

ICT & Business Development

CouncilConnect



Strategy

March 2006



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Executive Summary

Modern Governments with serious transformational intent see technology as a strategic asset and not just a tactical tool. Technology alone does not transform government, but government cannot transform to meet 21st Century citizen expectations without it. True transformation opportunities exist in all areas – on front line public services delivered to citizens and businesses; in regulation mechanisms that govern business and private life in Britain today; in delivery of social policy outcomes; and in the corporate services of the public sector that support efficient operations.

This is about using technology better to deliver core public services to have an impact on real people's daily lives, getting better public services, benefiting communities and improving the economy.

This Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Business Development Strategy provides the framework for the adoption and application of technology along with the business requirements to support the Council's aims and objectives. It achieves this by:

- Describing how ICT & Business Development Services will work with internal and external services to maximise the benefits of the investment in ICT
- Identifying the major internal and external business drivers that are shaping and influencing the need for change
- Identifying a variety of customer focus models and develop in further detail those considered most appropriate for the Council
- Identifying the physical components that will be used

1. Introduction

West Dunbartonshire Council has some of the most outstanding and breathtaking countryside in lowland Scotland, and in 2002, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs became Scotland's first national Park. West Dunbartonshire is also known as an area of sharp contrast where scenic splendour sits side by side with reminders of the area's proud industrial heritage. West Dunbartonshire also has good transport links with the rest of the country, and is included as part of the wider Glasgow City metropolitan area. The Council faces many challenges in delivering services to its customers.

West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) is currently going through a period of significant business challenges and change driven by external and internal directives and factors. It is these challenges that will need to be successfully considered if the Council is to meet the modernisation and efficient government agenda that all local authorities are facing.

There is an increasing requirement to share data securely across the Council and with other organisations in the public, private, voluntary and education sectors, in order to deliver the citizen's expectations for public services in the 21st Century. An effective strategy will simplify the business and technical aspects of data sharing. It will put in place a comprehensive security infrastructure, enabling concentration on the personal and organisation protocols relating to permissions and confidentiality.

A business and technical strategy is an investment in structural design, standards and integration principles supported by hardware and software which match the needs of the organisation. There is a requirement for a sound project management methodology and the implementation of a managed test environment to ensure robustness of the solution deployed.

2. Background

The Scottish Executive has identified the need for responsive public services, firmly focused on the needs of those who use them, which ensure that those who need the most help receive the most help, in a way that meets their needs and expectations. Public services need to be provided in a well-run, cost-effective and innovative manner that improves standards while minimising costs and bureaucracy. Underpinning this new working environment is the need for all local authorities to more effectively manage service delivery, and in particular the interface between the Council, partners and the communities that they serve.

In addition to these external drivers, WDC has recognised that service delivery must be subject to regular reviews to ensure that the services delivered reflect clear and accurate customer requirements. It is also important that access to these high quality services is effectively enabled for members of the public in locations, at times, and through channels that are most appropriate to their needs.

3. Need for a Strategy

This Strategy provides direction and focus as technology advances and Council services change, these can be delivered by:

- 21st Century Governance which enhances the quality of life and maximises opportunities for the community of West Dunbartonshire.
- Supporting the day to day business of West Dunbartonshire Council to provide high quality services.
- Efficient and effective interdepartmental partnership working to identify external and internal business drivers which allow all council departments to meet the Corporate Vision.
- Establishing a framework for assessing technical aspects of investment in new systems;
- Identifying appropriate technology and standards to support information exchange with both internal and external stakeholders;
- Minimising the risk associated with ICT investment by identifying appropriate standards and procedures;
- Identifying the resources and competencies required for support and development;
- Providing a focus for the development of appropriate IT skills by users.
- Partnership working with other local authorities and external agencies.

4. Progress Reporting

Modernising Government

The Customer First Steering Group is the decision making unit responsible for the Modernising Government Agenda, this is chaired by the Chief Executive. Progress on the Modernising Government projects are updated at every meeting. Also responsible for informing the Customer First Steering Group is the Customer Services Working Group, and the Website Development Strategy Group.

Electronic Service Delivery

Regular updating on the 46 Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) targets is required by the Scottish Executive. The achievements, completions and progress reports are collated in the Council “traffic light” monitoring system, which centrally stores each departments’ updates. This reporting system is managed by the Business Development Section and the information collated is reported directly to Open Scotland.

Council Plan

The Action Planning database has been introduced to centrally store the Corporate Objectives and Council Priorities. This supports clear reporting on a regular basis from each department on how the objectives are being actioned and achieved. The outputs from the database are central to performance reporting requirements from Central Government.

Corporate Management Team

Major project updates, and recommendations are regularly submitted to this team for consideration and approval.

Corporate Service Committee

Regular reports are submitted, updating the Committee on achievements, and project progression. Committee papers are also presented for the Council's consideration and approval.

Audit and Performance Committee

Reporting on issues which contribute to agenda's such as Best Value, Continuous Improvement, Modernising Government and Customer First.

5. Stakeholder Outcomes

If the objectives of the Modernising Government Strategy are to be realised, it will be necessary to expend a considerable amount of time, resource and money. It is therefore critical to ensure that technology developments are judged not only against their contribution to Modernising Government but also to the purpose of the Council as expressed in its Key Objectives.

As part of the service planning and budget process, separate capital bids are required for projects which contribute to the development of 21st Century Agenda. Key outputs required are improved public access to information and services, better access to information within the Council and cost effective ICT systems and infrastructure.

6. Best Value Agenda

Best Value is defined as a duty to deliver services to clear standards, covering both cost and quality, by the most economic, efficient and effective means possible. Staff in ICT & Business Development roles must understand the need to challenge, consult, compare and compete to ensure the overall objectives of the service are achieved, and in doing so deliver a positive contribution to the Council's Vision and Key Objectives.

The Best Value regime demands a radical culture change and there are a number of elements to consider for staff in ICT-related roles:

- **Citizen and Customer Focused**

Staff in ICT & Business Development roles have a special responsibility to keep in mind the impact of their efforts on the real customer receiving services. This will be achieved by focusing on the outcome rather than the technology and by taking account of public consultations.

- **Business Focused**

It is essential that staff in ICT & Business Development roles gain an understanding of Council business and its objectives and that they view their daily work in this light, recognising that technology is, and should be, of secondary concern to most users. It will be important to continue to take on board the views of those receiving the ICT service.

- **Service Priorities**

The focus will be on delivery of robust new developments contributing to the achievement of the Council's priorities, while not impacting on maintenance of existing services. This will involve new and different solutions to resource issues.

