracted a limited number of prospective bidders. The tender process has been temporarily halted with a view to the procurement of a solution no later than March 2015 and ahead of the PSN review in that year.

20. In the meantime, officers have met with the Cabinet Office to discuss issues around compliance with PSN and the various solutions that might be applied. While our current arrangements offer high levels of resilience and aid flexible working, they are not particularly "PSN-friendly" and, in some respects, cause potential conflicts. Those constraints can work in ways which are counter-productive to a "digital by default" approach – the Government's strategy to encourage, as first choice, for everyday transactions to be conducted on-line. As a consequence of the discussions with the Cabinet Office, officers now have a revised approach to the most effective delivery model and this is explained further later in this report.

Citrix Replacement

21. The key project identified for 2013/14 was the procurement of a replacement for Citrix. Citrix is a system whereby all the systems and software are delivered from servers rather than the individual PC. In our present office environment, desks are equipped with a Wyse terminal, a lightweight device which takes up little space, uses less energy and costs less than a PC. The same solution enables staff and Members to access Council systems remotely whether working from home or using any mobile device capable of logging on to the secure network. Citrix has been revolutionary in enabling home working which formed part of the solution for moving to a single site and it has provided greater resilience than traditional working, for example during the bad weather experienced in 2012, when more than 240 employees were logged on remotely.

22. One downside of Citrix is that not all software works in a citrix environment and some services have had to retain their PCs with those systems stored on the PC. Initially, there were many teething problems with Citrix and it had a poor reputation within the Council. By contrast Citrix now works very well and the ICT team have even managed to add some systems to the environment which were never designed to be Citrix enabled.

23. Another issue is that where Citrix uses software such as Java in conjunction with a number of departmental Council systems, only one version of the software can be used at any time. Hence if one of the Council's systems uses an old version of Java, that becomes the denominator for all other systems and can cause limitations to delivery of services or the extent to which all the modules of a piece of software can be used.

24. The procurement of a replacement for Citrix has been delayed by a number of factors. The implementation of the shared service for Environmental Health and, more recently, the changes to the waste service have both impacted heavily on the work programme for ICT and many additional hours have been

worked supporting colleagues in the Customer Services and waste teams. This has had at least one positive knock on effect in the earlier than scheduled launch of the new Wealden Portal (see Recent and Current Developments section of this report).

25. Those delays have perhaps also been fortuitous in coinciding the start of the tender process and the discussions with the Cabinet Office. The replacement for Citrix is a significant and complex project. For all its operational benefits, whether Citrix was upgraded or replaced with an alternative, the Council would need to contribute a significant resource to its development and maintenance and in creating workarounds to ensure PSN compliance. Discussions with the Cabinet Office and related research with other local authorities now suggest that a radically different solution is required. This is explained in more detail at paragraphs 33-45.

The Connected Councillor 2015

26. The Corporate Plan Update report to Cabinet in December 2013 introduced the ambition of having "connected councillors" from the 2015 District Council elections. Beyond May 2015, the Council envisages wide use of tablets and technology by Members helping them to be more accountable and to demonstrate strong community leadership. As the Corporate Plan report noted:

"This is even more important where we are not delivering services directly. Improved technology will ensure that Members have ready access to information and the people who provide services so that they can be more effective in helping local people understand decisions, access digital services or find a resolution when they have difficulties or problems in accessing services from any agency."

27. In practice, this means that from 2015, Members will make wider use of technology such as tablets, not only to reduce the paper produced for Council meetings, but to assist them as Community Leaders, giving them better access to the information they need to engage effectively with their communities.

Recent and Current Developments

28. **Wealden Portal** – The Wealden portal was given what is called a "soft" launch in late 2013 offering 10 online services. Going live towards the end of the issues arising from the waste contract, it provides a simple way of requesting services online ranging from reporting a missed bin to ordering pest control services. Through a series of questions with options, it enables the request to be forwarded to the service and handled in a uniform way, at a time to suit the customer and without requiring the involvement of Wealden staff.

29. **Mobile** – Given the wide ownership and use of smartphones and other mobile devices, the current trend is for organisations to develop an application (an "app"). However, these work best where the organisation has a single or primary service. Local authorities deliver a much wider range of services and could never resource the development and maintenance of a number of apps for individual services tailored for different devices. Some councils have developed an app for some services and some have opted to provided some services through a third party application called *My Council*.

