

Committee: e-Government Task Group
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: IT Programme 2003/04
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Summary

- 1 This report provides details of a number of IT projects and seeks approval for a proposed 2003/04 IT programme. The report also recommends that the sum of £146,170 be included in the draft Capital Programme, to supplement specific e-Government related grant.

Proposed Development Programme

- 2 Set out in Appendix One is a proposed IT Programme for 2003/04 totalling £430,000 along with a list of possible alternative projects totalling a further £184,280. Set out as Appendix Two are brief details of each of these projects, including summary costs and benefits. The projects have been divided into three groups:
- (a) e-government developments – Specific projects contributing towards achieving the Government target of having all local services available electronically by 2005.
 - (b) User defined developments – Projects requested by service departments relating to both new developments and the modernisation of existing applications.
 - (c) Core IT technical developments – Projects required to update the IT infrastructure, in order to cope with growing and increasingly complex use of IT within the Council.
- 3 Capital funding for IT projects of approximately £150,000 has been approved in previous years and it is suggested that a similar sum be set aside for developments in 2003/04. This would enable a programme of £430,000 to be funded, as follows:

IEG Funding ^{note 1}	£200,000
Uttlesford Funding – General Fund	146,170
Verification Framework ^{note 2}	15,840
Uttlesford Funding – HRA (already approved in Jan 2002)	67,990
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	£430,000

Note 1 – Refers to monies due from the Government's Modernising Fund, specifically to fund e-government related developments. It follows the successful submission of an Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) statement in October 2002.

Note 2 – Refers to specific Government grant to support the implementation of the anti-fraud benefit verification regime.

4 Even with this level of funding, there will still be a considerable shortfall between the total list of potential projects and what can be achieved. It has therefore been necessary to identify priorities. The following criteria have been used:

a. High Priority Projects

- i) E-Government projects. There is a requirement to spend the £200,000 IEG funding on e-government related developments and associated infrastructure improvements.
- ii) Unavoidable projects, such as the Housing iWorld upgrade.

b. Low Priority

- i) Projects requiring a high level of on-going support by the IT Section. Staff resources are very stretched and this has to be recognised as a significant constraint.
- ii) Projects with high annual support charges, as revenue funding is also constrained.

5 In consultation with Service Managers projects have been prioritised on a scale between 1 (high priority) and 5 (low priority). The priority rating for each project is shown in Appendix One.

6 It should be noted that it might be possible to fund some of the reserve programme by:

- a. Investigating the possibility of jointly purchasing the Financial Management System with another local authority, resulting in potential savings in project costs.
- b. Securing additional funding for national e-government initiatives. For example, there may be additional funding available for the National Land Information Service (NLIS) project.

If such savings or additional funding is forthcoming one or more of the un-funded projects could be added to the programme. However, this would need to be the subject of a further report setting out how the on-going financial and staffing implications would be addressed.

Revenue Cost Implications

7 The on-going revenue consequences of the proposed programme are also set out in Appendix One. Most of the items in the suggested programme have few or no net revenue budget implications. Even so, there would be additional revenue costs of £19,510 per annum, to be financed as follows:

Growth items included in draft revenue estimates	£11,700
Verification Framework Funding	7,810
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	£19,510

Conclusions

- 8 A copy of this report is being considered by the Member E-Government Task group on 22 January 2003 and its views will be orally reported at this meeting.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 In addition to the specific Government Grant of £200,000 in 2003/04, a sum of £146,170 be included in the draft Capital Programme for 2003/04.
- 2 Subject to any comments of the E-Government Task Group, the programme set out in Appendix One be approved.

Background Papers: IEG2 Statement.

