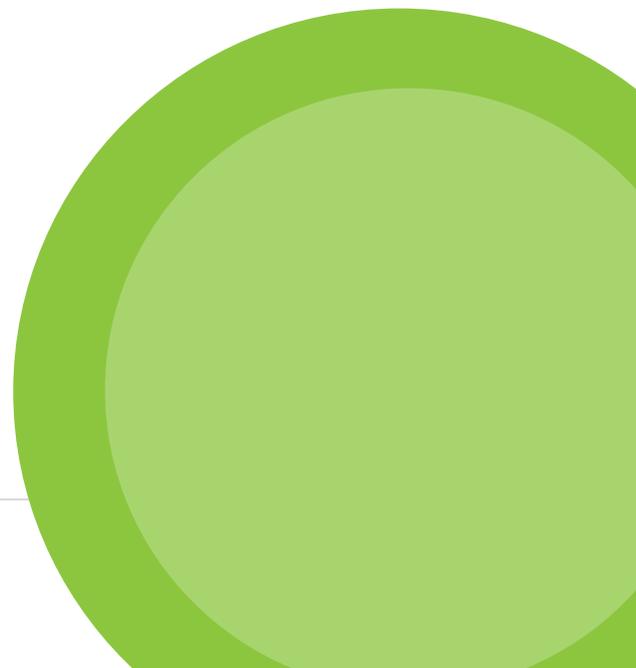




Attachment 1

Central Bedfordshire Council
ICT Strategy & Technology Roadmap
2015 – 2019



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Executive Summary

This ICT Strategy is published in the middle of continuing and **unprecedented demands** for savings and operational efficiencies within the Council. During the life of this Strategy it is estimated that the Council will need to save an additional £80m from its administrative budgets and will require new, efficient and innovative solutions for its management and service delivery priorities.

Simultaneous with the introduction of efficiency measures, Central Bedfordshire aspires to **improve** the **services** it delivers to its citizens by bringing forward easier ways to work with the Council, better and more comprehensive **information** on both Council services and non-council service offerings within the community, improved **transparency** of Council Governance and streamlined, less bureaucratic service delivery.

Demands for Central Bedfordshire to work in a much more joined up manner with other governmental and non-governmental bodies – the Council, NHS, Mental Health, community not for profit organisations, Police and Fire services – will require more **flexibility** and greater use of our Information assets, the sharing of information across agencies and the ability to act on the information available to us.

This ICT Strategy will support the Council's need for efficiencies, its aspirations for improved services to the community we serve, and the requirement to make more comprehensive use of our information assets by:

- Providing **Better Tools** to present both services and information to the Citizens of Central Bedfordshire and to collect information and opinions from them.
- Improving Customer Services by **Simplifying Processes** and presenting all services as digitally supported self-service procedures.
- Making Central Bedfordshire staff more productive through **improved mobile working**, reducing both the time necessary to complete processes and the administrative overhead associated with them.
- **Modernising Internal Council Processes**, eliminating paper work, reducing the number of steps and reviews necessary.
- Enhancing the Value for Money received from IT investment in Council services through **Better Contracting**, more efficient change delivery and reuse of existing resources.
- Simplifying the **Technical Services** offering by concentrating on reducing the number of software packages, more efficient licensing and the reduction of unneeded controls.
- Providing **greater flexibility** to use and reuse information from all Council systems, to link information to external data as required and to share that information on demand through improved **Information Management**.
- Providing **Improved Governance** for both IT security and IT Information Management.

To Delivery this work we will:

Establish ICT as a Service First Organisation!

Enhance and review our internal IT operations to assure that they are secure, sound, robust and available.

Make ICT governance and transparency a priority. Inviting comment and oversight from all parts of the Council to assure that each service can participate in the process of prioritising service delivery and that each service has a clear view of IT projects and ICT services delivery, and, to assure that IT has a clear understanding of Service Needs.

Focus on ***Prioritising our work*** to address the most pressing and customer facing requirements first.

Seek efficiencies in IT service delivery both to lower overall costs and to allow the resources allocated to IT development to stretch as far as possible.

Establish projects and processes to

- ***reduce the use of paper,***
- ***streamline processes,***
- ***improve communications,***
- ***maintain and analyse data.***

Provide a robust and functional ***mobile working offering*** that will allow CBC staff to work effectively and efficiency from any location at any time.

