Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: *C-033-2014/15*
Date of meeting: *6th October 2014*

Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio: **Technology & Support Services**

Subject: **ICT Capital Requirements**

Responsible Officer: **David Newton**   **(01992 564580).**

Democratic Services Officer: **Gary Woodhall**   **(01992 564470).**

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1)   To determine the projects to be scheduled for the financial year 2015/16;

(2)   That a sum of £200,000 be included in the Capital programme for 2015/16 for the following ICT projects:

     (a)   BACS (Banker Automated Clearing Service) electronic payment system replacement;

     (b)   UPS (Uninterruptable Power Supply) Replacement;

     (c)   PC Remote management tools; and

     (d)   Implementation of other projects identified from the ICT strategy to improve productivity/efficiency, or maintain service; and

(3)   That £75,000 be included in the Capital programme for 2015/16, as a contingency sum for the Corporate Flexible working rollout.

Executive Summary:

Historically, ICT were allocated £300,000 per annum (PA) in the Capital programme for the updating and maintenance of the core technical infrastructure. Following the revision of the Capital programme, this allocation has been removed and now all proposed ICT projects are considered on an annual basis.

Estimated project costs for the following financial year 2015/16 are set out below.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The ICT projects detailed below are necessary to maintain the current ICT infrastructure, improve business continuity within the Council and allow staff to fully utilise the benefits available from ICT systems.

Other Options for Action:

To not approve the 3 critical projects identified above (recommendations 2 (a), (b) & (c)) will

impact on the reliability of the ICT infrastructure and could result in the inability to make payments (i), sustained periods of system unavailability (ii) and limit ICT ability to support remote workers (iii). To not approve (iv) will impact on the ICT strategy implementation and delay the long term vision of flexible working and improved process.

To not approve the Corporate Flexible working rollout will mean the Council is unable to gain the benefits of more efficient working practices in terms of productivity or the usage of office space.

Report:

1.   Capital funding is sought for the following projects, which are listed in order of priority for ICT. Full details of each project are contained in the appendices:

Project	Amount requested	Appendix
BACS electronic payment system replacement	£17,000	Appendix 1 – Priority ICT Strategy Projects
UPS (Uninterruptable Power Supply) replacement	£30,000	
PC Remote management tools	£20,000	
Citrix Upgrades	£20,000	Appendix 2: Projects identified from the ICT Strategy
SQL Server Licenses and Client Access Licenses:	£20,000	
Replacement Service Desk System	£18,000	
VPN Replacement	£8,000	
Replacement of iPhones	£5,000	
Interim mobile/flexible working development	£10,000	
Gazetteer Integration a) Capita Academy b) Northgate OHMS	£15,000	
Good for enterprise	£7,000	
Information@work rollout	£10,000	
Confirm Migration	£10,000	
GIS Development Fund	£5,000	
Website Development Fund	£5,000	
Corporate Flexible Working rollout	£75,000 (Contingent sum)	Appendix 3: Corporate Flexible working rollout
Total	£275,000 (Including £75,000 Contingent sum)	

Resource Implications:

At this early stage it is not possible to calculate exact costings for these projects. However, it seems prudent to allow an amount of £75,000 for the Corporate Flexible working project, and £200,000 for the ICT projects, making a total of £275,000 in the financial year 2015/16. An amount of £373,300 for Capital projects was agreed for the previous financial year. It is likely that revenue savings will be generated by these projects and further reports will be made on individual projects as they progress.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None.

Risk Management:

Failing to maintain and update the ICT infrastructure could disrupt the day to day operations of critical systems and will have a significant impact on staff's ability to carry out their duties.

Appendix 1 - Priority ICT Strategy Projects

BACS (Banker Automated Clearing Service) electronic payment system replacement; (ICT Strategy – New Project):

BACS is the system which processes the council's electronic payments such as Direct Debits. The current system will not be supported by our suppliers after August 2015, and as such must be replaced. The replacement system will ensure we are able to make payments to suppliers and residents.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X		X						
Council	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Members	X		X						

If the BACS system is not replaced, in the event of a problem the council would not be able to call on support, and the system may also not meet the increasingly stringent security requirements of the banks.

Estimated cost £17,000

UPS Replacement (ICT Strategy – New Project):

The UPS (Uninterruptable Power Supply) is used to provide back-up power to our servers in the event of power loss prior to the generator being engaged (or indeed in the absence of the generator). The current UPS arrangements in both Computer Suites are in need of replacement to ensure a reliable power supply to the ICT infrastructure in the Civic Offices. These new units will also provide power to the switch cupboards across the Civic Offices to ensure availability of the telephone system in the event of a power failure.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public		X	X						
Council		X	X			X	X	X	
Members		X	X						

It is recommended that the batteries within a UPS are replaced every 4-5 years. The current

UPS is 9 years old and is in need of replacement as the batteries can no longer retain the charge required for a sufficient period of time.