30. Wealden's approach has been to develop a mobile web strategy for the delivery of services. The Council's website design and structure is geared to delivering services suitable for personal computers or for mobile devices. This is a very similar approach to the BBC who also provide a wide range of services online. While the Council's website has been considered less "exciting" than other websites, including other local authorities, the ICT Service has built the website and its mobile equivalent around the principles of good customer service rather than artistic merit.

31. "**Blackberries**" – At present, Blackberry are the only company whose products meet the PSN security and authentication requirements and blackberries are the only mobile solution for Council staff to use when accessing e-mail and storing information on the device. Since their introduction, these devices have aided service delivery, particularly in keeping in contact with emails and information while out in the field and in handling emergencies. The technology is, though, being rapidly surpassed and tablets and larger smart phones are favoured by many for accessing the same information as it is less cumbersome, easier to read on screen and simpler to use, for example when sharing information with customers and partners and at meetings.

32. An ongoing trial of iPads is already proving the worth of the newer technology, but for this and any other mobile equipment to be used, we need to apply certain controls. The Government uses the term "managed device" to refer to equipment that is owned by the Council and used in this way and requires higher levels of authentication than the basic four digit access code used by suppliers such as Apple and also requires that no data is held on the device itself. Through the trials of equipment, we are working on ways of resolving this so that these and other mobile devices are suitably controlled but are not so cumbersome as to make them unattractive to use.

The Way Forward

33. So far, this report has set the scene. It has introduced a new technical strategy document and revised policies so they are simpler and reflect the positive culture that the Council seeks to promote. It has also identified some of the conflicts encountered in delivering more services digitally that the Council has to work with and the constraints imposed by PSN. It has explained why we have opted for a mobile web strategy rather than develop applications.

34. The internet remains central to improving the delivery of services, particularly out of hours. We need to continue to develop the ways we provide services through mobile devices and the portal particularly and ensure that the customer experience is such that it encourages those channels to be selected as first choice in future dealings with the Council, wherever possible. The more we can encourage customers to self-serve, the lower the cost of each "transaction". More importantly, services are designed to be accessible by means and at times which suit our customers and, in many cases, allows service delivery to be progressed more quickly and more efficiently, with feedback to the customer to give assurance that their request is being dealt with.

35. Overall, Wealden has had a good reputation with its customers and this is something we are keen to preserve. But a good customer experience is no

longer judged only by face to face contact. The ease and speed with which a transaction is carried out is the primary measure for many. A high percentage of customers have already migrated from personal visits and letters to telephones and web services. The challenge now is to reduce the volume of business conducted by those traditional means, but keeping them open for when it is most appropriate, for example when dealing with vulnerable persons. Newer media such as social networking, text messaging and webchats all need to be explored more fully and we need to make good use of those which are most appropriate without creating an unmanageable burden of maintaining multiple channels. In the same way as the Government intends only to provide vehicle tax discs on line in future, we also need to recognise when channel shift has progressed well enough to close down the less used and least efficient channels.

36. Within the organisation, we need to develop the ways we work, improving the flow of information, access to information, paper and electronic storage and other technologies to communicate. We are now well established in the single HQ at Hailsham, but face challenges in physical storage and increased costs in electronic storage. Solutions such as Microsoft's Sharepoint are not yet widely used, but holding electronic documents centrally with managed access uses considerably less storage space than each user retaining the email and attachment. It also facilitates shared working with our partners.

37. There is a clear ambition to support Members in their Community Leadership role through the provision of better and more effective ICT. The portfolio holder has been consulted and considers it would be appropriate for the Cabinet Advisory Group (CAG) to review the current arrangements and through the portfolio holder to report on the type(s) and the level of support they might consider appropriate for Members commencing from the election of the new Council in May 2015.

38. The PSN guidance has undergone several revisions during 2013 and officers have had an ongoing dialogue with the Cabinet Office. Each revision has presented new challenges and discussions with the Cabinet Office are conducted mainly by phone and are rarely confirmed by definitive written guidance. The consequence is that a local authority could incur significant expenditure in implementing solutions to be compliant only to find that the bar has been raised again or the goalposts moved. There is no money provided by Government for what is regarded by many as a new and increasing burden. A preliminary estimate of the cost of future changes needed if we continue to work in a Citrix environment is £150,000; this in addition to the budget estimate for the replacement of Citrix of £300,000.

