

NOTES FROM THE IT SUB GROUP OF 12TH JULY 2007

Present: Cllr K Hitchen (in the Chair); M McVeigh; P Whalley

Apologies from Cllr A Holliday

Officers: C Lloyd; M Stroud; N White

Chairman

The Sub Group agreed that Councillor K Hitchen should be the Chairman of the sub group for this civic year.

Terms of Reference

The Sub Group noted that its terms of reference had been originally set as to review the Council's IT. It felt that it would be worthwhile to bring the terms of reference more up to date.

The Sub Group considered a proposed terms of reference and felt that these should be split into protocols and functions.

The protocols were that:

- that the group has the support of a dedicated member of member services
- that agendas are formulated by the chair through member services
- members of the group can add to the agenda through member services
- that the group be increased by one person with knowledge and interest in information and communication technology.

The Sub Group agreed that this should be Councillor D Wilson and that Councillor Anne Bradshaw should be replaced by a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

- that the group meets monthly and a standing item on the agenda is the review of the ICT strategy action plan
- the group should produce reports for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
- the group should be called the Information and Communication sub group

The functions were that:

- Receive presentations on ICT functions
- Receive reports from ICT User group
- Receive reports on the ICT Strategy Action Plan
- Receive reports on ICT developments
- Sponsor communication of ICT matters
- Receive information of software systems, consider changes, corporate implications, etc.
- Promote member use of ICT
- Provide reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

The Sub Group considered that in looking at the issue of promoting member usage it would be useful to know which members regularly used the intranet so that non users could be targeted. It would also be useful to assess what the cost to the council was of the members of the council not using their laptops. Officers were also requested to remind all members what the council's IT policy for members in particular what they could use their council laptop for and what usage the council would be pay for.

The Sub Group further considered that the "champion" for IT across the Council should be the sub group. It also agreed that its terms of reference should be a "living document".

AGREED – that officers (A) ascertain which members of the council regularly used the intranet so that non users could be targeted,

(B) work out what the cost to the council was of the members of the council not using their laptops,

(C) remind all members what the council's IT policy is for members in particular what they could use their council laptop for and what usage the council would pay for, and

(D) the terms of reference for the Sub Group be as detailed above on the basis that they become a "living document".

Meeting Intervals

The Sub Group agreed that it should be meet on the second or third Thursday of the month starting at 9.30am

AGREED – that the next meeting of the Sub Group be held on Thursday 16 August at 9.30am.

ICT Strategy and Action Plan

The Sub Group noted that it was intended to report on this item at the next meeting and to highlight key items within the action plan and the deadlines for dealing with those items.

AGREED – that the ICT Strategy and Action Plan be considered at the next meeting.

Shared Services Agenda

The Sub Group noted that there was little to report on this item at this time and it was agreed to take this item off the agenda and put any information on this matter on the Sub Group's folder on the intranet.

Work Plan

The Sub Group considered items for its work plan for the rest of the civic year. Officers were asked to draw up a work plan and report on it to a future meeting and ensure that it was placed and regularly updated in the Sub Group's folder on the intranet.

AGREED – that a work plan for the Sub Group be drawn up and reported to a future meeting.

Website

The Sub Group noted that the Chief Executive was looking at ways to improve the Council's website and requested that a report on this be submitted to a future meeting.

AGREED – that the Chief Executive be requested to report to a future meeting on ways to improve the Council's website.

Next Meeting

The Sub Group agreed that at its next meeting it should consider:

- ICT Strategy and Action Plan
- Notes from the user group (if it has met)
- Presentation on Video Conferencing
- Presentation on how parts of the IT fit together
- Promotion of member use of IT
- Work towards an IT newsletter on Intranet

NOTES FROM THE IT SUB GROUP OF 17 AUGUST 2007

Present: Councillors Hitchen (Chairman), Holliday, McVeigh, Metherell, Wilson

Officers: Chris Lloyd, Tim Capper, Martin Stroud, Alan Johnston

ECDL

Members were updated on the current position on the ECDL qualification which was now available through a local provider for employees and Members. There were 6 modules each requiring approximately 10 hours of home study and a test on each at the end of the course. ECDL was now a nationally recognised qualification and set a standard in terms of competency in use of IT.

The Group discussed whether the Council should move towards ECDL being available for all staff. There were issues that would need resolving i.e. whether or not to allow study in work time, and compulsory or voluntary basis, and whether or not the Council will fund resits where tests are failed.

Agreed that report be prepared for a future Executive picking up all the relevant issues including those outlined above.

