Scrutiny Standing Panel Agenda

ICT and E-Government Scrutiny Standing Panel
Monday, 21st November, 2005

Place:	Committee Room 2
Time:	7.30 pm
Democratic Services Officer:	S G Hill - Senior Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01992 564249 Email: shill@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors F Maclaine (Chairman), M Cohen (Vice-Chairman), S Barnes, Mrs D Borton, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, P McMillan, Mrs P K Rush and Mrs M Sartin

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PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND

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1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

   (Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

   (Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

   In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

   This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

   Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a

matter.

4.   NOTES OF THE LAST PANEL MEETING (Pages 3 - 4)

To consider and approve the notes of the last meeting of the Panel held on 22 September 2005.

5.   TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 5 - 6)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Panel and associated Work Programme. This is attached. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

6.   ICT STRATEGY - REVIEW 2005 (Pages 7 - 56)

(ICT and CSS Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached Cabinet report.

7.   MEMBER CONNECTIVITY SCHEME - PROGRESS REPORT

To receive an update on the progress of the project.

8.   REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider which reports are ready to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

9.   FUTURE MEETINGS

To consider the forward programme of meeting dates for the Panel.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF ICT AND E-GOVERNMENT SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2005
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2
AT 7.30 - 9.30 PM**

Members Present:	F Maclaine (Chairman), Mrs D Borton, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, Mrs P K Rush and Mrs M Sartin
Other members present:	S Metcalfe and C Whitbread
Apologies for Absence:	M Cohen
Officers Present	A Scott (Head of Information, Communications and Technology), V Evans (Customer Services Manager, ICT) and S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

13.	**SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

No substitutes had been appointed.

14.	**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were made.

15.	**TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME**

The current position with the work programme was noted.

16.	**NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The notes of the meetings held on 18 July and 8 August were noted.

17.	**MEMBER CONNECTIVITY SCHEME**

The Panel received a presentation from Simon Hill, Research and Democratic Services, Project Manager of the Member Connectivity Scheme, on the proposals to connect members to the Council's network.

The Panel noted the proposed scheme and the proposals to pay members an additional sum to purchase and maintain their own computers. It was also noted that it was intended that this sum would be paid to those had signed up to the scheme quarterly and in the first year, those who had signed up by December 2005 would receive all the first years payment in January 2006.

It was noted that the implementation phase for the scheme would be the period January to March 2006 with new members in May being connected on election. All councillor would be connected by March 2007.

Under the scheme members would be required to have a computer that could connect to the Internet via broadband and an email address for notification.

A full presentation on the scheme would be made to members priori to Council on 27 September 2005

The Panel considered that there was the need to have graduated training to take account of the varying levels of experience of the members expressed through their competency questionnaires and that these should be structured sessions using the council's IT Training Suite.

The Panel also considered that these courses should form part of the annual Member Training Programme.

Recommended:

(1)   That appropriate training sessions for members be arranged on the use and connection to the Council's systems;

(2)   That these courses should form part of the annual Member Training Programme

18.   E-PROCUREMENT

The Panel noted the need to address a procurement strategy under the Improvement Plan. They considered a proposed report to the Cabinet on E-procurement and made the following observations on that report.

(1) The Panel suggested the addition of the words 'where they provide best value' to the end of recommendation (1) of the report (relating to the proposed recommendations made by the National e-Procurement Project (NePP));

(2) The Panel's view was that it is premature to consider the appointment of a Procurement Analyst at this time. This was on the basis of:

(i) The benefits of entering into the EMP were as yet unknown and should be implemented to ascertain areas in which further analysis might be required;

(ii) From a review by officers, it was considered that the large number of 'procurements' through the system would be of low value in terms of the council's overall turnover but high volume and staff time intensive.

The Panel are therefore suggested that this appointment be deferred at this time but that it be considered again for the 2007/08 budget (after EMP implementation).

19.   REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(a)   Members Connectivity Scheme; and

(b)   E-procurement report and receoommendations.

20.   FUTURE MEETINGS

Agreed that a date for the next meeting would be arranged in November 2005.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

Title: e-Government and Information & Communications Technology (ICT)	

Status: Standing Panel

Terms of Reference:

(1) To consider how the implementation of the ODPM Implementing e-Government (IEG) Priority Outcomes and the local e-Government Strategy should be monitored and prioritised and to make any resulting recommendations to the ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder or Cabinet as appropriate.

a) To consider within this theme options for Member connectivity to the Council's new Committee Management System. This relates to Priority outcomes R5, R6 and R22.

(2) To consider the introduction of a Corporate Customer Contact Centre on behalf of the ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder and to make any resulting recommendations to the ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder or Cabinet as appropriate.

a) To consider the specific ICT role within the Corporate Customer Contact Centre and agree which elements of this project should be monitored and reviewed by other O&S panels/committee

(3) To consider the Council's IEG Government Returns on behalf of the ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder prior to consideration by Cabinet.

(4) To review the Council's ICT Strategy on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder and Head of ICT and to make any resulting recommendations to the ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder or Cabinet as appropriate.

(5) To monitor progress on the Council's ICT Service Business Action Plan on a six monthly basis.

(6) To consider the introduction of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005 on behalf of the ICT and Support Services Portfolio Holder prior to consideration by Cabinet.

(7) To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Council and the Cabinet with recommendations on matters allocated to the Panel.

Work Programme 2005/6

Item	Priority	Report Deadline
1. Review of the Council's IEG Strategy	High	Completed
2. Introduction of a Customer Contact Centre	High	Initial report considered
3. ICT Strategy Review	High	October 2005
4. Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations	Medium	February 2006

Chairman: Councillor F Maclaine

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DRAFT - Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C/ /2005
Date of meeting:

Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio: ICT and Support Services – Cllr S Metcalfe

Subject: Corporate ICT Strategy – Review 2005

Officer contact for further information: Adrian Scott – Head of ICT

Committee Secretary:

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1)   **To agree the new technical objectives of the Corporate ICT Strategy for 2006/2008 as set out in the report.**

1. The Council's Corporate ICT (Information and Communications Technology) Strategy was first introduced in 1998. The Strategy sets out clear objectives and plans for addressing the key elements of the technical ICT environment. This is the 4th review of the Strategy that is now limited to a 24-month period to ensure the Strategy remains current and adaptive to the potentially beneficial changes in new technology. These potential benefits are currently being targeted by the various e-Government initiatives and the current efficiency drive from Central Government by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). These benefits have been further emphasised by the report 'Transformational Government enabled by Technology' published by the Cabinet Office on 2 November 2005. The Prime Minister introduces this report by saying:

    "Within the public services we have to use technology to join up and share services rather than duplicate them. It is a simple fact that we are stronger and more effective when we work together than apart. It is also self evident that we will only be able to deliver the full benefits to customers that these new systems offer through using technology to integrate the process of government at the centre."

    It is clear from this new report that Central Government is expecting a wholesale change in the way Public Sector services are delivered by exploiting the transformational nature of ICT.

    The Corporate ICT Strategy aims to create an environment in which business information systems can, if appropriate, be shared and data enabled to flow in a seamless manner that is transparent to the user of that information or data regardless of whether they are a member of the public c, Member or Officer of the Council or indeed any other relevant government agency. Above all, the Strategy must be kept Corporate and its content mainstream. These are the key factors that have been taken into account in the review process.

    In addition to these requirements, the review considered the implications of the Council's e-Government Strategy and the main central government technology drivers. These drivers are currently the 'Government Connect' and 'DirectGov' projects that underpin the 'transformational government' objectives. The details of these are covered under the applications section of the strategy.

The Corporate ICT Strategy is divided into six key headings: standards, hardware, operating systems, databases, applications and networks.

The actual projects that result from the agreement of this strategy will be detailed in the ICT annual Business Plan. Each project will be listed in the Action Plan along with its priority and relevance to this Strategy. The ICT Action Plan is currently monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny ICT Standing Panel on a six monthly basis.

Option for Action

2.   **Corporate ICT Strategy – Review 2005**

Appendix A details the 2005 review.

3.   **Corporate ICT Strategy – Summary of Adopted Standards and Policies**

Appendix B details the active standards and policies introduced by the implementation of the Corporate ICT Strategy over the past seven years.

Statement in Support of Recommended Action

4.   This Strategy is a key enabler of the Council's e-Government and efficiency initiatives and underpins the vision and objectives set out in the Council's annual Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Government Returns (available on request).

This report covers the 6 part Corporate ICT Strategy. The above objectives and programme of works for 2006/2008 will be funded from the combination of the Central Government IEG capital grant for 2004/5, IEG match DDF funding, IEG CSB funding and the Council's ICT Capital programme.

The projects that are developed under this Strategy will be funded from existing resources as detailed above. But, it must be noted that the total project implementation costs will not be calculated until this strategy is agreed and each relevant project initiated. If at that point there is insufficient funding available from existing resources Members will receive a further report detailing the relevant project business case and additional costs required to deliver the perceived business benefits.

Consultation Undertaken:

5.   Due to the mainly technical nature of the Strategy the consultation process was limited to the ICT service, the Council's ICT suppliers and partners, Overview and Scrutiny - ICT Standing Panel and Management Board.

Budget Provision:

£150,000 from ODPM IEG Capital Grant in 2004/5
£60,000 DDF IEG Match funding
£45,000 CSB IEG Maintenance funding
£600,000 ICT Capital Programme (over two years)

Personnel: Nil

Land: Nil

Community Plan/BVPP Reference: BVPI 157, ODPM Priority Service Outcomes

Relevant Statutory Powers: None
Background Papers: Implementing Electronic Government Return, e-Government Strategy, e-Procurement Strategy, Transformational Government enabled by Technology
Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None
Key Decision Reference: **None#**

Appendix A

The Corporate ICT Strategy – Review 2005

1.   **Standards/Policy**

1.1.   **Overview**

Standards within an ICT service are designed to reflect levels of attainment and achieve a common approach over a long period of time. It is therefore advisable to formalise these standards in a written document with sections for each discipline. Standards addressing key activities within the ICT function are needed to ensure consistency of usage and compliance with rules designed to protect the integrity of the ICT service and related functions.