Appendix One**Suggested IT Programme 2003/04**

	Proposed Programme		Reserve Programme		Priority
	Project Cost	Net Annual Cost	Project Cost	Net Annual Cost	
<u>E-Government Projects</u>	£	£	£	£	
1. E-Services Development - General	40,000	2,000			1
2. E-Services Development – GIS Online	25,000	3,500			2
3. Intranet Development	17,000	3,200			2
4. Essex Online Partnership Projects	30,000	1,000			1
5. National E-Government Projects	20,000	1,000			1
6. Web Casting of Council Meetings			0	21,600	4
7. E-Procurement			20,000	1,600	4
8. Uttlesford Extranet			50,000	17,700	5
	132,000	10,700	70,000	40,900	
<u>User Requests</u>					
9. Legal Services – Case Management System			20,000	1,800	5
10. Upgrade to Housing System	67,990	0			1
11. Replacement Financial Management System	130,000	0			2
12. Funding for miscellaneous projects			10,000	1,000	3
13. Housing Benefits – Verification Framework	15,840	7,810			2
14. Contract Services – Replacement DSO system			23,000	0	3
15. Extension of wide area network to sheltered units			34,000	16,440	3
	213,830	7,810	87,000	19,240	
<u>Technical Infrastructure Improvements</u>					
16. Networked Test Environment			27,280	0	4
17. Completion of upgrade to operating system & messaging platforms	29,170	0			2
18. Upgrade to disaster recovery infrastructure	40,000	1,000			1
19. Replacement Server Programme	15,000	0			3
	84,170	1,000	27,280	0	
Total Programme Cost	430,000	19,510	184,280	60,140	

Appendix Two - Proposed E-Government Projects

1. E-Services Development - General

Project Description – Further development of online services. The project will help achieve compliance with national e-government targets (primarily, that all services should be available electronically by 2005). Development is likely to be in the following areas:-

- Creation of web pages for the remaining core service areas, including community & leisure and democratic services.
- Integration of Housing & Revenues applications with website.
- Creation of a Museum website, as part of National Grid for Learning.
- Creation of a Tourism website, probably in conjunction with the East of England Tourist Board.

It is anticipated that the work will be carried out partly in house and partly by specialist web developers.

As online services become more widely used the infrastructure will need to be enhanced to cope with the additional demand. Consequently, the budget includes provision for an additional web server and firewall.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

Professional web development services		£20,000
Additional hardware & software		
Web Server & software	3,260	
Stonegate Firewall	7,900	
Web Development Software	3,000	
	—————	
		14,160
Implementation Services		2,500
Contingency		3,340
		—————
		£40,000

Annual Costs

Additional firewall support charges, including Managed Service	£2,000
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Benefits

1. Provides citizens with an additional means of accessing Council services and which are available outside of normal office hours.
2. Enables services to be joined up in ways that make sense to citizens, for example, by mirroring common 'life events' (such as moving house or leaving school) and by providing seamless links between different tiers of government.
3. Reduces the opportunity for delay and error when processing requests for service, as online transactions will be linked directly to back office processes. Will lead to long-term efficiency improvements.
4. Provides an easy way of extending access to the democratic process.

2. E-Services Development – GIS

Project Description – Specific online development to provide public access to information held on the corporate GIS system, including digital maps, map overlays and associated data.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

eGGP licences note 1	£ 12,500
Services	
Installation & customisation	3,900
Training	800
Hardware – server	4,000
Contingency note 2	3,800
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	£ 25,000

Note 1 - Cost would increase to £20,000 for 100 concurrent users.

Note 2 - Likely to be additional charges from Ordnance Survey

Annual Charges

eGGP annual maintenance charges	3,500
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Anticipated Benefits

1. Provides direct public access to the wealth of information held on the GIS system, including:
 - a. 60,000 Planning applications, dating back to 1948.
 - b. Planning constraint data, including 5,500 Tree Preservation Orders, 3,600 listed buildings and 1,900 archaeological sites.
 - c. Other data sets, including land charges & grounds maintenance.
2. Online provision of information would reduce number of queries directed at planning staff, although it is impossible to quantify the impact at this stage.
3. Would provide opportunities to publish data from other organisations, such as Essex County Council, local utilities etc.

3. Intranet Development

Project Description – Further development of the Council’s Intranet system, including:

- Installation of query handling software to assist staff in problem solving when dealing with citizens face-to-face (for example, at Community Information Centre (CICs)) and via the telephone. The development would build upon the LEAP (life events) pathfinder work carried out by a partnership of London Boroughs.
- Automation of a range of administrative tasks, such as processing starters’ & leavers’ documentation, internal procurement etc.
- Re-design and modernisation of the Intranet, including single sign-on to Council systems.
- Development of remote access facilities for staff, building upon the work being undertaken with Members.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

Query Handling & related Software (estimate only)	£10,000
Citrix, Siteminder & ACE security / authentication software	7,000

£17,000

Annual Costs

Software Support Charges	500
BT Anytime Accounts for Remote Workers 15 x 12 x £15pm	2,700

