

NOTES FROM THE ICT SUB GROUP OF 24TH OCTOBER 2007

Present: Councillors K Hitchen, Chairman; M McVeigh; P Whalley; Mrs W Metherell

Officers: C Lloyd, Business Development Manager; I Curwen, Communications Officer; N White, Scrutiny Officer; C Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer.

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received by Councillor D Wilson.

ICT 1 Development of the Council's Website

Members received an update from the Communications Officer on the project to develop the Council's Website. This included an overview of the history, content and style of the website.

Details of the Project Group were considered along with their responsibilities. It was noted that the deadline for the group to report back to the Project Manager with details of their part of the project was Friday 26 October and from this initial work, an Action Plan would then be drawn up in due course.

During the development stage, Members and Staff user groups would be consulted and a communication plan for stakeholders drawn up which would be put before the Sub Group to consider at a future meeting.

Although it was noted that the target project implementation date was January – March 2008, it was felt that there was a risk of slippage due to there being no technical resource available.

The Sub Group requested more details of the Project Improvement Boards that this project was one part of and the Chief Executive was requested to attend a future meeting to provide that information.

The Sub Group further requested that the Project details and aims be made available on the Intranet with the facility to provide feedback.

It was **AGREED** – that

- a) a Communication Plan be drawn up and brought back to the next meeting;

- b) the Chief Executive be asked to attend the Sub Group to talk about the Project Improvement Boards, and
- c) the Project details and aims be made available on the Intranet with the facility to provide feedback.

ICT 2 Notes of the Meeting Held on 25 September 2007

It was **AGREED** that the notes of the meeting held on the 25 September 2007 be signed as a correct record.

ICT 3 Matters Arising from the Notes

- The Sub Group were advised that the Council had agreed to support the European Computer Driving Licence and as a result 115 people (including 4 Members) had taken up the offer. It was noted that training had to commence before the end of February 2008.
- A website called Modern Councillor was recommended to the Sub Group. This site would be free for two years and would also be incorporated into the New Councillor Training Package.
- The Appendix to the notes detailing IT usage per Member since May 2007 was not yet available and it was intended to report on this to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
- The Sub Group expressed its concerned that Members were not able to access their laptops at home or in the office. During the discussion it was noted that there were still a number of areas of concern which needed to be resolved and it was recommended that this be subject of a report to the next meeting of the group. The Sub Group further noted that there was a need to identify training needs for Members with special accessibility requirements. The Business Development Manager was requested to liaise with the Democratic Services Manager to arrange.
- It was noted that Local Democracy Week had recently taken place during which it had been hoped that a video conference would be arranged with a local school, however this had not been possible.

It was suggested that local Secondary Schools could be approached and asked if they would like to participate and if so what they would like to achieve from the exercise and whether this should include meetings of Council, Planning or Overview and Scrutiny meetings. It was felt that subject to technical requirements, this be investigated to take place in January 2008. It was also felt that it would be useful to get the

communications team involved to gain maximum press coverage.

- The Sub Group suggested the use of Web Cams for Members, with members of the group testing their usefulness before being rolled out to all Members and Member Services. The Business Development Manager was requested to investigate this and report back to the next meeting.
- The Business Development Manager advised on the progress of the Cumbria IT Strategy. It was noted that although progress was being made many issues were still being developed and it was felt that this should be subject to a report to the next meeting of the group.

It was **AGREED** – that a) details of IT usage per Member be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee;

b) the Business Development Manager report to the next meeting on Members not being able to access their laptops at home or in the office;

c) a video conferencing exercise with a secondary school in Copeland be arranged for January 2008;

d) investigations be undertaken to identify training needs for Members with special accessibility requirements. The Business Development Manager be requested to liaise with the Democratic Services Manager to arrange;

e) an update report on progress with the IT strategy be submitted to the next meeting of the sub group; and

f) the usefulness of web cams be tested by Members of the sub group prior to it being rolled out to all Members and Member Services.

ICT 4 Draft ICT Service Level Agreement

The Sub Group were informed that the Council's ICT Service Level Agreement (SLA) had been in place since 1999 and an opportunity to update it had been taken.

The draft SLA covered Priorities and Response Times, Escalation Process, Support Action (Frequently Asked Questions), How to contact IT and Emergency Procedures as well as listing the Equipment and Software Systems per Business Unit/Member. During consideration of this item the Scrutiny Officer emphasised that performance indicators would be the key to the monitoring of the effectiveness of the ICT unit.

ICT Sub Group Members are asked for their comments on the SLA which would be directed to the Business Development Manager. It noted that the SLA would be submitted to the group for consideration at its next meeting.

AGREED – that an update on the SLA be submitted to the next meeting for comment.

ICT 5 Presentation

There were no presentations.

ICT 6 Date of Next Meeting

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the Group would be early December 2007.

The meeting closed at 2:00pm

Signed by Chairman