- **Pro-Active**

Staff in ICT & Business Development roles must always be looking for ways to improve delivery, ensure service issues do not arise and minimise time required to be spent in keeping operational systems working.

7. The Vision for Change

CouncilConnect aims to respond to citizen demand, changing the face of public service in West Dunbartonshire by offering an increased choice of place, time and method for receiving services. This may be by:

- Phone or on the Internet to a single access centre for all public agencies.
- Services available on the Internet
- Citizen or Customer access to technology in public buildings
- Mobile Technology brought to the citizen
- Kiosks providing information and services wherever people gather
- Mobile communication devices such as interactive mobile phones
- Digital Interactive TV in the home

It is worth noting that the intention is to increase choice through technology. Previously the preferred method of interaction with the Council is by telephone and in many cases citizens still seek face to face contact, although more recently this is changing with a greater reliance on technology. Those who do not wish to use the latest technologies will still have these choices and will receive equal priority and attention. Staff will however use these facilities and information to provide improvements in the service to all.

This vision does not only address the issues of choice of access, but has a strong statement of the need to review back office processes, consider what are the key elements and use technology as an opportunity to increase effectiveness.

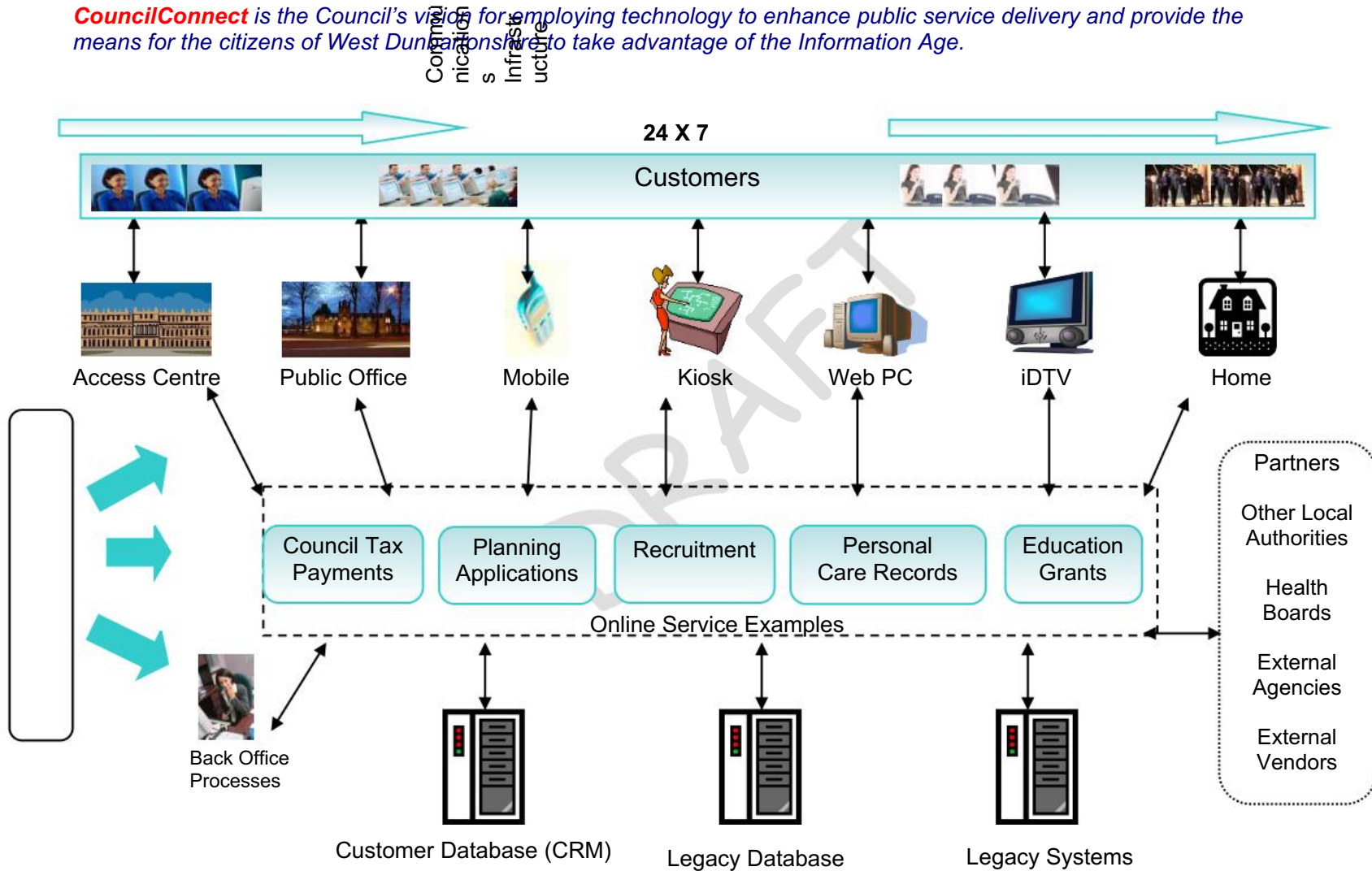
Whilst this vision is recognised amongst a number of WDC staff it crucially has the following shortcomings:

- The wider WDC staff base, especially at the crucial service manager level, have not been involved in the formulation of this emerging vision, and therefore may not understand or support it at the moment;
- This vision may be fragmented across various reports, funding applications and papers, but it needs to be drawn together and communicated to all relevant stakeholders and staff; and

Without this overall, corporate vision, Heads of individual services at WDC may be looking inwards for solutions to any customer service problems that they are facing, and attempting to solve them at the individual service level.

CouncilConnect

CouncilConnect is the Council's vision for employing technology to enhance public service delivery and provide the means for the citizens of West Dunbartonshire to take advantage of the Information Age.



8. Meeting the Vision for Change

In summary the broad vision for improving customer-facing services is the Customer First agenda.

Delivery of the Customer First programme is a priority for the Council and its profile should be raised throughout the organisation. A Customer First Steering Group has been established and is chaired by the Chief Executive with its main advisors being the Council's MGF Co-ordinator and the Head of ICT & Business Development. The steering group also comprises of senior representatives from each department, a facilitator and technical & business analysts specialists from ICT & Business Development.