3,200

Anticipated Benefits

1. An increased percentage of public enquiries would be dealt with at the initial point of contact, enabling an enhanced service to be provided at CICs.
2. Would provide remote access facilities for housing repair and environmental services staff after the existing Cable & Wireless Service is withdrawn.
3. Would enable tele-working to be piloted, initially in the Revenues & Benefits Section. This initiative forms part of an approved Best Value Review Improvement Plan.
4. Would provide secure extranet facilities for the Uttlesford / Stevenage Audit Partnership and, potentially, other suitable partnerships.
5. Would simplify login arrangements for staff and enable the Intranet to be a more effective focal point for communications with staff.

4. Essex Online Partnership Projects

Project Description – Provision for the financial implications of participating in the Essex Online Partnership. The partnership, which is made up of representatives from all Essex authorities, has been formed to help progress the development of joined-up services within the county. It has identified the following projects:

e-Forms	Secure Network
CRM Strategy	Project Review
Broadband Strategy	Electoral Registration Systems
Change of Address	Wired Communities

Summary Costs

Project Costs - £30,000

This is a provision for participation in Essex Online projects. Although it is too early to anticipate where exactly expenditure will be required, it may include the following:

- e-Forms – Each participating authority will be required to purchase Adobe forms development software, approximate cost £10,000.
- Change of Address – Participating authorities may need to link to www.ihavemoved.com, the national change of address service. The approximate cost for this service is £8,000, plus ad hoc development work.

All costs incurred are likely to be the result of joint negotiation with other Essex authorities.

Annual Costs – cannot be determined at this stage. Assumed to be £1,000 per annum for budgetary purposes.

Benefits

1. Successful partnerships attract additional Government funding of up to £2,000,000. To obtain this funding however it will be necessary for the Essex Online partnership to demonstrate tangible results. The active participation of all Essex authorities is therefore vital.
 2. The objectives of the Essex Online partnership are:
 - a. To support and expedite the meeting of Best Value Performance Indicator 157.
 - b. To facilitate the creation of integrated solutions to customers' needs and expectations.
 - c. To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our individual organisations by working together and sharing our valuable, often unique, skills and resources.
 - d. To present socially inclusive, integrated, accessible and higher quality local services to Essex citizens and local businesses.
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5. Provision for future national projects

Project Description: A contingency sum for future central government-led projects that may require local development. Possible projects include:

- The National Local Authorities Secure Electoral Register (NLIS) – accreditation to level 3.
- Participation in the national LASER (local authority secure electoral registers) project.
- GIS – Ordnance Survey positional accuracy improvement programme.
- The National Land Use Database and
- The National Change of Residence Service.

Summary Costs

Project Costs - £20,000

This is a contingency sum only. Although it is too early to anticipate where exactly expenditure will be required it may include the following:

- NLIS – cost of linking existing land charges application to the NLIS & making it compatible with the NLPG. £8,000
- Software to comply with Ordnance Survey positional accuracy improvement programme (estimate). 5,000

Annual Costs - Cannot be determined at this stage. Assumed to be £1,000 per annum for budgetary purposes.

Benefits

1. Dependent upon the projects to be funded. However, generally, these national projects are intended to improve and simplify citizens' dealings with government. For example, the National Change of Residence service will

- enable a citizen to notify government once of a change of address, with the information being forwarded electronically to all relevant agencies. The LASER project will provide a platform for future e-voting initiatives.
2. Local progress with national projects may help to attract future funding.
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6. Web Casting of Council Meetings

Project Description: The live broadcast, via the Internet, of Council meetings.

Summary Costs: Charges are on an annual basis of £21,600 for a full year. Shorter subscription periods are available.

Benefits

1. Enables citizens to be involved in the local democratic process without the need to attend meetings.
 2. Enables meetings to be broadcast 'live' and / or recorded for viewing at a later date.
 3. Software enables citizens to give feedback whilst a meeting is taking place.
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7. E-Procurement

Project Description: Installation of software to enable goods and services to be ordered and paid for electronically, directly from suppliers. Will also enable suppliers to submit resulting invoices to the Council for payment electronically.

