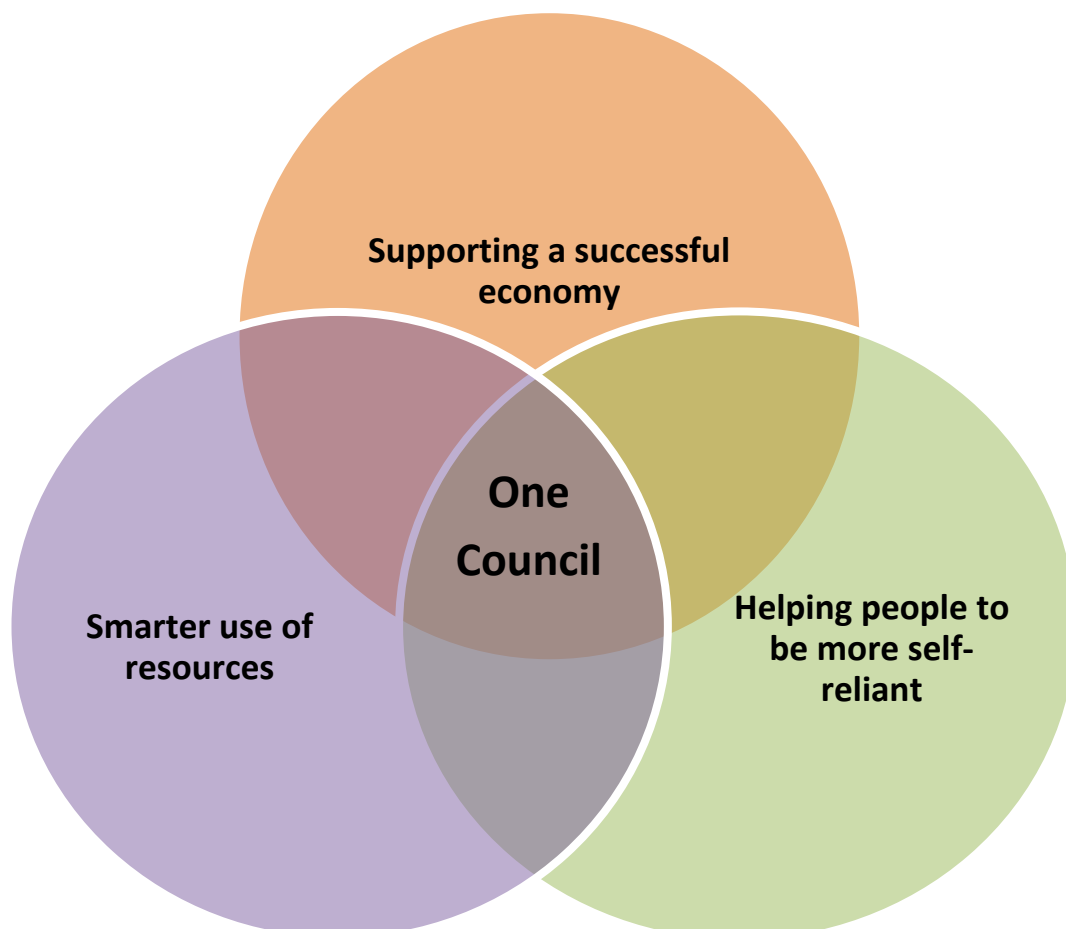


ICT strategy 2016 - 2020

1 Background / Context

- 1.1 The council is undergoing a period of unprecedented change. In an increasingly uncertain future, the organisation faces the following “trilemma”
- The driving force for continuous improvement in the delivery of high quality services which benefit citizens and deliver value for the council tax they pay
 - Increase demand for its services, driven by an ageing population and increasing legislative responsibilities
 - The need to reduce expenditure in response to ever reducing budget settlements from Welsh Government
- 1.2 Against this background, the council has reviewed its previous six corporate priorities and agreed to focus its efforts on the three new priorities



- 1.3 ICT has a key role to play in supporting the organisation in the delivery of these objectives. It must be an enabler for change, delivering the art of the possible and a key support for the transformation agenda. At the same time, ICT delivers existing capability to all areas of council services, and this delivery must meet current needs in reliable, safe and resilient way.