The Customer First steering group will monitor overall progress on the Modernising Government Agenda which will include:

- E-empowering current WDC offices and reception points, and rationalising telephone contact both in and out of office hours which will achieve added value information and services for the customer, ideally around a single number or point of initial contact.
- Availability of information communication technologies supporting service delivery, to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of service delivery to enable all customers to access quality service when, where and how they choose.
- To rationalise and where possible reduce the number of points through which requests for information or service have to be made
- To increase the range of services available outside standard opening times
- To increase opportunities for customer to access information and services
- To shorten the time taken to respond substantively to requests from customers and explore the feasibility of adopting a one number approach to council services both in and out of hours

Whilst the Council have been able to attract appropriate partners (and consortia) to support the delivery of the modernisations agenda, it is doubtful whether funds made available by the Scottish Executive together with internal funding availability, will be sufficient to support the implementation of all possible solutions. Introduction of a Call Centre would likely require the Council achieving further success in bidding for Modernising Government Funding (MGF); the third round, MGF3.

It is anticipated that this vision will be delivered through the deployment of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technology to improve existing service delivery.

9. The Impact on the Customer

Implementation of the strategy will bring about significant business efficiencies not only in terms of ICT operations but also with regard to both front-line services and back office support functions. Examples of the impacts on the Council and its services to the citizen or client that implementation of the technical and business strategy can deliver include:

- A higher proportion of the Council's ICT resources engaged in development of solutions for improved services.
- Solutions developed in one Service applied across the Council.
- Easy to use, proven resilient technology, appropriate to the purpose.
- Service departments can take advantage of cost-saving and service improvement from corporate contracts.
- Services such as debt advice have easy access to all the information needed to assist citizens and clients.
- Services such as social care and health able to share resources.
- Availability of information communication technologies support service delivery 24 x 7, where appropriate.
- Citizen or client has a choice of methods, locations and times of contacting the Council.
- Elected members and officers can keep in touch with Council business from home or other locations of their choice and have convenient access to a range of information sources from across and outside of the Council.
- Field staff able to use technology to make appointments, provide confirmation of service, report problems and access information needed to deliver an improved service while spending less time travelling to and from the office.

10. Business Drivers for Change – Internal & External

- The focus of service delivery should be based on the requirements of the citizens rather than on organisational responsibilities and preferences.
- Customer expectation of service delivery have changed and in many instances grown. The Council recognises the need to identify alternative models for service delivery in one with customer expectations.
- Notably there is a strong internal business case emerging for improving contact services, particularly over the telephone, to realise economies of scale, free up professional time to focus on their technical service delivery tasks, and provide a consistent and high standard of service.
- Equally the key external drivers from customers and the Scottish Executive are suggesting, and even enforcing, a change in the current arrangements, and are also providing some of the resources to make these improvements.
- It is clear that there are a wide range of powerful, internal and external business drivers which are indicating that WDC should address the problems evident within the current customer contact environment.
- A number of these business drivers evidence the problems with the current approach, but positively other drivers provide potential sources of finance and help in achieving these improvements.

11. Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation

Local government already operates within a complex legislative framework; two of the most significant pieces of legislation relating to ICT are the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act. It is imperative that when dealing with either of these acts that the Council and partner agencies apply rigorous compliance. It is essential that staff are trained and equipped to handle these acts and subsequent changes to them. As more services become available on-line, via electronic communication technology, the Council requires to strictly adhere to such legislation.

12. Partnership Working

Separate to, but clearly in parallel with the 21st Century Agenda, are the Directives from the Scottish Executive to work more closely with other local authorities and external agencies. In particular, they are directing WDC to work in partnership with neighbouring local authorities, and other public sector organisations (e.g. Health, the wider Social Service organisations) to jointly deliver public services.

- The Council is conscious of the need to address the modernisation and efficient government agenda to ensure the requirements of the community are fully addressed. In considering these areas, it is important that the Council explore wherever possible opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations and service providers.
- Through effective partnership arrangements, there is a focus on common objectives and at the same time ensuring representation of stakeholders interests are maintained.

13. Interoperability (e-GIF)

- The electronic government interoperability framework (e-GIF), under the management of the Cabinet Office, mandates policies and standards for achieving integration and coherence across the public sector. The e-GIF approach must be consistently implemented across the Council to ensure delivery of a modern, responsive, integrated public services enable by increasingly complex technologies.
- The speed of technological change has increased in the internet age. There are many products which claim to deliver the levels of integration required to achieve the e-Government goals. It is therefore essential to undertake a continuing programme of research and service development into use of technologies which will help to deliver the Council's Key Objectives, enable "joined-up" government and maintain a firm foundation for the future.

14. Project Management

- A robust project management methodology is essential to the effective implementation of ICT solutions and the business change that these enable. PRINCE is a methodology covering the organisation, management and control of projects.
- A formal project management methodology provides a framework for managing a project, providing a standard, tested approach to such issues as management arrangements, planning, reporting and controls, risk, quality and change
- Suppliers to include a robust project management methodology which can be co-ordinated with Council processes
- Appropriate training in the methodology to be put in place for all those who will be involved in ICT related projects
- It is imperative that project processes and procedures are both practical and professional. Corporate ICT undertake reviews of best practice methodologies as part of continuous improvement of the service. A significant number of staff in ICT roles have undertaken training in the PRINCE2 Project Management Methodology. Increasingly staff from other departments are adopting the same approach to project management and are undertaking appropriate training.
- Various training opportunities can be sourced for differing levels of project management skills required. Level of training need can be identified by assessing the level of involvement within specific projects.

15. Risk Management

- The Council recognises the risks involved in the e-government programme. PRINCE2 methodology is prescribed for management of all projects with an ICT component. The framework incorporates robust risk assessment at the initiation stage with regular reviews during each stage. Project boards are responsible for ensuring that this activity is carried out diligently.
- Where procurement is involved the Council's tendering processes are employed, ensuring that risks are fully considered and minimised at each stage.

16. Service Quality

The focus will be on delivering the right outcome first time and on creating a culture of continuous review and improvement. Quality standards and methodologies are a source of guidance for Best Practice and an area seen as support to achieving excellence in service provision. Benchmarking is another useful mechanism for testing the appropriateness of actions being taken.

- Maintaining the Profiled Investor in People accreditation ensure that staff are central to delivering a quality service, externally accredited by Investors in People Scotland. Currently benchmarked in the top 25% of profiled UK Business. Participating in the council wide liP skills transfer programme.
- Maintaining the Information Systems Quality at Work Award (ISQW) for excellence in staff training and development programmes again ensures that industry identified skill competencies are clearly achieved within West Dunbartonshire Council.
- Ensuring that the current BCS Corporate Professional Partner status is maintained again ensures that our approach to staff development meets the corporate business requirements, which are updated by British ICT professionals in an ongoing proactive programme. This is supported by e-skills (The Sector Skills Council for IT, Telecoms, Contact Centres) BCS (The British Computer Society), IEE (IT, Electrical and Electronic Professionals) and SFIA (Skills Framework for the Information Age)
- By ensuring that we maintain Trusted Source Status, we can recommend staff to achieve membership status of the BCS professional body and be received as a reliable and trusted source of recommendation.
- Maintaining annual externally audited accreditation to deliver the extensive recognised ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) family of qualifications, ranging from equalskill through to advanced ECDL Expert status, this provides the opportunity for ongoing development for staff in ICT roles.
- Maintaining learndirect scotland learning centre branded status also provides the opportunity for extensive training and development programmes in a wide range of topics for West Dunbartonshire.
- Achieving Charter Mark status will demonstrate quality customer service to the citizens and stakeholders of West Dunbartonshire Council.