1.2.   **Main aim**

To introduce codes of practice or formalised standards and policy that covers the whole ICT environment. It is extremely important that new standards and policies are created as new technologies and working practices are adopted.

1.3   **Objectives for 2006/2008**

One of the major outstanding issues from the previous review is the implementation of a corporate desktop strategy. This was delayed due to the lack of ICT human resources. However, Members recently approved a new staff structure for ICT and as a result the Council can now move forward positively with its implementation. The new corporate desktop environment will be controlled from the centre using Microsoft's active directories. This product allows all users to be profiled so they only have access to an ICT environment that is appropriate to their job function. The 'active directories' solution was implemented as part of the previous review and is currently used to control access and resources of the Servers in the computer suite. As well as a new method of user control the strategy will also introduce a new standard hardware, operating system and office application model. The specific technical details of this model are covered in the relevant sections of this strategy. The model will assist the Council in achieving a greater return on investment (ROI) by ensuring that the desktop is only replaced when the desktop functionality is no longer adequate to complete the tasks required by the relevant member of staff. The ROI period will be set initially at 48 months. Although in this period a request for a desktop enhancement may be made these would need to be supported by a full business case and subject to both Head of ICT and Portfolio Holder approval. The Council needs to ensure that the Desktop environment is securely controlled and perceived only as being a tool for the job and not an extension of an individuals home PC. There is a real danger that the Council will fail to realise any ROI if its corporate ICT strategy is influenced by the 'entertainment' factor of the Home PC market.

The current e-Government initiative, which is overseen by the ODPM, is due to come to a close in March 2006; at this point central government will move the focus of e-Government onto the efficiency agenda that is closely linked to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process. The ODPM believe that the investment made in ICT systems over the past four years should now be delivering greatly improved efficiency across the whole of the public sector. Although at this point the Council is not able to directly make the link between its ICT investment and any real reduction in the bottom-line costs of delivering services, the Council has used this investment to dramatically improve access to information for both officers and the public. This is clearly evidenced by the improvements made in information provision and transactional interaction on the Council's website and the implementation of the Committee Management System. This coupled to the Member connectivity project has lead to a quiet revolution of information access methods.

The ODPM, however, are still continuing with the Implementing e-Government (IEG) Government Return that is used by central government to assess how the Council is progressing with BVPI 157 (This measures the percentage of e-enabled interaction with the public) and the 78 'priority service' outcomes. IEG 5 is due to be submitted by 19 December 2005 and IEG 6 has a draft deadline of April 2006. The Council will need to consider these returns in due course.

The Essex Online Partnership (EOLP) that consists of all the Essex Districts the County Council, Health, Fire and Police Services has assisted the Council in its e-Government projects. The EOLP is funded by contributions from each partner. The Council currently contributes £22,000 per annum for membership to the EOLP. Now that the current e-Government initiative is drawing to a close the Council will need to review the benefits of belonging to the EOLP and consider that if it remains a member, how the EOLP should be used to assist the Council in future projects.

The ongoing development of the Customer Services Transformation Programme (CSTP), which is currently at the Programme Planning stage, will require the Council to develop a Corporate Information Strategy. The information strategy acts as the linchpin between the Council Plan and the ICT strategy. It identifies what information is required and where the information is held that supports the primary tasks, or key goals, of the Council Plan. It also questions the appropriateness of the critical assumptions behind the Council Plan in the light of the changing environment and changing perceptions of the Council's local community and their relationship with other government services. Therefore this strategy should have both deterministic and emergent elements that when coupled with the ICT strategy will give the Council its first overarching information systems strategy. This will bring together the business aims of the Council, an understanding of the information needed to support those aims, and the implementation of computer systems to provide that information. It is effectively a plan for the development of systems driven by the informational/transaction needs of the business and customers of the Council.

In July 2005 the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations came into force. This new regulation is being overseen by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI). OPSI were previously known as the HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office). The main aim of this legislation is to ensure that where appropriate a charge is levied for the re-use of documents and information made available under the Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. In order to comply with this new statutory requirement the Council will need to establish an Information Asset Register (IAR) that sets out clearly what information is available for re-use and how this is licensed (the cost). The policy development for this will be undertaken by the existing Freedom of Information Framework Group (FOIFG) that was set up to oversee the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act. The Council will also need to review and amend its existing Freedom of Information and Data Protection Policies to ensure compatibility with this new requirement.

Finally under this theme, ICT will be undertaking reviews of three existing policy areas namely the underlying use of the Internet, ICT security standards and access to information policy. The existing policies have been in force now for up to five years and best practice suggests that a formal review is now required.

With regard to the review of the security standards and access to information policy the Council will need to address compliancy issues relating to ISO27001 (an information security standard) and consider the implications of the Information Commissioners (IC) current review of the format and content of the Publication Scheme produced under the Freedom of Information legislation. The Council will be required under statute to review its Publication Scheme in line with the IC's findings that are due for publication early in 2006. A new Publication Scheme will need to be submitted to the IC by November 2006.

The review process will include all Members, Heads of Service and the Council's ICT partners. The revised policies will be submitted to Members for ratification before being issued to all relevant parties.

1.4 **Strategy for 2006/2008**

> Implement the Corporate Desktop strategy that creates a single point of management and control of all peripheral ICT resources. The technical details of this are listed under the Hardware, Operating System and Application sections of this document

> Review and update the Council's IEG Government Return.

> Implement the agreed Member connectivity strategy.

> Review the benefits of being a member of the Essex Online Partnership and only continue to participate if new projects deliver clear benefits to the Council and its community.

> Develop a Corporate Information Strategy that creates the framework for future information systems planning.

> Develop and implement a corporate Re-Use of Public Sector Information policy

> Review of the following Internet and access to information related policies:

- Internet Usage Policy
- Email Policy
- ICT Security Standard
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2. **Hardware**

2.1. **Overview**

The hardware is the machinery and equipment used to deliver the ICT service to the user. The Council's hardware consists of standard HP ProliantR Servers (based on Intel technology) at the Centre (Computer suite) and HP Deskpro Personal Computers (PC) and HP 'thin client' terminals on the desktop. The Council uses Epson and HP printers both centrally and on the desktop.

2.2. **Main Aim**

To ensure that the Council maintains a fully supported and standards based hardware profile across all levels throughout the Authority.

2.3 **Objectives for 2006/2008**

ICT will ensure that all current operational servers have adequate resource capacity (Processor, Memory, and Network) to accommodate the other planned elements of this review. This work will be coupled with the commissioning of Computer Suite 2 to ensure that adequate disaster recovery provision exists for core data processing activities.

ICT will implement a new standard HP desktop hardware model to support the aim of providing a secure and controlled peripheral network. The HP solution will be procured through the proposed Office of Government Commerce (OGC) contract that is being negotiated between HP, Dell, IBM, Microsoft and Oracle. This contract will ensure that the public sector obtain the best pricing model for all ICT equipment and software purchases without the need for a full tendering exercise. The existing HP desktop hardware currently in use will be reallocated and reused wherever possible subject to its age and specification. Due to the high turnover of current desktop equipment, which is funded directly by Services, this should reduce the actual initial cost in hardware significantly.

All new equipment for desktop hardware in future will be funded directly from the corporate ICT capital programme. This will release, on current estimates, over £100,000 per annum of service area revenue budgets. This coupled to the new aim of achieving a real ROI should create real bottom-line savings for many Council Services. The Head of Finance will undertake an analysis of the financial implications and report back to Members separately with these findings.

2.4   **Strategy for 2006/2008**

➢   Carry out a full review of server capacity and upgrade servers as appropriate.

➢   Implement the previously agreed disaster recovery plans for core ICT systems that are summarised below. These services will be implemented in the new Computer Suite that should be ready for occupation in August 2006.

- Hot standby systems for Email, Web Services, ERDMS, Housing services, Revenues, Housing Benefits, Financial Management and ICT Help/Service Desk.
- Cold facilities for other Council services.

➢   Design and implement a desktop hardware model based on the corporate HP equipment standard using the following criteria:

- Thin Client devices (terminals, mobiles) to be used unless ICT in discussion with the relevant Head of Service determine the user requires a PC or Laptop (thick client)
- Both Intel and AMD based processors are acceptable
- LCD monitors to be used with a minimum size of 17"
- Wireless optical wheel mouse and keyboard. Wired where wireless is impracticable
- All devices to support the current Universal Serial Bus (USB) standard (currently 2.0)
- All devices to have appropriate access to the Council's ICT Network
- All devices to have access to a networked printer service where appropriate
- The use of networked workgroup based HP multifunction printers (Scanner, fax, copier and printer) to be used in preference to standalone or networked printers.
- All devices are to be compatible with the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) 802.x security protocol to enable the Council to implement peripheral network security measures. This effectively means each device will be required to authenticate itself before gaining access to the Councils Network 'EppNet'.
- Mobile devices to support a minimum WiFi (Wireless network) standard of IEEE 802.11b (this entry level will be reviewed as necessary)

3. **Operating Systems**

3.1. **Overview**

The operating system is the means whereby the applications communicate with the hardware and is also the mechanism for managing hardware resources (disk space, memory, etc) and enforcing security measures.