Develop a robust ***Information Management*** Strategy and Delivery programme that prioritises data quality control, effective reporting, security, data sharing and analytical capabilities.

Customer Experience

The Case for Change

Customers of Council Services are also customers of a wide range of commercial services. They have grown accustomed to the ability to interact with their service providers 24 hours per day, at any time of their convenience.

They expect easily understood services, rapid and accurate responses to their questions, and access to simple and clear self-service facilities.

In their interaction with the Council, they expect the same level of service, efficiency and self-service as they would with any other modern, commercial digital service.

What Success Looks Like

We will continue with the development of the **Digital Council Agenda** to extend on-line, self-service facilities to all relevant Council service offerings.

Citizens will be able to look up and to determine their **entitlements**, fill out any relevant **applications**, submit and **track** the status of their applications and receive a prompt and accurate reply on-line, at a time and place that suits their life style.

If they require **help and support**, they will receive this in a courteous and informed manner, receiving the same information that they received had they self served.

Citizens **reporting** situations to the Council will be able to do so on-line and receive a prompt and informed response.

Efficiencies obtained from an increased proportion of citizens using the internet to obtain Council services will allow more money to be **reinvested** into Council services and will allow the Council to continue to provide a full range of services as it meets its savings targets.

The **efficiency and comfort** of on-line services will improve the image of the Council in the community, allow for better **community participation** in Council decision making and lead to a more professional environment.

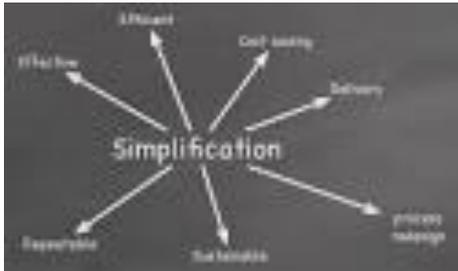


Key Technological Focus

Following is a list of those technologies (capabilities) and processes (know how) that ICT Services will prioritise and develop going forward, to meet the existing and changing needs of the Council. Most are either new areas of interest for the Council, or are existing technical areas that will need strengthening and developing to meet expectations. Each relates directly to business processes and needs that have been identified.

All of the areas will require investment in technology, training, management leadership and officer prioritisation. Although each area is self explanatory, none will be successful without the full support of both ICT Services and the leadership within the Council's individual service units.

Software and Application Simplification



The support and maintenance of software applications is a major demand on ICT resources, consuming close to 45% of the total IT budget for the Council.

Too much of this resource is used to support duplicate systems, redundant applications or legacy installations that now represent questionable value for money for the Council.

ICT will address this challenge by focusing on these areas:

- Consolidate similar applications where a business case shows a positive benefit to the Council.
- Consolidate databases to focus on a single instance of each type of database: One Oracle, One MS Sequel et cetera, to avoid unnecessary and excessive charges for individual applications.
- Move to open source databases for applications where possible.
- Review all planned software purchases to avoid investment in redundant systems or investment in areas where the Council already owns materials that can provide the same services.
- Remove from service arbitrary applications that provide little value to the users and that represent excessive costs to the business.
- Review the deployment of multiple instances of Geographic Information System (GIS) applications and consolidate as possible.
- Use Open Source Software where possible to avoid on-going license costs.
- Review all software licensing agreements and compare existing entitlements to the number of licenses that are in use with a view to removing licenses that are surplus to needs.
- Review Microsoft ELA agreements and evaluate moving 80% of CBC staff to non-Microsoft desktop services.

Mobile Working



In common with most modern organisations, Central Bedfordshire is encouraging its staff to move towards more mobile working, home working and the use of consumer electronics.

The advantages are numerous: more efficient use of time, more convenient access to systems, improved services through personal contact with the citizens and the reduction of costs through reduced use of expensive office space.