39. The challenge in sourcing a replacement for Citrix is to implement a solution which is PSN compliant but cost effective and takes account of the new and developing ways of working and other needs identified by senior managers at Wealden. Work undertaken to date indicates that although it is a solution that has served us well to date, it is time to rethink our strategy. If we work to build compliance into what we procure, we can avoid further unnecessary costs and the use of resources in "fixing" what we have to make it fit the requirements.

40. As the report has already said, our investment in Citrix has served us well and has provided a high level of resilience while reducing our spend on cyclical replacement of equipment. Any alternative needs careful consideration:

- Resilience is critical – without ICT systems, the Council ceases to function until issues are resolved.
- It should be responsive to service and operational needs, flexible, and forward looking.
- It should be effective, enjoyable, exciting and easy to use.
- The long term costs should ideally be equal to, or less than they are currently.
- It should be aligned to systems operated by our partners to enable future shared working where practical and for mutual benefit.
- It should minimise downtime and accommodate provision for those providing key services to be given priority in an emergency.
- Software needs to be kept compatible with that used by partners and the costs of software licences optimised.
- Existing equipment should be re-used wherever possible and any losses from redundant equipment should be minimised.
- Renewal and replacement should be pragmatic, programmable and planned to avoid surprises and spikes in expenditure.

41. The first decision should be around securing the network. At present we handle government data which we have to protect to PSN standards and our own data over which we have more freedoms. We are also developing ad hoc solutions to issues as they arise which is a poor use of resources and not strategic. If we were to adopt a principle of securing all data to the PSN standard, all the Council's data and systems would be compliant. It does mean that constraints over a small part of our data and systems would drive what we do across al parts of the service, however it is also the simplest, most effective, pragmatic and lowest cost solution and is therefore recommended.

42. The next PSN Assessment must be completed by March 2014. The Council expects to remain compliant at that date but would not necessarily at March 2015 without further investment. This allows around six months to complete either the Citrix replacement or an alternative and up to four months to implement the changes so that work is completed by the end of 2014.

43. The ICT team have recently identified an alternative method of delivering a solution which warrants further investigation over the next two months alongside the Citrix replacement. This will be a detailed piece of work involving the whole team and service users as it represents a significant change to the way we currently work. Essentially, it is a notebook based solution, outlined earlier in the report. Each officer would be issued with a notebook, suitably encrypted and secured which could be plugged into a docking station at the office, or used as a mobile device when visiting customers or attending meetings.

44. The use of personal equipment would cease and home workers would instead use a Council issued "managed device", this ensuring the Council remains PSN compliant. It is critical that if the equipment were stolen or lost, it would not be possible to access the personal data. Devices must also not allow data to be transferred from the secure network to other storage media. The option needs a detailed assessment and a business case to be prepared before it can be progressed and members will be updated through the Portfolio Holder and the Councillors' Bulletin. IT must also ensure the highest levels of

resilience so that staff can continue to work through emergencies and adverse weather conditions such as heavy snow. The business case will also review the available options to address the concerns expressed by staff who do not have room for office ICT equipment.

45.　The ICT Service are always mindful of the opportunities for shared working and already work collaboratively with other authorities. The Service will continue to work and liaise with others, for example in joint procurement or sharing resources and expertise for mutual benefit.

CMT advice

46.　Cabinet is recommended to

(1)　Endorse the need and importance of ensuring the security of personal data of customers and residents.

(2)　Approve the draft ICT Strategy at Appendix A and the way forward outlined in paragraphs 33-45 of this report.

(3)　Delegate the approval of the ICT policies to the Director of Governance& Corporate Services

(4)　Endorse the Council's approach in meeting the Public Services Network requirements set by Government; and

(5)　Endorse the Project Plan.

(6)　Task the Cabinet Advisory Group to consider Members use of ICT to inform final arrangements for elected Members from May 2014.

Implications considered

Financial implications

47.　There is existing financial provision for the ICT Service and the replacement of Citrix in the revenue budget and capital programme. At this stage no additional expenditure has been identified, other than in this report where the potential additional costs of PSN compliance have been identified. Once the Citrix replacement has been properly evaluated, the capital programme can be revised to make proper provision for future spend and to aim to make this as consistent as possible year on year.

Other implications

47.　Risk Management - The risks associated with any new service delivery mechanisms will be assessed within the business case.

48.　Human Resources - The health and safety implications of any proposals will need to be reviewed, once these become known. Any solution will need to comply with legislation and local policies.