3.2. **Main Aim**

To standardise and maintain the server and client (PCs) to the (current) Microsoft Windows operating System. To ensure that the Microsoft server environment is maintained to an adequate level of resiliency.

3.3 **Objectives for 2006/2008**

The main area to be addressed under this theme is the implementation of the new desktop environment. The Council is fully committed to Microsoft's family of Windows operating systems (OS) as agreed by Members in 1998. Although it would be possible to consider a review of the Council's OS provider, with the current commitment to both the underlying hardware and overarching applications there is not really any practicable alternative. In order to successfully deploy a new hardware model the OS will need to be brought up to date. The procurement of a new corporate Microsoft OS site licence to support this work will be achieved through an OGC contract as detailed in section 2.3. Microsoft will be shortly releasing a new version of Windows called 'Vista' the terms of the site licence will allow for a free upgrade to this version if required.

3.4 **Strategy for 2006/2008**

➢ To implement the latest version of Microsoft's Windows operating system on the new standard desktop models. The latest versions of the Windows operating systems that will be used are listed below against the relevant hardware model:

- Windows Terminals (thin client) – embedded Windows XP/CE.Net 5.0
- Personal computers and Laptops (thick client) – Windows XP (Windows Vista to replace XP shortly)
- Mobile Devices – Windows Mobile 5.0

4.   **Database Management System**

4.1.   **Overview**

The database management system (DBMS) deals with the storage and retrieval of user data and provides the programming development environment. It also deals with the security of data and provides the tools to enable end users to extract and manipulate data outside of its normal application.

4.2.   **Main Aim**

To change the current strategy of a single standardised DBMS (Oracle) environment for a new strategy based on an open database management system approach. This change is required due to the IT industry changing its methods for the development of Local Government systems that use an underlying DBMS.

4.3.   **Objectives for 2006/2008**

Since the turn of the century the software industry that serves Local Government has been through a major change in business focus. During the late 1990's most software the Council purchased was based around a server/client model. This model required the server to hold the data in a DBMS and the client PC to run the application that retrieved the data from the server. With the rise of the Internet and its related web browser application (Internet explorer, Netscape, Firefox etc) the IT industry focussed its attention to making all application accessible through this new web browser application. The larger suppliers of DBMS such as Oracle and IBM were slow to respond in providing low cost development tools for the software industry to adapt systems to use a web browser to run business applications. This left the market open to other proprietary DBMS players, such as Microsoft with SQL Server and Progress with OpenEdge DBMS as well as open source players such as Ingres, in providing many software developers with alternative development tools. As a result many software providers that had classically used Oracle or IBM were now providing lower cost web-enabled applications supported by other lower cost DBMS providers.

Over the past five years Oracle and IBM have responded to this change and are now also providing cost effective development tools, however the Local Government software market has now changed and there is no longer any one single provider of this technology to Local Government software developers. The Council now needs to reflect this change in its strategy. Therefore it is proposed that the Council allow non Oracle solutions to be implemented if they provide the Council with the best business solution in terms of both quality and support costs. They must also fully integrate with the Council's standard Microsoft Windows OS and Office application environment.

4.4   **Strategy for 2006/2008**

➢   Allow the use of Oracle, IBM, Microsoft, Progress, Sybase and Ingres DBMS in the support of database driven systems.

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5.   **Applications**

5.1.   **Overview**

The application is the system that delivers the service to the user via the terminal , PC or handheld device and is normally the only method that staff can access any data or information. It is critical to the success of the overall ICT Strategy that all new applications apply the strategies set out in each of the other key areas. The application is normally the only element visible to the end user of ICT services and therefore is the only real indicator that both staff and managers have to measure the overall success of the Strategy.

5.2.   **Main Aim**

To ensure that the Council maintains an up to date and relevant set of applications that allow the delivery of all Council services in a staff efficient, cost effective and customer focused manner. The application layer of the Strategy is critical to the overall success of the Council e-Government and Customer Services Transformation programmes. Managers throughout the Council will in the future be directly measured on the success of their business applications and the way these applications integrate and connect with the Council's service delivery partners and most importantly our customers.

5.3.   **Objectives for 2006/2008**

Moving towards an efficient and effective Local Government has been a fundamental theme of Central Government since the publication of the Gershon Efficiency Review in 2004. A key element of achieving this objective has been the so called 'e-Government' initiative that demands all relevant Local Government services be available electronically (where appropriate) by March 2006.

With these two major Government initiatives now being targeted by the latest CPA review process it is critical that the Council's computer applications maximise efficiency and allow easy access to relevant information and transactional services via a number of evolving electronic channels.

The Council has recently agreed to develop and implement a CSTP that will be spearheaded by a Customer Contact Centre. It is therefore essential to the success of the CSTP that the underlying voice, data and email support systems together with the core business systems are kept up to date in order to facilitate the new crosscutting business applications that support this type of programme.

The implications of the CSTP will be drawn into this Strategy after Members have agreed the Programme Plan that is currently being developed. It would be inappropriate to estimate the Programmes requirement at this stage.

The introduction of a corporate Geographical Information System (GIS) forms part of the new planning system that went live in October 2005. A GIS basically allows maps to be displayed on a computer screen showing an outline (overlay) of any relevant information. In the case of planning the overlay may show the boundary of a property or a tree that has a tree preservation order. The real point of GIS is that a graphical representation of objects on a map makes it clear (visually) to the user what parcel of land or property is being discussed. This avoids any confusion over the description of land that currently leads to a unique property or parcel of land being entered as a different entity on each system. However, the current support of this GIS is fragmented between Planning and Environmental Services and this is creating issues regarding system ownership and simple day-to-day support. The Head of ICT will be putting forward a GIS support plan to address these shortcomings during 2006 with the intention of setting up a single corporate support

function for the GIS environment.

The e-Government initiative is now starting to have wider implications on the technical design and capabilities of many Council core business systems. This is due to the requirements set down by Central Government to allow the 'citizen' to access information and carry out transactions directly through the 'DirectGov' website without the need for officer intervention. DirectGov is the new central government website that aims to be the single point of electronic access for all government services. This will mean that many of the services offered through the Council's local website will in the future be subsumed by this single point of access. This method of 'self service' makes a great deal of sense and will, in the mid-term reduce the cost of front-line support services. However, the systems required to support this way of providing services are not currently in place.

The first areas that are being targeted by this requirement are Housing Benefits and Revenues. The Council is required under the ODPM's 'priority service' outcomes to be in a position where it can offer its customers online access to individual benefit claims and Council Tax and NNDR account information. Central Government is assisting in this process by providing a common method of authentication for customers across all Government agencies. This method of access and authentication is called 'Government Connect' and it is the same system that central government currently use for authenticating people who submit online tax returns. This system will handle all the issues of authenticating identity and gives the Council the assurance that it is safe to let them access and view information and participate in transaction with regard to their Benefit/Council Tax/NNDR account and in the future any other relevant function in the Council.

This is obviously a major change in the way the Council currently handles a customer's account where all current system access is done via an officer of the Council. However, the main issue for this strategy is the fact that currently the Council's Benefits and Revenues system was not designed to allow connection to the 'Government Connect' solution and further more it is not economically viable for the supplier to make it compatible. The only viable way forward for this mandated requirement to be achieved is to change our current Benefits and Revenues System to one of the three currently 'Government Connect' compliant solutions. Therefore the Head of Finance in consultation with the Head of ICT will be reviewing the current Benefits and Revenues System with a view to migrate to a new solution within the next 18 to 24 months; co-terminus with the end of the current contract for these two systems.

ICT are currently reviewing all the other core business systems to ensure they all have the technical ability to join the 'Government Connect' project when required. Based on initial discussion with the suppliers of these systems it would appear that these systems could, for an additional cost, be given the functionality to communicate with 'Government Connect'. Further reports will be presented to Members on 'Government Connect' as it becomes clearer as to the financial implications of engagement.

A major requirement of the application layer of the strategy is to provide appropriate Office System tools. These are typically a word processor, desktop publishing, business diagramming, spreadsheet, web browser and email applications. As part of the new Desktop strategy the tools currently in use will need upgrading. The current standard is based on Microsoft's Office 2000 application that was purchased in 1998 as part of the first ICT Strategy. This product has now been through two major releases and the version currently in use is now becoming less able to cope with the requirements of the core business systems. The providers of these core business systems have mainly brought this about by incorporating new features within its system that rely on later versions of the various Microsoft products. Again as with the Microsoft Operating System (OS) it would be possible to consider alternative solutions, however, for the same reasons for retaining Microsoft as the Council's provider of OS the Council has no real alternative to retaining Microsoft Office for its main Office System tools. There are however other tools within the

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Council's office tools standard that are not provided by Microsoft and at least these offer some degree of fair competition against Microsoft.

The actual level of access that any individual will have to the new office tool set is determined by the requirements of their job function. In addition to this control the Council has recently implemented a software asset management tool that will monitor the usage of all desktop software to ensure the Council is only using licenced products. This will also assist the Council in the efficient procurement of licences as previously there have been cases of licenced software being installed on PC's and remaining unused.

The procurement of a new corporate Microsoft Office site licence to support this work will be achieved through an OGC contract as detailed in section 2.3. It should be noted that Microsoft intends to release a new version of 'Office' in the later part of 2006. The terms of the site licence will allow the Council to upgrade to this version at no additional licence cost. The products used for this update are covered in detail under the strategy heading.

Finally, Members have agreed to the implementation of various new applications over the past 8 months. These have been agreed by Cabinet and originated from either the Council's e-Government Strategy or from individual reports via the Service areas. They are summarised below with the details of the system function and their system owner.