To support the mobile agenda for the Council, ICT will deliver the following technologies:

- Mobile Device Management that will secure and track smartphones, tablets and laptops – keep them safe, allow access to Council systems.
- Mobile Document Management that will allow secure access to Council documents to workers on the move.
- Greater Use of Consumer Technologies to allow workers preference in their equipment and to lower Council costs.
- Access to Council Information Services through secure WiFi channels to provide convenience for staff will mobile.
- Access to the CBC desktop from any device, anywhere at any time to keep staff in touch with the Council's primary services
- Publication of Individual Applications on the Internet that will allow direct access without unnecessary operational overheads.
- Access to all Council Services while mobile. Secure the systems; create appropriate access channels.
- Development of Apps that are useful to field workers. Review our on-line facilities. Move to the use of apps where appropriate.

Information Management



The heart and soul of the Council going forward will be the information that it maintains about itself, its activities and the citizens of Central Bedfordshire.

The demand for reporting and publishing of Council data continues to increase year on year and is now accompanied by requests for much greater analytical skills to interpret the data to determine what it means for Council business.

To develop information resources within Central Bedfordshire Council, ICT Services will deliver these support functions:

- Improved Database management, upskilling of CBC data staff. Move forward with skills that allow for greater use of databases and greater control of software and greater access to data.
- Implementation of centralised reporting facilities. Most systems have their own reporting tools and associated super users who know how to use them. Less frequent are skills that allow deeper introspection of the data, data quality control and association of silo-ed data with other Council databases.
- Implementation of data quality control. Tracking and monitoring of database entries to assure that they are up to date and as accurate as needed.
- Deployment of data exchange tooling such as Extraction, Transformation and Loading (ETL) facilities to allow us to extract data as required, change both the format and content as required and then move it on to a new destination.
- Integration with External Organisations through the exchange of management data.
- Publication of Council Data in relevant contexts to the community, via both the Council and government web sites.
- Reduction in research necessary to meet legitimate Freedom of Information requests.

Paper Reduction



A major cost to the Council and to the environment lies in the printing, processing and storage of paper.

The use of paper by the Council will be reduced to the minimum associated with good business practices by moving to the use of electronic systems and digital document storage.

Initial target is a 25% reduction in locally printed paper volumes.

ICT will lead the effort to reduce the use of paper within the Council by:

- Providing access to high volume Electronic Document and Records Management systems to allow for proper storage and retrieval of documents associated with business process.
- Providing access to high volume scanning for both line of business applications and for bulk external document storage. Internal scanning available for local business processes and an bulk external scanning for large processes and archive storage.
- Publishing document repositories securely both local and on the internet to allow workers in the office and while mobile access to needed information.
- Deploying secure software to support digital meetings and conferences to allow meeting participants to view all needed information securely on tablets and laptops rather than needlessly printing out documents for temporary use.
- Focusing on process automation to remove the need for paper from general council processes, both internal and external.
- Providing collaborative software solutions for workers to communicate electronically to reduce the need to print and send information.

Process Automation



A major business and modernisation challenge facing the Council as it moves forward is the automation of the standard, everyday business processes that lie outside of the remit of the major line of business applications.

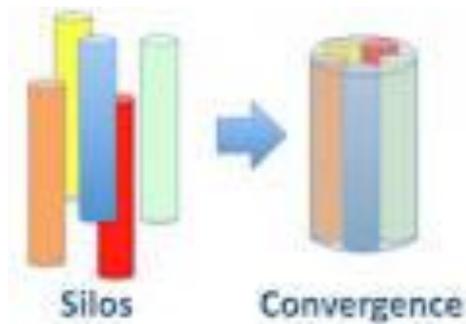
How to move from processing paper applications, requests and registrations to having electronic, work-flowed processes that can be built at low cost.

Many of the processes in need of automation are internal in nature and can be controlled end to end.

To provide the Council with a low cost, business process automation environment, ICT Services will :

- Provide a focused project methodology to systematically *walk* through the Council one process at a time,
 - work with the staff to develop an efficient approach to servicing their needs
 - develop the appropriate specifications for change
 - programme the forms, workflow and reports necessary, and
 - deliver the resultant systems, train the users, and monitor the results.
- Standardise ICT services to work with a preferred applications development technology, assuring appropriate training for staff working with the applications and assuring the quality of the resultant deliveries.
- Provide for electronic signatures and authentication, eliminating the need to print documents for wet signature and the subsequent rescanning for electronic storage.
- Provide for appropriate electronic storage of finalised documents and the data that is contained in them thereby avoiding the use of paper storage.

