

**IT WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 29 OCTOBER 2007 at 7.30 pm**

Present:- Councillor S Howell – Chairman.
Councillors K R Artus, J E Hudson and R M Lemon.

Officers in attendance:- R Auty, M Brean, S Martin, C Roberts and
A Webb.

ITWG15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

With Members consent, the Chairman re-ordered the agenda.

ITWG16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2007 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

ITWG17 E BENEFITS UPDATE

The Head of Corporate Support & Revenue Services explained the purpose of the software package, why it had been bought and what value it would add. In answer to questions he said that staff were ready and willing to progress with using the software package but its use was currently inhibited by a recruitment freeze to vacant posts.

Members asked for a further update at the next meeting.

The Director of Business Transformation added that improvement in service was expected from this package which had been bought using e-government funding.

RESOLVED that a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Working Group.

ITWG18 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS REPORT

The Head of Community Engagement presented a report which detailed the features of the four software solutions under consideration. Each of the four product manufacturers would be invited to tender for specific works to the web site and it was anticipated that add-on goods and maintenance would increase the value to the Council of the offers. The budgeted figure for the website redesign was £20,000. Tenders would be evaluated by a team of officers.

Some Members expressed concern about the need for protection in the contract against escalating maintenance costs and the question whether the

package was open to being run by persons other than the tendering company. A question was asked about response times for maintenance and Richard Auty said the ones built into the contract were standard ones. The redesigned website once completed was expected to last ten years.

RESOLVED that a progress report be brought to the next meeting.

ITWG19

OCELLA COMPUTER SYSTEM –RETENTION/REPLACEMENT

The Head of ICT reminded Members that due to the emergence of significant financial issues the Finance and Administration Committee had decided not to go ahead with replacement of Ocella at the current time. It was noted that officers were now talking to other partners and major expenditure should wait on the outcome of these discussions.

The Internal Organisational Re-engineering team would investigate to establish what improvements could be achieved by enhancing the present system.

Councillors Artus and Lemon expressed disappointment that the Finance and Administration Committee had deferred expenditure of £50,000 on commissioning Northgate to advise on the Organisational Re-engineering programme, but the Chairman stressed that the circumstances had radically changed since the Working Group made its recommendation and the Group should accept the decision of the Finance and Administration Committee. Members briefly discussed possible implications of outsourcing and partnership arrangements.

RESOLVED that a progress report be brought to the next meeting.

ITWG20

ICT AND ORGANISATIONAL RE-ENGINEERING TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME WORK STREAM UPDATES

The Group considered the report of the Director of Business Transformation on progress of the work streams.

The Director of Business Transformation confirmed that the internal Organisational Re-engineering team was now up to established strength. External challenge at regular intervals had been factored into the programme.

Members speculated about levels of savings to be made. The Director of Business Transformation added that the report on savings which could be made would be brought to the meeting of the Working Group on December 12 2007 and he expected quick wins in Democratic Services, Corporate Services and the Mailroom.

Members discussed possible savings to be achieved arising from postal de-regulation, reorganisation of the Community Awards scheme, outsourcing of printing and introduction of a Cabinet system.

The Director of Business Transformation said he had approached the Regional Centre of Excellence with an outline funding proposal around the OR team costs, with the longer term intention being to sell the service to other authorities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.