Summary Costs

Project Cost

Implementation and Licensing costs	£11,000
Hardware	4,000
Contingency	5,000
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	£ 20,000

Annual Cost

Software support charges	£1,600
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Benefits

1. Reductions in administration costs of ordering goods and services and processing subsequent purchase invoices.
 2. Reduced delivery periods for orders.
 3. Opportunities for suppliers to reduce overheads when transacting with the Council.
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8. Uttlesford Extranet

Project Description: The creation of an Extranet within the Uttlesford district accessible by local organisations including the district council, town and parish councils and local voluntary groups. The project would include the further development of the Committee Management system (CMIS) to enable local

councils to include details of their own meetings, Members etc on their own web site.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

Development of CMIS application	£5,000
Hardware (PCs, routers, printers, servers etc)	15,000
Software (Office 2000, Citrix client, Exchange etc)	6,630
Siteminder / ACE security / authentication software	£ 3,000
Training note 1	5,250
Comms connections	3,000
Temporary Project Officer	10,000
Contingency	2,120
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	£50,000

Note 1 – Assumes that 15 local councils would participate in the project.

Annual Costs

Internet access (BT anytime service, or equivalent)	2,700
IT Support Charges (the project would require permanent part-time support)	15,000
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	£17,700

Benefits

1. Would facilitate the rapid dissemination and exchange of information for a range of local services, such as planning development control and environmental protection.
2. Would provide information services and chat room facilities for local councillors and volunteers.
3. The project would pilot many of the technical and non-technical issues that will need to be addressed when developing the countywide Essex Extranet.

Proposed User-Requested Projects

9. Legal Section – Case Management System

Project Description – Purchase and installation of a time, task and document management system, for use within the Legal Section. The system would include elements of workflow, for example, automating elements of standard processes, such as debt collection and possession cases.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

Application software (6 user licence) note1	£3,000
MS SQL Server	1,420
Installation & Training Services	6,200
Hardware, including software, back-up device etc	5,000
Contingency	4,380
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	£20,000

Note 1 – Other solutions are potentially more expensive, particularly if document management is to be incorporated into the solution.

Annual Charges

Annual licence fee £ 1,800

Benefits

1. Would improve case handling (and thus enhance service delivery) by running standard procedures, time recording and improved management control systems.
2. Would provide information for recharge purposes

10. Upgrade of Housing System

Project Description – Upgrade of the SX3 integrated housing system to iWorld. This is an enforced upgrade by the supplier. The costs, timings etc have been the subject of considerable negotiation between the supplier and the local authority user group.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

i-World Licence	£ 21,640
Sx3 migration costs	32,350
Hardware Upgrade	4,000
Bespoke work to interfaces & Contingency	10,000
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	£ 67,990

Annual Charges

No additional charges are anticipated.

Benefits

1. Ensures that the Council's systems are supported and comply with all current housing legislation, particularly in respect of housing allocations.
2. Provides a platform for the introduction of housing related e-government developments.

11. Replacement Financial Management Systems

Project Description - To upgrade or replace the existing Radius financial management, creditors, debtors and bank reconciliation applications. These systems are very old (acquired in 1993) and are running on an old, unsupported version of Unix.

Summary Costs – the estimate is based upon a quotation from an existing supplier – tenders in accordance with the EEC Services Directive will be required. It should also be noted that it is intended to try and reduce costs by buying a new system in partnership with another Council.

Project Costs	
Hardware, including a replacement Windows 2000 server	£10,000
Applications Software	44,690
Business Objects (reporting tool)	4,790
Implementation Services	49,110
Contingency, including integration with other applications	21,410
	130,000
Annual Costs	
Software maintenance charges	11,910
Business Objects (reporting tool)	1,280
Less: Savings in existing revenue costs:	
Unix Software Charges note 1	-1,500
Lease Charges note 1	-4,500
Existing support charges	-7,190
Net	£ 0

Note 1 – Relates to Unix Superserver – FIMS is the last system still on the Superserver & therefore it can be decommissioned once the new system is live. However, there will be short-term timing differences that will need funding.

Benefits

- a. Improved functionality, for example e-billing, where invoices can be emailed directly from the system to debtors.
- b. More user friendly.
- c. Improved year-end processing.
- d. Closer integration with PC products, such as MS Office.
- e. Web, document imaging and email enabled.
- f. Improved data analysis / modelling capability.
- g. Euro compliant.

