IT WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 12 DECEMBER 2007 at 8.00 pm

Present:-   Councillor S Howell (Chairman) and Councillor J E Hudson.

Officers in attendance:-   M Brean, M Cox, M Frost, S Martin and A Webb.

ITWG21   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K R Artus, R M Lemon and D Sadler.

ITWG22   **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2007 were received, confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

ITWG23   **WEBSITE UPDATE**

Michael Frost reported that the tenders for the website development had been evaluated and Verse One had been appointed. The Company had considerable experience in the housing field and was familiar with local government websites. It also had the lowest running costs of the four shortlisted suppliers, offering savings of approximately £10,000 per annum. The project was within the budget of £20,000.

A project definition workshop had been held in November to give preliminary thoughts to design, function and timescales. Two or three mock ups would now be created and would be shown to the Working Group at the next meeting on 16 January 2008 when a decision would be made on the preferred design.

The site would then be worked on in detail. Members asked that the new site be tested in depth to ensure that it was easy to navigate. Michael Frost said that the Council would be driving the content of the site and he would be working with all the council services and the design team to ensure that all the relevant information was available. It was intended that the site would be more user friendly and service centres would be able to update their own areas.

It was agreed that any councillors interested in the design of the Council's new website would be invited to attend the meeting of the ITWG on16 January 2008.

The Chairman thanked Michael Frost for the excellent progress with this project and confirmed that the next meeting would look at the design options and the project timescale.

ITWG24   **E-BENEFITS**

The Head of Corporate Support and Revenue Services explained that with the current financial and staffing situation within the Council, there had been little progress with implementing the package and the Senior Management Board had accepted this position. He still felt that if implemented the system would add value to the service and was optimistic that there would be further opportunities to use it in the future. The Chairman asked for an update on the situation for the March meeting.

ITWG25   **ICT AND ORGANISATIONAL RE-ENGINEERING TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

The Group was advised of the progress of the current OR reviews. The review of the planning service had started and meetings had been held with key staff. It was expected that indications of savings might be available for the meeting on 16 January although it was noted that the current redundancy process would inevitably slow the process.

As part of the review of the Printing Section officers had met with North Herts and Harlow Districts as well as private sector printing suppliers. The team were looking at the options of retaining the current arrangements, partnership working and outsourcing and hoped to be able to present recommendations to the ITWG on 15 January. The review of Democratic Services was now part of the PA and Central Services review and the team were working directly with the Chief Executive.

The new post arrangements with TNT were up and running and appeared so far to be working well. There had been a smooth transition to the new system and no negative feedback about the delivery rates. The savings with the new system were being carefully monitored. It was noted that there was still too much first class post being sent and this would need to be addressed with staff.

The new manager of the Organisational Re-engineering team, Paula Evans produces a weekly highlight report of activities and this would be circulated to Members in future. She would also attend the next meeting of the Working Group to update members on the implementation of the OR programme.

The Director of Business Transformation reminded the meeting that he had submitted a funding bid of £270,000 to the Regional Centre of Excellence (East) to support the OR programme through to 2011. He had been told by the RCE (East) that the outcome of the bid would not be known before 31 December 2007

ITWG26   **2008/09 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Head of ICT presented a report which detailed the IT projects being considered for inclusion in the 2008/09 IT programme. Adrian Webb explained the basis on which projects had been prioritised and sought

Members approval for the resulting programme. It was recommended that the revenue and housing servers be replaced at a total cost of £45,000.

The Chairman noted that there was very little capital spend recommended for this year, and while he appreciated the current financial situation, he asked for assurances that the Council's systems would still be able to operate effectively. The Head of IT said that there was money in the 2007/08 budget to replace the current servers with a new blade server and it was expected that this project would begin in April 2008.

RECOMMENDED that the Finance and Administration Committee:-

1   Include the proposed IT Capital Programme (attached as an appendix to these minutes)in the overall Capital Programme for 2008/09.

2   Include a sum of £30,000 for IT developments in the overall General Fund Capital Programme for 2008/09.

3   Include a sum of £15,000 for IT developments in the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2008/09.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm.

APPENDIX ONE - Proposed IT Capital Programme 2008/09

		Proposed 2008/09 Programme		Draft 2009/10 Programme		Priority *Note 1
		Project Cost £	Annual Cost £	Project Cost £	Annual Cost £	
	Corporate Projects					
1	Replacement Electoral System	0	0	50,000	10,000	2
2	Network replacement	0	0	150,000	15,000	2
		£0	**£0**	**£200,000**	**£25,000**	
	User Requested Projects					
3	Minor Projects	0	0	20,000	0	2
4	Revenue Server Replacement	30,000	0	0	0	1
5	Housing Server Replacement	15,000	0	0	0	1
		£45,000	**£0**	**£20,000**	**£0**	
	Total Proposed IT Programme	**£45,000**	**£0**	**£220,000**	**£25,000**	
	Less HRA Programme	**-£15,000**	**-£0**	**-£0**	**-£0**	
	General Fund Programme	**£30,000**	**£0**	**£220,000**	**£25,000**	

Notes

1. Priorities have been determined on the following basis:
   a. **On-Going Financial & Staffing Commitments** - Projects that require high levels of on-going resources, whether financial or staffing, have been given a lower priority.
   b. **Statutory Obligations** – Projects that help the Council fulfil its statutory obligations have been given a higher priority.

2. Non-monetary savings may result from:
   a. Essex Online Partnership (EOLP) working.
   b. Utilising the outcomes from national and pathfinder e-government projects.