- Performance Management System – Head of HR and Performance Management
- Corporate Electronic Records and Document Management System – Head of ICT
- Web casting Pilot – Head of Research and Democratic Services
- Essex Marketplace e-Procurement System – Head of Finance
- E-Bookings System - Head of Research and Democratic Services

5.4 **Strategy for 2006/2008**

➢ Assist the CSTP Programme Board by providing technical and business analysis services in designing and implementing the required crosscutting business applications

➢ Ensure all underlying technical support applications (security, web, email, file, backup etc) are maintained in accordance with the suppliers recommended upgrades, updates and patches.

➢ Develop and implement a single GIS support function

➢ Undertake a review of the 'Government Connect' and 'DirectGov' implications and develop a plan for their implementation

➢ Undertake a review of the current Benefits, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates System and develop a plan for its replacement in supporting the wider e-Government requirements.

➢ Implement the 'Office Tools' element of the Corporate Desktop Strategy by using the following standard products on all desktops:

- Microsoft Office 2003 standard edition (Office 12 to be released in 2006) This includes a word processor, spreadsheet and email
- Microsoft Access – Only when supported by a business case This allows for small applications to be developed, only when there is no other corporate alternative (see appendix b - applications section)
- Microsoft Visio – Only when supported by a business case This is a diagramming application
- PDF Factory - (Server edition)

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This allows for the creation and editing of Portable Document Format (PDF) files.

- Adobe InDesign - when supported by a business case
  This is a desktop publishing application
- Microsoft Internet Explorer
  This is a web browser

➢ Implement the following systems as agreed by Council:

- Performance Management System – 'TEN'
- Corporate Electronic Records and Document Management System – Anite@work
- Web casting Pilot – UK Council
- Essex Marketplace e-Procurement System – IDeA
- E-Bookings System – Business Web Software
- Choice based lettings – external provider

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6. Network Infrastructure and Services

6.1. Overview

The network infrastructure is the physical cable and hardware that link the Phone/PC/terminal to the relevant network/server/mobile device. The existing data network infrastructure is based on the Ethernet standard that is used by nearly all major organisations worldwide. Our current implementation is based on a data rate (speed) of 100/1000 million bits (10 bits equal one character) per second (Mbs). The Council also has links to remote sites using digital public circuits, the in-house voice network or older private analogue connections and the Essex wide secure extranet that connects to all Essex Local Authorities, Fire, Health and Police Services. The technical terms used to describe these networks are local area network (LAN) and wide area network (WAN). Collectively the network is known locally as the 'EppNet'. The Essex wide data network is known as the 'Essextranet'.

As part of the recent Senior Management restructure (2003) the Voice Communication function of the former Legal and Administration Service was subsumed into the new Network Services division of the new ICT service. As a result ICT is now responsible for all network services across the authority including telephone services and the provision of the main telephone switchboard function.

6.2. Main Aims

To provide a standards based resilient data and voice network that provides access to corporate ICT resources throughout the Council's offices (both locally and remote) and to allow access to external resources where appropriate.
To ensure that the 'EppNet' is capable of delivering all the Council's data and voice transport needs required by this Plan.

6.3. Objectives for 2006/2008

Following on from the successful restructuring of the newly formed ICT service the Council is now in a position to standardise on one single data network that could provide both data and voice (telephone) services. The Council has a highly evolved network cable infrastructure already in place that has the capacity to handle both voice and data; however the current legacy analogue switch could not effectively make use of this infrastructure. The way forward for the Council is to adopt the new industry standard for providing telephone services. This new standard is called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). This technology digitises speech and converts it into the same protocol that PC's and servers use to

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communicate; as a result the telephone handset can use the same network as all other corporate computer devices. In the case of the Council this would mean the telephone switchboard and the telephone handsets would be plugged into the 'EppNet' and therefore share a single corporate network. The main business benefits of VoIP are:

- **Simplified infrastructure.** With VoIP on the Council network there would no longer be a need for separate cabling for the telephone system and the existing investment in network management systems for data would also manage the VoIP environment.

- **Scalable.** Traditional proprietary PABX (Private Automatic Branch Exchange) based phone systems come in many size ranges and it is often necessary to upgrade existing systems and replace hardware in order to add features and expand; this is not the case with VoIP systems that add features and capacity in software at minimal cost.

- **Reduce operating costs.** Because a VoIP exchange has no proprietary hardware and is based on software, it is easier to alter and maintain.

- **Improve productivity.** VoIP treats voice as if it were any other kind of data, so users could attach documents to voice messages or participate in virtual meetings using shared data and videoconferencing.

- **Flexibility.** The Council could reduce the use of privately leased connections to remote sites by using broadband services and combining voice and data over a single lower cost service.

In addition to moving over to a VoIP based telephone solution the Council now needs to upgrade its existing 3Com workgroup data switches. These switches connect all the Council's terminals, PC's and printers to the core network. They have been in operation since the late 1990's and have now come to the end of their expected operational life. 3Com have also announced their obsolescence with regard to support, this will be withdrawn from October 2006. The Council has recently (March 2005) upgraded its core network to the latest generation of 3Com enterprise data switches (8800 series) and although these operate in an open standards environment it is being recommend that the Council retains its commitment to 3Com for supply of all its data switches to ensure complete compatibility and reduce the burden and inefficiency of support staff understanding multiple proprietary environments. 3Com have recently announced the introduction of its 5500 workgroup series of data switches that are the replacement product for the Council's existing 3300 series switches. The new 5500 series also offer the Council a network speed increase for connection to the core data switches. Currently the core network is connected to the workgroups at 1Gigabits per second the new standard introduced by the 5500 and supported by the existing 8800 series is 10Gigabits per second. This increase will allow for the expected growth in network traffic introduced by other parts of this strategy.

6.4 **Strategy for 2006/2008**

> Replace the existing legacy workgroup data network infrastructure with the current 3Com workgroup 5500 series switches.

> Replace the current Siemens analogue telephone switch the with the newly introduced Siemens VOIP switch. The Switch will be fully Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) compliant to ensure multi-vendor handset support.

> Replace the existing analogue telephone handsets with a combination of standalone VOIP handsets, software handsets linked to terminals/PC's and mobile WiFi smart phones. All handset are to be SIP compliant to allow for multi-vendor procurement.

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Epping Forest District Council

Information and Communications Technology

Corporate ICT Strategy

Summary of Adopted Systems, Standards and Policies

October 2005

Corporate ICT Strategy

Overview of the Strategy

A successful Corporate ICT Strategy is one that creates a technical environment in which information can, if appropriate, be exchanged and data can flow in a seamless manner that is transparent to the user. The Strategy must also accommodate the rate at which technology becomes obsolete and therefore will be a constantly evolving document that is reviewed on a regular basis. Above all, the Strategy must be kept corporate and its content mainstream. These are the key factors that have been taken into account during the development of the Strategy over the past 7 years

The Corporate ICT Strategy is divided into six key headings: standards, hardware, operating systems, databases, applications and networks. This document summarises the standards and policies in each key area that have been adopted by the Council to date.

This document is a critical element within the Council's E-Government strategy and will be used to ensure all ICT systems and services are delivered using clearly defined standards that will provide the correct balance of end-user functionality and corporate accessibility.

7. Standards/Policy

7.1. Overview

Standards within an ICT service are designed to reflect levels of attainment and achieve a common approach over a long period of time. It is therefore advisable to formalise these standards in a written document with sections for each discipline. Standards addressing key activities within the ICT function are needed to ensure consistency of usage and compliance with rules/law designed to protect the integrity of the ICT service.

Active standards and policies

➢ Corporate ICT Security Standard.

➢ Corporate ICT Procurement Standard

➢ ICT Help Desk Policy

➢ Corporate E-mail Policy

➢ Corporate ICT Contingency Strategy

➢ Corporate Data Protection Policy

➢ IEG Government Return

➢ Corporate Internet usage Policy

➢ Freedom of Information Policy

➢ Home Working Policy

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8. Hardware

8.1. Overview

The hardware is the machinery and equipment used to deliver the ICT service to the user.

Adopted hardware standards

- ➢ All servers and related technology to be based on the HP Proliant rack mount series hardware. (Reviewed 2002)

- ➢ All Workstations/PC's/Terminals/Mobile devices to be based on HP hardware. (Reviewed 2002)

- ➢ Using windows terminal technology (thin client), as appropriate, in preference to PC's for corporate desktop computing. (Reviewed 2004)

- ➢ Supporting all hardware platforms (Servers) from a single external contract (April 1998).

- ➢ All core backup hardware to be based on LTO technology. (April 2000).

3.0   Operating Systems

3.1   Overview

The operating system is the means whereby the applications communicate with the hardware and is also the mechanism for managing hardware resources (disk space, memory, network access etc) and enforcing security measures.

Adopted Operating system standards

➢   All Servers to use Microsoft's Windows 200x/.Net Server operating system.

➢   All Terminal Servers to use Microsoft's Windows 200x/.Net operating system combined with the Citrix Metaframe enhancement.

➢   Basing desktop computing on a thin client model in preference to thick client (PC's).

➢   Basing desktop computing operating system on Microsoft's Windows 9x/200x/CE environment. Moving all desktop operating systems to the Windows 200x/.Net/CE model by April 2005.

➢   Using Microsoft's Active Directories to control and manage the entire 'EppNet' Domain.

9.   Database Management System

9.1.   Overview

The database management system (DBMS) deals with the storage and retrieval of user data and provides the programming development environment. It also deals with the security of data and provides the tools to enable end users to extract and manipulate data outside of its normal application.

Adopted Database standards

➢   The Council will use the Oracle RDBMS for all new applications. (P&C – 29 September 1998). The version of Oracle used will be based on Oracle's support policy at the time of purchase.

