

**IT WORKING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD,
SAFFRON WALDEN at 5 pm on 14 MARCH 2007**

Present: - Councillor R F Freeman – Chairman
Councillor A R Thawley

Officers in attendance: - M Brean, E O'Malley and A Webb

ITWG27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Artus, Lemon and Pedder.

ITWG28 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**ITWG29 UTTLESFORD IN 2011 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – ICT WORK
STREAM AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS**

The Director of Business Transformation spoke about the Uttlesford in 2011 transformation programme and the report to the council meeting on 15 February 2007, which set out how the Council would achieve the vision of being the pre-eminent small district council in England. The report illustrated the longer-term direction up to 2011 and included a preliminary high-level action plan with specific actions for what the council wanted to achieve. He explained that the transformation programme contained twelve work streams. The high-level action plan for work stream 7, which covers information and communications technology (ICT), was explained in detail.

The Director of Business Transformation explained to Members that the planned actions required a large amount of work; the possible replacement of the Ocella system was a significant project in itself. Some staff had already commented that any new system may not be both as user and customer friendly as the Ocella system. There would be a sound business case for any replacement system, which focussed on user friendliness and efficiency with the ability to provide future savings. The Head of ICT reported that the replacement of the Electoral Roll system also needed to be considered at some stage. Councillor Freeman asked whether only having one supplier makes the system vulnerable if problems arise. The Head of ICT agreed that this was an issue that required further consideration.

The Head of ICT explained that a pilot was underway for remote home working weekend support until the end of May 2007. This would remain in place for new Councillors who experienced any problems in the first couple of weekends after the election. Councillor Freeman commented that he felt not every problem could be fixed over the telephone and Councillor Thawley suggested home visits. The Head of ICT replied that all IT staff had access to any servers even at home. He added that suggestions for video

conferencing had been made to cut travel costs. Councillor Freeman commented on the environmental effect of additional servers. The Head of ICT added that another recommendation to introduce paperless committee meetings, and provide screens like those used in Development Control had been planned. Both Councillor Freeman and Thawley suggested whiteboards which allow Members to annotate and are easy to read. The Director of Business Transformation agreed that this required further investigation.

ITWG30 **WIRELESS NETWORK UPGRADE**

The Head of ICT reported that a full survey would be taking place detailing where officers should place transmitter intelligent access points. These would provide three virtual networks; data, telephony (which would allow handsets to be used around the building) and public (which would give open access to those who come to the council offices for meetings and conferences). Councillor Freeman asked what the initial costs would be and he replied that the final cost would be known after the survey but it would be in the region of 45,000. He went on to add that this should be running by the council's Innovation day in the summer.

ITWG31 **SOCIETY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGERS (SOCITM)
Insight Publication – ICT for elected members**

The Head of ICT explained that the document was purely for information and asked Members to note its content.

ITWG32 **DUPLEX PRINTERS FOR MEMBERS**

The Head of ICT provided an update for Members on a trial of the HP7200 duplex colour inkjet printer and asked Members opinion on the way forward.

Councillor Freeman informed Members he had been trialling a colour duplex inkjet scanner for the past month, he reported that the scanner functions perfectly but was painfully slow as it waited for one side to dry before printing on the other. On a multi-page document Councillor Freeman said that it takes a very long time to print, and as Duplex printing is mostly used for documents, the disadvantage is significant. Councillor Freeman suggested a LaserJet printer be deployed to Members. The Head of ICT explained that these were expensive but he would continue to explore. He suggested that Members were provided with a number to call the Print Room at London Road, Saffron Walden if need to print large documents in colour. Councillor Thawley asked why Members could not print at home as all Members were provided with allowances. The Head of ICT suggested providing Members with scanners alongside the printer and he would circulate this idea.

ITWG33 **MEMBER TEXT MESSAGING**

The Head of ICT explained that this had been requested as an agenda item by Members as many felt this may improve communications. He explained

that a trial had taken place before and only 6 Members had been interested, with text messages to alert members of system failures.

Councillor Freeman suggested texts to remind Members that meetings were on. Councillor Thawley asked for a simple text to be sent asking Members whether they would be attending which would ensure a Committee would be quadrate. The Head of ICT explained that he wanted to look at the bigger picture on the issue of text messaging for communication. He added that this was to be looked at in further detail in early April.

ITWG34

ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

The Director of Business Transformation explained that two submissions had been made to the Government Computing awards covering efficiency savings and citizen accessibility. Councillor Freeman noted that awards are a good boost for morale and places Uttlesford District Council on the map.

ITWG35

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 16 May 2007.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm.