

Report to the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report Reference: ***FPM-001-2008/09.***
Date of Meeting: ***16 June 2008.***

Portfolio: Corporate Support & ICT Services.

Subject: Review of ICT Service.

Responsible Officer: **Bob Palmer** (01992 564279).
David Newton (01992 564580).

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

Recommendations:

- (1) To note the key findings of the review and the recommendations contained therein;
- (2) To agree that the most appropriate means of future ICT service delivery is through targeted investment in the current service; and
- (3) To agree the proposed action plan to implement the key findings of the review.

Executive Summary:

The ICT Service has been through a challenging period with the medical retirement of the former Head of ICT and the subsequent resignation of the Assistant Head of ICT. The loss of these senior staff combined with the corporate restructure made it essential to conduct a review of the ICT Service.

Capita were engaged to review and benchmark the existing ICT Service and make recommendations on the strategic direction and future provision of ICT Services at the Council. This review has helped highlight both strengths and weaknesses and has concluded that the current in-house provision should continue. This conclusion is based on Capita's opinion that out-sourcing would be unlikely to provide either cost or risk savings.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The proposed decisions are in line with the external consultants recommendations and should ensure that the ICT Service is provided in the most economical, efficient and effective manner.

Other Options for Action:

The ICT Service could be wholly or partly out-sourced, although this would go against the consultant's advice.

Members could decide that the service does not require a re-structuring or any investment. However, this would not achieve the objective of making the service fully fit for purpose.

Report:

1. The full report produced by Capita is attached at Appendix 1 and will be presented to the Committee by Mr Kevin Smitten, Proposition Development Manager, Capita IT Services.
2. An action plan is attached at Appendix 2 to address the report's main recommendations.
3. Members are asked to note the key findings of the review and approve the action plan.

Resource Implications:

Comments on resources are made individually against the areas detailed in the action plan. In summary, a re-structuring may require some additional resource whilst new servers can be funded from the existing capital programme and should lead to revenue savings.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

If it is possible to implement server virtualisation (the ability to allow multiple virtual machines, regardless of operating system, to run in isolation, side by side on the same physical machine) electricity consumption could be reduced.

Consultation Undertaken:

None.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

No equalities impacts.

The consultants have highlighted that outsourcing would increase risk, particularly if any form of customer contact programme were initiated.