Whilst embarking on a number of quality initiatives Chief Executives' has achieved medallist status for the following awards:

BCS IT Professional Awards 2005

- The British Computer Society Professional Development Awards
 - Best implemented Scheme Award
- The British Computer Society IT Professional Awards 2005 – President's Awards
 - Women in IT Award
- The British Computer Society Individual Awards 2005
 - Angela A. Clements, The IT Director of the Year – Large Organisations and won the Best Implemented Scheme Award.

Telegraph Business Awards 2005

- Angela A. Clements short-listed in the IT Director of the Year category.

17. Disaster Recovery Management

As part of the **WDC Disaster Recovery Plan** services must establish how they will fulfil their responsibilities in case of loss of ICT service and consider cost benefit for provision or resilience.

- Ongoing delivery of ICT services depends on the effective implementation of these tools and on comprehensive disaster recovery planning.
- Safeguarding the Council's data, we have a robust tested solution, with a preferred partner.
- To ensure the tested solution can meet many differing situations that may arise, testing will be ongoing. There will be various levels of testing ranging from loss of one system to the fully restored requirements that could arise from a major disaster.
- Consistent business continuity plans need to be in place across the Council in line with Audit Scotland recommendations.

18. Current and Planned ICT Initiatives

The Council are currently undertaking, and have planned in the near future, several major ICT projects that could potentially work towards the wider agenda of improving customer service delivery across the organisation. The most important of these initiatives are:

- The Council has approached partner organisations to support achieving business goals in an efficient and cost effective manner. In summary, major issues facing the Council include: The Council's capacity to achieve the wider modernisation agenda; in particular:
 - Identifying solutions to improve service delivery to customers e.g. call and contact centres, one stop shops, kiosks etc.;
 - Achieving opportunities offered by the wider roll out of broadband across the region;
 - Ensuring the infrastructure in the widest context is in place to support the chosen solution(s); and
 - Ensuring that the full change management process is appropriately managed and co-ordinated. In particular this focuses on appropriate reviews of businesses processes together with pertinent training, support and development for staff.
 - Resources needed to take the Council forward are consistently expended on day-to-day support.

The Intranet and Council Website Development

The **WDC Web Strategy** is fundamental to the provision of up to date information and on-line services being made available. The strategy will address the key issues for both current and future requirements of the Council's Community Website.

- The Council is working towards the provision of a fully transactional website, to allow citizens to carry out various transactions on-line. Several of the recently-procured systems allow for such transactions, notably the corporate cash receipting system, for example
- The Website is seen as a key communication tool for the citizens, Council and stakeholders.
- The intranet has been developed in-house using Microsoft FrontPage which is designed for the development and support of websites.
- The web portal enables Services to directly publishing information onto the Council website.

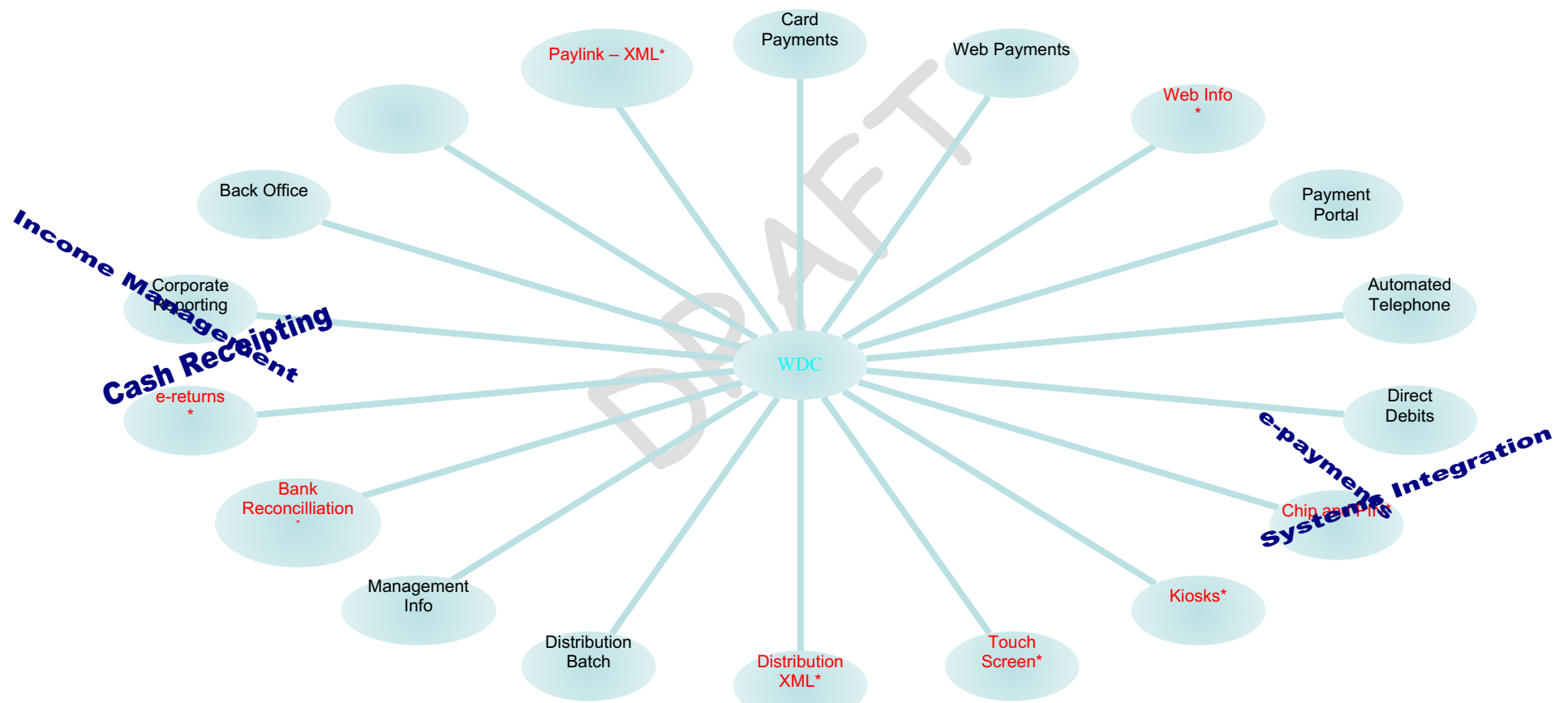
Cash Receipting System (CRS)

