

**IT WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 5.00 pm on 4 APRIL 2006**

Present: Councillor R F Freeman - Chairman
Councillors R M Lemon and A R Thawley.

Officers in attendance: M Brean, V Harvey, M Jimmick, A Webb and N Whitman.

ITWG40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

An apology was received from Councillor Artus.

ITWG41 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

ITWG42 IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STATEMENT (IEG6)

The Head of IT presented a report explaining the purpose of IEG statements and sought the Working Group's approval to submit the IEG Statement to the ODPM, which would be due by 10 April 2006.

IEG5 was submitted in December 2005 with an achieved 100% compliance. Uttlesford had completed all of the outcomes with the exception of G16 and G17. These were primarily Essex County Council targets which UDC would join up with when achieved. UDC had done all it could to achieve the target but was restricted by the lack of progress by ECC, therefore Member opinion was sought on the level of amber. If UDC had reported green it would not have passed an audit.

Under the Change Management Section a lot of statuses had been identified as amber. The government gateway had been delayed but UDC had made a return on investment. It was suspected that IEG7 would follow shortly.

The BVPI 157 had achieved 100%.

Members were overall impressed with the improvements and it was

RESOLVED that

1. G16 & G17 be reported as amber and
2. the IEG6 Statement be submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

ITWG43

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY 2006-11

The Executive Manager (Customer Services) explained the communications technology strategy for 2006-11. He outlined the draft ICT Strategy for 2006 - 11. This would replace the current e-government strategy based mainly on the Cabinet Office consultation paper 'Transformational Government – enabled by technology' and it looked at how Local Authorities were moving forwarding with ICT services.

Members were pleased with the report but wished to make slight grammatical amendments. It was agreed that each member would submit any comments and the document would be amended accordingly.

Appendix 2 stated that home workers still used Citrix. It worked very well for them as remote users.

RESOLVED that the committee approve the strategy subject to Member amendments.

ITWG44

TELEPHONY PROCUREMENT PROGRESS REPORT

The Executive Manager (Customer Services) provided a report detailing the progress of the procurement of the new telephone system. The Operations Committee approved capital and revenue budgets of £250,000 and £11,000 respectively for this purpose.

The council, Procurement Agency for Essex and the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) had met with a view to truncating the tendering process. The option of a managed telephone service (Mts) was discussed, which had the benefit of the Council being able to embark on shared telephony service with other Councils, if required in the future.

OGC buying.solutions was an Executive Agency of the OGC and offered products and services to the public sector. They offer Mts through a partnership with Global Crossing. Global Crossing provides Mts telecom services to OGC buying.solutions, which acts as a broker for 600+ Government offices. This service currently provided over 12,000 telephone extensions to central government departments.

Mts had many benefits, including a single point of contact made available 24 hours a day, disaster recovery/business continuity service features and economies of scale which would reduce unit operating costs. It was likely that a substantial amount of the £250,000 approved capital budget for new telephony would not now be required.

The Head of IT said the proposal was due to arrive next week. It was expected there would be a charge of £225 per handset with no call charges; however there would be an additional charge for digital and IP telephones.

It was aimed to have the new telephony installed in stages by 30 November.

Members had concerns about service continuity with a managed service but as the partnership was with OGCbuying.solutions this should not be a problem. It was agreed that a telephony consultant be asked to look at the Global Crossing Mts proposal for assurance purposes.

RESOLVED that this course of action be approved.

ITWG45 **MEMBER SUPPORT DESK CALLS 1 JANUARY 2006 – 28 MARCH 2006**

The Head of IT reported for the period 1 January – 28 March 2006 there had been 28 calls logged with the Support Desk on behalf of Members, of which only one call was outstanding.

For the period 1 April 2005 – 28 March 2006 there were 112 Member calls logged. This formed part of the 5,009 total calls logged with the Support Desk in that period.

The vast majority of users had now been taken off of Citrix; this resulted in 33% lower calls than at the start of the period. Citrix for home users was very robust and worked well.

Members were pleased with the decrease of Support Desk calls due to the migration of office based staff from Citrix.

ITWG46 **INTEGRATED CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

The Executive Manager (Customer Services) provided Members with a report detailing the progress of the Integrated Customer Management (ICM) project. The main problem that had been experienced with the CRM system was the losing of services on an intermittent basis when updating the system. This and other problems had been raised at senior level with Northgate Information Solutions, who had now resolved the issues. There were still concerns over the slow speed of the system, but this was also being monitored. Two new servers were being built which would increase response times.

In March a letter was sent to over 4,300 people who paid for council services with the purpose to advise them of the review that had been carried out by the Council on how customers accessed services and ways to improve them. 267 calls had been received of which only 17 were negative; Methods were being looked at to accommodate people who wanted to pay by cheque.

The ICM JMT Premises Group had been consulting staff on the proposed lay out of the new customer service centre in order to involve staff as much as possible. Work was hoped to start in May 2006.

The Executive Manager (Customer Services) made a presentation to the Parish Liaison meeting and the tenants forum in March about ICM, including new ways to pay initiative. It was also proposed to meet with the Housing Services sheltered unit wardens to through “new ways to pay”. An article on this had also recently been placed in Uttlesford Life.

It was anticipated the first phase of the business process re-engineering programme would commence in Revenues, Benefits, Cashiers and Anti-Fraud in April 2006. It was envisaged that the first phase would take up to 3-4 months. The second phase of the programme would cover Housing Services processes.

Additional staff workshops were set up to explain the impact that ICM would have on the organisation and how staff would be affected.

The JMT Risk Group met regularly to re-evaluate the risks, append the revised register and draw attention to the most recent amendments. The Executive Manager (Customer Services) attended the last meeting of the group to discuss the recent CRM system problems and delay starting the BPR programme.

Members noted the progress made in each area.

ITWG47 **APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR TO REPLACE COUNCILLOR BOWKER**

The Chairman expressed his sadness at the recent death of Councillor Bowker. He said that when he and Councillor Bowker joined the Working Group there had only initially been one place, but due to the desire of both to sit on the Group the membership increased to five. The Chairman said there was no need to replace Councillor Bowker but suggested another Councillor should join if they had a specific knowledge or need to contribute.

RESOLVED that the Operations Committee and Full Council would be asked if any Councillor wished to join the Working Group.

ITWG48 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Steve Willoughby from saffireweb would attend the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 6.25pm.