



Epping Forest
District Council

2018-
2023

Technology Strategy

Executive Summary



Today's Impossibilities are
Tomorrow's Realities

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TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY 2018-2023 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ICT remains a catalyst for change and although technology alone cannot change the way we work, the Council cannot hope to improve the services it provides to the public or indeed its own working culture without it. During any multi-year strategy, changes to corporate priorities may alter deadlines, but more than ever it is essential that everyone is aware of ICT involvement in both other Directorate strategies and overall long term Corporate plans.

Our strategy will create an infrastructure that will not only meet current requirements but will also be flexible enough to adapt to the ever-changing environment in which we work. It is vital that we get maximum benefit from the existing systems we already have as well as focussing on future projects that provide the greatest efficiencies and savings. This document summarises the key points of the Strategy, the full Strategy is contained within the Programme Definition Document.

1 OUR VISION

Today's impossibilities are tomorrow's realities

"Maximising the flexibility of our staff, technology, systems and accommodation to enable the delivery of transformed customer focussed services".

The vision above is the starting off point for Strategy for 2018-2023. We have learned lessons from our previous strategy in terms of how we can best structure the projects, and what projects need to be included in the programme that results from the strategy.

1.1 AIMS OF THE TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

- To enable the reduction in accommodation, and the changes in usage of that space, that will result from the Transformation Strategy.
- To enable users to work flexibly and more efficiently
- To improve Corporate performance and customer service.
- To improve ICT performance and customer service.

1.2 CAPABILITY

In general, the programme will be managed within existing capacity and capability, as the ICT team is designed with project delivery and project management capacity as part of its structure. The ICT Programme Management Office (PMO) will support the programme and provide key capabilities and capacity to key projects and deliverables. Training will be given to the officers acting as Project Managers and Project Sponsors.

Where identified, specific capabilities may be in-sourced from outside the authority on a fixed-term basis. Provision has been made in the Strategy for a fixed term Programme Delivery Support Officer to assist the ICT Programme Manager, and to provide PMO capacity for key projects within the ICT Strategy.

2 DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

The primary function of ICT is to support and facilitate the Council in the delivery of its services to our customers, we have identified a number of Drivers for Change that are affecting the services we offer, and how we offer them:

- In the Industry –
 - One view is: Mobility, Social, Cloud, Big Data;
 - or an alternative vision is: Consolidate, Integrate, Automate, Collaborate.

- In the Public Sector – Public Sector Network (PSN), G Cloud, Open Source/Standards, Digital by Design, Localism, Partnership working, General Data Protection Regulation, Green ICT, Equalities
- Within the Council - Transformation, Customer Service, Accommodation Changes, Corporate Plan, Common Operating Model, Increase in Public Expectations, Budget Limitations, Values & Behaviours)

3 WORK STREAMS

We have identified 9 work streams within the Technology Strategy that will form our main programme of projects, with another work stream covering projects we need to complete in the run up to formal commencement of the strategy.

3.1 YEAR 0 ENABLING PROJECTS

An ICT Section Prepared for the challenge in April 2018

- Prioritising key improvements to the ICT Infrastructure and Services that are required prior to the commencement of the 2018-2023 ICT Strategy to ensure initial and urgent corporate requirements are met in April 2018.

3.2 EFDC CUSTOMERS

Enabling the Business to Exceed public expectations

- Enabling our Customers to access Council systems and data that they need to progress applications and deal with problems online at any time of the night and day. This will entail the provision of 24/7/365 'digital by design' services for resident

3.3 EFDC STAFF

Work is not somewhere our staff go, it is something they do

- Enabling our staff to work when and where they need to, allowing easy access to our systems with the correct level of security.

3.4 EFDC TEAMS

Virtuality is the new normality for our teams

- Enabling teams to operate efficiently when working in a dispersed fashion as a virtual team; allowing conferencing, collaboration and easy sharing of information at team level and at an organisational level.

3.5 DATA AND INTEGRATION

Providing a data platform based on Integration, Sharing and Transparency

- In terms of data we intend to link our systems together to enable our staff to easily access and analyse the data that we hold across all our service areas. This could be by the integration of back end systems, or by using common referencing to allow data to be pulled from a range of systems for analysis or to provide information to our CRM.

3.6 PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Cost effective, Streamlined, Integrated and Automated Processes that will evolve with the Council

- The implementation and integration of applications and business processes, particularly e-forms, document management and workflow, to improve services, improve efficiency, reduce costs and increase business agility. Making best use of existing systems and hardware, and exploring alternative software solutions including open source to maximise value for money.

3.7 ICT INFRASTRUCTURE

Ubiquitous, Standardised & Resilient infrastructure to enable Flexibility

- Maintain and develop a reliable and secure ICT service for internal users and members to take advantage of new technology and greater efficiency, keeping up with technology including cloud hosting of servers and systems which will reduce the ICT accommodation footprint substantially.

3.8 ICT SUPPORT

ICT Support adding value to staff and the business

- Providing a consistent level of ICT support and training across all service areas in the Council, delivering value for money and a resilient solution, and adding value to the business by assisting in the conducting and implementation of business process reviews. This will include a customer focussed Service Desk operation in core hours, linked to 24/7 second line support for critical infrastructure and systems, and a business need focussed application support operation.

