ICT Position Statement

Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

1.0   Summary

1.1   This report describes the problems being experienced with basic telephony and ICT services and the urgent actions being taken to improve these business critical services. It also seeks to outline the proposed initial steps for developing a digital road map which will allow the councils to harness the benefits of cloud technologies for a range of stakeholders in our council areas, through buying or building next generation local government digital services, keeping users at the heart of the design/specification process.

2.0   Background

2.1   The Chief Executive, through the Catching the Wave Programme and using a member led recruitment process, successfully recruited 4 new Directors in March 2014. Paul Brewer was appointed Director for Digital and Resources and started on May 6th 2014. The Director has now completed an initial discovery phase allowing the production of this first report to Joint Strategic Committee, the ICT Position Statement.

Telephony Position

2.3   The Unify Openscape phone system, deployed to most staff in Worthing Town Hall and Portland House as part of New Ways of Working (NWoW) Phase 1, is still not operating as required despite the efforts of officers. A report to Joint Strategic Committee on New Ways of Working / Accommodation Project, 5th March 2014 refers to earlier severe problems and since then there have been several further system outages on: 6/3/14 (2hrs 6 mins), 12/3/14 (1hr 10 mins), 13/3/14 (1hr), 7/5/14 (45 mins).

The problems are not only with system outages however. A number of important functions have not yet been adequately delivered, in particular the softphones and hunt groups which allow a call to circulate round a group of phones until it is answered. Initial testing of softphones quickly uncovered problems with operating at any scale and this is still unresolved. This means users continue to use desk phones and a complicated web interface that they struggle with. The effect is that users are often not correctly logged in/out or diverted, often making staff unable to contact each other: "*I get ringing tones, but the phone's not ringing their end*". We have not yet fully investigated the extent of the day-to-day communication failures but it is clear staff productivity is being very significantly affected, and this constitutes a large

amount of "hidden harm", users now having changed their behaviour from fault reporting to adaptive working around over time.

2.4   There are two main reasons why the Unify Openscape system has not yet been deployed to the customer contact centre and outlying sites, such as Commerce Way and Worthing Crematorium. The first is a low level of trust in the stability of the new system (the outages), and the second is the ongoing delay with the delivery of the Capita Wide Area Network (WAN), which is needed to support the increased network traffic. The WAN issue is discussed further in para 2.11.

The Siemens HiPath system, used by the contact centre, suffered downtime itself on 16th June 2014 for a full day, with a full service only being restored after 1.5 days. This was due to an internet outage at West Sussex County Council which interrupted the routing for certain key phone lines into the Town Hall.

Commerce Way uses the old Phillips switchboard also in use at Adur Civic Centre. There have always been problems with the call routing from that system to the Unify system. Staff at Commerce Way reported to the Director that they often resort to using their mobiles or emailing for a call back to colleagues on the Unify system, a totally unacceptable situation.

Worthing Crematorium, Worthing Leisure and Theatres operate their own small PBX systems which are outdated and therefore also vulnerable to failure. Staff are using their mobiles at Lancing Housing Office.

Immediate Actions

2.5   *Contract meetings:* Problems with the Unify system have been escalated to the supplier over the last year in August, September, November and December 2013. An action plan was developed and a number of issues were resolved, such as one-way audio and problems with transferring calls. However there remain problems and more are emerging as staff are consulted again. Following the Openscape outage on May 7th, the Director for Digital & Resources called an urgent contract meeting with the supplier, Unify. As a result, and after some delay, Unify produced a report which while containing promises has not yet resulted in any concrete delivery of improvement. Unify promise to resolve many issues (though have not detailed which) with the "Version 8" upgrade in September 2014. The new Head of Census ICT, John Ross (who started in early June), also met with both Unify and Datrix, the hosting supplier, where he identified problems with the Datrix fail-over (backup system) arrangements which are now apparently being addressed.

2.6   *Timeline for supplier and market testing:* The Director and officers have not been satisfied with the commitments given by the two suppliers and we are now working on two strands in parallel. Firstly we plan to set out clear and detailed expectations in a letter to Unify, tied to their commitment to resolve a range of problems in their software upgrade, due in September 2014. We will set out a timeline for delivery with two stages of acceptance testing (September for software changes, then October for successful testing at scale for softphones). Secondly, we plan to conduct a rapid market testing exercise to identify an alternative supplier.

Should Unify fail to deliver a properly working system as specified in the council's original contract specification, the Council will be in a stronger position to declare

Unify in default of the Contract and consider exercising its rights of termination, and exits rights, under the framework contract.

The Unify report (see 2.5) contains some admissions as to the present unsatisfactory elements of the system at para 3 page 5; 3.1 page 5; 3.2 page 6; last para page 4; for Horsham para 5 page 8;

A breach of contract by Unify would entitle the Council financially to be in the position it would have been in had the contract been properly performed, and a claim for additional expenditure incurred by the Council in dealing with the faults, may be made. As it is unlikely that Unify would willingly return funds paid, such action would inevitably result in a claim against Unify, and potential litigation, although it may be possible to negotiate the provision of a less sophisticated, but acceptable, telephone system from them with a return payment.

