

POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

24TH JULY 2014

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ICT AND PROCUREMENT

STEPHEN JOHN

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SECTION A - MATTERS FOR DECISION

ITEM 1

21st CENTURY LEARNING PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To obtain approval to engage with and appoint an educational provider to design and deliver a 21st Century Learning Programme and to suspend the Council's Contract Procedure Rules ("CPRs") in respect of the requirements of competition.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council recently benefitted from a WG Grant under their Learning in Digital Wales (LiDW) programme. The grant amounted to £950k and was directed at improving in-school networks; in particular wireless connectivity. This exercise is now complete and all schools now have full wireless capability.
- 2.2 Aligned with this exercise were two other initiatives delivered via the LiDW programme, one to deliver high speed internet connectivity to all schools across Wales and the other to host an all Wales Learning and Collaboration Platform; known as HWB+ and incorporating Microsoft Office 365.
- 2.3 In order to support and promote the use of these new facilities, WG have released further funding to each Council with the express remit that the grant must be reinvested in educational ICT within schools.
- 2.4 The grant is paid over two years and is derived from an equation centring on the number of schools in each Local Authority and the annual cost of their internet provision. In NPT's case this amounts to £150k in year 1 and £165k in year 2.
- 2.5 There are a number of initiatives directed at this funding, one of which is a programme of work aimed at the primary and secondary schools which will feed the new school planned for Baglan Bay; Ysgol Bae Baglan.
- 2.6 The programme aims to engage with teachers, pupils, parents and the wider community with the aims of raising attendance levels and improving literacy and numeracy skills. In addition to this, there is an engagement with school based technology to support the delivery of the programme with all work

produced being underpinned by Office 365 and HWB+.

- 2.7 The programme will require significant commitment and all schools included have been fully involved in evaluating its content and benefits; the result of which is a 100% take up rate which will provide the opportunity for all pupils transferring to the new school in September 2016 to achieve the same skill levels prior to coming together.
- 2.8 In order to deliver a bespoke 21st Century Learning Programme across the three Secondary Schools and eleven feeder Primary Schools it is proposed to engage with the Port Talbot based company, Aspire2Be. The intention is that they will work directly with schools and digital leaders to undertake the design of a robust technology and learning framework and deliver it over the next two school years.
- 2.9 The costs of this programme will be £80,000 per annum for each of the two years with payments being staged on a term by term basis and based on results. The programme itself will be funded with a contribution from the WG LiDW grant, monies secured from the WLGA Inclusion Fund and each school making a contribution to cover specific staff training and this has already been agreed in principle.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 CPR 2 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules relating to the invitation of tenders is suspended and authorisation is given to formally contract with Aspire2Be to provide the learning programme, for a period of 2 years commencing 1st September 2014.

4. Reasons for Proposed Decision

- 4.1 To ensure that an appropriate provider is appointed to deliver the learning programme within the relevant timescales.

List of Background Papers

Wards Affected

All

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

21st CENTURY LEARNING PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts:

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	Positive
Better Health and Well Being	Positive
Environment and Transport	No impact
Crime and Disorder	No impact

Other Impacts:

Welsh Language	Neutral
Sustainable Development	No impacy
Equalities	Positive
Social Inclusion	Positive

(c) **Consultation**

Not applicable.

ITEM 2

Approval and Adoption of the Corporate ICT Strategy

1. Purpose of Report

To approve the content and adopt the Corporate ICT Strategy Document.

2. Background

The Council last published its Corporate ICT Strategy during 2011; a document that covered the period 2011-2015.

The recent publication of the Council's improvement objectives, and the challenging financial situation facing the Council, required that the strategy be reviewed and aligned accordingly; covering the period 2014-2018.

This exercise has now been completed and the revision has been signed off by Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and the Cabinet Member.

3. ICT Strategy – Organisational Fit

The ICT Strategy is part of the wider Council Strategy addressing its related support services of Property, HR and ICT. It is intrinsically linked with those addressing the future delivery of the Property and HR services.

The ICT Strategy is not a technical document aimed at ICT staff but one that is meant to be used by all Council staff and Service Managers to engage with the ICT Service in order to transform their services and delivery options to achieve associated improvements in citizen outcomes.