Infrastructure Simplification



The IT Infrastructure has been improved greatly over the past three years, but still retains too many legacy pieces inherited from previous structures.

It remains more complex than required.

There is real potential to reduce the cost of delivering IT services to the Council while simultaneously improving service quality and reliability.

To simplify and to improve the IT infrastructure, ICT Services will:

- Redeliver the two principal Data Centres in use by the Council
 - Complete and modernise server virtualisation to reduce server foot print, decrease costs and improve DR capabilities.
 - Refresh the Data Backup and Restore facilities to reduce the amount of data being stored, reduce times necessary for backup and assure available of restoration when required.
 - Modernise the SAN and data storage facilities to provide duplicated data storage across both data centres.
 - Provide fit for purpose application and system monitoring.
- Explore the commercial viability of moving infrastructure services to the Cloud.
- Provide Wireless Overlays (WiFi networks) for all CBC commercial premises and customer facing service centres so that workers and visitors to the premises can make full use of wireless capabilities.
- Provide a light touch laptop deployment that eliminates the need for data to be stored locally and removes from the laptop any personalisation so that in the event of failure it can be quickly swapped with a backup.

Remote Hosting And Cloud Services



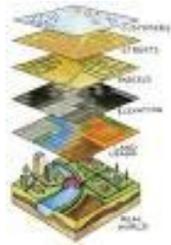
Cloud Services have become the talking point of the industry as more authorities seek to divest themselves of commodity IT services in a cost effective manner turning to professional service providers to fill the gap.

The business case highlighting the pros and cons of moving to Cloud Services will be delivered and reviewed.

Previously the Council has restricted the use of cloud hosting services in line with its views on the risks of third party hosting and its impact on achieving the PSN Code of Connection. The Council was also inclined to provide services locally rather than contracting. Going forward, ICT will:

- Consider the Cloud and Internet Hosting arrangements to be the Council's *third* data centre and build into the Council's infrastructure the ability to work securely with third party hosting.
- Change networking provision to assure appropriate capacity and transit facilities for Cloud hosted services including the possibility of key services such as telephony being provisioned over the Internet.
- Establish Authentication services to allow for secure access to Cloud arrangements to allow in house users to access with equal confidence both in house hosted and third party hosted applications.
- Evaluate each new software requirement to determine if the Council is best served by Local or Cloud arrangements as measured by cost, availability and resource requirements.
- Encourage services, as appropriate, to consider the use of Cloud services if their use would enhance their service offering.

Geographical Information Systems



The need to associate data with geographic locations is pervasive ranging from the need to report potholes and street light outages to reporting by Ward on Council expenditure, and highlighting school catchment areas.

GIS services are one of the key technologies moving the Council from columnar reporting of data to the

visualisation of information.

To encourage the efficient use of GIS services in relation to the consumption of data and the automation of services, ICT will:

- Move towards the consolidation of GIS services into a single technology to support operations across the Council, this move to rationalise costs and to make more effective use of the investment in GIS. Areas of technical application expertise need to be developed into Council wide competencies that can benefit all Central Bedfordshire services.
- Incorporate GIS services into the reporting methodologies used to publish Council information. With the development and extension of Information Management as a discipline within the Council, the incorporation of GIS capabilities into the data management, transformation and reporting capabilities will be invaluable.
- Provide more effective training in the use of GIS for both technical staff who support the technology and for the users who will consume the information will be made available. GIS mapping and reporting can be of major benefit to many of the existing Council services, but this can happen only if the staff involved understand GIS and know how to beneficially access the technology.

Systems Integration



With the majority of Council applications being purchased from small vendors each using discrete technologies, the job of integrating a range of systems into a useful infrastructure, falls to the internal ICT operations.

The ability to integrate information from one system into the workflows of another system, and to do so quickly and efficiently will be one of the key determinate skills for ICT going forward.

Systems Integration is key factor in the forward progress of the Council as the Council seeks to work seamlessly and in collaboration with peer organisation in central Bedfordshire. To service this need for integration, ICT will:

- Specify and deploy mid range integration middleware to support the real time exchange of information between applications providing a base set of technologies that can be repetitively used across a range of systems.
- Extend the Information Management service to include the functional use of Extract, Transfer and Load (ETL) tooling to support data integration across applications. Much of the *integration* requirement at CBC is in fact the need to move data from one system to another and back. This type of data integration lends itself to the use of ETL and database tools possibly more so than the use of middleware suggested above.
- Review the specification of systems being purchased by ICT and by the Council's services to assure that the integration requirement needs of the new service are met by the acquisition.
- Work with Council services to improve systems integration and usage to derive better value from the software already in use, advise on how to improve process flow and efficiency through better systems integration.