Estimated cost £30,000

PC Remote Management Tools

ICT currently lack the full suite of tools for remote deployment of software and management of PCs. Given the moves towards a more flexible workforce we require the ability to remotely install software without the need to physically visit each machine.

The tools we are looking at will also allow us to more effectively manage these devices in terms of security and remote monitoring of performance. This will make the ICT operation more efficient in providing desktop support, and also improve staff productivity.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public			X						
Council	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Members	X		X						

If this is not implemented ICT will need to rely on manual deployment of software in many cases, and also require home based workers to bring machines to the offices for updates and installations of core software.

Estimated cost £20,000

Appendix 2: Projects identified from the ICT Strategy

Citrix Upgrades:

Citrix is the system that ICT uses to deliver software applications and virtual desktops to users. The current version we are using is now unsupported and requires replacement, we also require support around the implementation to ensure performance is optimised to give the best possible experience to our users.

Citrix is a key component in our flexible working rollout, as is the mechanism which allows users to remotely access corporate systems.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public									
Council			X		X		X		X
Members			X						

Estimated cost £20,000

SQL Server Licenses and Client Access Licenses:

We are currently upgrading our server estate to newer versions of MS Windows and MS SQL Server. As an economy measure we dropped out of the Microsoft Enterprise agreement some years ago, which has yielded a considerable saving to the Council. However we now need to purchase licenses to ensure compliance in terms of both server licenses and client access licenses for the newer versions.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public		X	X						
Council	X	X	X		X		X		X
Members		X	X						

Estimated cost £20,000

Replacement Service Desk System

The system used to manage the ICT service desk has been in place for 7 years and is no longer fit for purpose, and is pending de-support from our suppliers. This system is also used to manage our ICT asset inventory, and as such is critical to effective management of hardware with a flexible workforce. Adoption of a new system (linked or potentially integrated to the Remote PC Management tools outlined above) will allow greater use of self service, and also give a much more flexible solution for use within ICT. In addition this new system can also be used to log Facilities Management calls, allowing the ICT Service Desk to act as a single point of contact for both ICT and FM issues. ICT have already investigated a range of options, and have ruled out other possibilities in terms of cost (up to £40,000) and capability – all remaining solutions are around this price point.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public									
Council	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
Members									

Estimated cost £18,000

VPN Replacement

VPN (Virtual Private Network) access is in use by around half of our staff, parish councils, members and all of our ICT suppliers to provide remote access to systems. Although other solutions exist for remote access to email (Good For Enterprise) and access to network for home workers (Branch Routers), VPN is still an essential component of remote access. VPN would be used by staff in the field needing to access a back office system. This enhancement would move the current on premise based access control to a more resilient and scalable cloud based system. If this is not implemented, and the current system is retained, potential savings in licensing costs for additional users will not be realised. An enhanced VPN will greatly improve the user experience of flexible and mobile workers.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X	X						X	
Council	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Members	X	X						X	

Estimated cost £8,000

Replacement of iPhones

We currently have around 40 iPhone 4 devices in use, many of which are now approaching 4 years old. The iPhone 4 is not capable of 4G, and the phone is not capable of running the latest version of the Apple operating system – this means it will not be supported on many of our systems. This sum allows replacement of the majority of these iPhones with a cheaper Windows alternative, which costs around £100, but also allows for a small number of iPhones to meet specific needs. Smart phones are integral to our flexible working rollout, as they provide the necessary hardware for email access on the move. It is proposed to recycle these obsolete phones and any funds received will be offset against future purchases.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public									
Council	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Members									

Estimated cost £5,000

Interim mobile/flexible working development

While consultancy work is ongoing around mobile and flexible working a small working budget will still be required to meet ongoing needs to provide equipment to areas who have urgent requirements for mobile and flexible working. It is proposed to use this sum of funding to complete the rollout in Development Control and Building Control following testing that is currently underway in 2014/15, which has seen more than half of the overall team equipped with mobile/flexible working hardware – the remaining areas are Conservation, Trees and some staff in Building Control. To wait until the outcome of consultancy work will result in the impetus gained from the rollout being lost, so it is important that this funding is available from April.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Council	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Members	X	X	X			X	X	X	

Estimated cost £10,000

Gazetteer Integration
a) Capita Academy
b) Northgate OHMS

At present there is no automatic integration between the corporate land and property gazetteer and the Academy system (used by Revenues and Benefits) and the OHMS system (used by Housing). This means that the data held in these systems is not directly linkable to the corporate address data set, which limits its use in reporting (Big Data) and also means that there is a risk of addresses not being correctly entered or identified. This also leads to unnecessary duplication of work in the creation and management of address data.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X							X	
Council	X				X	X	X	X	
Members	X								

Estimated cost £15,000 (Academy £10,000, OHMS £5000)

Good For Enterprise

Good For Enterprise (GFE) is in use by 150 staff and members to access email securely from personal or Council smart phones. Good Share extends the functionality by giving access to files stored on our network in the same secure environment This project helps enable mobile working, by allowing secure easy communication with a dispersed mobile team. As well as providing the ability to do word processing Good Dynamics extends the functionality of Good For Enterprise (GFE – our system to access email on smart phones) by offering features such as access to network drives or remote desktop access. This has proven to be the system which has had the most immediate benefit to both flexible and mobile workers, and also to managers in terms of easy access to diaries (etc) in meetings. This sum will cover the procurement of additional licenses to meet Staff and Member requirements.

