

# INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF ICT AND THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL AND CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

**Report By: Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

## Wards Affected

County-wide.

## Purpose

To outline the content of the Independent Review into ICT Services carried out by Mr Ian Crookall, who was nominated by the Chief Executive of the Local Government Association, and the proposed actions in response to the recommendations made.

## Financial Implications

The full cost of the independent review is likely to be in the region of £10,000.00

There will be ongoing costs in respect of the recommendations from the report in commissioning further work from other providers and additional reports from officers as set out in the action plan at Appendix 2.

## Considerations

1. The Cabinet at its meeting of the 20th September 2007 received the Special Investigation Report dated 20th September 2007 from the Director of Resources in respect of the Financial Governance in ICT and Customer Services. The Cabinet resolved to commission an independent review to be carried out by a person nominated by the Local Government Association and for the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to agree the Terms of Reference together with the Leader of the Council.
2. Mr Ian Crookall, previously Chief Executive of Buckinghamshire County Council, was nominated by the Local Government Association and he agreed his Terms of Reference with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. These were finalised on the 15th October 2007 with the Leader of the Council and the Chair of Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.
3. The Terms of Reference allowed for Mr Crookall to review and request any additional support to carry out the independent review. Mr Crookall was supported during part of the review by a former Section 151 Officer in relation to some aspects of the review as well as officers of the Council.
4. The Report is attached at Appendix 1.
5. The reports from the Cabinet meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> November and Audit & Corporate Governance Committee of 16<sup>th</sup> November appear elsewhere on the Council agenda.

## **Risk Management**

There are legal and probity risks for the Council in not endorsing the recommendations of the review report. If the Council does not have robust and workable processes in place to support officers and Members then future contractual arrangements will be called into doubt and may be subject to legal challenge.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the Independent Review report be accepted and the recommendations endorsed.**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Independent review report of Mr Ian Crookall dated 9th November 2007.

Appendix 2 Action Plan responding to the recommendations set out in the review report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None identified.