- WDC has already implemented a new cash receipting system. This application is a fully integrated cash receipting, income management and e-payments system that manages all payments from all sources across all departments and is available 24 hours, 7 days a week.
- It provides a complete solution for tracking income from the receipt of payments through a multiplicity of delivery channels, to the banking, reconciliation and dispersal of monies collected and provides end-to-end income processing, from electronic collection to fully automated reconciliation.
- The CRS system enables WDC to stay ahead of technological and legislative changes by providing a system that accurately reflects the working procedures of today, and is able to accommodate those of the future.
- The system is Euro-compliant with full multi-currency. Additional charges can be added to any card type, combination of fund and card type, or delivery channel, as either a prefixed value or percentage.

DRAFT

Fully Integrated Cash Receipting System

The growing move towards CRM particularly in a call centre environment, a key service such as cash receipting and income collection must both fit in with the new strategy and also provide a seamless integration between new and old systems. This diagram illustrates the potential for integrating services. The modules already implemented are displayed in black and the modules displayed in red are future potential developments.



e-Payments

To date, the following e-Payment modules have been introduced.

- Webstaff
 - This enables staff to take debit and credit card payments and track the payments from their workstation (via the intranet)
- Automatic Telephone Payments
 - This will allow citizens to make payments automatically by debit or credit card at any time that suits them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- On-line internet payments for the collection of:
 - Council Tax
 - Non Domestic Rates
 - Council Debtors
 - Community Charge
 - Council House Rents
 - Citizens can make payments over the internet for single or multiple accounts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Card Authorisation

All debit and credit card payments use card authorisation which is on-line and immediate. Once the details have been verified a request for payment authorisation is sent to the relevant acquiring bank using the ICON APACS approved e-payments engine and the bank either approves or declines the payment. Declined payments are held in a separate area.

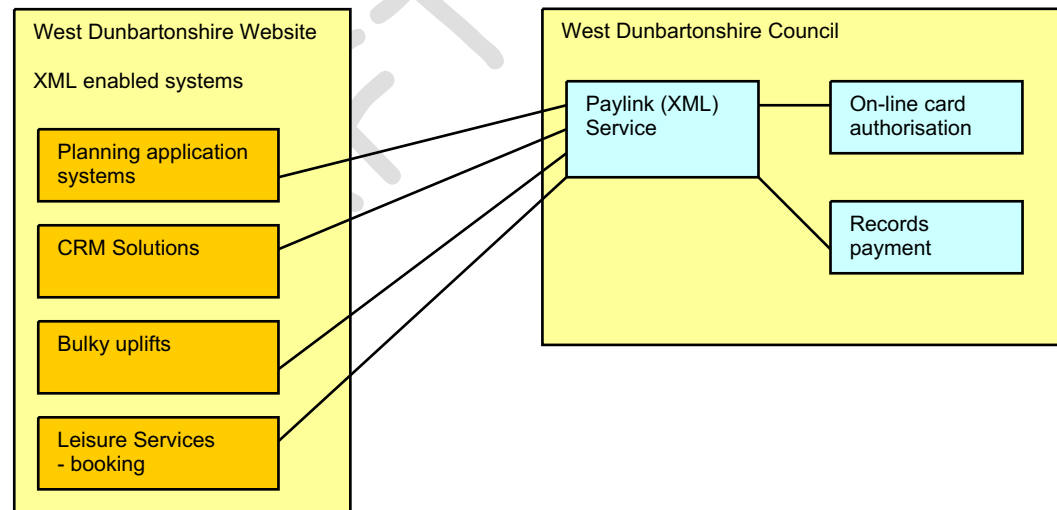
Paylink

All Local Authorities are by now well aware of the Governments policy statement regarding software, whereby systems should be moving towards e-GIF compliance. Underpinning this strategy is the need for all systems to become XML-compliant, in other words to communicate with each other. This will make communication between systems far easier as the language will be common.

The e-GIF is demanding that Local Authorities embrace XML and begin to “speak the language of government”.

How Does It Work?

In the example opposite, the web host application passes reference number and payment information to Paylink, which then authorises the payment online and records the information on the CRS database before passing control back to the host system.

