

ICT Strategy

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Confidentiality: **Open**

1. Issue

1.1.1 To consider our ICT strategy.

2. Recommendation

2.1.1 The Board is asked to agree to finance the investment in our ICT systems from our overall budget (as defined in section 3.2).

3. Consideration

3.1 Overview of ICT strategy

- 3.1.1 Our ICT strategy has been developed to define how we will meet the organisation's business system needs within the next three years. It describes a desired future state where our systems provide up-to-date and accurate information to support our strategic regulator role fully. It has been developed in tandem with our Corporate Strategy and Plan and has been approved by the Senior Management Team.
- 3.1.2 Although we have designed a proportionate strategic systems state that will deliver value for money, there is of course a cost attached to this over and above what we would need to spend just to maintain our current systems.
- 3.1.3 This paper therefore describes the benefits and costs of implementing our ICT Strategy and asks the Board to agree the expenditure
- 3.1.4 A copy of the draft ICT strategy is attached as Appendix A. In summary, much of its focus is on facilitating the collection, storage and effective sharing of information throughout the organisation. Although the Knowledge Management Strategy (currently in development) will more closely describe the business' requirements, the principles of

being able to store and then view a complete history of activities, documents and intelligence on authorities and individuals (e.g. members) are already understood. To facilitate this, we will undertake the following key developments:

- Deliver Project Excellence
- Enhance CRM for other users in the organisation to match more closely their business processes and facilitate better capture and use of information
- Introduce Search and Management Information tools to enhance the use of information
- Enhance the use of our SharePoint system as an Electronic Document Record Management System
- Retire our legacy Case Management System and move the data to a platform more aligned with our system architecture
- Work with the business to change ways of working to embed data capture and the systems in day to day activities.

3.1.5 With better access to better quality information, we will also look to support more online collaborative working. For example, as part of our office refurbishment, we will be implementing a wireless network and providing better audio visual equipment for meeting rooms. This will allow people to access the systems from anywhere in the office and hence explore our data as part of investigation planning or risk meetings. We will also improve the tools for working remotely and implement collaborative working software.

3.1.6 Behind the scenes, we will be rationalising our server architecture so that it costs less to maintain, whilst delivering optimum performance. This will be facilitated through 'virtualisation' of our servers, to reduce the number of physical machines that we need to run and maintain.

3.1.7 We will also improve the governance and transparency of ICT development, with SMT receiving regular updates on the planning and steering prioritisation of the programme.

3.2 Costs of delivery

3.2.1 In developing the Strategy, we have borne in mind the proportionality of our systems given the size of our organisation and the nature of our work. We believe that the proposed strategy delivers the best value for money through helping to improve SfE's delivery whilst not gold-plating the solution.

3.2.2 The Board could however choose not to invest in our systems and redirect the funding to direct customer delivery. In this situation, we would still incur an annual cost to keep the current architecture running, which might actually increase as the software and hardware get older and require more attention. In that case we would miss out on the benefits highlighted in that paper.

3.2.3 Table 1 below summarises the costs of ongoing maintenance and support of our current systems as is, and compares it with the estimated budgeted costs of delivering the proposed ICT Strategy.

Table 1 – comparison of estimated costs for coming two financial years

Year	As is		With ICT Strategy	
	10/11	11/12	10/11	11/12
Software licensing and maintenance	75,000	85,000	75,000	70,000
IT Staff costs	88,000	88,000	88,000	88,000
Capital development (enhancement of CRM and SharePoint)	10,000	10,000	85,000	35,000
Additional Software	0	0	10,000	20,000
Business input	10,000	10,000	40,000	30,000
Total	183,000	193,000	298,000	243,000
10/11 ICT Strategy cost				115,000
11/12 ICT Strategy cost				50,000

4. Risk and financial considerations

4.1 Benefits

- 4.1.1 The primary benefit of improving our systems is the support of strategic decision-making based on quality information. In our regulatory sphere, we must take a proportionate and balanced approach to maintaining standards, using our resources in an intelligent way to ‘punch above our weight’ and make a bigger impact than as a non-strategic regulator. Information is the cornerstone of this impact, allowing us to target our resources and pre-empt potential standards issues before they occur. This is directly in line with our corporate strategic objectives. Our current systems support this to a limited degree, but limit the extent to which we can view and analyse information.
- 4.1.2 There are also benefits from better supporting online collaborative working too. Documents stored electronically can be accessed by more than one person and at numerous locations as well as being automatically controlled in terms of retention and security restrictions helping us meet our Data Protection and Freedom of Information requirements. It also reduces the risk of paper documents containing sensitive information being lost or stolen.
- 4.1.3 Finally, there are also ongoing cost savings to be found by rationalising our server architecture through reduced energy consumption and maintenance. These can be achieved whilst actually improving our internal service delivery.

4.2 Risks

- 4.2.4 Updating our systems and software means that we are continually supported by the manufacturers, as well as benefitting from new features and generally greater stability that newer versions offer. However, the risk of not investing in our systems is that we

will increasingly run on outdated and unsupported systems. This puts us at risk of not being able to call in help in the event of a failure, potentially leading to loss of key functionality with extended rebuild time and cost.

- 4.2.5 There is also a risk of more frequent down-time as components of aging equipment wear out and need to be replaced.
- 4.2.6 From a business perspective, failing to mimic business processes in the system will mean that our people are more likely to resort to work-arounds that do not facilitate the sharing of information. A subsequent consequence could be unnecessary duplication as people attempt to obtain information that we already have moving us away from the principles of Hampton strategic regulation.

5. Appendices and attachment

Appendix A: Draft ICT strategy