Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	31 January 2005
Subject:	IT Strategy Progress and IT Improvement report
Responsible Officer:	Director of Business Services
Contact Officer:	Group Manager, IT
Portfolio Holder:	Business Connections and Performance
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

None – the report is for information only.

Reason for report

This report was requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 19 October 2004 – Minute 215 refers.

Benefits

N/A

Cost of Proposals

N/A

Risks

N/A

Implications if recommendations rejected

N/A

Section 2: Report

The service plan for 2004/05 identified the key challenges for ICT for the year as:

- Plan and implement the first elements of the ICT Strategy
- Improve customer satisfaction and to focus on meeting customer needs
- Enable services to respond to New Harrow Project, e-government and other corporate initiatives
- Be a major player in the procurement of a Strategic Partner and prepare the groundwork for working with them
- Seamlessly integrate Social Services help desk and other transferred functions whilst maintaining their existing service quality.

Progress on these objectives is considered below.

2.1 Plan and implement the first elements of the ICT Strategy

2004/05 saw the start of a step change to the ICT infrastructure planned in accordance with the ICT strategy. In large part this was funded through the capital programme and project progress on these is detailed in the attached report (Appendix A).

All are complete or largely on course to complete by their target dates. The next projects to implement the ICT strategy have been identified and funded. This strand will continue as a key theme.

To help manage this programme of projects and to help improve standards of project management, HITS successfully set up a project office and provided project management support through PRINCE2 training and the introduction of a project management support tool called Work.Together. The project office works in close liaison with the corporate programme management offices in the Council. Work on consolidating and improving project management standards within ICT will continue into 2005/06.

2.2 Improve customer satisfaction and to focus on meeting customer needs

2004/05 saw the second year of HITS Performance Indicators measuring performance across a wide range of ICT services. The exercise has focused attention on key service deliverables and internal procedures and processes. The data provided by the Performance Indicators has provided key lessons for HITS Management about the provision of its services.

The core service of providing the network, supporting the desktop, email, providing and maintaining critical service delivery systems and telecoms continued to function. High levels of overall availability were achieved as measured by our performance indicators. This has been maintained against the background of the redevelopment of the infrastructure as described above. As a result of on-line ordering and use of the purchase card our performance on quotations and ordering has significantly improved. We have also implemented a new help desk system to improve our workflow.

The PIs, customer satisfaction survey and benchmarking exercise have shown that HITS has areas for improvement around communication, fix at first point of contact and overall customer satisfaction. We have put together a HITS Improvement Plan comprising:
- Defining a general SLA
- Producing a communications strategy
- Re-organisation of the help desk
- Achieving ITIL compliant processes
- Improving customer focus behaviours

Continuation of these themes will be the cornerstone of our action plan for a businesslike organisation for 2005/06

HITS has reviewed its Performance Indicators for 2004/5 and consolidated them into a balanced scorecard for HITS.

2.3 Enable services to respond to New Harrow Project, e-government and other corporate initiatives

A new web and GIS team was formed. Central Government introduced a set of Priority Service and Transformation Outcomes (PSTO) that have provided additional e-government targets. The new web and GIS team are helping the Council meet these targets. Work in this whole area has included:

- Final completion of the ODPM funded HSP e-government series of projects
- Migration of the Harrow website into APLAWS+
- Improvement of underlying intranet application
- Procurement and installation of an e-forms product
- Implementing a series of e-forms with services to improve services and meet BVPI 157 & PSTO targets
- Implementation of a series of smaller browser based applications, e.g. FOI.

- Completion of the GIS application underlying the vitality profiles.
- Assisting the move of all GIS data into the corporate GIS product.
- Production of an e-government strategy for the Council
- Expanding e-payments and planning portal implementation

Projects associated with the ICT strategy have had an impact in helping services respond to NHP and corporate initiatives, for example performance management (CorVu) and the Public Realm project.

We have also played our part in the WLA e-government group and contributed to the excellent reception received by the group's progress report to WLA members and Chief Executives.

This overall theme continues into this year's service plan. One of the key corporate objectives is to meet the December 2005 and March 2006 Central Government defined e-government targets.

2.4 Be a major player in the procurement of a Strategic Partner and prepare the groundwork for working with them

The procurement of a Business Transformation Partner is on target. The Group Manager ICT is a key member of the procurement team and HITS, as a whole, has willingly and openly co-operated with each of the potential partners to provide all the detailed information that they require. The emphasis in the 2005/6 service plan changes to being able to work well with the chosen Business Transformation Partner expected to be in place bu the end of June 2005.

2.5 Seamlessly integrate Social Services help desk and other transferred functions whilst maintaining their existing service quality.