➢   The Council will consider the use of Microsoft SQL server (RDBMS) for new applications, subject to resource implications incurred by the corporate ICT service. (April 2001)

10.   Applications

10.1.   Overview

The application is the system that delivers the service to the user via the PC or terminal and is normally the only method that staff can access any data or information. It is critical to the success of the overall ICT Strategy that all new applications apply the strategies set out in each of the other key areas.

Service Specific Applications implemented (Major systems)

- Financial System – Anite/E-Financials (Implemented 2002)

- Debtors System – Anite AIMS/HBOPS (Implemented 2002)

- Local Land Charges System – NorthgateMVM (Implemented 2002)

- Housing Management System – Anite/OHMS (Implemented 1999 – 2002)

- Cash Receipting System – Spectrum (Implemented 2001)

- Highways System – SBS/Confirm (Implemented 1999 – Transferred to ECC July 2005)

- Environmental Health System – Northgate MVM/PP Wizard/Monitor
- (Implemented 1999)

- ICT Help Desk System – Datawatch/Quetzal (Implemented 1999)

- Electoral Registration System – Express (Implemented 1998)

- Estate Management – GVA Grimley (Implemented 2003)

- Benefits, Council Tax and NNDR – Anite/Orbis (Implemented February 2003)

- Human Resources – KCS kEM (implemented April 2004)

- Telephone Payments System – Spectrum – (Implemented 2004)

- Content Management – Harlequin - Punch/Business Web Software - Achieve Forms (Implemented 2004)

- Planning and Local Land Charges – Northgate MVM M3 – (Implemented 2005)

- Local Land and Property Gazetteer – Northgate MVM M3 – (Implemented 2005)

- Electronic Online Payments System – Capita – (Implemented 2005)

- Committee and Civic Management – NTE – Modern.Gov (Implemented 2005)

- Electronic Forms – BWS Achieve Forms (Implemented 2005)

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Corporate Office Applications Implemented (Corporate Standard software)

- Office Productivity System - Microsoft Office 2000 (Implemented 1998 – 2000)

- Digital Mapping/Geo-graphical Information System – MapInfo (2000)

- Database reporting tools – Crystal Reports and Business Objects (2000)

- Desktop Publishing - Adobe InDesign (EOLP 2003)

- Novell GroupWise Email System (Server and Client) – Upgraded to 6.5 – (2005)

- Electronic Records and Document Management System/DIPS – Anite@work (Implementation due to start in December 2005)

- Geo-graphical Information System Viewer – ProPrinter (2004)

- COLD System – PTC Oxalys (2000)

Corporate Technical Applications Implemented

- Corporate Backup Systems – Veritas Backup Exec/Symantec V2I (2000)

- Corporate Antivirus Systems– Symantec/Sophos (2000)

- Corporate Firewall System – Watchguard (2002)

- Corporate Remote Access – F5 Firepass SSL VPN – (2005)

- Corporate Data Management – Veritas Storage Central/ExecSoft Diskeeper (2004)

- Network Management System – Castlerock SNMPc (Implemented 1998)

- Network Monitoring System – Network Instruments - Observer (2005)

- Corporate Log Management – PTC Console Manager (2004)

- Corporate System Scheduler – PTC Scheduler (implementation start October 2005)

- Corporate Software Asset Management System – Express Metrics (July 2005)

11. Network Infrastructure

11.1. Overview

The network infrastructure is the physical cable and hardware that link the Phone/PC/terminal to the relevant network/server/mobile device. The existing data network infrastructure is based on the Ethernet standard that is used by nearly all major organizations worldwide. Our current implementation is based on a data rate (speed) of 100/1000 million bits (10 bits equal one character) per second (Mbs). The Council also has links to remote sites using digital public circuits, the in-house voice network or older private analogue connections. The technical terms used to describe these networks are local area network (LAN) and wide area network (WAN). Collectively the network is know locally as the 'EppNet'

The telephone network consists of copper wire cable infrastructure connecting telephones and fax machines to the Councils Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX). The interface between the Councils telephone network and the PABX is the Test Jack Frame (TJF). The TJF provides complete connectivity between the PABX ports (extensions) and the telephone network wiring. The TJF also interfaces between the PABX and the BT Public Telephone Network (PSTN). Remote sites are connected to the main PABX using digital or analogue leased lines.

Adopted Network standards

➢ The Councils LAN 'EppNet' is based on 3Com 100/1000Mbs Ethernet technology. The network will migrate to 3Com 8800/5500-based technology when available (2006/2007).

➢ The Council will base all wireless network access on 3Com 8700 series products. Wireless connectivity will only be available through RADIUS access.

➢ The Council operates a TCP/IP (V4) only protocol standard. Migration to V6 will be considered when appropriate to the needs of the Council.

➢ The Councils WAN is based on Cisco router technology and operates over leased digital services with on-demand digital backup services.

➢ The Council will migrate the existing legacy WAN to VPN based technology.

➢ A fully redundant network topology has been designed and implemented across the whole civic office site (completed June 2000).

➢ All computer based remote sites are linked to the 'EppNet'.

➢ The 'EppNet' is linked to the Internet. Both Web access and E-mail facilities are now generally available (see standards for other related issues

➢ The 'EppNet' is linked to the 'Essextranet'. This gives all users of the EppNet access to all Essex District and County Networks.

➢ Cat5e copper cable (350Mhz) is used for all 100Mbs circuits. Multimode Fibre (62.5/125 -250-500Mhz) is used for all 1000Mbs (SX) circuits. Cat5e circuits are terminated with standard cat5e RJ45 sockets. Fibre sockets are terminated with ST

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(patch panels) and use ST to SC patch leads (legacy) or ST to MT-RJ patch leads (current).

➤ Cables of various sizes (10/20/60/100 pairs) radiate from the TJF in a star formation. These cables are terminated on either non-structured (70%) or structured (30%) systems.

➤ Non-structured : Cables are terminated at a Distribution Point (DP). Individual 3 pair cables connect the DP to Line Jack sockets, which are floor or wall mounted. Telephones are connected directly to the Line Jack socket. (The DP offers localised flexible connectivity for telephone user moves and changes.)

➤ Non-structured standard component specifications: TJF jumper wire copper CW1423 Blue/Yellow; TJF to DP Internal cabling copper CW1308 (20/40/60/100 Pair + Earth); DP to socket Internal cabling copper CW1308 (3 Pair without Earth); Line Jack 2 (single) and Line Jack 4 (double) BT 631A sockets; Plugs BT 631A (6 pins 6 wires) or BT 431A (4 pins 4 wires) right-hand latch; All Connections use IDC terminations.

➤ Structured: each cable from the TJF is terminated on a telephony patch panel. A patch lead allows connection to the data network, from the patch panel through to the RJ45 sockets, which are floor or wall mounted. Telephones are connected either directly to the RJ45 socket or through a 'PABX Master' line adaptor (providing the ring circuit). Localised flexibility being achieved using the patch panels and cords.

➤ Structured standard component specifications: TJF jumper wire copper CW1423 Blue/Yellow; TJF to Patch panel: Internal cabling copper CW1308 (20/40/60/100 Pair + Earth); Patch cord: Cat5e copper cable with BT 431A/631A plug and RJ45 plug termination; Patch panel to socket: Cat5e copper cable; Standard cat5e RJ45 sockets; Plugs RJ45 (8 pins 8 wires); All connections use IDC terminations.

![HM Government]

Transformational Government

Enabled by Technology

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Transformational Government

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Contents

Foreword

The world is changing around us at an incredible pace due to remarkable technological change.

This process can either overwhelm us, or make our lives better and our country stronger. What we can't do is pretend it is not happening.

Government has to respond to keep up with the hopes and aspirations of citizens and business, to remain efficient and trustworthy.

That is why I asked for a strategy on how we can use technology to transform government services.

I am delighted that the Chief Information Officers' Council and the Service Transformation Board have produced such a bold strategy.

The future of public services has to use technology to give citizens choice, with personalised services designed around *their* needs not the needs of the provider.

Within the public services we have to use technology to join up and share services rather than duplicate them. It is a simple fact that we are stronger and more effective when we work together than apart. It is also self evident that we will only be able to deliver the full benefits to customers that these new systems offer through using technology to integrate the process of government at the centre.

But most of all we have to have the right people with the right professional skills to plan, deliver and manage technology based change.

This strategy has the potential for real transformation of public services.

What delights me most though is that this strategy has come from the ground up. It shows that there is a real appetite for change and modernisation *within* the public services themselves.

This strategy has my full support and I am going to do all I can to help make it happen.

Rt Hon Tony Blair MP

Transformational Government
Enabled by Technology

CITIZEN and BUSINESS CENTRED
SHARED SERVICES
PROFESSIONALLY DELIVERED

"…This is a time to push forward, faster and on all fronts: open up the system, break down its monoliths, put the parent and pupil and patient and law-abiding citizen at the centre of it. We have made great progress. Let us learn the lessons of it not so as to rest on present achievements but to take them to a new and higher level in the future…"

The Prime Minister's speech to National Policy Forum 9 July 2005

Introduction

1. The Prime Minister commissioned this strategy to seize the opportunity provided by technology to transform the business of government. Technology has a major part to play in the solutions to each of three major challenges which globalisation is setting modern governments – economic productivity, social justice and public service reform. Only a strategic view will enable the United Kingdom to use technology decisively and effectively across government to meet its national objectives.

2. In particular, the strategy was directed to provide overall technology leadership in three key areas:

(1) The transformation of public services for the benefit of citizens, businesses, taxpayers and front-line staff.

(2) The efficiency of the corporate services and infrastructure of government organisations, thus freeing resources for the front-line.

(3) The steps necessary to achieve the effective delivery of technology for government.

