

## **Report for Cabinet Member for ICT, Education and Achievement ICT services.**

### **1.0 Review of 2009-10**

The Herefordshire Council ICT Service provides essential Information Technology and Communications support across council, schools and other partner organisation. The department is an integrated support service with NHS Herefordshire's ICT Services, the only such type of shared services arrangement anywhere in the UK. In January 2010, the service was shortlisted as a finalist in the 'Government Computing 2010' awards, for its unique collaborative working with the NHS.

Major highlights from 2009-10 include:

- **Operational support and maintenance:**  
A significant aspect of the work of the department is supporting the ICT needs of staff and the estate of ICT assets, from its two major data centres (Plough Lane and Thorn) to several thousand individual devices (PCs, mobiles etc).

This year saw an increase in the number of support calls from approximately 24,000 in 2008-09 to 29,000 during 2009-10. Despite the increase in calls, service levels have improved with 93% of requests solved within SLA in 2009-10, as compared with 87% the previous year.

- **Retendering of the Community Network Contract:**  
This was a major procurement for the council both in terms of financial value (the previous 5 year contract with Siemens was worth over £7million) and in terms of reputation as the previous contract had drawn some criticism. The contract was thoroughly and successfully re-tendered and in doing so has resulted in a net saving of over £1million over its three year term. A recent internal audit of the procurement concluded a 'good' audit opinion.
- **Upgrade of the Thorn Data Centre and ownership of Plough Lane Data Centre (as part of overall site purchase).**  
A capital expenditure of just under £400,000 was invested in the Council's backup data centre at Thorn. This investment replaced a previous planned scheme to build a new data centre at a cost of £1.9 million. This Thorn upgrade included essential works to install:
  - regulation-compliant fire detection and suppressant systems,
  - advanced and more energy-efficient air cooling systems,
  - intelligent building management systems,
  - replacement of the Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS) and
  - provision of additional desk space within the same office area

The refurbished facility is now safer and easier to manage. To ensure the investment is well protected, a revised seven-year lease has been secured for the Thorn Site.

The purchase of Plough Lane has also secured the ownership of the Council's main data centre. Had the site not been secured, the replacement costs of re-provisioning this data centre would amount to approximately half the cost of the purchase of the whole of the Plough Lane site (circa £2m).

- Development of a joint network across Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire:  
To support partnership working with NHS Herefordshire, the two respective networks have been opened up to each other to allow staff working in integrated teams to access applications. Though this not complex from a technical perspective, there are significant security and information governance approvals that national authorities have to sign off. Some of the benefits of this joint network now mean that, for example, over 130 Mental Health staff have better access to social care information when providing services to vulnerable adults and children.
  
- Providing support to Herefordshire Schools and education services:  
The working relationship and ICT support provided to schools continues to improve. There is an active 'ICT in Schools Forum' that has recently benefitted from member representation and as a result of its work programme and success has double the number of times it meets each year once a term to once every half term. Some of the work of the group has been:
  - Helping schools work with extended school partners via a template MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) and provision of expert ICT advice
  - Working with schools to improve the web filtering experience of students and staff
  - Looking at school requirements for SMS
  - Developing a schools ICT roadmap and strategy
  - Piloting a desktop to desktop video conferencing solution and discussing wider school requirements for collaborative working
  - Highlighted the need for an e-safety sub-group to report into the safeguarding board.
  - Help and advice on completing the schools workforce return

As part of the 'Connexions' service moving from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire based service to being one being provided by the Council; ICT supported the transfer of networks, IT hardware, applications, web services,

telephony and mobile phone services to meet the end of year deadlines that had been set for the transfer.

ICT Services were also involved in the supporting the new build at Riverside School, the headmaster sent a special note of thanks to the service for their efforts.