Non-financial implications	Applies?	Non-financial implications	Applies?
Human Resources	Yes	Legal	No
Human rights	No	Equalities & Diversity	No
Crime and disorder	No	Risk Management	Yes
Environmental	No	Access to information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No

Contact points and references

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Appendices	A – ICT Strategy
	B – ICT Strategy Delivery Roadmap 2014-17
Background Papers	None

Wealden District Council

ICT Services

Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to define Wealden District Council's ICT Strategy for the years 2014 through to 2017. It builds upon the work already undertaken and will reinforce the key principles of how ICT can be used to effectively support the delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives and support business requirements and customer service. Effective and efficient ICT is pivotal to the smooth running and development of the council's services. It should be flexible enough to provide solutions to changing business requirements, but accommodate the necessary security requirements.

The scope of this strategy is that of a high level document which defines the direction and framework for ICT in line with the Council's priorities. This strategy will ensure that the general direction of ICT development is not constrained but will use the knowledge and experience gained from previous areas of work to influence and inform future developments.

Influences;

- High and increasing reliance on ICT
- Must be easy to use, cost effective and efficient
- Must support the organisations aims and objectives within the Corporate Plan
- Must conform with security (such as PSN) and Data Protection requirements
- Changing technology and demands from Departments
- Changing customer expectations regarding service delivery

The strategy is divided into sections for each service provided with specific targets for each.

Licences

One of the largest areas of ICT expenditure in the organisation is on software licences. These can be for business systems, databases, operating systems or corporate systems such as office and email.

The Council has a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) which covers Office, Exchange, Sharepoint and various other products.

Targets

LS001 – Undertake an audit of licences to ensure that these are adequate, appropriate and that they meet the requirements of the organisation (**Annual**)**.**

LS002 – Provide the most cost effective licensing for the organisation using joint procurement, framework agreements etc. (**Assess at procurement phase for ICT purchases**)**.**

LS003 – Maximise the investment made in the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement by utilising other licenses such as Lync and Sharepoint (**Trial by end 2014**)**.**

Hardware

As the Council presently operates a thin client environment (currently Citrix) there hasn't been a need for standard base unit PCs. Thin client terminals are cheaper than PCs and use approximately 10% of the power. This has also led to an extended replacement programme (7 years as opposed to 5 years for PCs) due to the increased life expectancy of terminals. The Citrix contract is now due for renewal and we will review replacement and alternatives, with implementation of the preferred solution by March 2015.

The Council has adopted virtualisation as its preferred method of delivering server products.

At the time of writing the Council has the following hardware infrastructure;
- 22 physical servers
- 260 Wyse terminals (including those used for home working)
- 9 blades

Targets

HW001 – Provide thin client terminals as the default desktop device through to March 2015 .

HW002 – Provide a virtual environment for servers as the default (**Ongoing**).

HW003 – Secure funding for the delivery of the preferred option arising from the review and appropriate provision for any associated hardware replacement programme (**Ongoing**).

HW004 – Review to ensure the environment is "fit for purpose" for the Council's current and future business and financial requirements (**Annually**).

HW005 – Ensure the hardware element of Council's compatibility checklist is adhered to during any procurement of ICT systems and equipment (**Ongoing**).

Telephony

The Council uses VOIP (Voice Over IP) throughout its offices and for home workers. A hot desking system operates where each member of staff has an individual extension which can be used to log into any phone.
The telephony infrastructure uses SIP trunking which allows us to use our internet provision for our telephone traffic. As well as reducing telephony costs it also gives the ability to increase or decrease the number of lines available to the Council at limited notice which is also part of the Council's disaster recovery solution (DR).

The standard mobile device used at the Council is a Blackberry – this will be reviewed during the period this strategy covers.

At the time of writing the Council has the following devices;
- 90 Blackberries
- 290 Mobile phones

There is an increasing demand for tablet devices with 3G connectivity as an effective means of accessing systems and data in the field.

Targets

TY001 – Undertake a review of all mobile technology to ensure that it provides best value, remains appropriate for the Council's changing and emerging service delivery needs, and accommodates Government security requirements (Annually)

TY002 – All Council phones provided will be IP phones (Ongoing)

TY003 – Undertake controlled trials to assess the effectiveness of tablets and other mobile devices for field officers.