3. This document focuses upon the core themes which each public sector organisation needs to develop into actions for its area of responsibility, and on the supporting actions to be taken across government as a whole. Alongside this document will be a series of short descriptions of how these principles will change public services in key delivery areas. It is also supported by more detailed working papers and recommendations.

Vision

4. Twenty First Century Government is enabled by technology – policy is inspired by it, business change is delivered by it, customer and corporate services are dependent on it, and democratic engagement is exploring it. Moreover modern governments with serious transformational intent see technology as a strategic asset and not just a tactical tool. Technology alone does not transform government, but government cannot transform to meet modern citizens' expectations without it.

5. So this strategy's vision is about better using technology to deliver public services and policy outcomes that have an impact on citizens' daily lives: through greater choice and personalisation, delivering better public services, such as health, education and pensions; benefiting communities by reducing burdens on front line staff and giving them the tools to help break cycles of crime and deprivation; and improving the economy through better regulation and leaner government.

6. In addition, in announcing the Comprehensive Spending Review, HM Treasury set out a range of challenges to Britain that will require innovative policy responses and co-ordination of activity across departmental boundaries. Technology will be at the heart of meeting this agenda. Indeed, this strategy envisages:
- Unlocking around £1.4 billion (10% of the current spend on technology) from the current annual spend on legacy systems which can be released to new technology enabled reforms in public services.
- Providing practical steps to help secure the delivery of the substantial savings at the heart of the 2004 Efficiency Programme which were to be enabled by technology.
- Creating a basis for the next round of efficiencies across the wider public sector which could result from fundamentally different ways of delivering public services.

7. The specific opportunities lie in improving *transactional* services (eg. tax and benefits), in helping front line *public servants* to be more effective (eg. doctors, nurses, police and teachers), in supporting effective *policy outcomes* (eg. in joined-up, multi-agency approaches to offender management and domestic violence), in reforming the *corporate services* and *infrastructure* which government uses behind the scenes, and in taking swifter advantage of the *latest technologies* developed for the wider market.

8. Overall this technology-enabled transformation will help ensure that:
- Citizens and businesses have choice and personalisation in their interactions with government. Choice will come through new channels and more fundamentally through new opportunities for service competition.

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- Taxpayers benefit from efficiency gains.
- Citizens, businesses and the voluntary and community sector benefit from the better regulation, reduced paperwork and lower costs from a leaner, modern, more effective public sector.
- Public servants have better tools to undertake their jobs, and the opportunity to provide better service as a result.
- Policy makers will be better able to achieve intended outcomes in practice.
- Managers are able to free resources from back office to the front-line.
- Citizens feel more engaged with the processes of democratic government.

9. However the vision is not just about transforming government through technology. It is also about making government *transformational* through the use of technology – creating and retaining the capacity and capability to innovate and use technology effectively as technology itself develops. This is the only way in which public services can keep up with a continually changing, globalised society.

Current Position

10. Modern government – both in policy making and in service delivery – relies on accurate and timely information about citizens, businesses, animals and assets. Information sharing, management of identity and of geographical information, and information assurance are therefore crucial.

11. Across the whole public sector, government spends about £14 billion a year on new and existing information technology and related services, directly employs about 50,000 professionals in this field, and is one of the largest customers of the technology industry. The scale and complexity of government business means its deployment of technology is often pushing the boundaries of what has been achieved in public or private sectors globally.

12. Behind the scenes virtually every public service depends upon large scale processes and technology, particularly the large and complex transactional systems that support individual front-line public services. Most public services would simply not function at all without their reliable operation.

13. Yet many of these systems are also old and custom-built, use obsolete technologies, are relatively costly to maintain by modern standards, and hence stretch the capability of the whole technology industry when it comes to amending or replacing them.

14. Moreover they increasingly fail to meet the needs of modern government and the rising expectations of customers:
- Many systems and processes are still paper-based and staff-intensive. The underlying assumption is that customers will fill in forms and that staff will process them by routine rather than by risk-managed exception. Telephone access, customer access over the web and other improvements have sometimes been grafted onto this base. This locks in high

costs and difficulty in meeting changing customer or policy requirements. Choice is costly and slow to implement.

- Many systems are structured around the "product" or the underlying legislation rather than the customer (sometimes because, at the time, each system was big or difficult enough to do by itself). Often the customer experience is not joined up, especially when it crosses organisational boundaries.
- Many systems were designed as islands, with their own data, infrastructure and security and identity procedures. This means that it is difficult to work with other parts of government or the voluntary and community sector to leverage each other's capabilities and delivery channels. It also leads to customer frustration, duplication of effort (for instance on customer change of address) and failure to make timely interventions, as the Bichard Inquiry showed. Choice requires services to be able to talk to each other.

15. In addition, until recently, most technology investment has been on transactional or back office functions and not on systems to support front line staff – doctors and nurses, teachers, police, social workers and many others. The availability of effective information technology to support those at the front line has been poor, as the Wanless and Woolf reports observed, where too often the systems have failed to provide the right information at the right time to the right person.

16. The corporate services and infrastructure which government uses behind the scenes have been very much Cinderella areas – despite costing around £7 billion a year. The result is that the corporate services such as Human Resources and Finance are significantly behind the private sector in both effectiveness and efficiency. Moreover the Heads of Profession are demanding transformed corporate services to help them improve financial management, personnel management, policy making and operational delivery in core businesses.

17. The number, scale and sheer difficulty of public sector projects means that public and private sector capacity to deliver this portfolio is constantly stretched. The capacity and capability of (particularly central) government organisations and their suppliers to deliver technology-enabled business change has been subject to severe criticism by Parliament and the press over the last decade. Public confidence in government's ability to deliver technology projects reached a low point by the late 1990s.

18. Since then the Government has taken a consistent approach to improving performance in such projects. In the last five years progress has been made towards addressing some of these issues:

- *Funding:* In the last two spending reviews, substantial investment in technology has been made. Those programmes are starting to deliver real change.
- *Customer centred delivery:* Directgov and Business Link have started to introduce a different way of looking at online services, with the focus on customers rather than the service provider. Innovative local authorities have implemented customer relationship management systems, integrated contact centres and one stop shops to provide a similar focus on customers.

- *Use of the internet:* Responding to the Prime Minister's challenge, over 96% of government services will be "e-enabled" by the end of 2005. Over half of households have the internet at home, and broadband is available to almost all homes and businesses. There are also 6000 UK Online centres in place, providing internet access and free assistance to those who do not wish to go online at home.
- *Leadership:* Most major government departments have created Chief Information Officer (CIO) posts at or near their board level, and have recruited experienced IT professionals through open competition to fill them.
- *Reliable project delivery:* After the McCartney and Gershon reviews into procurement and project delivery in 2000, the Office of Government Commerce has led programmes to improve project delivery and supplier performance. These have included the Gateway Review process and the enhancement of professionalism in Procurement, and Programme & Project Management. The Office of Government Commerce and Intellect, the IT trade association, have introduced an IT Supplier Code of Best Practice, a Concept Viability process that allows industry to input to nascent projects, and clearer leadership of supplier teams on government projects.

19. Nevertheless existing challenges remain. The UK is not yet seen in the global vanguard of those governments who achieve excellence through electronic service delivery. In addition, these challenges are joined by new ones:

- There are new information assurance risks: terrorists, organised criminals and hackers threaten information and services, and theft of identity and of personal data is of increasing concern to individuals and businesses.
- Technologies have emerged into widespread use – for instance the mobile phone and other mobile technologies – which government services have yet properly to exploit.
- Sophisticated, holistic policy solutions, such as those set out in the government's election manifesto, rely upon effective and pervasive technology systems across government and beyond – for instance to support offender management through offender profiling and managed rehabilitation plans and to deliver patient choice in the health service.
- Public use of the internet and telephone continues to rise. As people experience excellent services in parts of the private and public sector, so their expectations of public services rise across the board.

20. So the challenge ahead is not just to "do IT better" in the context of the past models for delivery of public services. It is also about "doing IT differently" to support the next phase of public service reform – building services which are more joined-up, more personalised, more efficient and more effective in terms of policy outcome. This requires difficult, long-term, strategic change in the services of government, how they use technology, and how technology and skills are provided to support them.

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Strategy

21. Achieving the vision will require three key transformations:

(1) Services enabled by IT must be **designed around the citizen or business**, not the provider, and provided through modern, co-ordinated delivery channels. This will improve the customer experience, achieve better policy outcomes, reduce paperwork burdens and improve efficiency by reducing duplication and routine processing, leveraging delivery capacity and streamlining processes.

(2) Government must **move to a shared services culture** – in the front-office, in the back-office, in information and in infrastructure – and release efficiencies by standardisation, simplification and sharing.

(3) There must be broadening and deepening of government's **professionalism in terms of the planning, delivery, management, skills and governance** of IT enabled change. This will result in more successful outcomes; fewer costly delivery failures; and increased confidence by citizens and politicians in the delivery of change by the public services.

Citizen and Business Centred Services

22. Services need to be designed around citizens and businesses to ensure effectiveness of delivery to the customer, to achieve policy goals, and to release savings by reducing duplication and streamlining processes (customer satisfaction, though important, is not the only goal). The key actions required are (a) to increase understanding of customer needs and behaviours; (b) to define customer groups and appoint directors to lead the overall development of services to those groups; (c) to create a Service Transformation Board to define and enforce common service design principles; and (d) to develop modern channels and manage the migration to them. The following paragraphs expand on these.

(a) Systematically engage with citizens, business and front-line public servants to understand and then specify the transformational changes which service providers need to meet – learning from the best practice already within the public sector, from other governments and from the private sector.

