Executive   **2nd December 2008**

Report of the Assistant Director of Resources – Transformation and Efficiency

ITT Strategy 2008-2012

Summary

1. This report sets out the draft ITT Strategy for the Council for the next five years. Its key themes are designed to link closely to the corporate strategy and the agenda for change over the coming years. IT will be an essential enabler of transformation in the future.

2.   The strategy seeks to establish an attainable yet challenging vision, supported and illustrated by measurable, clearly defined deliverables.

3. In order for the organisation to deliver this strategy there will be significant human effort to transform the way the Council does business, from Business Process Re-engineering through to changes in the way it plans, manages and delivers its services. This is not just a technology plan, but an essential plank in our transformational approach. .

Background

2. The ITT Strategy 2002-2007 was reviewed in October 2006 to assess how successful we had been in delivering it. The strategy had 129 objectives, and of these 63% had been fully achieved with further 26% partly achieved.

3. The old Strategy had 4 key themes and in summary we have been extremely effective in delivering Nos 1 and 2, have made good progress on No 3 but have made little progress on No 4.

    1. **Provide a secure, resilient, high performance ICT Infrastructure**
    2. **Create the environment to deliver E-government**
    3. **Use technology to improve business efficiency**
    4. **Establish effective links with Partners**

4. We now have

    - A strong and flexible platform on which to base future improvement
    - Our core business relies upon stable, secure systems
    - Improved IT Project and Programme management
    - Less ad hoc development
    - Better control and prioritisation of investment
    - Increased use of IT systems to deliver front line services

- Move to web based services
- Better use of performance data and IT to make us more efficient
- Innovative approach to e-government
- We use technology to improve customer services
- Good basis to deliver efficiencies from the use of technology
- An implementation approach that combines technology and process change

5. The organisation now has a stable platform on which to undertake its business. We lose very little productive time due to IT failure or poor performance which is a significant enabler for the delivery of high quality services to our customers. Having invested heavily in this area in the last 5 years and having achieved an acceptable standard of service it may be that this is not a priority for the future of strategy. However it is not an area where we can become complacent or dis-invest entirely without putting ourselves at serious risk of future IT failure.

6. Following the review of our old strategy, and to reflect the drivers set out below, in 2007 CMT and Executive agreed 5 themes around which the new IT strategy would be structured. These were much more business focussed, with a clear alignment to the corporate strategy. It was then expected that the fuller strategy would be written and brought back for agreement. However, with the departure of the Chief Executive, the Director of Resources and the Head of Public Services, the Strategic Head of ITT has been redeployed to cover vacancies/acting up arrangements and it is only now that we have had the resources to develop the strategy in full. The draft strategy has been used to drive and shape the IT Development plan for 2009/10.

Drivers for the Future Strategy

7. Gartner, the IT industry think tank, predict that in future, the IT function will fulfil 3 major functions,

- Technology Management – operate the technology and support users with a focus on availability and cost per user

- Strategic Change – enabling service improvement through the use of technology and process change - not just aligned to the business but becoming part of it

- Innovation – using technology to drive radical new approaches to local service delivery, to change the paradigm rather than adapt the existing models of activity

8. Central Government has set out its expectations that Technology will play an essential part in the Transformation of Public Services in the Varney review (Service transformation - a better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for taxpayers) and then more explicitly in **The White Paper on Strong and Prosperous Communities**, particularly the themes of: -

   o **Responsive Services and empowered communities** - Technology can be used to improve consultation and communication with Citizens and to assist with the planning and delivery of services at a neighbourhood level. The use of the Internet and phone to deliver services in the way customers demand them is also key to this theme.

- o **Efficiency – Transforming Local Services** – Requirements for ambitious continuing improvements in efficiency are being built into the Comprehensive Spending Review. There is a drive to use business process improvement techniques including new technology to deliver these service transformations. This reflects the move from electronic government (e-government) to transformational government (t-government). Greater collaboration between public sector bodies is also expected. The efficiency improvements also incorporate carbon efficiency and a drive for each Local Authority to reduce its own carbon emissions. The use of technology is essential to these objectives.