Single View of the Customer



Providing for an accurate record of the citizens we serve, their on going needs, their use of Council services and the prognosis for future requirements is crucial for the efficient management of service demand.

The more that the Council knows about its community, the more likely it is to successfully provide correct and timely services.

To enable the Council to understand its community, ICT Services will:

- Provide a *Single View of the Customer* by creating a consolidated record for each Council Service User that includes information on each of their transactions with the Council, their entitlements and their needs. This information will be extracted from the range of existing Council database as well as from information held by peer organisations as it is made available to the Council.
- Compare the information that we rightfully hold on our Citizens with information on demographics and community trends that is available from our open and governmental sources to enhance our knowledge. By looking beyond the information that is immediately held by the Council and by drawing reasonable assumptions from the trends and changes documented we will be better able to predict and adjust Council services to meet community needs.
- Create processes by which this information can be used to improve Council services, to accurately determine entitlements, to better provide information to the community as and when needed and to reduce our cost of service provision. Providing the composite view of the community is the first step towards the provision of better informed services.

Key Directorate Programmes

Directorate Priorities

The Case for Change

The requirement to reduce Council costs and to improve both the efficiency and quality of our service offering is a continuing process.

Services are rapidly moving forward with more modern, digital work styles that make citizen self-service a reality.

Combined with better information about the Council, the Council's services and the offerings available in the community, the citizens of Central Bedfordshire will be better served and at a lower cost.

What Success Looks Like

We will help Central Bedfordshire services to meet their objectives by providing direct ICT support in their review of business process, examination of critical needs and their planning for business change. Specifically we will:

Provide support for moving from paper based internal processes to digital, on-line processes.

Analysis for document and information management moving from paper based storage to on-line digital storage, retrieval, and document processing.

Move from paper based meetings and communications to electronic documents for Council meetings and communications, increasing the use of hand held smart phones and tablets.

Support business process analysis for new systems and process change, support the creation of tender documents and participate in the selection, acquisition and deployment of new systems.

Become an active part of service level strategic planning and change management. We will define our activities as key support resources and move forward proactively, as required, to lead change.

Be customer focused in our work remembering the mission of IT to

***enable a smarter,
more efficient Council.***

Children Services

The Case for Change

The Directorate is working towards better integration of records and information with Central Bedfordshire Council's key services and with other agencies.

Upgrading key applications such as Mosaic and Tribal are key priorities for Children's Services over the coming period.

There is also a requirement to move towards an electronic way of working by digitising records and reducing dependency on paper. This will save time and money and better support a workforce who are out in the field with customers.

What Success Looks Like

Children's Services directorate is driven by two of the council's top six priorities.

- To improve educational attainment
- To promote health and wellbeing and to protect the vulnerable

The Directorate strives to bring together professionals from a variety of disciplines to deliver early intervention and prevention and targeted youth services to children, young people and families in Central Bedfordshire.

Regeneration and Business Services

The Case for Change

The inward investment campaign is critical to the directorate's aim of supporting business and new job growth in Central Bedfordshire.

The Directorate will also need to meet its statutory obligations on land charges and sustainable drainage.

There is also a requirement to move towards an electronic way of working by digitising records and reducing dependency on paper. This will save time and money and better support a workforce who are out in the field with customers.

What Success Looks Like

The Regeneration and Business Services directorate aim is to create an environment which meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents by making the communities in Central Bedfordshire well planned, well built and prosperous.

The directorate provides services that people care about:

- Support to businesses
- New job growth
- Town centre development
- Planning and sustainable growth

The aim of Regeneration and Business Services is to make the towns and villages in Central Bedfordshire places for communities to thrive, grow and be proud of.

Community Services

The Case for Change

Community Services need to meet several statutory obligations over the coming period in order to continue compliance on the key services it delivers.

A major project for the Directorate is the retendering of the Highways Contract. This is being supported by IT.