23. For public services the Prime Minister has set out clear principles of reform – national standards, devolution of delivery, flexibility in service provision and greater customer choice. Basing services on what the customer wants and needs is crucial to technology-enabled public service transformation. Some parts of the public sector have developed mechanisms for measuring customer response to particular services. However customer insight and market intelligence is not shared systematically across government. Unlike some other national governments, the UK has no regular, holistic and publicised assessment of customers and their experience of public services. To modernise services government needs a systematic view of what citizens, businesses and front line staff want and need.

24. Government will therefore implement new processes to engage with citizens, businesses and public servants to research technology enabled services, as well as co-ordinating and sharing existing customer and front line research. The aim is to bring a strong and reliable customer voice into the design of individual services; and (at a more general level) to get a better understanding of the service expectations of citizens, businesses and public servants. The recent announcement by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster of ways to measure customer satisfaction is part of this.

25. The needs of key groups – such as older people – are best viewed in the round rather than service by service. So part of this work will be to help define the customer groups. These are where citizens or businesses expect, or where social and policy outcomes require, joined-up and consistent presentation, access to and delivery of all relevant government services. This will be a complex picture: people rarely fall neatly into categories, so services needs to be responsive enough to deal with the fact that individuals often associate themselves with different groups at different times depending on their particular need.

(b) Appoint "Customer Group Directors" for particular groups of the citizen/business population to lead the design of services, working to Ministerial leadership.

26. To lead the transformation of groups of services to customers, especially for those which cut across organisational boundaries, the Government will appoint Customer Group Directors, each reporting to one Minister responsible for that customer group. Key responsibilities of a Customer Group Director will be to sponsor customer insight and research into the needs of that customer group; to lead the design of services including overall channel planning, joining-up of presentation and delivery, branding and communication, and service improvements; to track and communicate performance against customer related targets; and to represent the interests of their customers as necessary in existing inter-departmental governance and in the governance of this strategy.

27. To start the process off, and in parallel with the further research, the Government will initially appoint Directors for one citizen group (e.g. older people), one policy group (e.g offender management), and one business group (e.g farmers). These initial appointees will help develop the role, including its own accountability and any necessary adjustments to the accountabilities of others, its relationship with local government, and the resources and governance necessary. Other appointments will follow in due course once these new roles have been thus defined in more detail and the first phase of the research work is complete. Early candidates will include Directors for parents and for small businesses.

28. These appointments should normally be people already leading a major service line, and each Customer Group Director would create a "Customer Group Team" from the key public and voluntary sector bodies which serve the customer group and from the relevant marketing, research and communication groups.

(c) Create a Service Transformation Board whose role is to set overarching service design principles, promote best practice, signpost the potential from technology futures and challenge inconsistency with agreed standards.

29. In order to steer and co-ordinate the work of Customer Group Directors and others, the Government will set up a Service Transformation Board of officials from the wider public sector who run major services and have operational delivery responsibility. The Cabinet Office will provide the secretariat and design authority for the Board under a Service Transformation Director.

30. The role of this board is to set overall operational strategy and its policy framework and focus on the practical mechanisms to deliver service transformation. In particular, it will set overarching service design principles; promote best practice; signpost the potential of technology; identify common design and development needs; and challenge inconsistency or deviation from agreed standards or best practice.

(d) Develop modern channels for citizen and business access to services, and actively manage the shift in channels towards the most efficient and effective.

31. Customers expect simple access to services, with an appropriate, efficient choice of consistent entry points and with seamless handovers across the channels – for instance between telephone and internet.

32. Historically government services depended almost entirely on form-filling and face to face meetings. Over the next decade, the principal preferred channels for the delivery of information and transactional services will be the telephone, internet and mobile channels – as well as the increasingly important channels within the digital home. Using customer insight, government will drive take-up of the best new digital channels and exploit mobile technologies; and it will innovate its services to take swift advantage of new technologies as they emerge.

33. To improve efficiency, effectiveness and customer value, action is required to improve government's use of these channels, including:

(1) There are at least 130 major call centres in central government alone. Government's call centres will be rationalised, building on the work already done by the National Audit Office and many local authorities.

(2) Consideration of a single national public service number for non-emergency services as has been successful in New York (311) and is being introduced in France and the Netherlands. The development of a Single Non Emergency Number service between the Home Office and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, involving local authorities and police force partnerships and currently focusing on non-emergency policing, crime and anti-social behaviour, could be the foundation for this service.

(3) There are currently over 2500 government websites. To ensure that overall the government uses the web most effectively to support its service delivery and communications strategies, the web presence of government will be rationalised. For each government organisation the number of different web sites it uses will be reduced and consistency introduced in line with its overall communications strategy. For customer information, self-service transactions and campaign support, services will converge on Directgov and Business Link as the primary on-line entry points; service-specific or stand-alone solutions will be phased out.

(4) To improve access for people on the move or without fixed phone lines a step-change will be made in the use of mobile phones and other mobile devices to exchange information and transact directly with citizens and front line staff.

(5) Improvement in the use of search to access the government's web information, including exploring the potential for co-branded solutions with major search providers. This will learn from the way people now use the wider internet.

(6) Innovation with broadcasters and other content and infrastructure providers on the potential opportunity for delivering service directly to people's homes, further fuelled by the digital switchover in broadcasting.

(7) Giving citizens online access to their records and data held by government, mirroring existing rights and reducing the cost of handling simple enquiries.

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34. Overall government should steer citizens and businesses to the lowest cost channels consistent with meeting policy objectives and customer acceptability. At an appropriate time, legacy channels should be closed (as the Department for Work and Pensions has recently achieved through its benefit payment modernisation programme) unless there are compelling policy reasons that *cannot* be achieved by other means.

35. During the migration period services should increasingly be designed on business models based round electronic service delivery. Substantial efficiency savings cannot be released while services essentially convert electronic transactions into paper ones for internal processing. So the reverse should apply: electronic transactions should be the norm, and paper transactions processed by front-line staff or intermediaries electronically.

36. Customer Group Directors should take the lead in determining the overall channel strategy for their customer group, including use of intermediaries, other parts of government, local providers and the voluntary and community sector, and agree implementation of that strategy with relevant service providers.

37. Sometimes the benefit to society of dealing with government online is not clear. Customer Group Directors and public service providers should also promote responsible channel choice by telling people how much use of more efficient channels saves and what that saving could achieve in terms of reinvestment elsewhere in the public services.

38. The experience which has already been gained by innovative government services in incentivising and managing channel shift is sometimes overlooked. The Service Transformation Board should collate experience and research within and outside government, and produce guidance for Customer Group Directors and public service providers.

Shared Services

39. A new Shared Services approach is needed to release efficiencies across the system and support delivery more focussed on customer needs. Technology now makes this far easier than ever before. Shared services provide public service organisations with the opportunity to reduce waste and inefficiency by re-using assets and sharing investments with others. Tackling this will be a major challenge as government prepares for the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. Particular attention should be paid to the following areas:

(1) **Customer Service Centres,** such as those for customer contact or payment processes, where there is significant scope for rationalisation through sharing, particularly if central, local and other public sector bodies can team up.

(2) **Human Resources, Finance and other corporate services,** where improved professionalism, standard systems and processes and effectiveness of these corporate functions should achieve efficiency gains across the whole public sector and in the functions themselves, as well as enhancing the employee experience and realising indirect efficiencies from better financial, personnel, knowledge and asset management.

(3) **Common Infrastructure,** where as government services converge around the citizen and organisations adopt commercial off-the-shelf technology solutions, the ability to share items of common infrastructure increases. Common technology will enable joined-up solutions, leverage investments and shorten the implementation timeframe of new reforms. To facilitate this a user-led Common Infrastructure Board will be established; it will be supported from the Cabinet Office and financed through user investment; and it will set out a roadmap and timetable for the delivery of common infrastructure.

(4) **Data Sharing:** data sharing is integral to transforming services and reducing administrative burdens on citizens and businesses. But privacy rights and public trust must be retained. There will be a new Ministerial focus on finding and communicating a balance between maintaining the privacy of the individual and delivering more efficient, higher quality services with minimal bureaucracy.

(5) **Information Management:** to facilitate the move towards more collaborative working on issues that involve a range of government organisations, common standards and practices for information management will be developed, with an effective range of tools to allow the most efficient use and sharing of information to all those across government that have a legitimate need to see and use it.

(6) **Information Assurance:** despite the difficulties of a fast moving and hostile world, underpinning IT systems must be secure *and* convenient for those intended to use them. The Government will further develop its risk management model to provide guidance on this, approved by the Central Sponsor for Information Assurance. And it will develop a simple, tiered architecture for its own networks to support this model in practice, with an updated application of the protective marking scheme for electronically held information. Government will also play its part to promote public confidence by leading a public/private campaign on internet safety and by a new scheme to deliver a wider availability of assured products and services.

(7) **Identity Management:** government will create an holistic approach to identity management, based on a suite of identity management solutions that enable the public and private sectors to manage risk and provide cost-effective services trusted by customers and stakeholders. These will rationalise electronic gateways and citizen and business record numbers. They will converge towards biometric identity cards and the National Identity Register. This approach will also consider the practical and legal issues of making wider use of the national insurance number to index citizen records as a transition path towards an identity card.

(8) **Technology standards and architecture:** to ensure that government's technology is cost effective in terms of public and private sector best practice, the CIO Council will determine a consistent approach to standards and architecture to be taken across government. Legacy systems will be progressively refreshed: by taking advantage of open standards, commercial off-the-shelf products and asset re-use, expenditure will be reduced and capacity freed for the transformational agenda. An overall strategy for geographical information will be developed under the leadership of the Geographical Information Panel recently created by Ministers.