- o **Local Government as a strategic leader and place-shaper** - Put partnership working at the heart of local service delivery – Use information technology to facilitate partnership working for service planning and delivery, enabled by information sharing and shared service delivery.

9. Other key issues that we need to consider in the IT Strategy are **:-**

- **The Sustainable Community Strategy** – ensuring that partners can work together to deliver outcomes for the city will require us to share information and facilitate partnership working using shared IT systems and infrastructure.

- **The new HQ** – the migration of the majority of our administrative accommodation to one central site will require the replacement of much of our network infrastructure. This gives us opportunities to use new technologies to transform the way we work in the new space, firstly enabling us to occupy the building effectively (flexible use of space based on wireless networks) and secondly bringing about service improvements as a result (flexible working, co-location of staff encouraging cross directorate working, single point of customer contact for all services etc).

- **Governance** - we do not have a clear mechanism for reviewing progress in delivering either the IT Development Plan or the IT strategy

- Inconsistent and sometimes inefficient split of responsibilities between central ITT and Directorate IT teams

- Client relationships between Departments and Central IT are not as responsive and productive as they could be. In light of the forthcoming move to a new HQ when departmental support will be significantly impacted by the co-location of staff, we commissioned an independent review of our current arrangements and of the future IT support needs of the organisation.

- We do not embed the delivery of IT strategy into departmental service plans in a systematic way

- Customer demands are becoming more complex as their business continues to change at an ever increasing rate. The IT support service needs to be able to flex to accommodate the speed of change

The Strategy

10. The new IT strategy has five themes. They are the main drivers for further IT development.

   1. Use technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Council Services and the internal working of the Council

   2. Use technology to make services easy to access, high quality and efficient, effectively managed, and responsive to the particular needs of individuals and/or Customer groups.

   3. Develop our IT Infrastructure to support the move to a new headquarters

   4. Use technology to make CYC a more sustainable organisation

   5. Use technology to forge stronger working relationships with our partners, to enable the sharing of information and improve joint service planning commissioning and delivery

11. Each theme is then broken down into the technology blocks which will enable us to achieve the vision statement. Each technology block sets out the current state of play, any (inter)national trends and the particular issues for CYC. It then sets out a series of objectives. Some of these are hard and fast actions (implement x or y) whereas some are more exploratory or set a principle for future development. The full Strategy is attached at Annex A

12. An Executive Summary has been developed to bring to life the strategy and visualise how this will affect the Council in the future. This is attached as Annex C.

Delivering the Strategy and Reviewing Progress

13. The IT strategy is a five year strategy. Many of the outcomes we seek to achieve will take this amount of time to deliver, so the strategy needs to be relatively fixed for the Council to realise benefits and maximise investment in technology. We should not be changing direction every year or two. However, there will undoubtedly be major technical innovation over the next five years, the objectives of the Council may change and we will clarify our objectives in some areas. It is therefore crucial that the Strategy remains a live document and that we review our objectives on a regular basis. We also need to review our progress in delivering the strategy to ensure success. It is proposed that CMT delegate this review work to the Corporate IT Strategy Group with an escalation to CMT if significant change is required.

14. The delivery of the IT Strategy will form the primary focus of the IT Development Plan and will drive investment in IT. The delivery of some of the softer issues in the strategy (compliance with policy etc) will also be built into Service Plans and ongoing working practices.

15. The delivery of the Strategy is not solely the domain of the IT department. It will require cross directorate buy in to the ideas and principles from Members, CMT and departmental management teams it will require significant input from Directorate IT and Business staff. Directorate DMT's will need to incorporate elements into their directorate plans and service plans. To get the key messages understood and embedded, and keep them fresh over the duration of the

strategy, we will need to develop a communication plan. Again, the CITSG will play an essential role in this activity.

