Central Bedfordshire Council

Audit Committee   26 September 2016

Update of ICT Disaster Recovery (DR) Plan

Report of: Stephan Conaway Council's Chief Information Officer

Bernard Sykes, ICT Operations and Network Manager (Presenting at Audit Committee)

This report relates to current plans for recovery of the Council's IT operations after a major outage at one of the Council's Data Centres.

Purpose of this report is to Update the Audit Committee on Current Plans for Disaster and to Inform the Committee on future trends and subsequent changes in DR planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit Committee to review and to note the changes in the DR environment and the work that is on-going in IT and to comment on these plans as it sees as appropriate.

Issues

This report on ICT DR planning was requested by the Audit Committee, as the existing IT DR plan had not been updated for some period and there were concerns that it would be out of date.

The original plan from 2014 has now been updated to *reflect the current state* of the IT infrastructure with two local data centres. This updated plan is attached as an exempt appendix to this report for review as required.

It is also emphasized that IT in local authorities across the UK is under going rapid change and that the CBC infrastructure is unlikely to remain in its current state for much longer.

For the past 20 months, ICT has worked on a strategy to move CBC data centres to the Cloud, a strategy that is reflected across the UK in local authorities and commercial businesses. CBC data centres now need serious investment to continue providing good services and the small size of the data centres makes it difficult to achieve high level efficiencies.

Moving to the Cloud can help CBC control costs, improve security, reduce capital investment and create much greater flexibility in providing high level services.

Plans are now in place to begin this migration and CBC ICT staff are currently being trained in the new services they will be required to provide. Prototype and test migrations to full cloud hosting will take place over the next 3 to 6 months and if proven successful, full migrations could take place in 2017.

Special attention is being paid to information security during this migration both internally and externally with the new Cloud providers. External reviews follow the PSN Code of Compliance 14 Principles of Cloud Hosting documentation; internal security is aligned with certification under the PSN CoCo annual reviews.

Cloud Hosting will have a major impact on DR for the Council.

- Several data centres will be hosting CBC data and services, as such the loss of any one centre will have significantly less impact on CBC operations.
- For the main hosting arrangements, dual, geographically spread data centres are being provisioned in professional hosting centres that are themselves highly secure.
- New more modern data backup, restoration and DR facilities are being designed into the regime.
- More modern technologies will be available to us in the Cloud.

The entire environment for DR will change radically over the next months, as Cloud Hosting matures and goes into service; IT will arrange to provide an update to the Committee on DR in the first quarter of 2017.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

1.   No Changes from Existing Arrangements

Financial and Risk Implications

2.   Move to cloud hosting, when established, is targeted to provide the same or somewhat reduced total cost base for the organisation.
3.   Targeted is an overall reduction in risk to the Council through the use of more modern technologies and a professional hosting environment.

Equalities Implications

N/A

Implications for Work Programming

N/A

Appendices:

Appendix A - ICT DR Plan (Current Architecture) **EXEMPT**.