- ICT support to Council directorates:  
ICT services pro-actively engage with council directorates supporting them in their requirements. ICT services facilitated workshops with each of the business areas during the planning cycle to help with determining and prioritising ICT requirements. The following are some of the systems that ICT services have implemented for directorates:
  - HR e-learning implementation - (Deputy Chief Executive) An online learning tool that can be utilised alongside other forms of learning i.e. classroom to provide a blended learning experience. Content available for all staff 24/7.
  - Centralised Door Access - (Resources) - Consolidation of numerous door access databases into one centrally managed by facilities management. Incorporation of door access chip into staff ID cards. Cost saving and improved security benefits.
  - PC Booking and Print Management - (Environment and Culture) Introduction of self service PC booking and print management system in libraries and for public access PC's throughout the authority. Free's up staff time for other duties and helps in GEM targets for reduction in wasted print jobs.
  - SMS Pilot for Waste Management - (Environment & Culture) - Implementation of an SMS service for members of the public to subscribe for reminders of recycling collections. This coincided with the launch of the kerbside wheeled bin bi-weekly recycling service. New communication channel open for members of the public and helps with NI14.
  - Asset Management Software - (Resources) - Implementation of proprietary software to replace a number of disparate databases previously utilised by property services and finance. Efficiency gains throughout multiple departments.

ICT services have also sought to build on existing and to develop new relationships with staff and partners. A number of initiatives have been implemented in this regard:

- ICT question and answer sessions held at different locations throughout the year - reaches all levels of staff;
- Participation at Schools ICT Coordinators conferences in partnership with the council;

- Development and establishment of software/technology focused user groups and workshops;
  - Regular attendance at SMT (Service Management Team) and DMT (Directorate Management Team) meetings;
  - ICT customer satisfaction survey held jointly across HC, HHT and PCT, with action plans to improve areas of concern;
  - School Technical SLA - additional services at a reduced cost for 10/11.
- Knowledge Management and Web Service:

Development of the Councils (and partners) Internet services include:

- Common Applications Process (CAPS) & Youthzone redesign was completed.
- Children's Safeguarding Website was completed.
- Herefordshire Biodiversity Partnership website redesigned and launched
- Facts and Figures (Local intelligence website) launched
- "Find Election Information for Your Area" postcode search includes map showing location of nearest polling station and relevant local democracy information.
- Historic Environment Records Heritage Gateway link
- Museum online catalogue
- Joint branding and styling of HC & PCT websites including a shared A-Z, shared search results.

The implementation and further development of systems as part of the Herefordshire Connects programme continued during 2009-10.

- Social Care System - Framework-i

The Frameworki system was implemented in November 2008 for both Adult Social Care and Children Services. The main drivers for installing the system were:

To date the progress and benefits delivered by Frameworki have been:

- Ready access to case files and file availability (not reliant on paper)
- Service users enquiries are dealt with more efficiency and consistent information provided
- Better response to emergencies due to quick access to client information out of hours

- Better management of workload
- Providers benefits from quicker service with care plans
- Now meeting the requirements Electronic Social Care Record (ESCR) requirements set out by the Department of Health
- Social workers owning the work
- Panel process is more efficient
- Drill down available to more basic information

A survey of users indicated the following

- ✓ 50% of users agreed that “It takes me less time to complete tasks in Frameworki than previously”
- ✓ 55% agreed “Frameworki facilitates cross team working between my teams and other teams”
- ✓ 65% agrees “Using Frameworki has encouraged me to enter more accurate and complete data that with Clix” (The old systems)
- ✓ Over 80% agreed “Having consistent forms across teams in Frameworki is beneficial.”
- ✓ 65% agreed “Frameworki has enabled team workload to be monitored and work assigned more efficiently”

- Public Protection Systems – Civica APP

The APP system (Authority Public Protection) supplied by Civica was implemented for the authority in September 2009. The system has been implemented for the following business areas:

- Forward Planning
- Development Management
- Building Control
- Conservation
- Trading Standards
- Environmental Health
- Private Sector Housing
- Environmental Protection and Pollution
- Licensing
- Anti Social Behaviour
- Travellers Services

The intention of the system is to enable joint working between the sections and to reduce the necessity to re-key data between sections. To date there has only been a partial success with joint team working due to the way the system has been configured. The project team are working with ICT, Civica and the users to resolve these issues so that cross team working is as efficient as possible as part of the next project phase. The system is fully supported by ICT and has been built to the specifications from the users.