Community Services aims to improve access to support and systems for mobile colleagues by identifying and deploying a fit for purpose solution for these groups.

Also key is upgrading IT systems at libraries and leisure centres. This includes wifi access for staff and customers.

What Success Looks Like

Community Services works with our customers to provide the services that affect everyday life: roads, bins, safety, transport, leisure and the environment.

Put simply, the aim is to make Central Bedfordshire towns and villages places for communities to thrive, grow and be proud of.

The Directorate is working to improve public health and enhance the quality of life for all of our residents.

A key part of this is reducing and limiting waste, preventing pollution and providing a range of leisure services and activities for families and communities.

Social Care, Health and Housing

The Case for Change

The Care Act will steer the priorities for Adult Social Care Health and Housing in the coming months and years. Swift will continue to be developed to make it easier to use and to support the roll out of the Care Act.

To support the Better Care Fund, the Directorate will work closely with Children's Services on sharing transitions data and with the NHS to share health and social care data.

The Directorate will provide better choice and access to services through improved online self-service.

In Housing, the team will continue to improve systems so that they are more reliable and enable Housing to deliver high quality day to day services. QL is integral to partnership working with contractors and other CBC services.

For both parts of this directorate, the aim is to develop the paperless officer and mobile working. This will improve access to services and enable care and financial assessments and to be carried out remotely. This will help to support major corporate projects such as Your Space 3.

What Success Looks Like

Social Care, Health and Housing works with people to help them continue to live as independently as possible in their own homes and this includes working to ensure that there is suitable housing for everyone in the area.

The Directorate supports residents by ensuring access to appropriate care and support through Social Care and housing services provision.

The ambition is for residents of Central Bedfordshire to live their own lives, enjoy good health, be safe, independent and play a full and active part in the community.

The key priorities for the Directorate are:

- Building and securing the adult social care and housing market
- Strengthening customer focus, through improved professional standards and practice
- Determining and delivering the council's housing offer
- Preparing for future changes and the transformation of adult social care, health and housing

Public Health

The Case for Change

Publishing an integrated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is a key priority for Public Health. It enables the service to share accurate information with it's partners and the public about services in the Central Bedfordshire area. IT will be required to support the development of this online tool.

Improving access to CBC systems from Doolittle Mill is also a priority for Public Health. WiFi access will greatly improve the way of working for resident and visiting staff and partners.

What Success Looks Like

Public Health is all about improving health and wellbeing. The team work to understand and assess the needs of the population of Central Bedfordshire. They consider the impact and costs associated with different health and wellbeing improvement options, and make informed commissioning decisions.

Public Health has statutory responsibilities to commission sexual health services, the healthy child programme (5-19 years), drug and alcohol prevention and treatment as well as health checks.

Public Health in Central Bedfordshire produce an annual report on the health of the local population and champion health across the whole of the authority's business.

The team also work with local criminal justice partners and the Police and Crime Commissioner to promote safer communities.

The Case for Change

The core financial system, SAP, was established when the Council was created. The system is a clone version of the SAP system that was in use by the predecessor Bedfordshire County Council.

The Bedfordshire system was never fully optimised and insufficient investment has been made in the system since to allow it to reach its full potential as a management system.

What Success Looks Like

The objective is to provide improved system user interfaces that are more logical and intuitive to use, are more efficient and that lead users through their work processes.

System interfaces – moving information between SAP and range of line of business applications – will be improved, simplified and provide better audit control.

Reporting will move to a professional data warehouse environment to provide more flexible reporting, to report on more financial aspects and to provide better user access to reports.

Subsidiary financial processes that are currently handled on line business systems outside of the direct control of SAP will be supported to migrate workflows and processes onto SAP in an efficient manner.

Improvement and Corporate Services

The Case for Change

Improvement and Corporate Services will support key corporate-wide projects over the coming months and years. This includes mobile working and associated business transformation, the digitisation of services and improved access onto online services. Through the Customer Strategy, we will enable our customers to access services 24/7. Linked to this is the redevelopment of our corporate website.

Specific sections of the directorate will require further SAP integration to improve the services they are delivering. This includes HR on the e-recruitment side and IPAMS on the Assets side.

What Success Looks Like

Improvement and Corporate Services is the backbone of Central Bedfordshire Council, supporting the front line services by providing quality back office services.