HITS help desk is one combined operation. However, as identified earlier, the help desk processes and its organisation can be improved and plans have been put in place to deliver this in a phased approach over the course of the next 12 to 18 months. Initial quick wins already in the process of being implemented, these include

- Re-categorisation of problems
- Provision of accurate client and asset databases
- Re-structuring of the unit
- Revised service level agreement   .

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Appendix A: IT Strategy Progress Report

Appendix A

ICT Strategy Progress Report

1. Overview

The ICT Strategy was published in October 2003 having been approved by CMT and Cabinet. This paper summarises the progress made during the first year which has focused on three key areas:

- Infrastructure Projects that are designed to provide a robust, resilient and scalable network and infrastructure platform as a backbone to achieving all the councils aims and objectives
- Corporate and Departmental Business Projects including Flexible working pilot, Social Care Core System, Online Planning Applications, Public Realm and Performance Management.
- Internal Governance and Management practices designed to improve the delivery of services and management of projects and to ensure corporate involvement in the management of IT.

The first year has also focused on providing the technical framework and platform required to deliver major applications that the Council intends to implement such as CRM and ERP with the Business Transformation Partner.

A full list of the projects and their current status is contained in Appendix 1.

2. Infrastructure Projects

The main focus for 2004/2005 has been to build a robust and resilient technical platform that will provide solid framework to build the various applications. The following capital projects are generally all making good progress

- Local Area Network (LAN)
- Wide Area Network (WAN)
- Storage Area Network (SAN)
- Server Consolidation
- System Management Software
- Business Continuity Planning
- Desktop Standardisation

Tenders have been issued for the LAN, WAN, SAN, Server Consolidation and System Management Software Projects with contracts being awarded and work underway for the WAN, SAN and Server Consolidation. The contracts for the LAN and System Management Software projects are due to be awarded in mid January.

Recruitment of a project manager to oversee and deliver the business continuity plan is underway and this project is expected to begin in earnest during February.

The Desktop Standardisation project is nearing completion with the target of having all PC's on a single software platform (Windows 2000) by the end of March.

3. Corporate and Departmental Projects

The key Corporate Projects are focused on either preparing for the business transformation projects, or, achievement of key targets and efficiencies that are immediate. These include the following:

- Flexible Working Pilot
- Performance Management
- Business Transformation Procurement Project
- Business Portal Development

The technical aspects of flexible working have been largely resolved with pilot projects in Housing Benefits, Social Workers, Education Advisory Services and Building control currently underway or in planning.

The Performance Management project has focused on delivering key corporate indices to senior management and is based on the CorVu product. This project is completed, at least from an IT perspective. It forms an early part of the Management Information System (MIS) that the Business Transformation Partner will deliver. .

Some Business Critical Departmental Projects are also underway. The main ones being:

- Social Care Core System
- Public Realm System
- Planning System

The Social Care Core System project will replace most of the disparate operational systems currently in use within People First Social Care. It will provide a single environment where all Children & Families, Adults and Old People Services will be provided for. The chosen package solution is CoreLogic and the project is underway with first phase implementation being due during the first quarter of the next financial year (2005/6).

Public Realm is in the middle of a project that will deliver a single state of the art operational system covering the management and delivery of services from a wide range of their current operational units. This project is due to complete phase one in April/May this year. The Planning department are also piggy-backing this project to achieve their business objectives a year earlier than originally planned.

4. IT Governance and Management Projects

Various organisational structures have been implemented to help manage both the delivery of the strategy and the management of HITS. These are as follows:

- Corporate Strategy Programme Board
- E-Government Steering Group
- The Project Office

The Corporate Strategy Programme Board (CSPB) is responsible for monitoring, controlling and prioritising the Capital projects and the delivery of the IT Strategy. As of from January this will be merged with the Capital Forum and Programme and Strategy Board to form a single corporate management body responsible for monitoring and overseeing all strategy and programmes.

An e-Government Steering Group is being formed. It will be chaired by the Director of Finance and Business Strategy initially to take forward BVPI 157 but later to include all e-Government and web based activities both on the Intranet and the Internet.

Within HITS a project office has also been established to ensure the effective project management practices of all IT projects, to monitor and report progress of all major IT projects and to provide effective resource management.

5. IT Organisation and Operations

As part of the New Harrow Project and the consequent restructuring the Social Services IT unit has been merged with HITS forming a larger Helpdesk function and a training unit within HITS. This has been married with the introduction of a new Helpdesk system, Touchpaper. Overall, there have been improved resolution rates at first level.