40. The Shared Services agenda is a major cultural shift for the wider public sector. To implement it:

(1) Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Councillors and Chief Executives must give strong leadership.

(2) Bodies awarding funding should presume that public service organisations only deliver good value for money when they standardise and share services with others.

(3) A Shared Service Director has been appointed in the Cabinet Office to promote and drive sharing across the public sector and to establish overarching standard frameworks for shared services with a joint HM Treasury and Cabinet Office team and governance; and Regional Centres of Excellence have been established for local government.

(4) HM Treasury will work with the National Audit Office, the Audit Commission, the Cabinet Office and public service delivery organisations on guidelines for the governance and funding for service sharing. They will ensure that relevant accountability frameworks expect and encourage full use of shared service provision where applicable, including measuring performance against published benchmarks.

(5) Each government organisation should set out clear policies for sharing for services and assets that it needs or can provide to others.

Professionalism

41. Government's ambition for technology enabled change is challenging but achievable provided it is accompanied by a step-change in the professionalism with which it is delivered. This requires: coherent, joined up *leadership and governance; portfolio management* of the technology programmes; development of *IT professionalism and skills;* strengthening of the controls and support to ensure *reliable project delivery;* improvements in *supplier management;* and a systematic focus on *innovation*.

Leadership and Governance

42. Coherent, joined-up leadership and governance across government are essential to ensure the vision and programmes set out in this strategy are achieved and that the opportunities for technology to enable change continue to be identified, communicated, managed and delivered effectively. Complex reform requires consistent pressure to be applied across the whole system for a number of years. Leadership needs to be provided at several levels – by Ministers and Councillors; by Heads of Department and equivalents; by business leaders across the public sector; by CIOs; and by industry leaders – and aligned with the wider governance of the public services. An open and transparent approach to plans and performance is essential.

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43. A full governance model will be established in due course, in line with wider reform and efficiency governance arrangements. However, as an early priority, the role of the CIO Council and Service Transformation Board will be formalised to ensure their authority is recognised.

Portfolio Management

44. The UK public sector spends around £14 billion a year on IT enabled projects and operations, yet there is no comprehensive overview of it. The technology agenda requires management of the totality of its technology enabled programmes at portfolio – as well as programme – level to deliver results with more predictability. Portfolio management will allow government: to match supply with demand; to anticipate generic challenges; to identify duplication and other opportunities for standardisation and sharing; to challenge relative low value projects; and to set priorities when competing for scarce capacity. A similar focus should be used at departmental or equivalent level, using a common methodology based on work already being introduced in the Department for Work and Pensions and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

45. The cost of IT projects and operations will in future be measured and monitored at the aggregate level. Annual expenditure and achievement against plans should be reviewed by the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury. An annual report should be published to Parliament and audited by the National Audit Office and the Audit Commission.

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IT Profession in Government

46. The IT Profession in government needs to build capacity, culture, skills and identity. A new approach to the Government IT Profession within Central Government and the wider public sector is to be launched by the recently appointed Director for IT Professionalism. This approach is part of the Professional Skills for Government programme, meets the business needs of the CIO community, and responds directly to feedback from IT professionals. In summary it aims to:

(1) Develop a competency framework to support the career development of IT Professionals across government.

(2) Support the initial launch and development of the Government IT Profession with an on-going communications programme.

(3) Actively engage individuals in networking and mentoring activities.

(4) Establish the Government IT Academy to support both the professional development of IT Professionals in government and the building of a culture and identity for the Profession.

(5) Identify required "capability building" programmes to provide training and leadership development support for government IT Professionals.

(6) Engage with the Human Resources community to involve them in the establishment of the IT Profession as well as to begin to address perceived "pay and rations" issues.

(7) Work in partnership with the Programme & Project Management and Procurement professions towards their shared agendas, and to foster excellent working relationships and exchange of knowledge and skills between disciplines.

47. In addition the IT Profession work will support the development of IT awareness and IT-enabled business change management skills across the wider Professional Skills in Government agenda. Similarly the Central Sponsor for Information Assurance will improve information risk management through sponsorship of better governance and training of information and security staff.

Reliable Project Delivery

48. A further programme of work on the management and control of technology enabled business change will be put in place to build upon the foundations established by the Office of Government Commerce. This will ensure that not only the *successful delivery* of major projects but also confidence and controls to ensure the *reliability* of successful delivery. In particular:

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(1) The development of strengthened scrutiny and intervention in government's most important programmes, especially at their earliest stages.

(2) Renewed support for Ministers and senior officials responsible for Mission Critical projects.

(3) The implementation of a new process to manage better the transition from policy to practical implementation.

(4) The development of a new technology enabled project methodology and control tools drawing from best practice in the private sector.

(5) Closer Office of Government Commerce and Cabinet Office support for key programmes.

(6) A "continuous improvement" approach to learn and disseminate emerging best practice.

49. The Office of Government Commerce will also consider how better to support programmes in the wider public sector, drawing upon the experience of local government representatives on the CIO Council and organisations such as the Improvement and Development Agency and the Society of Information Technology Management.

Supplier Management

50. The public perception remains that many of government's suppliers have a "patchy" track record on delivery, whilst suppliers continue to find government a relatively "difficult" customer with which to engage. So a further shift in supplier management is required, including:

(1) A regular forward look at demand and supply of IT services and an agreed forward sourcing strategy, including action to ensure capacity and competition in the market.

(2) Active management of strategic IT supplier intelligence, relationships and performance across government, using a standard assessment framework.

(3) An agreed performance plan for each major supplier to improve that supplier's delivery, capability and partnering with current and future public sector customers.

(4) Encouragement of the use of standardised contracts, services and service boundaries, and contracts and service management models. This should allow departments to incorporate additional products and services from other suppliers including SMEs.

(5) Use of Gateway 5 Reviews as a trigger for project contract review at end of implementation and periodically thereafter.

Innovation

51. There must be effective processes to ensure *continuing* innovation. To encourage the development and design of better, more joined-up services as technology itself develops, the CIO Council should sponsor the accumulation and sharing of research, knowledge and innovation. It should also work strategically with the Department of Trade and Industry in their support of research, knowledge transfer and international partnering in relevant business and technology areas.

Timetable for Change

52. A detailed action plan to implement the strategy will be approved by the CIO Council and the Service Transformation Board, and then published before the end of the current financial year. However the broad timing will be as follows.

53. *2005 & 2006* The current volume of change is stretching the capacity and capability of the government teams and their suppliers to deliver. Major new programmes are already in the pipeline, such as the Olympics, the Census and identity cards. So the *next eighteen months* must focus on:

(1) Delivering the massive programmes of change commissioned under the last spending review and already underway, including Connecting for Health, reform of the Criminal Justice System, the Harnessing Technology strategy in education and modernisation of the Defence Information Infrastructure.

(2) Driving the Connecting Britain – the Digital Strategy programme (of which this strategy is a part) to tackle overall issues of digital inclusion and service provision.

(3) Mobilising the professionalism agenda – not least so that early action can help assure delivery of the current programme.

(4) Putting in place the key roles and structures to lead the transformations needed beyond 2006.

(5) Using the Comprehensive Spending Review to challenge existing delivery models and set clear plans and targets for improving services and realising efficiency benefits through a citizen-centric, shared services approach.

(6) Working with government and public services at all levels – central government, devolved administrations, local government and other public services – to identify areas of common purpose and opportunities for specific shared actions.

54. Between *2007 and 2011* the priority for technology investment and business change must be transforming delivery into public services centred round citizens and businesses, and transforming support into a shared services framework. During this period it will also be important to realise the financial and service benefits of current and planned investments. The goal should be to have made the key changes, to have embedded the new cultures, and to have made the process irreversible, by 2011.

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55. *Beyond 2011* should be a period of further radical change in the delivery of public services, enabled by technology. The cycle of technological advancement is rapid and hard to predict. But if the broad themes of this strategy over the next five years are achieved in practice, strong foundations will be in place. In particular:

(1) The focus on delivery and professionalism will have generated confidence in government's ability to transform itself in radical ways.

(2) The switchover to new channels, supported by common infrastructure and the digital home, will enable radical new service delivery options to be implemented.

(3) Some of the newer technologies today will be mainstream by 2011 and the time will be right to roll out their widespread exploitation.

(4) The culture of government will have changed to one which embraces – rather than shuns – sharing, which will continue to breakdown the silos perceived today.

(5) The market and other governments will have set new citizen expectations and created new opportunities for government in the UK to exploit.

56. It is likely therefore that the planning for this era will be based upon a vision that sees citizens and businesses increasingly serving themselves – at home, in work and public places and on the move; public servants truly dependent on technology to discharge their professional roles; policy makers regarding technology as crucial to designing policy and achieving policy outcomes; and backed by a government delivery network in which the boundaries between departments, between central and local government, and between public, private and voluntary sectors continue to be less important and less visible to the citizens and businesses. This may seem very radical by today's standards. But with strong foundations laid in the next few years it should be entirely achievable.

How to Respond

We would welcome your comments on this strategy

Please return comments by **Friday 3 February 2006** to:

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Your responses will be used to help develop and implement the strategy and a summary of responses will be published on our website within three months of the consultation closing date. By submitting your ideas to the consultation, you agree to their use in this way and foreclose the possibility of subsequently applying for a patent on those ideas. If you are in any doubt as to your legal position, please seek professional advice.

There is a Regulatory Impact Assessment available on the website at www.cio.gov.uk. We are also interested in any comments you have about the impacts of our proposals.

Freedom of Information

All information in responses, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If you want your response to remain confidential, you should explain why confidentiality is necessary and your request will be acceded to only if it is appropriate in all the circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

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