16. In the past, Members have agreed the initial strategy but have had no role in monitoring progress. Corporate Services EMAP have had a view of the financial impact of the IT Development Plan but no formal reports on achievement of the outcomes of the strategy. Directorate EMAPs have occasionally received reports on individual projects. A broader reporting mechanism needs to be developed so that Members receive reports on the progress of key business led projects within their portfolio or across the whole organisation.

Corporate Objectives

17. These themes align to the refreshed Corporate Strategy, mainly around the Organisational Effectiveness theme.

18. The theme of Partnership Working (theme 5) will be particularly important to deliver the outcomes set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The theme of sustainability (theme 3) will also support the objectives set out in the SCS in reducing the carbon footprint of the organisation.

Consultation

19. This draft document has been considered by the Corporate IT Strategy Group and by CMT who ;-

- Supported the 5 themes set out above.

- Believed the strategy provides a desirable road map for the use of technology within CYC.

- The mixture of vision and hard, measurable objectives will make it possible to develop delivery plans and monitor progress on delivery.

- That Directorates currently struggle to deliver IT projects on time as there is limited Project Management capacity in house and retaining staff on a project by project basis is an ongoing problem. The capacity to deliver an ongoing programme of IT development needs to be developed and retained in house. Proposals to achieve this need to be developed.

- This Strategy is part of a broader organisational transformation agenda and will require a large amount of human effort to achieve the objectives (it is not just a technology implementation plan) It will also require effective co-ordination with other transformation agendas (new HQ, Efficiency Programme, Easy@york, HR workforce and policy development, Performance management etc).

Financial Implications

20. The investment required to deliver this strategy is made available through the IT Development Plan. Historically this has been an annual allocation and this has created problems both in delivering a longer term strategy and in making the resources available in time and for the full duration of the projects (which are often multi year). The Strategy proposes that in future years the IT Development Plan will be developed as a three year rolling investment plan to match the development of 3 year budget setting process.

21. An IT Strategy delivery plan will be developed which will enable us to identify the basis for each future IT dev plan round and to estimate the required level of future investment. If this funding is not allocated to the delivery of the strategy then there will be a need to amend the strategy to reflect this and to reduce the ambitions set out in the strategy.

22. The allocation of time to deliver this plan has historically been a problem for the organisation. Freeing up resources within the business and creating and funding the project management capacity have led to delays in implementation and concomitant underspends in the IT Development Plan.

23. In order to create capacity to deliver the strategy on time, we will explore the establishment of a central pool of Project Managers and Business Analysts that can be deployed wherever they are needed to support major projects. This will create a source of additional expertise that Directorates can call on when needed. This will offer more continuity of contract and prevent staff from leaving towards the end of projects and ensure that we can develop and retain skills in house. This will ultimately mean that we do not have to recruit expensive consultancy support or agency staff.

Implications

24. The implications of adopting this strategy are
   - **Financial** - None at this stage
   - **Human Resources (HR)** - None at this stage
   - **Equalities** – assessment will take place in November.
   - **Legal** – No implications
   - **Crime and Disorder** – no implications
   - **Information Technology (IT**) – Incorporated into the report
   - **Risk Management** – The strategy sets out a direction of travel for the use of technology and as such has implications for management of change across the whole organisation. If a broad range of IT and non IT activities are not coordinated then the objectives of this strategy cannot be met. It is proposed that the CITSG take a primary role in coordinating this activity and managing this risk.

Recommendations

25. That Executive comment on the suitability of the 5 themes set out in paragraph 10

26. That Executive agree the IT Strategy attached at Annexes A and B

27. That Executive comment on how they would like to review progress in delivering the IT Strategy

28. That Executive agree to the development of proposals for a 3 year IT Development Plan as set out in paragraph 20.

29. That Executive agree to the development of proposals for a central pool of Project Managers and Business Analysts as set out in paragraph 23.l

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Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all* **All** | *tick*

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annex A – IT Strategy 2008-2012 and glossary of terms
Annex B – Executive Summary of IT Strategy 2008-2012