E-GOVERNMENT TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.00 pm on 7 OCTOBER 2004

Present:-   Councillor V J T Lelliott – Chairman
               Councillors A R Thawley.

Officers in attendance:-   M Brean, L Bunting, M Jimmick, J K Mercer and
                              A Webb.

Also present: Dr S Willoughby.

EG5   **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R M Lemon.

EG6   **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2004 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to an amendment to Minute EG4 – (f) Replacement Financial Information System (FIS) – in the second paragraph - 2004/05 should read 2003/04.

EG7   **BUSINESS ARISING**

(i)   Minute EG2 (ii) – Broadband Aggregation Project

The Development Officer, Martin Jimmick, gave details of an Essex Broadband Partnership meeting he had recently attended. He said that BT were anticipating an ADSL coverage of 99.6% but there were no direct plans as yet for the other 0.4%. He also reported on a strategy for businesses to help them learn how to utilise Broadband.

(ii)   Minute EG4 (f) – Replacement Financial Information System (FIS)

It was reported that this system had gone live on the due date.

Councillor Thawley referred to a slight problem with the GIS system. The Principal IT and Audit Officer said that he would investigate and referred to an instruction page which was due to be prepared.

EG8   **SAFFIRE**

Dr S Willoughby gave a demonstration of the new Saffire community website and then left the meeting. Members considered the website to be very good and would be useful to the Uttlesford community.

EG9   **2004/05 E-GOVERNMENT WORK PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Executive Programme Manager (Access to Services) submitted a report providing an update on progress of the 2004/05 E-Government work programme.

It was reported that a significant programme of development work was being carried out in the current financial year, including a number of e-Government related projects. A summary of each project was presented to Members for their information.

(i)   E-Government Implementation Plan

The Executive Programme Manager (Access to Services) gave details on the various projects being carried out to help meet Best Value Performance Indicator 157 (all services to be available electronically by 31 December 2005). By 31 March 2004, 62% of services were available electronically, compared to an original target of 60%. The Council was well placed to meet BVPI 157 and, provided a reasonable level of progress was maintained, it was anticipated that 90% to 95% of all services would be available electronically by 31 March 2005.

(ii)   Progress in responding to mandatory E-Government priority outcomes

The e-Government priority outcomes had been set out in an Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) paper published on 30 April 2004 entitled 'Defining e-Government Outcomes for 2005 to Support the Delivery of Priority Services'. The paper had established 73 outcomes that councils would be required to deliver, many of them by 31 December 2005. Whilst not all these outcomes were relevant to Uttlesford, the Council was still required to deliver approximately 50 of them. Many of the remainder were voluntary and there was an expectation that they would be delivered by 'high-performing' councils.

Several of the requirements as set out by the ODPM, were either vague or ambiguous. Consequently, it had been necessary for the IDeA to issue clarification and guidance to assist councils with understanding their obligations. The guidance had been published on 1 September 2004 and the progress report presented reflected the latest position. It was unfortunate that the ODPM requirements and the subsequent guidance had been established so close to the 2005 deadline. Nevertheless, most of the mandatory outcomes were achievable for Uttlesford, although it was now evident that some would be more difficult to achieve and further thought would need to be given to how they would be met.

EG10   **TENDERS FOR ONLINE SERVICES**

The Executive Programme Manager (Access to Services) presented a report advising Members of the outcome of two recent tender exercises for online service development.

After discussion it was

> RESOLVED that the tenders submitted by Media Paradigm, for the revised sums of as outlined in the report, be accepted.

EG11   **e-AUTHENTICATION**

The Executive Programme Manager (Access to Services) presented a report which advised Members of the need for online registration and authentication systems in order to meet the various national E-Government targets.

It was reported that 100% of all council services should be available electronically by 31 December 2005. For Uttlesford, this amounted to some 600 different service interactions with the public. For a number of these interactions, it was essential that the physical or 'real world' identity of the service user was established beyond reasonable doubt and examples of such interactions would include:

- Online access to personal information about a citizen, such as council tax account details, housing benefit entitlement etc.

- Online submission of claims and applications where, had the transaction been carried out in a traditional way, a signature would have been required. Examples would include submitting a claim for housing benefit or renovation grant, applying for council housing or submitting a planning application.

These types of interactions required a level of identity authentication in the 'online' world that was equivalent to that commonly accepted in the 'real' world. Governments and businesses had found this concept challenging as the typical means of authentication in the real world (*e.g.* driver's licence, passport, notarised signatures etc) no longer applied.

There were two key elements to establishing the 'real world' identity of a citizen when using online services:

Registration: This was the process by which a user gains a credential such as a username or digital certificate for subsequent authentication. This may require the user to present proof of real world identity (such as birth certificate or passport) and/or proof of other attributes depending on the intended use of the credential (*e.g.* proof that an individual works for a particular organisation).

Authentication: The process by which the electronic identity of a user was validated for a specific occasion, using a credential issued following a registration process. Typically, the user would be required to establish that they were the true holder of a credential, by means of a password or similar security feature. The purpose of authentication was to ensure that the person accessing a system, or carrying out an online transaction, was who they claimed to be. Authentication protected the user, by ensuring that access to their personal information, which could be confidential or sensitive, was restricted.

Uttlesford had led a strategy study earlier this year, on behalf of the Essex Online Partnership (EOLP), to determine the best way of approaching the issue. The recommendations accepted by the partnership were:

- Utilise the national Government Gateway system for the registration and authentication of online interactions in Essex. The Gateway had been established for the online delivery of central government services, such as the submission of self-assessment income tax returns and VAT returns.

However, it had been established during the study that the Gateway could now also be utilised by local government.

- Purchase a DIS box (the hardware needed to connect to the Gateway) either for the whole EOLP partnership, or for smaller groups of partners. Such an approach would reduce costs and ensure that expertise and knowledge was shared and it had been agreed that a single solution would be pursued for the whole of Essex.

- Use the national ESD toolkit to determine, for each transaction, the level of trust, and consequent level of security, that was required. The higher the trust that was required in the real world identity of a user, the greater the need to ensure that the user was who they said they were. For example, a breach in security relating to the issuing of a fire arms certificate would have potentially far greater consequences than for a breach relating to personal council tax account information. The Gateway could be used to apply different levels of trust to different transactions.

- Carry out a detailed option appraisal to determine from which supplier the DIS box should be purchased.

The DIS Box Options Appraisal had been carried out, led by staff from the EOLP Programme Office. The estimated costs could be summarised as follows:

Total estimated shared costs	£81,000 plus integration costs
Annual costs, per council excluding transaction costs	£14,500

It had been agreed amongst the EOLP partners that a formal tender exercise should be carried out, inviting all existing DIS box suppliers to submit bids and this exercise would begin shortly.

It had been concluded that the provision of robust and secure online registration and authentication systems was essential to the on-going development of electronic services and the fulfilment of the BVPI 157 target.

After discussion it was

> RECOMMENDED that the following be put before the Resources Committee
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> 1   Uttlesford agree to participate in the EOLP project and
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> 2   Suitable budget provision be made for 2005/06.

EG12   **IDeA E-CHAMPIONS CONFERENCE**

The Executive Programme Manager (Access to Services) reported verbally on the IDeA e-Champions Conference held on 28 September 2004, which he had attended with Councillor Thawley. He had been surprised that there had been no update on national projects. It was considered that the conference

had been well presented but much of it had been of only general interest to local government.

EG13 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman thanked the Executive Programme Manager (Access to Services), John Mercer, who was leaving the Council after many years and wished him good luck in his new post.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm.

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