The ICT Strategy should be viewed as a pervasive document, one that can be placed alongside any service report to ensure that the ICT implications of its recommendations are understood and capable of being met. It will also allow Members and Senior Officers the opportunity to utilise its Objectives as part of their scrutiny process.

4. ICT Strategy – Structure and Approach

The ICT Strategy is constructed around a flow which begins with the Council's *Improvement Objectives* and finishes with a high level *Action Plan*.

The *Improvement Objectives* lead to the construction of specific *ICT Service Objectives*, which themselves translate into *Themes* for delivery.

Each of these *Themes* are examined in detail and a set of desired *Outcomes* are produced and it is the achievement of these that form the outline *Action Plan*.

The detail is in the strategy itself which can be found at Appendix A.

5. ICT Strategy – Key Points

The ICT Strategy:-

- recognises the principles of Systems Thinking and has embedded the approach at all levels
- understands that delivery of the strategy is a corporate activity and that while specific elements fall directly inside the ICT Section, large elements will demand service involvement
- acknowledges the current and on-going budget situation and will continue to be delivered within cash limits whilst reducing the need for Capital investment
- recognises that information is a key asset, one to be used extensively but with due regard to its governance and security.
- is an engaging strategy, not a prescriptive one. It recognises that by adopting a themed approach it can address the Council's priorities whilst remaining flexible to service needs
- operates to service the needs of the Council whilst recognising that National and Regional initiatives need to be considered and delivered where a robust business case exists
- continues to be aligned with the original aims of the All Wales ICT Strategy
- will be reviewed and reported on an annual basis

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members approve the publication and adoption of the ICT Strategy.

7. Reason for Proposed Decision

To provide an Authority wide Strategy to be used by all Members, Council Staff and Service Managers to engage with the ICT Service in order to transform their services and delivery options to achieve associated improvements in citizen outcomes.

8. Background Papers

None

9. Wards Affected

All

10. Appendices

ICT Strategy 2011-2015 – Appendix A

11. Officer Contact

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COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Approval and Adoption of the Corporate ICT Strategy

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

(d) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts:

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	Positive
Better Health and Well Being	Positive
Environment and Transport	No impact
Crime and Disorder	No impact

Other Impacts:

Welsh Language	Positive
Sustainable Development	No impact
Equalities	Neutral
Social Inclusion	Neutral

(e) **Consultation**

Not applicable.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

ITEM 3

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES BUSINESS PLANS

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report provides, for information, the business plans for 2014/15 for the ICT and Procurement Sections.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has a general duty under the Local Government (Wales) Measure (2009) to ‘make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions’. To support this, a review was undertaken of the Council’s current approach to performance management by a group of officers from across the Council. External challenge to the review was provided by Rod Alcott, Chief Officer Leadership was provided by Aled Evans and Head of Service leadership by Karen Jones.
- 2.2 A key proposal from the review was to replace the existing policy which requires business plans to be produced at Accountable Manager level with a requirement for them to be produced at Head of Service level based on a common set of principles. These business plans will be underpinned by the production of service report cards at Accountable Manager level which will demonstrate the service has in place arrangements to support and inform continuous improvement.
- 2.3 The timetable for completion of the plans was mid-May in order that the relevant Cabinet Member could sign off the plans before the Annual General Meeting of Council. The plans for the Finance and Corporate Services Directorate (ICT, Procurement, Legal Services and Financial Services) were produced according to the timetable and have been signed off by Councillor Arwyn Woolcock.

3. Business Plans

- 3.1 The business plans that have been provided in this report are for the ICT and Procurement sections. The business plans are all based on the common set of principles proposed by the review referred to above, were all produced according to the timetable laid down, and have been signed off by Councillor Arwyn Woolcock.
- 3.2 The plans outline the key objectives of the divisions for 2014/15 along with how any risks to the achievement of these objectives will be mitigated. They also provide a detailed plan of individual actions designed to ensure that the objectives referred to are achieved.
- 3.3 Monitoring of delivery against the business plan will take place throughout the year via meetings with Accountable Managers and with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services at his regular Departmental Management Team meetings.
- 3.4 The business plans are attached at Appendix B and C to this report.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 That the report be noted.

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix B – ICT Business Plan 2014/15

Appendix C – Procurement Business Plan 2014/15

Wards Affected

All

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