

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 1 November 2011

Subject: Planning and Technology Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Philip

Recommending:

That the report from the Planning and Technology Portfolio Holder be noted.

Website replacement

The website replacement project is progressing well and a presentation was made to Management Board on 12 October. A further presentation will now be made to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 15 November and Members are encouraged to attend to view the enhanced website.

Mobile Working Solutions

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are currently evaluating the use of a system which would enable direct access to many of the core systems remotely, either from home or off-site. A further demonstration is taking place later this month whereupon a final decision can be made.

Telephony upgrade

The ageing telephone switch requires replacement as maintenance continues to be expensive and support difficult to source. ICT have recently attended demonstrations from a number of suppliers capable of supplying both hardware and Internet based Cloud solutions. Although a Cloud solution offers far more resilience in the event of a Disaster Recovery situation, initial findings indicate that the cost could be prohibitive. Further investigations are on-going.

Wireless Network Coverage within the Council

A potential solution is in the final stages of testing. The selected wireless unit allows secure access to both the internal Local Area Network and the Internet. Following a successful trial within ICT, the solution will be rolled out to cover key areas such as the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms. The project is currently on course for a March 2012 completion.

Draft SOCITM Benchmarking Report

The benchmarking report from the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) compares ICT performance between 17 participating Authorities. Initial indications are that EFDC ICT has performed well, especially with overall response

times to user requests and network/system availability. A full report will be made in the ICT Update Report scheduled for Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 16 January 2012, following receipt of the final report.