Assessed benefits:

	Customer Service	24/7 Service Availability	24/7 Service Resilience	Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently				Improved communication	Enable flexible/remote working
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X	X				X	X	X	X
Council	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Members						X		X	

Estimated cost £7,000

Information@work rollout

We currently have two Information@work scanners which are now approaching 9 years old, these are connected via a now unsupported connection type.

These scanners require replacement to ensure that the Planning scanning process can be carried out. The timely scanning of plans is vital for allowing planning to improve process and reduce internal costs, as well as facilitating flexible working by their staff.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X	X				X			
Council	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Members	X	X				X			X

Estimated cost £10,000

Confirm Migration

The Neighbourhoods Directorate currently uses the Confirm system for management of the Grounds Maintenance function. It is proposed to migrate this team to the existing Northgate M3 Public Protection system. This will reduce the Councils ongoing costs of approximately £12,000 PA in terms of maintenance, as no additional costs will be incurred for the Northgate system outside of implementation as we already have a site license for the system. Funding currently used for covering the annual license cost of Confirm will be used to cover increases in licensing costs for other system, removing the need for additional revenue funding to cover inflationary cost increases.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public									
Council				X	X	X	X		X
Members									

Estimated cost £10,000

GIS Development Fund

The implementation of the replacement GIS (Geographical Information System – GIS) is well underway. The project team has requested allocation of a small capital sum to fund implementation consultancy and enhancements. The system includes public facing mapping and tools for mobile working, both of which will give major improvements to how we use mapping information.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public		X	X			X		X	
Council		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Members		X	X					X	

Estimated cost £5,000

Website Development Fund

The Website Development Board has requested allocation of a sum of money to provide for incremental upgrade work on the website and related systems.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X	X						X	
Council	X	X						X	
Members	X	X						X	

Estimated cost £5,000

Appendix 3: Corporate Flexible Working rollout

In 2013/14 and 2014/15 ICT have been using Capital funding to run a trial of mobile and flexible working solutions.

Successful testing has identified the following main hardware options to enable mobile and flexible working:
- Office based work with some home working – Laptop, Branch Router, Port Replicator
- Office based work with on site and some home working – Windows Tablet, Branch Router, Port Replicator
- Full time home worker – Terminal, Branch Router

This project could equip 50 staff with tablets, 50 staff with laptops, and an additional 15 staff with Terminals. Assuming the ratio here, it will also include the rollout of smart phones including remote email access to 50 of the staff included in the rollout.

It is proposed that this funding be provided for in the Capital Budget, but only made available when the business justification for adoption of flexible work in a range of business areas has been made clear. The funding is being requested at this stage to ensure it is available in a timely manner once this work is complete.

Assessed benefits:

| | Customer Service | 24/7 Service Availability | 24/7 Service Resilience | Retain Low Council Tax and use finances efficiently | | | | Improved communication | Enable flexible/remote working |
				Reduced procurement costs	Reduced ongoing costs	Improved process	Improved Staff productivity		
Public	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Council	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Members	X	X	X			X	X	X	

If this rollout is not committed to it will not allow the Council to gain the benefits of more efficient working practices in terms of productivity or the usage of office space.

Estimated cost £75,000

Due Regard Record

This page shows which groups of people are affected by the subject of this report. It sets out how they are affected and how any unlawful discrimination they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how access to the service(s) subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to understand each other better as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

Date / Name	Summary of equality analysis
8/9/14 **David Newton**	The projects within this report will impact on both employees and the public The two groups impacted by the strategy are members of staff (if they lack ICT skills as our training offering is being changed) and people with disabilities. (Public in terms of online service via the website, staff in terms of new technology). Mitigation is in place for both of these areas, a training needs analysis is to be carried out for new starters, and one to one coaching will be available to them if required (and to existing staff). We will also ensure that suitable hardware and software solutions (e.g. Jaws) are tested and available to staff members with disabilities that require them In terms of online service provision, the Website Development Board continues to oversee the development of the website and collate any feedback received, which is then fed back into the design of the site. The projects also advance equality of opportunity by improving the ways we can collect and analyse data, which will help us pinpoint areas of need or analyse trends. Also the move to put more services online helps make information more available to all groups, and accessible to those with mobility issues, or who are unable to access our services in normal hours. The projects will also offer benefits by increasing the scope for flexible/remote working by staff, which will assist those with Caring responsibilities.