IT Strategy and Action Plan

Chris Lloyd updated the Members on the current position with the IT Strategy and Action Plan

Remote Access and Secure Access Messaging

Martin Stroud updated the group on developments in remote access whereby equipment could be repaired remotely through a broadband connection.

Secure Access Messaging could now be made available to Members through a members secure area on the web site with links to the secure portal. This group would need to sell the benefits of the system to other members.

Members agreed that SAM should be piloted through the sub group with a review of progress at the next meeting on 25 September and a set-up session and practical demonstration at the meeting on 19 October.

IT Update

Chris Lloyd and Martin Stroud gave a presentation on developments in use of IT throughout the Council. It was agreed that this should be repeated at Management Group and at full Council at suitable times in the near future.

MCal

The Group discussed progress on training for Members on MCal travel expenses system. It was agreed that practical training on the Members Room PC should be given until September 2007 and then reviewed.

Records Management

It was agreed that a report be made to a future meeting on the present position on the Council's records management policies and procedures. It was noted that the records management function covered all areas of the Council's activities, not just IT and all types of records held, not only electronic records.

Employee User Group

Chris Lloyd gave an up date on issues currently being discussed by the User Group. There was no current member representative, and it was agreed that this should be considered by the User Group.

IT Newsletter

The Group received an update on the IT Newsletter. It was agreed that there should be a link to this from the Intranet front page.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 25 September 9.30 am

NOTES FROM THE ICT SUB GROUP OF 25TH SEPTEMBER 2007

Present: Cllr K Hitchen (in the Chair); M McVeigh; P Whalley

Apologies from Cllr A Holliday, Mrs W Metherell

Officers: C Lloyd; M Stroud; N White

Notes

The Sub Group considered the notes of the meeting held on 17 August 2007.

The Sub Group noted that in respect of the ECDL qualification the Head of Policy and Performance and the Human Resources Manager had expressed their support for this qualification. However there was an issue of the time commitment involved in this training.

The Sub Group felt that this training was important in improving the efficiency of the council service, the ability of the Council to retain its Investor in People status and in being a forward looking council. It agreed that the Corporate Team should be asked to rate how essential IT training and that staff time should be released to enable this training.

The Sub Group also agreed that its notes should be considered by the Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These notes should also include an appendix which showed the IT usage by each member of the council since May 2007 to inform that Committee on this issue.

AGREED – that (A) the Corporate Team should be asked to rate how essential IT training is and that staff time should be released to enable training for the ECDL qualification,

(B) the notes of the meetings of the Sub Group should be considered by the Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and

(B) the notes of this meeting include an appendix that shows the IT usage by each member of the council since May 2007 to inform that the Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee on that issue.

Remote Access and Secure Access Monitoring

The Sub Group noted that remote access was currently being tested and due to start on 1 October 2007 with the intention that the Sub Group should pilot it.

The Sub Group felt that video conferencing could be usefully used during Democracy week with a session being run with a local school for a question and answer with one of the council's committees. The Group noted that the Beacon had a full video conference suite that was due to open shortly and should be used for this session.

AGREED – that a question and answer session be run during Democracy week from the Beacon's video conference suite with a local school and one of the council's committees.

Records Management Policies and Procedures

The Sub Group noted that it was intended to make a presentation to Corporate Team on the benefits of using Sharepoint which was a web based documents and monitoring system that would cut down on paper use considerably.

The Sub Group considered that as a trial its documents be moved from the intranet to this system. It also agreed that Corporate Team should be made aware of how the installation of this system would fit into the Council's Corporate Plan and internal audit be made aware of the benefits of this system for audit purposes.

AGREED – that (A) as a trial of the Sharepoint system the Sub Group's documents be moved from the intranet to this system, and

(B) Corporate Team should be made aware of how the installation of this system would fit into the Council's Corporate Plan and internal audit be made aware of the benefits of this system for audit purposes.

ICT Strategy and Action Plan

The Sub Group noted the progress that was being made with the Council's ICT Strategy and Action Plan which included the drafting of a Service Level Agreement with all the council's departments.

The Sub Group questioned what progress had been made on the Cumbria IT strategy and requested that the Chief Executive provide an update on this.

AGREED – that the Chief Executive be requested to provide an update on the latest position on the Cumbria IT Strategy.

Employee User Group

The Sub Group received an update from the latest meeting of the Employee User Group and noted the issues that would require further work to resolve. It agreed that the notes from these meetings should be on the sub group's shared drive.