12. Funding for miscellaneous projects

Project Description: To provide funding for a range of minor, user requested projects with demonstrable service and efficiency benefits. Examples of projects that were funded under this heading in 2002/03 were:

- Extension of wide area network (WAN) to Museum Laboratory.
- Provision of fast data links and extension of WAN to T.I.C.
- Acquisition of hardware to provide environmental services staff with remote access to central systems.

Summary of costs

Project Costs - Sum of £10,000 to fund minor projects – allocation of funds to be determined by Corporate Management Team.

Annual Costs – To be determined – unlikely to be significant.

Benefits

Dependent upon the project. However, it is expected that in each case relatively minor expenditure will lead to a significant improvement in efficiency.

13. Housing Benefits - Verification Framework (VF)

Project Description – Installation of software to manage the increased workload created by the anti-fraud verification regime. The project includes the purchase and installation of an additional document imaging scanner (to deal with the increased volumes of documentation resulting from VF) and hardware and software for three additional staff. A report on the introduction of VF is to be submitted to the Resources Committee in the near future.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

PCs x 3	£ 2,700
Office 2000 / Exchange 5.5 / Citrix Metaframe / Word 97	1,330
Additional DIP scanner, including Kofax software	5,500
ICLipse additional users	1,980
ICLipse Implementation Services	£1,000
First Software VF Module	2,500
Fox IT Implementation Charges	830
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	£15,840

Annual Costs

ICLipse Support Charges	190
First Software Support Charges	630
Extension to Fox IT FM Contract note 1	6,990
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	£ 7,810

Note 1 – The First Software application is supported under a Managed Service contract by Fox IT, hence the additional support costs for the new module.

The project costs will be met by VF Set Up grant, whilst the support charges will be met by VF on-going grant and income from WIBS subsidy.

Benefits

1. Helps cope with the extra workload, and resultant paperwork, known to be associated with the introduction of VF.
 2. Provides ICT facilities for proposed new Revenues staff.
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14. Contract Services – Replacement DSO management system

Project Description – The purchase and installation of a replacement stores / DSO management system. The existing system is rather old and whilst still supported, the original suppliers have ceased trading and its long-term future is uncertain. The project would include the installation of broadband into the depot and the creation of links to the Council's wide area network (WAN).

Summary Costs

Project Costs

DSO System (estimate)	£10,000
Hardware – server etc	5,000
Broadband connection charges, including routers	1,800
Suppliers charges for creation of import / export files	3,000
Siteminder / ACE security software	1,000
Contingency	2,200
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	£23,000

Annual Costs

Annual software support charges	1,500
Broadband rental	400
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	£ 1,900

Benefits

1. A replacement system could be supported by the IT Section, enabling some savings to be made on the existing £3,000 pa support fees.
2. By electronically transmitting works order and invoice files between the stores and central housing systems, significant efficiency savings could be achieved. At present works orders generated by the housing system have to be re-keyed manually into the Contract Services' stores system, whilst invoices generated by the stores system have to be re-keyed manually into the central housing system.
3. By providing Contract Services with access to the WAN, communications with the rest of the Council will be improved.

15. Extension of wide area network to sheltered units

Project Description – Provision of networked access to Council systems, including email and Internet, for all sheltered housing officers.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

BT Installation of ISDN at each sheltered unit	£ 3,780
PCs and printers (small HP laserjet)	17,290
Network Hardware	1,140
Software (Office 2000	3,800
Additional Siteminder / RCA licences	3,000
Training	2,000
Contingency	2,990
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	£34,000

Annual Costs

BT line charges	10,790
BT Anytime (fixed charge for unlimited usage)	3,650
Consumables	2,000
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	£16,440

Benefits

1. Would simplify and speed up communication between Housing Section and sheltered housing officers (SHOs). All communications are currently either by telephone or post.
 2. Would provide SHOs with access to the Council's central computer systems, as well as email and the Internet.
 3. Could be extended at a latter stage to provide general Internet access from communal areas for residents.
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Proposed Technical Infrastructure Projects

16. Networked Test Environment

Summary of project – Installation of a separate network in order to test new applications, releases, bug fixes etc, and to replicate problems / devise solutions, before working in a live environment. The project would consist of the installation of a Windows 2000 network, a Citrix thin client environment and an applications server on which test versions of applications would be installed.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