A Web and GIS team has been set up primarily to meet the e-government requirements of the strategy and to develop both internal and external applications on the Intranet and Internet. The following projects have been successfully implemented

- Conversion of the internet site into the APLAWS structure. This allows content to be directly input by staff and partners and conforms to national standards.

- GIS – The underlying system was implemented and used to provide the platform for the vitality profiles project.

- Implementation of IDeA esd toolkit to measure and help implement BVPI 157 and commitment from Directorates

In October 2004 a Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) team was established to provide across the board BPR projects. This group will provide in-house and readily available consultancy resources with a consistent approach across the council. This approach should considerably reduce the council's (external) IT consultancy bills.

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HITS has adopted PRINCE II project management standard. All senior offices have been trained to Practitioner level. This level of project management will help to ensure that all IT projects are managed effectively. Training will continue allowing additional members of HITS and Project Managers from across the organisation to become Prince II accredited.

HITS has been reviewing and developing a number of policies and standards although progress has been hindered by the vacancy in the Security and Standards Manager position. An Interim Manager has recently been employed and has with Hytec, our security advisors, developed some of these policies in the interim. Some examples are contained in the following table

Policies	Status
Develop Corporate Information Strategy and Data Access Policies	Draft for approval
Promote security standards. Promote ISO 17799	Under review
Implement Business Continuity Plan	Under review

6. IT Improvement Plan

In June 2004 Business Connections commissioned the NCC Group to examine the performance of ICT delivery in the Council, focusing primarily on Harrow IT Services (HITS). The review was conducted during June and July 2004. The overall approach consisted of:

- Baselining. Looking at the AS-IS status examining ICT management practices, investment, staffing levels and user satisfaction.
- Gap analysis. Using the results of the baselining exercise to determine where gaps exist and the levels and types of resource that are required to fill the gaps.
- Action planning. Setting out an action plan and roadmap which informs the Council of the actions and priorities which are needed to improve ICT service delivery.

The process of implementing the early quick wins is currently underway.

Appendix 1 –
Capital Projects

The main focus for 2004/2005 was to build a robust and resilient technical platform that will provide solid framework to build the various applications.

The following projects were approved by CSPB for 2004/2005 and generally are making good progress

Project	Status
Desktop Standardisation	Nov 04
Flexible working pilot	Mar 05
MS outlook as email client	Mar 05
Implement Business Continuity plans	Mar 05
Storage Area Network	June 05
Rationalise Servers	June 05
System Management System	June 05
Wide Area Network	June 05 (phase1)
Local Area Network	June 05
EAI projects	postponed
People First	
Schools Admission & Student support systems	Completed
Supporting People	Completed
Joint Equipment Store	Completed
Social Care Core System	March 07
Urban Living	
Online submission of planning applications	March 05
Profess implementation	April 05
Public realm	April 05
Organisational Development	

Performance Management (IT component)	Completed

Departmental Projects

The following projects were included in the strategy for 2004/2005. Most of these projects are funded from departmental budgets.

People First

Project	Status
Replacement of dial up links between schools and corporate networks	High speed internet link installed
File Transfer between schools and LEA	High speed internet link installed
Telecomm links to Wealdstone Centre	IT component complete
Exchange of Data with partner organisations	In progress
Support schools move from dbase	User led project – minimal HITS involvement
Libraries – access point for e-government	Under review
Review Dynix library management system	Postponed

Urban Living

Project	Status
Electronic communications with partner organisations	Completed as part of contractor partnering
Project monitoring system links to NRSW	Not progressed, awaiting business requirement

Online submission of planning applications	Completed
E-payment for parking fine	Awaiting pilot completion
Web development of FAQs	Part of content maintenance being carried out by business
Asbestos system	User led project – minimal HITS involvement
Upgrade of CAD	No HITS involvement
Upgrade of AMTECH lighting and cabling design	No HITS involvement
Composer landscape asset management system	Part of Unisys project
OHMS system separate from Housing ALMO system	Under review
Replacement for OCELLA	Under way

Organisational development

Project	Status
Development of web-enabled learner database	Completed
Development of e-learning and e-skills strategy	In progress (user led)
Develop Corporate FOI Strategy	In progress (user led)
Project	**Status**
Time recording for lawyers	Draft OBC

Corporate

HITS

Project	Status
New Helpdesk System	Phase 1 completed Phase 2 April 2005
Telephone System Upgrade (Voicemail and call centre queuing)	Completed
Harrow Vitality Profile	Completed
Connect Remote Sites	Completed
Cabling (computer room to communications cabinets)	Completed
Desktop Replacement Programme (Phase 1)	Completed
GIS – framework in Esri	Completed