The aim of the directorate is to provide excellent services to our residents and our colleagues to make Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work.

The team works collaboratively using its expertise, insight and technology to make sure the council complies, improves and excels.

Improvement and Corporate Services covers the following core business areas:

- Customer Relations and Services
- Assets
- Communications
- IT
- Performance and Programme Management
- Legal and Democratic Services
- HR
- Procurement
- Corporate Scrutiny and Research

Key IT Services

Security

The Case for Change

Government requirements to meet security for the Public Services Network, NHS N3 network and modern mobile work styles are a continually changing programme.

The task of good IT is to enact appropriate security, maintain business processes and keep our data and processes safe.

Persons conducting business with the Council have the right to know that their affairs are secure.

What Success Looks Like

Central Bedfordshire will take a **risk based, business first approach** to security, insuring that the Council's business can go forward to the benefit of our citizens and at the same time maintaining a security regime to assure a high level of control.

We will **review our security** requirements on a periodic basis and enact any measures found to be required to meet new standards or to meet new security risks as they emerge.

We will maintain our software and applications at **current levels** of release and will commit to a full and **continuous patching** regime for servers, software and networks.

We will **review all software** and applications prior to installation to assure that when operational both the new resources and the Council's continuing operations meet standards and requirements.

We will maintain all **policies and procedures** with respect to security and provide an on going training regime to assure that all staff are current and up to date with their responsibilities and with the risks facing us.

Service Simplification

The Case for Change

Several on going processes have come together to create a systems landscape that is more complex and less efficient than it needs be.

A forward looking objective is to simplify the systems landscape and to have only one of each style of application and to only have the minimum total number of applications required.

What Success Looks Like

As an on-going business process, IT will pursue savings and **simplification** by:

Identifying areas of duplication in systems provisioning – duplicate data bases, Case Management Systems, Electronic Document and Records Management, multiple web sites amongst others – and analysing the **potential to rationalise** and economise resources while maintaining or improving service quality.

Where a reasonable business case indicates a potential for **real business and service gain** through change, IT will take on the role of facilitator and move forward with the change process, rationalising and consolidating the systems offering as required.

When it is not reasonable to change systems immediately, IT will try to **rationalise** use of resources to minimise costs, by making more efficient use of the existing investment.

New system introductions will be reviewed by IT with, amongst other requirements, a view to providing the same services with an existing application.

The systems rationalisation process will include the consideration of systems in use by other Councils that could potentially be used by Central Bedfordshire as part of a **shared services** programme between the authorities.

Likewise we would seek to provide services to peer organisation.

Telephony

The Case for Change

The ability for our citizens to contact us by telephone and to receive an exceptional experience will remain key to our customer services strategy for the foreseeable future, even as more and more services become available on-line and more and more citizens choose on-line services as their primary contact vehicle.

The telephony services for the Council will need to rise above a status of adequate to a status of excellent if we are to meet our challenging goals of saving resources while improving services.

What Success Looks Like

We will retender for telephony services to provide a unified communications system that provides the same services on mobile phones as it does on fixed line desktop phones.

We will provide **aggregated billing** arrangements for voice and data and dispense with individual calling contracts to make more efficient use of our communications budgets and to lower costs of deploying new mobile and hand held technologies.

Call and data charges for individual tablets and phones will be eliminated through **licensing of individuals** rather than licensing of individual machines.

The 3G/4G black spot hovering over our main office facilities in Priory House will be addressed through the implementation of an internal antenna system to carry mobile communications.

The availability of both tablets and smartphones will be improved and handsets upgraded to make greater use of **applications**, data recording and communications.

As a result of improved communications, the divide that exists between those services available while working at a Council desktop and those available working while mobile will be reduced.

As society moves closer to the **Post-PC era**, Central Bedfordshire will be ready to follow technological development and to take advantages of new applications as they are released.

Servers and Hosting

The Case for Change

Central Bedfordshire self hosts the large majority of its applications and data.

Over the past 10 years there has been a steady move by industry and local authorities alike towards purchasing services that are remotely hosted and available on an as required basis rather than purchasing infrastructure.

Allowing vendors and service companies to host services has the advantage of removing the burden of technical support from the Council and of providing a higher level of operational flexibility.