Network, Print & Application Servers	9,000
3 x Windows 2000 Server (5 clients)	2,080
Backup software and tape device	2,970
Citrix Metaframe Server	£ 8,850
Workstations & Printer	2,560
Network Configuration	1,820
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	27,280

Annual Charges - Nil

Benefits

1. Helps to ensure that new applications, upgrades etc are more successful when installed in a live environment.
 2. Reduces disruption to users.
 3. Minimises downtime for online services.
 4. Aids problem identification and resolution.
 5. Provides a safe environment in which users can test new applications, upgrades etc, without effecting live system.
 6. Provides an environment to test disaster recovery procedures, in particular, to ensure that applications and data can be restored from back-up tapes.
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17. Completion of upgrade to operating system and messaging platforms

Project Description: Completion of the partially funded 2002/03 project to upgrade, over a period of two years, existing Windows NT, Exchange 5.5 and Citrix Metaframe 1.8 platforms to latest versions. By 31 March 2003, phase 1 will have been completed, comprising the upgrade of two Citrix servers to latest version and the creation of a Windows 2000 'primary domain'. Phase 2 will

consist of upgrades to the remaining Citrix servers and an upgrade of the Exchange messaging system to the latest release.

Summary costs

Project Costs

Software & Licences	26,180
Training	2,990
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	£29,170

Annual Costs - none

Benefits

1. Increased reliability and reduced down time, particularly for email services.
2. Software version supported by Microsoft.
3. Be able to take advantage of the advanced features of Windows 2000, Citrix XP & Exchange 2000.

18. Upgraded Disaster Recovery Infrastructure

Project Description – The centralisation of systems backups, using an automated tape-based back-up device. All 35 servers are currently backed-up individually. As the number of servers is increasing rapidly, so too is the time taken to manage the back-up process.

Other Options Evaluated – A number of other options have been considered, but were dismissed on cost grounds, including:

- Centralised Tape Drive – All servers are backed-up to a large drive device, which can handle 30 tapes at a time. The device automatically handles tape detention periods, indexing etc. This solution has been costed at £65,000
- Storage Area Network – This is the ideal solution. Data storage is consolidated onto one centralised device, resulting in fast backups and restores. For archiving and disaster recovery purposes, the centralised device is backed-up to a centralised tape device, preferably in another building. Because this is the full solution, it is also very costly, estimated at £156,000.

Summary Costs

Project Costs

Backup Software	£ 12,000
Networking	2,000
Hardware – Tape drives & Servers	20,000
Training	1,000
Implementation & commissioning	5,000
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	£ 40,000

Annual Costs

Software Support Charges	1,000
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Benefits

1. Automates the daily administration of back-ups, saving time and minimising the risk of error. There are also considerable concerns about the reliability of existing back-up arrangements.
 2. Reduces the time requirements for backing up individual servers. Some applications are taking all night to back-up. This may soon interfere with daytime systems usage and the effectiveness & availability of online services. The proposed solution will reduce the time taken to back-up servers.
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19. Replacement Server Programme

Project Description – A number of the Council's servers are now several years old. It is proposed to create a rolling replacement programme to ensure continuity of service. Likely replacements in the first year would include the GIS and Printer Servers.

Summary Costs

Project Costs – A provision of £15,000, sufficient to replace 3 servers in the forthcoming year.

Annual Costs – None

Benefits

1. Minimises down-time and risk of data loss.
2. Would enable the Council to take advantage of the improved specification of new machines. For example, it would be possible to purchase replacement servers with RAID storage, which aids recovery in the event of serious hardware failure.

Committee: e-Government Task Group
Date: 22 January 2003
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: E-Government – Progress Report
Author: John Mercer (01799) 510421

Summary

- 1 This report provides an update on progress with the 2002/03 E-Government work programme, including the redevelopment of Members' home computing services.

Progress to Date

- 2 Several e-Government related IT projects are currently in progress. These projects are intended to lay the foundations for future e-government related developments, as well as demonstrate progress in implementing electronic government by the target date of 31 December 2005.
- 3 A summary of progress on each of the projects is included in the attached appendix. Although reasonable progress is being made, some slippage has been experienced due to a series of hardware failures. Two Citrix servers, an Exchange server and the firewall server have all failed in recent weeks, the latter having failed twice. As a consequence, staff resources have had to be re-directed to problem solving. There has also been considerable disruption to services. Although these problems have largely been resolved some further work is required to Citrix and another re-build of the firewall is required.
- 4 Included amongst the projects is an upgrade to Members' home computing facilities. The upgrade will provide Members with secure access to the Council's systems from the Internet. This will be a more flexible, reliable and cheaper means of access. Again, this project has been delayed by hardware failure (in this instance an Exchange Server). Even so, the basic infrastructure is in place, 'web mail' facilities (which provide access to email from the Internet) have been set up and new security arrangements established. Investigations are currently taking place to determine the best way of enabling Members to download email to their laptops for off-line working. Once this is completed, the new system will be given to a small group of Members for testing. An update on progress, along with a demonstration of developments to date, will be given at the meeting.

E-Government Funding

- 5 To encourage councils to meet the 2005 target, additional Government funding of £190m is being provided for 2003/04. To qualify for a share of these funds, the Council was required to submit an "Implementing

Electronic Government Statement" (known as IEG2) to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) by 31 October 2002. The purpose of the Statement was to set out the actions the Council proposes to take to meet the 2005 target. The Council has recently been advised by the ODPM that its IEG2 statement has been accepted and as a result, the Council will receive £200,000 funding in 2003/04. Allocation of this funding is the subject of a separate report to this meeting.

Performance Indicators

- 6 Despite the recent setbacks it is still hoped to have around 40% of services available electronically by the end of the financial year. This is in line with the IT Section's interim target for reaching the 2005 e-government deadline.
- 7 Also for e-government purposes, the number of visitors to the Council's website is being monitored. The latest statistics are set out below:
 - Total visitors since re-launch of web site in September 2002 – 9,931
 - Total visitors in last week – 823.
 - Average daily visitors – 81.
 - Since September 2002, the site has had visitors from 30 countries.
- 8 These figures have been achieved without any significant publicity. However, it is intended to start publicising the availability of online services in the near future, beginning with the planning portal. The portal provides online access to planning information dating from 1989. It also offers the public the opportunity to comment online about current applications. With publicity, it is expected to reach the initial target level of 3,500 visitors per annum to the web site by 31 March 2003.

FOR INFORMATION

Background Papers: IEG2 Statement

Appendix

Progress Report – E-Government Projects

Project	Progress as at 31 December 2002	Next Steps	Budget Position	
			Budget £43,410	To Date £42,600
Web Hosting	<p>Installation of Infrastructure completed.</p> <p>Members' new dial-up arrangements being installed & tested.</p>	<p>Updated Members' Intranet pages to be completed shortly.</p> <p>System to be further tested by volunteers & rolled-out to all Members during February – March 2003.</p>		
NLPG	<p>Hardware & software purchased.</p> <p>Temporary assistant appointed to help resolve queries resulting from data matching exercises.</p> <p>Property data extracted from the Council's various databases and matched to the Essex County Council street gazetteer. Amendments to street data completed.</p> <p>Amended data submitted to Intelligent Addressing (the Government's contractors) for data matching to property level. The results of this matching are expected in early February 2003.</p>	<p>Installation of NLPG module of GIS system delayed until April 2003, due to problems upgrading the GIS system.</p> <p>Once results of property-level data-matching received, amendments will be made (likely to be several thousand errors). Amended data to be re-submitted to Intelligent Addressing for further checking.</p> <p>Once data matching is completed, a Local Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG) will be created, and linked to the NLPG.</p>	Budget £32,500	To Date £11,705
E-Payments	<p>Hardware & software installed and system configured.</p> <p>Negotiations with banks completed and contract signed with Barclays PLC to provide credit and debit card facilities.</p> <p>System 'live' in cash offices from 22 January</p>	<p>Intranet payment facilities, to enable payment to be made by 'phone, currently being installed.</p> <p>Internet payment facility to follow immediately afterwards.</p>	Budget £25,550	To Date £14,270

Project	Progress as at 31 December 2002	Next Steps	Budget Position	
	2003.			
Web Site Development	Upgraded web site 'live', Recycling & refuse collection sections now completed. Inter-active Development Control section 'live'. Stansted campaign section completed.	Disabled issues section, including a voluntary services database, under development. Online access to Revenues services currently being investigated.	Budget £30,000	To Date £18,850
Content Management	Contractor Appointed & initial project meeting held.	Installation scheduled to be completed by 31 March 2003.	Budget £25,000	To Date £0