2 Mission Statement

- 2.1 The mission statement of the ICT service will be

**DELIVER TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS WHICH SUPPORT HIGH
QUALITY, RELIABLE SERVICES**

- 2.2 This means we will

- identify the needs of our different customer groups and deliver the right solution
- not deploy anything unless we can make it easy to use, reliable and secure

3 Vision Statement

- 3.1 The vision statement of the ICT service will be

**THE RIGHT TOOLS, DELIVERED RIGHT.
VALUED BY CUSTOMERS, ADMIRER BY OTHERS**

4 Principles

- 4.1 The service is guided by the corporate values of FACE:

- F - Fair
- A - Ambitious
- C - Citizen Focussed
- E - Efficient

- 4.2 Over and above this, there are a set of principles which the ICT service will be guided by and which will inform our approach to the future strategic decisions about service delivery and how we best deploy our resources towards supporting the council's priorities.

Pick what's right, not what's cheapest

ICT will always aim to deliver the best available technology according to our customers' needs. While upfront cost may be higher, this approach delivers a more reliable, higher quality offering to customers which typically outlasts poorer offerings, proving better whole-life Value for Money

Resilient & Reliable

We will only deploy solutions which are resilient and reliable. Customers must be able to rely on what we give them.

Warranty / support SLAs

We will always maintain warranty/support for tier one systems. Below this, we will take a risk based approach.

On Premise vs Cloud services

In principle, we are agnostic between inhouse hosting vs the cloud. We will decide on a case-by-case basis dependent upon the needs of the customer, risk profile and whole life costs.

Inhouse expertise

We will operate a hybrid model where we maintain inhouse expertise for core / tier 1 systems, but have external SLAs or call off contracts for bespoke/niche requirements. We will apply this approach for corporate projects – acting as a technical advisor and expert delivering the solution through external support, with ongoing support delivered according to other principles.

Leveraging existing technology solutions

We have chosen Microsoft as the foundation for our technology solution. Wherever possible we will seek to build on this in preference to other solutions in order to make the most of our existing products, reduce integration risk and deliver the highest level of support from our inhouse capability – both in terms of skills and software architecture.

Buy, don't build

We will always look for industry leading software solutions first. Internally writing bespoke solutions is higher risk and creates a future capability requirement which we may not be able to support with reducing resources.

Learn from others and share our experiences too

We're all on the same side – let's not reinvent the wheel. We will engage with other public sector organisations about how to do it best, and what opportunities there are to collaborate and use each others expertise.

5 Customers

5.1 This strategy recognises the need to support different customers, both internal and external. The key customer groups are:

- Public Citizens and Businesses who access council services
- Internal Council Colleagues & Councillors
- SLA customers – e.g. Schools & Awen Trust
- Other sector bodies/partners, e.g. Western Bay, Youth Offending Team,

6 Risks

6.1 This section sets out the overarching risks which the ICT service faces, and how we will approach them. A more detailed risk register will be maintained as a live document over the strategy period.

6.1.1 Local Government Reorganisation

At the time of strategy development, there remains significant uncertainty over Local Government reorganisation or what it might mean in terms of partner/s for Bridgend in particular. The timeline for any merger is equally uncertain, but on current proposals, it may be assumed to be around 2020. From an ICT perspective, the merger of myriad legacy council systems across two and possibly three organisations is highly complex, time consuming and involves significant risk. However, there are also significant potential advantages from increased scale in terms of purchasing power and the recurrent efficiencies of deploying and managing a single solution across a much larger user population. Bridgend will continue to take a pragmatic approach, seeking the best ICT solutions based on current needs. We will be mindful of any future Integration, not taking decisions to frustrate it, but neither be constrained by it.

6.1.2 Staffing/Skills Risk

Following a restructure implemented in 2016, the ICT service has carried a high proportion of vacancies which it has not been possible to recruit to either internally or externally. Strengthening demand from the private sector combined with restrictions on pay & grading have meant that for certain skillsets it is difficult for the council to compete. Consequently, the service has adapted by creating a number of apprentice roles, which provide the service

with capacity and growing capability. We will develop our apprentices, recognise their potential and offer them opportunities to grow their skillsets. It is early days, but we are already beginning to see the benefits of this approach and we will continue it on an as-needs basis.

More widely, the strategy recognises that it may not always be appropriate to deliver solutions in-house. This is enshrined in a number of the principles set out in paragraph 4.2.

6.1.3 Financial Risk

As a support function within resources directorate, the council's ICT budget faces a higher level of forecast budget reductions than some other areas of the council. At the same time, there is increasing demand in the form of public demand for online services and the support requirement for ICT input into the council's transformational projects. The service recognises that it cannot do everything for everyone, but needs to focus on its core offering whilst providing support and guidance to projects where it can add most value. The priorities set out in this strategy form a core response to managing this financial risk.