Software

The Council provides a standard "suite" of software to all staff, this includes Microsoft Office 2010 including Outlook as the mail client. The Council moved away from purchasing standard Microsoft software in an ad-hoc fashion and instead purchased an Enterprise Agreement. This has allowed a more flexible approach to deployment and allows wholesale upgrades without the need to purchase new licences.

The licences purchased for exchange also extend to Lync and Sharepoint. It is anticipated that these two pieces of software will form part of the Council's technical estate in the future.

Targets

SW001 – Provide Microsoft Office to all members of staff (Ongoing).

SW002 – Ensure the Council is using either the most recent, or previous, version of Microsoft Office to gain the most benefit of the Enterprise Agreement (reviewed as new versions are released).

SW003 – To maximise value in the Council's Enterprise Agreement, undertake projects to trial Lync and Sharepoint (By end 2014).

SW004 – Ensure all new servers use an approved operating system from the Council's compatibility checklist (ongoing).

SW005 – Supply a "fit for purpose" client technology solution (commence Citrix replacement early in 2014 with implementation completed by March 2015).

Databases

Every business system the Council uses is underpinned by a database and like the systems themselves there are quite a few different varieties. Currently, the Council has examples of SQL Server, Oracle, Ingres and Progress databases.

In terms of support and licensing it is advantageous to try and adopt one database platform as the default. As SQL server is the predominant database used throughout the Council it has become the de facto requirement when tendering for new systems.

All new databases are configured to be backed up locally as well as being added to the main backup system. Housekeeping jobs are also set up and the database is added to the monitoring system to ensure any failures are promptly dealt with.

Targets

DB001 – Ensure systems purchased have a related database which conforms to the Council's compatibility checklist (Ongoing).

DB002 – Ensure new databases are configured with a suitable maintenance plan and backup schedule (Ongoing).

Systems

As the Council is made up of many different business units there is a requirement for a large number of systems needed to support these. For example there are specific business systems for public facing services such as Planning and Housing, as well as systems for internal services such as HR and Finance.

Although a key consideration when choosing a business system is how well it fits the needs of the business, it is becoming more important to consider how it would "fit" within the Council's technical infrastructure. As Council priorities, such as homeworking, shape the technological infrastructure it has become necessary to produce a compatibility checklist. This is used during the tender process to establish whether potential systems will work and whether suppliers will support them in our operating environment.

A business case needs to be written and approved by the Head of Audit, ICT and Performance before any new systems or major upgrades are purchased.

Targets

SY001 – Ensure all system purchases have an approved business case and can be suitably funded (Ongoing).

SY002 – Ensure all system purchases and upgrades conform to the Council's compatibility checklist (Ongoing).

SY003 – All system implementations will follow the Council's implementation checklist to ensure consistency (Ongoing).

Project Management

A large part of the ICT service provided is in the formal project management of new system implementations and, occasionally, non-ICT related projects. All Business Analysts are expected to hold and maintain the PRINCE2 practitioner qualification in accordance with best industry practice

Every system implementation shall be run as a project and shall, as a minimum require the production of a Project Implementation Document (PID), risk register, project plan and lessons learned. The project team will usually involve ICT technical staff, service area staff and external suppliers.

Targets

PM001 – Adhere to PRINCE2 conventions wherever possible (Ongoing).

PM002 – All system implementations will be formally project managed with the relevant documents produced (Ongoing).

Network

The network uses 100/1000 Mbit Ethernet over CAT6. Ethernet switching is in use and 1GB Mbit Ethernet is provided to servers. The Council uses the TCP/IP protocol with Class C IP addresses throughout its network.

The GovConnect is on a separate subnet to isolate the traffic to achieve the security standard required. We are Government Connect accredited.

The Council provides a stand-alone wireless network supplied by EE which allows free internet access to the general public while visiting the Council Offices.

Targets

NW001 – Implement two factor authentication (By 2nd quarter 2014))

NW002 – Ensure all network purchases conform to the compatibility checklist (Ongoing).

Data Security

As well as usual security measures the network comes under Government Connect security requirements as require by Cabinet office to gain and retain accreditation. This is a requirement to run a PSN connection for the use of the benefits department and the Elections Team.

All staff are responsible for the protection of data and the ICT Department is specifically responsible for providing a suitably secure environment (e.g. through security updates) and maintaining and communicating relevant policies which help to achieve this.

Where appropriate, misuse and breach of policies will be brought to the attention of senior management.