What Success Looks Like

To meet the needs of flexibility, rapid change and efficient support, Central Bedfordshire IT will focus on four key competencies in terms of servers and service hosting arrangements.

We will continually review our in house **skill sets** to assure that we have in place trained and flexibility support teams. We will assure that sufficient resources and training are available.

We will review and improve our internal server hosting and data centres to maintain **compliance** with best practice and industry security standards.

We will fully exploit modern **virtualisation technologies** to allow us to deploy resources more quickly, manage existing resources more efficiently, provide resiliency as required and assure backup and restoration services.

We will be open to remote and vendor **hosting arrangements** and will take full advantage of the relevant offers that come forward.

We will treat and support the Internet and the hosting arrangements that it represents as our **third data centre** and will assure Internet services, maintain security and provide for integration with existing systems.

Providing the best service arrangements to our users at the best value will be the primary focus, whether or not those services are internal to Central Bedfordshire or provided by a third party from a remote location.

Financing Change

The ICT budget at Central Bedfordshire represents approximately 3% of the total administrative costs for the Council. As the Council goes through a change programme to meet government demands for efficiencies, ICT will both actively support that change programme and see its own budget reduced in line with other Council administrative services.

The existing ICT budget is roughly allocated as 60% staff costs, 30% licensing costs and 10% general administration and re-investment.

The funding for future major projects will come from these sources:

- ***Internally generated funds*** from replacing higher cost services with lower cost alternatives and thereby generating savings.
- ***Capital Programmes*** funding from Central Bedfordshire Council internal initiatives that require major IT support.
- ***Change Programmes*** from the Council's services and Directorates that are actively seeking process and service change and development.
- ***External funding grants*** from government and service organisations that are supporting pathfinder organisations and deploying innovative solutions.
- ***Earnings generated*** from the sale of IT support services to external organisations.

The one sure factor is that funding for IT supported change programmes and development will become more difficult to find as the general local authority efficiencies programme bites deeper into Council budgets.

Creatively developing funding arrangements for IT will be a major focus as we move towards the next decade.

Rethinking ICT

When compared to home computer services and consumer electronics, the cost of Council ICT provisioning is relatively expensive on a per person basis. Local authorities have this cost structure in common with most large industrial companies.

The challenge going forward is to begin to move from a traditional, heavy and costly service towards a much ***lighter consumer oriented model*** that provides adequate and flexible IT support without all of the costly overheads.

For example, there is no need to provide a full Microsoft desktop with all of the associated costs, if a user only uses a single application and a bit of collaboration technology. And there is little need to provision an industrial grade, highly secure office network facility for many users who are working in a much more mobile environment.

Central Bedfordshire Council will start moving towards a lighter and more efficient IT by focusing on **comprehensive mobile technologies** to free users from both the office and the office IT environments.

Through securely publishing individual applications on the Internet we will reduce the number and kind of services consumed by individuals. Through the development and deployment of service oriented apps (applications) for our staff we will start the process of aligning user needs with IT provisioning. Collaboration with our external service partners will reduce the demand for traditional Council IT services.

One way to envision the changes that are coming forward is to start the planning exercise from nothing and build up services to the **required level of IT**, rather than starting the planning with what we have and then asking what we could reduce.

If there were no Council ICT Service, how would the Council function in the modern world. What services would they provide through consumer electronics and what would they purchase from service providers? What parts of the existing service would they just forgo?

As Councils continue to look for savings, the incidence of **Sharing Services** between Councils will continue to rise. We will seek to take advantage of this trend by both being willing to share Central Bedfordshire services with others and to consume services from other Councils when relevant.

Governance and Prioritisation

To assure maximum benefit from the investment, it is paramount that a Council wide **programme management** methodology including IT governance and prioritisation of investment is in place.

To facilitate the development of and then the on going management of IT governance, ICT is implementing a full Programme Office methodology including an **ICT Project Board** with the remit to review, advise and supervise the prioritisation of ICT internal projects.

This IT board will be extended to provide Council management with the ability to fully participate in council wide IT investment, advising on prioritisation and delivery of the services requested by their directorates and services.

The overall goal is to have an active, effective and **open process** of determining investment in IT work programmes with the leadership goal of achieving maximum alignment of investment with Council needs and priorities.