Cherwell District Council

Executive

7 April 2015

Joint ICT Business Development Strategy

Report of Head of Joint ICT Business Services

This report is public

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to present the Joint ICT Business Development Strategy which sets out the vision and direction for the Joint ICT Business Service for Cherwell, South Northamptonshire and Stratford-on-Avon Councils.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To approve the Joint ICT Business Development Strategy.

2.0 Introduction

At the meeting on 30 October 2014 the Joint Arrangements Steering Group considered the draft strategy and identified some areas of further work. These changes are now incorporated and the final version of the Strategy is attached to this report.

2.1 **ICT Business Strategy - Background**

2.1.1 In April 2014, Cherwell District, South Northamptonshire and Stratford-on-Avon District Councils created a Shared ICT Business Service with an ambition to extend to others, to maximise efficiencies and economies of scale. We have already extended the service to include South Staffordshire Council.

The strategy sets out that by working together in partnership we can improve performance whilst driving down costs through the effective use of ICT. The Strategy seeks to fully exploit technology as a key tool in delivering high quality services to our customers (residents, businesses and visitors), and a critical component of effective joint working.

Each partner individually has made considerable investment in technology and this strategy provides a shared framework within which to share those developments, pool our skills, and sweat our assets. It will ensure that investment by one partner

can be extended to benefit the entire partnership. By working together all partners will see spend on ICT reduce, and see ICT make a significant contribution to reducing costs generally.

This is an ambitious strategy designed to place ICT front and centre of the councils' objectives to implement a new operating model based on partnership and adopting a commercial outlook. It seeks to reduce the geographic dependency of our key asset – our people – by removing the links between place and information. By enabling our staff to work anywhere, with full access to the information they need, their availability and contribution is maximised.

It sets out to standardise, consolidate and harmonise our business applications, and by doing that, reduce the costs of duplication and wasted effort, improve the exchange of information, and thereby provide a strong return on investment for all stakeholders.

It will ensure that the identity of each partner is maintained and their corporate priorities addressed.

It will continue to support programmes such as superfast broadband, support local businesses, exploit emerging platforms such as hosted (cloud) based solutions both to reduce costs and increase income.

We are not starting from the beginning and much has already been delivered. This Strategy will ensure that no investment made by any partner is lost, but that work is extended so that all partners can benefit from it.

3.0 Report details

The Joint ICT Business Development Strategy sets out the vision, objectives and operating principles for the joint ICT Business Service and delivery of the Strategy. It details the key workstreams which will ensure that significant progress in the areas of ICT harmonisation, standardisation and increased online presence is delivered for the benefit of all 3 partners. These are presented in the appendices.

The Strategy has been written as a unified document to deliver information and communication technology services (ICT) to Cherwell District, South Northamptonshire and Stratford-on-Avon Councils through the Joint ICT Business Services and as such will be considered for adoption by all three councils. Whilst the adoption by all three councils would be desirable, the strategy has been written to enable delivery even if all councils did not subscribe and therefore adoption does not need to be made subject to the adoption of the other councils.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The Strategy sets a clear direction for the partnership in respect of harmonising and joining up all business areas shaped around the needs of customers and to maximise opportunities to reduce cost and increase income. To deliver it successfully requires an ICT Business service that is shaped towards delivering on the priorities identified in the Strategy. All three councils have already approved

and implemented the Joint ICT Business Service staffing re-structure so the foundations are in place to fully exploit the opportunities that ICT offers in respect of new ways of working and to maximise efficiencies.

5.0 Consultation

The Chief Executives and S151 Officers have considered and support the proposal.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 If the strategy is not adopted then the full range of efficiencies and cost savings identified in the business case may not be delivered so this is not recommended.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications directly associated with this report or attached strategy.

Comments checked by:
Martin Henry, Director of Resources, 0300 0030102
martin.henry@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.3 There are no legal implications arising from the report at this stage.

Comments checked by:
Kevin Lane, Head of Law and Governance, 0300 0030107
kevin.lane@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk Implications

7.4 There are no direct risks as a result of this report. Implementation of the ICT Strategy will also include a risk register.

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

N/A

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The ICT Strategy will deliver/support the following key corporate objectives:-

- District of Opportunity
- Safe, Green, Clean
- Thriving Communities
- Sound Budgets and Customer Focussed Council

Lead Member

Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and ICT

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	ICT Business Development Strategy
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Balvinder Heran, Head of Joint ICT Business Service
Contact Information	Tel: 01789 260470 Email: balvinder.heran@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk Cherwell, South Northamptonshire and Stratford-on-Avon District Councils