

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 19 MARCH 2013**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF ICT AND CUSTOMER SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **ICT STRATEGY UPDATE**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide Cabinet with an update on progress with the implementation of the Corporate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Council's ICT Strategy is a 4 year strategy which sets the direction and defines the use of ICT to support the Council's priorities and services.

2.02 This report highlights progress on how the Strategy contributes to the achievement of several of the Council's improvement priorities particularly Improvement Priority 1: "Modern and Efficient Organisation" and Improvement Priority 4: "Customer Service".

2.03 Under the Council's business planning arrangements the ICT Strategy is a fundamental element of the Governance Framework as a resource strategy alongside Finance, HR and Assets.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Since the last progress report to Cabinet in July, 2012 there has been a particular focus on Corporate projects supporting Flintshire Futures and service change e.g. Streetscene.

Customer Service and Streetscene

3.02 Technologies to underpin the Streetscene contact centre have been implemented providing sophisticated call handling arrangements, queue management and call recording. Calls are now taken by the contact centre and fully integrated with the Customer Relationship Management system and back office business systems allowing immediate responses to enquiries and requests for service to be actioned directly from the contact centre.

- 3.03 The contact centre system has now been extended to provide similar facilities for Housing, Leisure and Revenues & Benefits.
- 3.04 A major project is in progress in terms of improving the information we provide to customers regarding waste collection via the website and the planned Flintshire “App”. This has required the implementation of a new back office system which will provide property specific information in terms of waste collections schedules etc. This will be linked with new technologies to assist in managing missed collections which is due to be implemented later this year.

Flintshire Futures Assets Programme

- 3.05 In support of the Flintshire Futures Assets programme there has been a particular focus on projects which enable us to rationalise accommodation and allow staff to work more flexibly. We now have over 1500 staff with remote access to the Flintshire network allowing them to access information and systems from other locations providing they have internet access. We have implemented mobile working solutions across several services and our success in Building Control has been recognised by a case study published on a national newspaper website and a visit from a Welsh Government Minister.
- 3.06 To reduce our physical storage requirements for documents we have been implementing Electronic Document Management solutions across several services. Considerable progress has been made in Housing in back scanning large volumes of documents so reducing filing space. The next step is to link the electronic documents directly to the main housing systems to allow access by staff to tenant’s documentation electronically irrespective of location

Modernisation and Efficiencies

- 3.07 There has been a successful introduction of tablet devices to enable flexible access to emails, calendars and reports in meetings and when away from the office. This has been initially focussed on senior management allowing a major reduction in paper and printing for meetings, with CMT meetings now being run on a paperless basis.
- 3.08 The extension of this project to cover Councillors is currently being considered which will result in significant efficiencies in terms of printing and postage of committee papers and improved access to relevant information. The Council leadership and other group leaders are supportive of this project and detailed proposals and a business case will be brought forward in the next few months. Funding has also been made available from the Welsh Government to broadcast council meetings and allow remote attendance at meetings by members as proposed under the Local Government Measure. Both of these projects will result in significant modernisation of the Council’s democratic processes.

Collaboration

3.09 We have continued to work collaboratively with other North Wales Councils and other public sector bodies in identifying opportunities for common ICT systems, shared procurement and support.

- School Improvement Service: Regional MIS - Single Schools Management Information System (Capita ONE) hosted by Flintshire to enable cross authority efficiencies and reporting to improve Management Information available to the new regional service. Replaces 6 separately hosted systems across the region. This project was showcased at the Welsh Government Public Sector ICT Conference in Cardiff on 28th February as an excellent example of good practice and an approach that could be adopted by other regions.
- Service Desk software: Consolidation of software solutions and standardisation of processes in the delivery of ICT Service Desk functions across the region. This has resulted in cashable saving of around £30,000 in procurement costs.
- Content Management System: joint procurement of web content management system resulting in software procurement savings of approximately £50,000.
- Disaster Recovery: Consolidation of existing provision, use of reciprocal arrangements, sharing of plans and processes and development of resilience across the region.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Cabinet note the progress made on the implementation of the Council's ICT Strategy.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 The savings referred to in 3.09 above from the collaboration projects are one-off savings and have been included in budget projections.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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