The impact to clients of this system will be that the different business areas can retrieve information much more quickly as it is stored in a single system, rather than the myriad of systems that were previously in place

- Maintaining and Improving Standards, e.g.
  - Ongoing implementation of the ICT Scrutiny Report by members of Overview and Scrutiny and regular reporting of progress.
  - Successful revalidation of ISO27001 (Information Security) across ICT and Modern Records Service.
  - Maintenance of the top performing West Midlands local authority websites in the Sitemorse independent benchmarking league table in all but one month with an average ranking of 16th across 430 local authorities.
  - Implementation and monitoring of recommendations following internal and external audit reports.

## **2.0 Priorities for 2010-11**

A significant amount of organisational change is expected during 2010-11.

- Establishment of a Joint Venture Company (JVCo) for support services. Following development of a business case for shared services it is likely that a number of support services will be shared across Herefordshire Council, NHS Herefordshire and Hereford Hospitals Trust and transferred to a JVCo. This new organisation will require to be established with its own set of (ICT) support systems and will have its own set of ongoing support and development requirements. ICT services will itself be a part of the new organisation.
- Establishment of an 'Integrated Care Organisation', across acute, community and adult social care. This new organisation will radically change the way care is co-ordinated and delivered across the county and will require to be setup with its own set of systems.

- The complete integration of Herefordshire Council ICT Services and the NHS IT Services will be concluded this year. The new merged department will need to focus on improving its internal processes and increasing efficiency.

To support the changes, the current ICT Strategy, (which was published in 2008) will need to be refreshed. Some of the developments that are likely to feature in the new strategy include:

- ICT support for flexible models of working, as part of the corporate accommodation strategy;
- Improved provision of service for customers via the web site and other digital channels (e.g. SMS) and encouraging customer adoption of these channels;
- Renewal of major contracts with Microsoft and Orange (for mobile telephones);
- Upgrade of (older) databases and applications where vendor support will expire (e.g. oracle databases).

In May 2010, a fire at the Plough Lane facility which houses the UPS, caused outage of services over a weekend whilst repairs were being carried out<sup>1</sup>. Whilst at the time of writing the Emergency Planning department are finalising an incident report, a key part of the ICT strategy is likely to focus on resilience of ICT systems and plans to enable essential services (e.g. Social Care Systems, Info by Phone) to continue in the event of the main data centre being unavailable. Given the importance of this, some work has already commenced to increase resilience (e.g. Framework-i, the social care system continued to be accessible from a backup system operating out of Thorn, whilst Plough Lane was unavailable over the weekend of 18-19 June 2010).

The connects programme has now been subsumed into the Shared Services work programme and the implementation of the 'Agresso' system will be a significant enabler of shared services.

The scope of the Agresso project includes:

- HR
- Payroll
- Finance
- Procurement
- Asset Management
- Project Costing and Billing

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<sup>1</sup> Despite the disruption to the organisation, no data was lost and recovery was relatively quick as it took engineers less than 6 hours to bring all systems back online once electricity feed to the building was restored.

Some of the benefits that will be delivered by the Agresso project are:

- Integrated HR & Payroll processes
- Integrated Payroll and Finance
- Integrated Procurement & Finance
- System built to the needs of the organisation(s)
- Reduction in time of interfacing between systems
- Reduction in number of invoices received and processing time
- Employee Self Service for HR & Payroll issues
- Removal of duplicate data between HR & Payroll

The implementation of the Electronic Document & Records Management System (EDRMS) will take place this year, a priority area will be Planning where currently documents are sent to Scotland for scanning, this will be replaced by a more responsive and significantly cheaper in-house service.

Further roll-out of the Civica APP is planned in the following areas:

- Markets & Fairs
- Waste Management
- Land Charges

### **3.0 Items likely to be put to Cabinet in 2010-11 for information, approval or decisions.**

- Refreshed ICT Strategy
- Refreshed Web Strategy (in conjunction with Customer Services)
- Decisions on major procurements, e.g. mobile phone contract, assuming contract values require cabinet decision making.

### **4.0 Areas for Overview and Scrutiny attention.**

A very comprehensive review was carried out on a wide range of ICT issues in November 2008 and six monthly updates have been provided.

Scrutiny may wish to review aspects of the planned work for 2010-11.