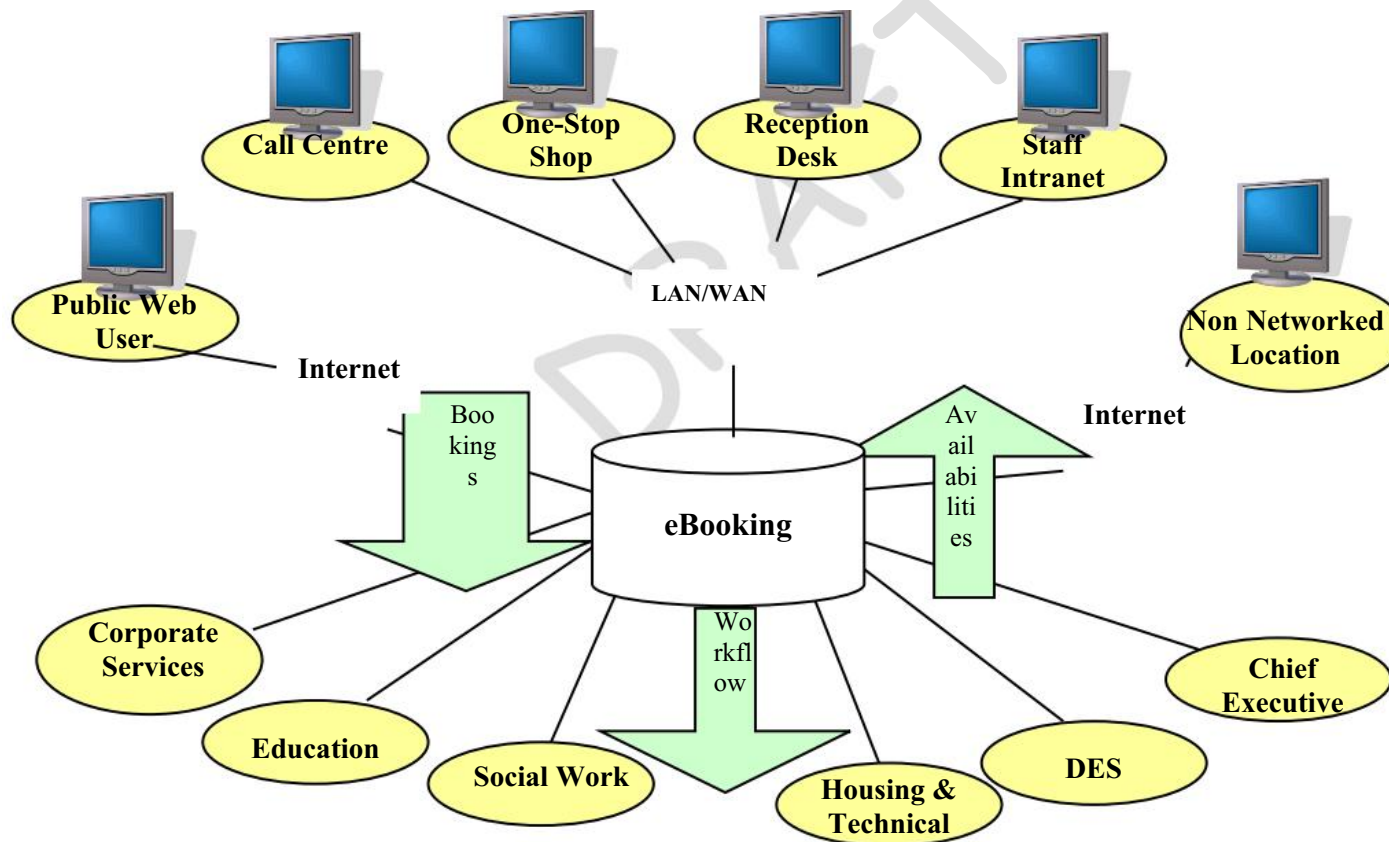


Using the Paylink facility, external systems can be fully integrated for on-line authorisation of payments without the need to re-key any information. Paylink can provide card payment facilities across a wide variety of systems.

eBooking

The multipurpose web-based eBooking system can handle the complete booking process for a wide range of council service and facilities – including rooms, sports pitches, courses, appointments and bulky item collections. It is unique because it provides more than simply a front-end for recording bookings. The eBooking system allows staff in service departments to efficiently manage the resulting workflow, encompassing the administration and fulfilment of bookings. It can operation across all contact channels – such as contact centres, one-stop shops, reception desks and Internet.

The eBooking system represents a significant evolution from systems designed primarily as tactical solutions for meeting eGovernment targets. IT gives councils the opportunity to achieve real improvements in the way they handle bookings – streamlining the processes, elimination duplication of work and improving resource utilisation.



Electronic Document Management and Workflow System (EDMWS)

- Business processes more efficient and effective by standardising working practices and the service to the customer
- Improved availability of information and increased usage of ICT for storage and retrieval
- All information about a citizen is available in the same place
- Lower Costs (the amount of time spent filing and retrieving documents is reduced or eliminated)
- Less Space required (archive rooms and paper filing cabinets are no longer necessary)

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

- CRM systems allow core data to be used for customer services over multiple channels and to give Council's a complete picture of their relationship with individual customers. This can greatly enhance customer service and the efficiency of service.
- A customer focused/multi-channel model for the delivery of services.
- This technology will allow the Council's staff to track, log and report on all contact with customers, through the CRM system which will link to the Council's back-office systems.
- Introduction of the Citizen's Account at local level to standards established by the national CRM/CA programme and to enable links to the national citizens account data set.
- Back-office integration issues need to be incorporated into in-depth reviews of business processes.
- Methods of measuring efficiency and effectiveness of service transactions can be developed using the CRM
- CRM is critical to the introduction of a telephone-based call centre, however a greater understanding of CRM is required throughout the Council.

Citizens Account Database (CAD)

- Citizens Account Database. The CRM system and Entitlement Card project will require the creation of a CAD which will be used to identify that customers are entitled to certain services. The CAD will also eventually links to all relevant back-office systems and to the CAG.

SmartCards/Entitlement Cards

- Smartcards are increasingly being used for a wide range of purposes. By taking an integrated customer account approach, a multi application card allows access to services such as bus travel, various leisure activities, library membership and other services.

Property Address Gazetteer

- Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG). This project will create a CAG for the Council which will be the definitive address database in use within the Council. It will be maintained by a data custodian who will ensure that all data is kept up-to-date, relevant and in the required BS7666 format. This CAG will eventually link to a National Address Gazetteer which will then contain data on all properties within all Scottish Councils. The CAG will also eventually link to all of the Council's back office address-reliant systems, so that a common client address is used by all departments.

e – Care

- e-Care is about better and more joined up care, advice and assistance to the people of Scotland through the use of computers and communication technology. With the individual's consent e-Care enables secure information-sharing between professionals - such as doctors, nurses, social workers and teachers - in public and voluntary agencies
- WDC are piloting the proof of concept along with Glasgow City Council and Greater Glasgow Health Board for children's services and the elderly. The e-care server is hosted in Glasgow and WDC have provided data and support for the development. The work WDC are carrying out will provide the other authorities in the Consortium with guidance on how to implement the store.

e-Procurement

- Better practice and efficiencies from procurement is one of the major target areas for Efficient Government. This is expected to achieve better efficiency and practice by encouraging public sector organisations to collaborate more widely on procurement, and by all public sector organisations using e-procurement methods

Corporate Debt Recovery System

- The emergence of the Internet has given us the ability to deploy information held in disparate legacy systems. However, it has generally been necessary to duplicate the information in a more cohesive form. This situation is not unique to the Council and the market has responded by developing what is known as ‘middleware’ effective technology which joins up other incompatible technologies without the need to move the data. These technologies have allowed us to develop a Corporate Debt Recovery system and provided the means to share data, bringing into sharper light the need for protocols which resolve issues such as security and citizen permission.

Software Library/Server Backup

- As well as the growing requirement for an effective, fully resourced backup regime managed by specialist staff there is a legislative requirement to retain historical e-mail and maintain an effective indexed software library.
- In order to maintain the integrity and security of the corporate computer systems that are core to the Council’s everyday business dedicated resources are required to manage this essential service

However, at the moment these initiatives are not joined up behind an overall modernisation vision at the highest levels within the Council.

19. People Skills – Professional Training and Development

Implementation of this Strategy will increase the opportunity for skills development across the Council. Increased awareness of how technology can be applied and aligned to service priorities will offer the opportunity to develop innovative business solutions.

- **Technical Skills**

The approach to staffing in ICT roles will be to have a highly skilled, flexible workforce within the Council. A skills database will be maintained at the centre with a view to matching project requirements to skill availability. This will enable decisions on training and coaching requirements and on determining when external assistance is required. It will also assist in the planning of technology replacement.