Targets

DS001 - Retain Government Connect Accreditation (Annually)

DS002 – Achieve Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance (By mid 2014)

DS003 – Run security health checks and resolve issues arising promptly (annually)

DS004 – Install security updates for all systems as released (Ongoing)

DS005 – Advise on, and monitor all data security practices by staff (Ongoing)

Printers and Scanners

Wherever possible, the Council encourages electronic working and avoidance of the need to print documents in order to limit paper production and storage and keep costs at a minimum.

Printing facilities are supplied primarily via a number of Xerox Multi-function devices (MFDs). These machines supply printing, copying and scanning facilitates for all staff. By the use of 'follow-me' technology staff can use any of the MFDs after identifying themselves by their swipe cards.

There are a limited number of desk-top printers which are used for specific purpose not available through the MFDs such as cheque and wage slip printing.

There are also three plotters used for large scale printing.

There are six scanners in different departments around the council used for scanning into specific systems.

Targets

PR001 – Keep MFD contract under review (Annual).

PR002 – Keep provision of specialist printers under review (Annual).

Support

All ICT staff are expected to attain an ITIL foundation qualification and the support function follows a basic ITIL model. Incoming requests go to a service desk to be logged (either via a web form, email or phone) and are then allocated to one of the technical teams.

The support desk also deals with placing data from our systems onto encrypted data sticks and/or DVDs to maintain a consistent approach to data security..

The purchase, maintenance and recording of ownership of all hardware and licensing is controlled by the Support helpdesk.

Targets

SP001 – Provide a service desk facility available through intranet, email and telephone between 8:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday (Ongoing).

SP002 – Fix 90% of helpdesk calls within the target date (Annually).

SP003 – Achieve a 90% satisfaction rating from customer surveys (Quarterly).

SP004 – To develop an appropriate and sustainable system of ICT support to Members, particularly for managed devices (May 2015).

Web

The Council operates a main website, www.wealden.gov.uk, along with a couple of separate satellite sites, www.w4y.co.uk and www.wealdencommunitystrategy.co.uk. Since the previous strategy the website has changed from being information-driven to being task-driven which resulted in being awarded the maximum 4 stars in the SOCITM "Better Connected" review 2012. There are over 150 tasks on the website, however, most result in either information being delivered or an email being sent to the relevant department. This will be an area of improvement over the period covered by the strategy as the Council looks to encourage the use of the website as a customer access channel.

Towards the end of 2013 a new customer portal was launched. This is designed for customers to self-serve and enable channel shift. The portal links the website to the Council's CRM system allowing services already written for existing channels to be used for self service. At the time of writing there are approximately 15 services available this way and it is anticipated this figure will grow rapidly.

In 2012 a mobile web strategy was written. Its primary aim is to give a plan on how the Council can adapt to new ways of accessing information and providing services. The website can be used on smaller mobile devices and as part of new design will be fully responsive meaning it will adapt to the size of the device used to view it.

Targets

WB001 – Develop services for self service (Ongoing).

WB002 – Ensure the website is accessible to all (Ongoing).

WB003 – Monitor and review the mobile web strategy (Annually).

WB004 – Launch a new design for the corporate website (2nd quarter 2014)

WB005 – Increase the number of services available through the portal to 50 by December 2014 and 70 by December 2015.

WB006 –10% of customers using self service via the portal instead of other channels on available services by December 2014 (15% by December 2015).

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Data Network	Cat 6, fibre backbone and wireless					
Voice Network	VoIP throughout		Soft phone trial	VoIP in office, soft phones for homeworking		
Servers	Virtual servers in new datacentre using VMWare			Re-tender	Virtual Servers	
Clients	240 WYSE in the office		Review/Tender	400 Laptops, docking stations in the office		
Email	Groupwise 6.5		Exchange 2013			
Office Software	Office 2010				Office 2013 (or later version)	
Database	SQL Server 2008				SQL Server 2013	
Mobile	Blackberries, mobiles		Blackberries under review			
Printers	Xerox MFDs					Tender
Tablets		Tablet trials	Evaluation	iPads for members		
CRM	MS Dynamics 4		Implementation	MS Dynamics 2013		
Web	Task based website		Single sign-on portal			
Intranet	Wealdnet		Sharepoint trial	Sharepoint 2013		
Desktop	Citrix Presentation Server 4		Review	Remote evaluation	"Thick" client in the office, new remote solution	