7 PRIORITIES

7.1 ICT PRIORITY 1: MAINTAIN THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT

7.1.1 The Council will maintain our hosted infrastructure environment to provide a resilient platform for our systems – delivering a full and uninterrupted service for our customers. We will aim to operate at 99.9% availability and retain core expertise inhouse to deliver this. With the twin risks of Local Government Reorganisation and the need to vacate sunnyside house at the end of the strategy period, our approach to infrastructure will need to change. We will develop a coherent storage & infrastructure strategy to exit sunnyside house and leverage opportunities from collaboration.

7.1.2 The key tasks in delivering this priority are:

- Review the PSBA WAN with regards network choice
- Single cabling supplier for networks
- Manage 5 year rolling replacement for Devices
- Contract for hardware procurement framework
- Development of an “Exit Strategy” with regards the Data Centre environment
- Review opportunities for Cloud Technologies covering on premise, hybrid, public
- Backup infrastructure for business continuity
- Achieve firewalls expert standard
- Maintain security certifications and ongoing compliance for public sector network
- Maintain/enhance email security
- Review and implement revised server replacement strategy
- Review telephony environment

7.2 PRIORITY 2: FOCUS ON OUR CORE OFFERING & LEVERAGE FULL CAPABILITY

7.2.1 As our resources reduce, we will look to rationalise our software estate, making the most out of our core systems through:

- Working with our customers to understand their needs
- exploring and maximising potential of unused modules
- deliver training on core applications
- making the most of our leadership position on WCCIS implementation

7.2.2 The key tasks in delivering this are:

- Upgrade to the Cisco IPT providing Call Centre and Extension Mobility
- Continue Schools ICT delivery and develop the model and offering
- Work with customers and suppliers to identify and deliver opportunities to leverage Microsoft Enterprise Agreement
- Implement Exchange Messaging supporting the Microsoft Ecosystem Strategy
- Review & Update ICT structure in line with changing demand from across the council
- Implement support network to manage inhouse provision of finance system E5
- Support LLPG corporate address database
- Support corporate cash system
- Maintain inhouse skills and support of Microsoft SQL
- Review of software estate focussing on reductions to internal and external support
- Review of network support focussed on reductions to internal and external support
- Review service needs and retender for replacement to current Ocella system
- Decommission end of life Microsoft systems
- Support Awen Trust transition from corporate network to public domain

7.3 PRIORITY 3: DELIVER AGILITY

7.3.1 ICT has a key role to play in helping to modernise ways of working, and will be a key enabler to support the property strategy to reduce corporate overheads through the deployment of agile working.

- procurement/ installation/deployment/training to new laptop users/ new technology users
- delivery of follow me phone to allow low/no cost agile telephony
- exploring and delivering further access on personal devices
- maintaining secure authentication across new agility offering
- Further roll out of EDRM to work towards a more paperless office, supporting agility

7.4 ICT PRIORITY 4: DELIVER DIGITAL

7.4.1 The council will deliver a transformational shift towards:

1. digital access to services; and
2. digitisation of the most common internal processes.

The council recognise that this will not be for all of our citizens or all of our services, so there will be a need to maintain a good service for “traditional” communication methods. The council will deploy its ICT capability as follows:

- For Internal digital processes, act as a catalyst, champion the art of the possible and help create the conditions for success
- Provide technical support/expertise to support procurement processes
- Provide project technical support for integration issues with back office systems
- Ensure delivery of a secure platform/infrastructure mitigating security risks
- Explore and deliver against requirement for a citizen facing helpdesk/technical queries mailbox
- Support internal business process redesign, delivering building blocks to support transition to digital processes
- Leverage and grow existing digital office capability to permit inbound and outbound digital dataflow
- Development of Web GIS system
- ICT systems support for role out of Welsh Language standards
- Support review of council retention policies and procedures to support digital agenda

8 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 This ICT strategy is aligned to the 2016 revised corporate priorities of the council, to goals set out in the 2016-17 Corporate Plan and the financial forecasts in the councils 2016-17 – 2019/20 Medium Term Financial Strategy.

But it is a live strategy, which needs to evolve as the needs of the council and its residents change, the state of wider public finances evolve, and the picture around Local Government Reorganisation becomes clearer.

This document will be formally refreshed during 2018 at the mid-point of the strategy period, or earlier as required by changing circumstance