- **Soft Skills and Competencies**

The shift to a more customer facing approach requires a stronger focus on the analytical and management levels of ICT. Staff will play an important role in translating technical terms into appropriate language. People skills will become increasingly required of staff in ICT roles. There will be greater emphasis on:

- Process Analysis
- Business Analysis
- Project Management
- Supplier Relationship Management
- Customer Relationship Management
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Leadership and team working

20. Professional Development

ICT & Business Development has introduced a nationally recognised competency framework for staff in 2003. This competency framework identifies both the technical and personal skills required for different grades of staff. The competency framework is aligned with the ICT & Business Development Strategy to ensure that both present and future skills requirements are considered. The annual Performance Development Plan (PDP) process has been synchronised with the competency framework, and will continue to be used to provide regular review and agreement of employee development.

21. Other Services

Users require adequate training to ensure that full advantage is taken of the investment in ICT. Feedback Forms from ICT Training indicate that there is a gap between how much training user's believe they should get compared to what is provided. The Council's PDP process should be used to ensure that ICT training requirements are identified and agreed with employees, in order to maximise the benefit of the investment that the Council makes in ICT.

The British Computer Society's European Computer Driving Licence (known as ECDL) is a family of professionally recognised qualifications covering the key concepts of computing and enables staff to demonstrate their competence in computer skills. The qualifications range from equalskills, which require no prior ICT knowledge, to the full ECDL advanced expert status, which

demonstrates intensive ICT knowledge and skills. Achieving these qualifications can be fully supported within the Council, from training support to full examination sessions, resulting in achieving internationally recognised qualifications. The ECDL family of qualifications are based on an internationally agreed syllabus and therefore achieves a common standard for each level achieved. The implementation of the ECDL qualifications will encourage a general improvement in the basic knowledge and a higher level of competence in computing skills.

The ICT skills and competencies of staff need to keep pace with the implementation of the strategy. A nationally recognised ICT competency framework (Career Development Framework) which is regulated by the British Computer Society has been developed for staff in ICT & Business Development. It is recommended that other Services ensure that adequate provision is made to identify and develop appropriate ICT skills and competencies

The Council already recognises that information is a valuable asset. In addition, it is increasingly recognised that knowledge and expertise embodied in employees needs to be captured, stored and shared. A combined approach to information and knowledge management will ensure that the Council's information assets, organisational skills and competencies are harnessed to improve service delivery.

22. Information & Communications Technologies

ICT is a key enabler of the Council's service delivery objectives, this is achieved by ensuring that both the appropriate technology infrastructure and business management framework are in place.

Technology and business information management are crucial to the delivery of service improvements to the Council.

Whilst well able to support the needs of the Council, it is recognised that a more corporate approach to business, technology and ICT service delivery is necessary to enable the Council in its duty to deliver Best Value in the e-Government age.

Resources needed to take the Council forward are consistently expended on day-to-day support.

23. Delivery of Information & Communications Technologies

23.1 Desktop

The **WDC Desktop Strategy** document has been produced detailing the standard configuration for Personal Computers, PDA's Laptops and related peripherals.

- Business critical corporate databases should generally be located on a server to provide control of corporate data, backup and housekeeping processes, and to ensure any economies of scale or synergies are achieved e.g. in avoiding duplication of data. Standards will define occasions when exception is appropriate.
- Office tools such as Excel are not designed for development of complex business-critical applications. Using them in this way opens the Council to risk of loss of important information.
- Consistent, affordable approach to be adopted to desktop supply and support, aimed at reducing proliferation of makes, models, etc.
- Hardware standards with structured build will be defined by ICT & Business Development and adopted, complete with technology refresh programme. Standard hardware reduces the number of builds required and issues encountered on deployments of applications
- Microsoft Office Applications Suite is the standard desktop package deployed throughout the Council
- Core, service and corporate build layer standards to be created for desktop software
- Software imaging, backup, remote management and software deployment tools to be used. Directory services, remote management and development tools reduce the overhead involved in roll-outs and support
- Security & different levels of lock-down to be achieved. A standard back-up tool performs data restores with minimum effort.
- Reduction in number of suppliers and operating systems deployed to be targeted
- Anti virus software is deployed and regularly updated to protect the Council's computers from attacks by the latest viruses and worms, and to prevent such attacks spreading to other areas of the corporate network.

23.2 Mobile Technology

- Hardware and build standards for laptop and handheld computers to be defined and adopted, this will ensure consistent performance levels and assist in support provision.
- Access security and backup procedures to be defined and adopted. Risks to corporate data are increased by the use of mobile devices as they are necessarily outside of automatic control systems for much of the time. The responsibility of individuals for adherence to backup and security policies is correspondingly increased.
- Appropriate training to be provided in security and backup procedures for those using mobile technologies.
- In line with desktop, identify an affordable and effective delivery model that will consolidate the various makes and models of laptops deployed.
- The selection criteria for handheld computers to be specific to service requirements at this stage.
- Research & Development work to be commissioned to establish standards for use of handheld technology.

23.3 Help Desk

The ICT & Business Development helpdesk is the key point of contact for all Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) related queries or problems. In addition, the Helpdesk is a central source of information and guidance on all ICT matters.

23.4 Systems - Communications

A secure infrastructure needs to be in place as the Council moves to meet the requirements of the e-Government agenda. Investment and effort is required to maintain protection of the information assets and the confidentiality of the citizen or client. Communication technologies are fundamental to the provision of e-government services and demand for bandwidth continually increases particularly as enterprise applications, video and audio are deployed.

The **WDC Systems Strategy** document will address the telecommunication requirements of the Council.

The following points provides a summary of the content of the document

- Continue to ensure high availability and performance of networks, servers and systems
- Increased external use of Internet to access systems (e.g. for electronic mail and updating and querying of business applications)
- Enhance the security of confidential information essential to the maintenance of the trust relationship between the citizen and government
- Compliancy with the Government's e-GIF standards
- Provides flexibility to support the expansion of services into remote kiosks, PDA and mobile technologies
- Increased reliance on email for communication and information retrieval
- Foundations for voice, video, data traffic using compatible technologies to be introduced

23.5 Corporate Systems - Servers

The **WDC Systems Strategy** will be updated to meet the Council's service requirements and will deliver flexibility and responsiveness, laying foundations for both planned and unforeseen developments.

23.6 Internet / Intranet

Reliance on the Internet meeting the requirements of e-government brings a new set of challenges to the Council, the aspiration to provide service on a 24 x 7 basis where appropriate. The enhancements to security requirements have, until now, been largely defensive concerned with confining access to those within the organisation who have defined rights. Electronic business requires a different approach allowing interaction with public and external partners without loss of security of information assets through effective authentication mechanisms.

