Disaster Recovery Provisions

Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

1.0   Summary

1.1   This report is a response to queries raised at Adur and Worthing Councils Joint Governance Committee in 2013 and an update requested through JGC/16-17-008. CenSus ICT were asked to respond to the Committee regarding the state of Disaster Recovery services and options at the Councils' disposal.

This report provides an update on activities undertaken since the Joint Governance Committee on 27/09/2016.

2.0   Background and Progress

2.1   At the previous JGC meeting, an update was requested on the progress of ensuring disaster recovery arrangements are in place at the Councils in the event of serious ICT failure.

The current provisions were outlined along with the details of the long-term plan, to migrate all Council hosted services to public secure cloud services through the Infrastructure as a Service project (currently titled the CenSus Cloud project).

On the request of JGC members, a service recovery test is being planned for a test execution of the current provisions in the coming quarter (January - March 2017).

2.2   Business Continuity Planning

At the time of the last JCG the Digital Development team, was working with Lloyd Harris (Emergency Planning Officer) to complete and release a Business Impact Assessment / Business Continuity Planning tool on the Mats Platform. The development of this tool is now in an advance testing phase by Lloyd Harris, before he commences work with Heads of Service to begin to populate it with Business Impact Assessment data.

2.3   ICT Disaster Recovery Process / Plan

Engagement has been made with 'Adam Continuity', a business continuity and disaster recovery specialist consultancy firm, to review, test and report on the current arrangements in place at Adur and Worthing. Exercise planning with Adam Continuity is due to commence in late January.

This is principally a collaborative exercise between Digital, CenSus ICT, Business & Technical Services and Emergency Planning. However, as the exercise is planned to be a 'live' test (albeit out of hours), full engagement with heads of service will be required throughout the planning, scheduling, execution and feedback stages.

Consultation with Heads of Service may determine the schedule in order to avoid business service impact.

2.4   Resilience Arrangements - Data Backup

Offsite Backup - At the last JGC it was reported that CenSus were exploring options for storage of backup tapes offsite at a Centenary House, Durrington (owned and operated by WSCC). Since this time, we have determined that for ease of access and operation, the site at Commerce way offers us a more appropriate location.

CenSus ICT, working with AWCS have set up a backing store at Commerce Way. This means that offsite backup storage is now entirely independent of Worthing Town Hall and Portland House, offering a significantly greater separation between the data centre and recovery data sets.

2.5   Resilience Arrangements - Emergency Power Supply: Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) and Generator

The call off contract for the provision of an emergency diesel generator was renewed in November 2016 under the same service terms and conditions as the previous contract.

2.6   Server / Service Information Data Sheet

This information is being maintained and will be reviewed in line with findings and recommendations from the outputs from the Business Impact Assessment toolset (reference 2.2 of this document) and the Disaster Recovery Exercise.

2.7   DR Service Options Review

Specific disaster recovery options will be reviewed as outputs from the Disaster Recovery Exercise.

3.0 Legal

3.1   Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

3.2   Alternatively Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.

3.3   Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

4.0 Financial implications

4.1   At present, all costs of DR options services for Adur and Worthing are being investigated, however, early indications are that such services are available for between £25-40k per annum. Outcomes of the engagement with Adam Continuity will clarify costs in this area.

Finance for other work mentioned in the report has already been signed off by the appropriate Committees.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1   That Joint Governance Committee note the progress made towards the provision of IT disaster recovery arrangements; and wider business continuity planning.

Local Government Act 1972
Background Papers:

- Moving to the Cloud, Joint Strategic Committee, 13 July 2016

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 This work will enable the Councils to meet our ambitions around becoming an Adaptive Council, as set out in *Catching the Wave*.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 This work will enable the Councils to meet our commitment, as part of the 'Becoming Adaptive Councils (and Places)' wave catcher in *Surf's Up*:

Our workforce is mobilised using modern devices and digital tools, working smarter and collaborating more easily with colleagues, partners and customers.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Cloud services make a positive contribution to sustainability: The cloud encourages important clean-tech applications like smart grids and it also encourages consumers to use virtual services such as video streaming to replace resource-heavy physical products.

The cloud also draws resources to where they are used most efficiently and its jobs tend to be cleaner and safer than those of more traditional industries. The cloud's efficiency and scalability help reduce energy usage. By reducing the need for hardware, companies can reduce costs and eliminate the need for maintenance and upgrades.

The cloud offers cheaper running costs and more flexibility for businesses hoping to expand. The cloud also increases productivity through its ability to accommodate online collaboration that reduces the need for face to face meetings.

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 The related projects discussed in the report will enable the Councils to support a wider range of devices and working environments for our customers, staff, and partners.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 None identified.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Privacy and security issues are the most important issues for citizens in relation to government use of ICT, particularly data, and it will be essential to strike the balance of risk and reward here, and communicate exceptionally well with residents and members.

7.0   Reputation

7.1   ICT failure has a considerable impact on the Councils' ability to deliver services and thus on our reputation. One of the core objectives of this project is to reduce the likelihood and impact of ICT failure.

7.2   The Councils have achieved in recent times a good national reputation for innovation in ICT and digital.

8.0   Consultations

8.1   None so far.

9.0   Risk Assessment

9.1   The Councils currently have risks identified around the lack of reliable ICT infrastructure and disaster recovery. These are managed through the service risk and corporate risk management processes.

This work mentioned in this report will help mitigate both risks.

9.2   As part of the project management of any work, a full risk register will be produced and maintained.

10.0   Health & Safety Issues

10.1   None identified.

11.0   Procurement Strategy

11.1   The work to procure the new cloud infrastructure, the support for the transition and the ongoing managed service of the infrastructure will be carried out in full accordance with the Councils' Procurement Strategy and Contract Standing Orders.

12.0   Partnership Working

12.1   The Councils are engaged with our partners in CenSus ICT and this work will help to inform the future direction of that partnership.