3.9 ICT SECURITY

Proportionate ICT Security enabling the business to operate safely rather than being perceived as an obstruction

- Providing a consistent level of ICT support and training across all service areas in the Council, delivering value for money and a resilient solution, and adding value to the business by assisting in the conducting and implementation of business process reviews. This will include a customer focussed Service Desk operation in core hours, linked to 24/7 second line support for critical infrastructure and systems, and a business need focussed application support operation.

3.10 ICT STAFF

Trained, Dedicated and Professional ICT Staff delivering the service required

- We will ensure we have staff available in the numbers required to deliver the strategy and normal operation, by adapting our structure and staffing levels to meet need, bringing in additional resource to 'flex up' for key projects. ICT will need to invest in training and developing its team to ensure that we are aware of what is emerging in the market and have the skills to deliver. At times, this may lead to abortive costs, but this risk is balanced by the opportunity to embrace new and innovative technologies that will support Flexible Working and responsive customer service.

4 BENEFITS AND DIS-BENEFITS OF THIS STRATEGY

This strategy aims to achieve a number of benefits, key ones of which are as outlined below, although it will result in some dis-benefit mainly around costs. Full details are in the Programme Definition Document.

4.1 FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- Saving of Computer Suite 2 running costs and up to 70% reduction in ICT accommodation
- Saving in software licensing costs by removal of redundant systems
- Savings from Change to Office 365 from Office 2017 + Software assurance
- Potential Saving from not building a replacement dedicated server room
- Savings from lease of Electric Van for ICT instead of giving Essential allowance to additional ICT staff
- Savings from bulk buying of hardware including Laptops and Desktop equipment
- Corporate savings from Internal process efficiencies in EFDC and lower costs of self-service transactions and batched printing.

4.2 NON-FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- Improved Resilience of ICT Solutions
- Improved Internal ICT Customer Experience
- Improved System Integration and Data sharing
- Improved ICT Staff productivity

- Improved internal communications
- Improved Remote Access to EFDC Systems
- Improved Public Online Customer service and system access
- Proportionate Security
- Enable Mobile Working and Accommodation Changes

4.3 DIS-BENEFITS

- Increased CSB Cost for hosting of servers offsite, and licences for software required for flexible working
- Reduced internal ICT Customer Experience owing to location issues
- Increased ICT Security Issues
- Requirement for Additional ICT Staff and 'flex' resource to ensure
- Reduced staff availability for Business as Usual tasks owing to project work
- Requirement for second internet connection
- Cost of additional hardware for homeworking

5 RISKS

The key potential risks to the benefits of the programme, as they are currently understood include:

- Failure to implement Single ICT Team and Matrix Management
- Resistant organisational culture
- Management of complex inter-project dependencies
- Failure to gain agreement on Hosting or Office 365 funding
- Insufficient officer capacity or capability
- Disruption to ICT operations during building works
- Failure to provide adequate financial resources and unforeseen increases in project costs
- Unplanned projects diverting resources or funding
- Inadequate ICT Office accommodation, storage and build space

6 ICT IN 2023

By the end of the programme, the new, key features of the EFDC's ICT provision will be:

- Processes:
 - Remote management of PCs and Laptops
 - Flexible Working to be the norm, including the use of telephone and video conferencing
 - Transactional website in place
 - Rationalisation of business systems, and intensification of use of remaining systems
 - System/Data integration to be enhanced
- Organisation:
 - Single ICT Team supporting all major business systems
 - Matrix management of remaining system administrators
 - Enhanced opening for ICT Service Desk
 - Enhanced on call arrangements for out of hours cover
- Information:
 - Replacement intranet hosting key information and collaboration tools such as SharePoint
 - Use of cloud solutions for hosting data
- Technology, tools, equipment, facilities:
 - Common standard for staff computers and telephony – to support mobile and Flexible Working
 - Homeworking technology in place, along with Mobile working applications for key areas

- Managed non-network laptops standard solution, using Citrix Unified Gateway to connect
- Servers externally hosted and Email migrated to Exchange Online
- Office 365 adopted to give flexibility of use and additional benefits
- SharePoint and MS Teams in place to allow easy sharing of information
- Collaboration tools in place to allow virtual teams to function
- All operational sites to have robust wireless network for staff use for all hardware types.
- Operational sites with Customer receptions/meeting rooms will have public wireless network.
- Key infrastructure will be hosted externally on the cloud
- Redundant connections will be installed for Internet access and telephony (SIP Trunk) due to the critical nature of these connections.

7 AFTERWORD

The efficient use of ICT is one of the most cost-effective means that the Council can use to meet the challenges that it faces. It is critical that the management of our systems and infrastructure, and the investment in technology is based upon sound business decisions that result in cost effective solutions being implemented to support our services. We must also look at the balance of our funding from capital to revenue funding due to changes in how software is supplied and licensed as more software moves to a subscription model (i.e. cloud based).

This will ensure that investment in technology continues to be timely and appropriate and is made in systems and solutions that:

- Support the overall corporate objectives and deliver on corporate priorities,
- Achieve value for money
- Generate a return on investment
- Maintain essential Council services