The intranet is designed to provide up to date and relevant information to employees of the Council.

The Council's website portal has been successful in providing devolved content management and publishing rights to all Departments and some community groups.

23.7 Security

Council wide ICT security policy is developed in line with BS7799. All members of staff have a responsibility for adhering to the policy and staff in ICT roles throughout the Council for implementation in line with Internal Audit Guidance.

As the Council moves into an e-Business environment it is important to realise that security requirements become infinitely more complex. The emphasis alters from defence of our network boundaries to management and control of interaction across the internet. The increased risk of virus infestation receives considerable media attention which is not overstated. In addition there are multiple types of attack from 'hackers' who exploit the openness of the internet technologies or weaknesses in the network defences.

The range and confidentiality of much public sector information makes us an attractive target and increases our responsibility for security. It is imperative that the Council acquires and maintains a level of knowledge that will enable informed decisions to be made, seeking expert advice where necessary.

ICT Security is the responsibility of all users. Although ICT & Business Development will continue to minimise the risk of security breaches by investment in appropriate software and hardware, the main risk to security is from the behaviour of users.

Awareness of the Council's ICT & Security policies will continue to be raised, and ICT & Business Development will continue to collaborate with other Services to develop robust and fully tested Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans.

Industry standard software and procedures have been deployed to ensure the security and data integrity of all ICT within West Dunbartonshire Council these include :-

- Email disclaimers
- Spam filtering tools
- Image filtering tools
- Auditing, reporting, and alerting on all domain controller activity
- Identification of unsecure files
- Anti-Virus software
- Firewalls

The above technologies enable ICT & Business Development to maintain a secure environment for West Dunbartonshire Council and other bodies

23.8 Business Continuity Planning

Business processes need to be used efficiently to maximise the benefit of investment in ICT systems. Introduction of new technology or alterations in the way that current technology is used will almost certainly require a change in working practices. How this change is managed will contribute to the overall success of the project. There is, therefore, a strong link between project management and change management.

Project management is primarily concerned with detailed planning, monitoring and control. Business change management is concerned with the impact on business processes and the effect of the changes on employees. Change in one part of the Council that may impact other parts. As with project management, careful planning for change is required.

There is currently a lack of resources dedicated to business change management in the Council, and no standard approach to facilitating change.

In addition, the Efficient Government Initiative seeks to identify efficiency savings accruing from changes in operational processes. Increasingly, external funding for investment in technology (e.g. Modernising Government Funds) is dependent on identifying the cost-benefits of the investment.

Consideration needs to be given to increasing the Council's capacity for business change management to ensure the benefits of ICT investment are identified and realised.

Serious computer failure is only one of the major incidents which could potentially affect the Council. Management of risk to business continuity is a Service responsibility. Corporate ICT plays a key role in preparing and advising on disaster recovery plans.

While attention is necessarily focused on plans to recover the ICT service, it is important not to ignore the responsibility of the individual departments in identifying critical processes and planning of how to manage their affairs until the service is restored. Other considerations include planning for incidents such as fires, floods, etc, where the infrastructure may suffer critical damage. Staff in ICT roles play a significant role in advising the Services on contingency planning to deal with such occurrences.

23.9 Software Licensing

Software 'piracy' is covered by legislation addressing general licensing issues and major companies are increasingly willing to use the courts to protect their products. Particular attention has been paid recently by organisations such as FAST (Federation Against Software Theft) to public sector bodies and their use of PC software. FAST (set up by the British Computer Society's Copyright Committee and the Business Software Alliance (an international organisation representing leading software and e-commerce developers) have been set up to ensure compliance with software licensing. All Elected Members and staff must make themselves aware of their responsibilities through the Council's Health & Safety policies on the use of Council Communications Equipment. The soon to be appointed Software Compliance Officer within ICT & Business Development will be responsible for ensuring master copies of software, licences, documentation, data and agreement for supply, warranty and maintenance are logged and maintained within the Council's database.

24. Implementation

Management of the implementation of the Strategy will be the responsibility of the Head of ICT & Business Development (and the Customer First Steering Group).

Local Government is an environment of constant change and new challenges and opportunities will emerge during the lifetime of this Strategy.

The ICT environment is particularly subject to rapid changes. The Strategy will require ongoing review to adapt to external and internal changes, and alterations will be controlled through the consultative and reporting processes.

IN SUMMARY

Strategy development and consultation are continuing activities as technology and services change, the ICT & Business Development Strategy document will continue to be reviewed and updated as these changes are introduced. During 2005/6 a number of pieces of work have been undertaken and if the objectives of the UK Modernising government strategy are to be realised, it will be necessary to expend a considerable amount of resource, time, effort and money.

Consequently it has been necessary to ensure that technology developments are judged not only against their contribution to modernising government but also to the purpose of the Council.

To effectively implement this strategy it is necessary to identify resources to complement the existing ICT skills in tandem with the requirements of the Modernising Government Agenda.

An **ICT & Business Development Implementation and Resourcing Plan** has been produced to underpin the requirements of this strategy.

DRAFT

Terms of Reference

Term	Definition
BCS	British Computer Society
Broadband	High Speed Internet Access
CAD	Citizens Account Database
CAG	Customer Address Gazetteer
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CRS	Cash Receipting System
Digital	A way of encoding/transmitting information
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence
EDMWS	Electronic Document Management Workflow System
E-empowering	Electronically allowing, authorising, enabling, permitting
e-GIF	Electronic Government Interoperability Framework, sets out policies and standards for achieving integration
e-Government	E-government applies concepts of electronic commerce
e-skills	The Sector Skills Council for IT, Telecoms, Contact Centres
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
iDTV	Interactive Digital Television

IEE	Institute of IT, Electronic and Electrical Professionals
liP	Investor in People
Infrastructure	The basic structure of an organisations system or network
Internet	An organisation’s external website
Interoperability	Systems and products from different suppliers can work together without special effort by the user or support services
Intranet	An organisation’s internal website
ISMIS	Institute for the Management of Information Services
ISQW	Information Systems Quality of Work
Methodology	The system of methods and principles used in a particular discipline
MGF	Modernising Government Funding
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant, handheld mobile computing device
PRINCE	“Projects in Controlled Environments” is a methodology covering the organisation, management and control of projects. PRINCE was first developed by the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA) now part of the Office of Government Commerce
R&D	Research and Development
Server	A computer or device on a network that manages resources and provides processing power
XML	Extensible Markup Language
Website Portal	A web site that acts as a single access point to a broad array of resources and services