In a letter to Unify dated 20th November, the Council's additional costs were expressed to be; additional consultation time £9,000; abortive training costs £8,000; and additional costs for handsets £5,000.

A further report on telephony to Joint Strategic Committee will be needed in October/November 2014, potentially with a proposal for urgent change.

2.7   *On the ground support:* The Business Support Manager has been tasked to urgently assess problems on the ground and provide immediate assistance. This work will also help categorise the problems (i.e. software faults, user set-up issues, network etc) and provide evidence to support decision making.

ICT Position – Infrastructure

2.8   *Outages:* On 11th April 2013, Joint Strategic Committee received a report on the severe ICT network outage during November 2012. The report reported a financial impact of £52,000 (consulting and overtime) and at least £15,000 in lost income from leisure and theatre services. The loss of staff productivity was not estimated but was considerable given the system only began to be recovered after 12 days. The report highlighted a lack of an ICT Disaster Recovery Plan and adequate Business Impact Analyses for each service. An exempted report by Deloitte was also presented: "ICT Incident Root Cause Analysis".

Since then, staff and customers have experienced frequent service interruptions, and the main ones are listed below. The ICT Disaster Recovery Plan has not yet been produced (Census ICT responsibility) and the Business Impact Analyses (councils responsible) are still outstanding.

A list of major outages since November 2012:

- 15th February 2013 – Power loss to the Worthing data centre resulting in ½ day loss of systems
- 25th February 2013 – Power loss resulting in ½ day loss of systems
- 4th September 2013 – Loss of network link to Worthing Leisure Centre from 8.37 pm to 2.52pm the following day
- 13th December 2013 – Loss of server for contact centre telephone system (1.5 hours)

- 19th May 2014 – Power loss to data centre resulting in lost productivity of a day

It is important to point out that there are also frequent localised outages, for example with single systems, such as finance (Total), payroll (Resource Link), document management (EDRMS) and human resources (MyView). Users have also reported very slow performance when accessing systems located at other sites via Citrix.

2.9   *Census ICT service:* The Director and the Chief Executive have recently held meetings with Mid Sussex and Horsham councils voicing concern with the service levels provided by Census ICT. It has been agreed that the new head of service (who started in June) will conduct a rapid assessment of the service; it's people, processes and technology and report back at the end of July. Adur and Worthing have been clear that it wishes to see a full range of options for the future in the report. An independent IT Health check will be undertaken on 14th July which should provide very useful insight, although this will focus on security rather than performance and service availability.   Adur and Worthing also propose to undertake its own Discovery exercise as part of work on a "digital road map" and this is described in section 3 below.

2.10   *Public Service Network (PSN):* During the last year, the PSN accreditation process has placed significant demands on all local authorities, and there have been criticisms nationally around the strictness of the central policy and the costs incurred. Adur and Worthing's PSN accreditation expired on 24th June 2014 but an extension has been granted to Census and all its partner councils to end of July 2014. An IT Healthcheck is scheduled for 14th July 2014 by which time, Census ICT firewall transition, replacement of 30 XP machines and a fully deployed protective monitoring system will have been completed according to Census ICT. The PSN submission is currently planned for 28th July 2014.

It is worth noting that the PSN work has helped identify important vulnerabilities and for example triggered the replacement of hardware that was end-of-life and could have caused future outages. It is not acceptable that this PSN work is identified as the cause for delay in producing a disaster recovery plan however.

2.11   *Wide Area Network (WAN):* As mentioned in 2.4 above, the physical network lines connecting our offices (WAN) need to be enhanced to support New Ways of Working technology. This was ordered from Capita by Census (i.e. in large part paid for) in March 2013 and has still not been delivered. The Head of Census ICT is escalating this via Horsham legal services at present, and is also working on alternative solutions, for example with the current provider 6degrees. The Director has escalated the situation to Capita's Local Government Market Director. As an example of the impact of the WAN issue, Lancing Housing Office remains unable to access services as basic as printing.

Immediate Actions

2.12   *Disaster Recovery Plan & Business Impact Analyses:* In May, work was initiated to bring in specialist consultant PTS Consulting to rapidly produce a Disaster Recovery Plan. This work was handed on to the new Head of Census ICT and Adur & Worthing services are being interviewed week commencing 7th July, with a view to

producing a highly practical DR action plan by end of July. The Director is working with the Emergency Planning Officer to take proposals to Council Leadership Team on business continuity requirements in the round. This will develop the action plan to include completion Business Impact Analyses across our services.

2.13   *Census Review:* The new Head of Census ICT is conducting a rapid review which will report at the end of July, diagnosing the issues relating to people, processes and technology and offering up a full range of options for the future.

2.14   *Project Management:* We are re-establishing project management for New Ways of Working, alongside the telephony support previously mentioned in 2.7. This will register the issues for staff and manage the resolution of them where possible, and ensure better, more regular communication with staff. It will also bring together evidence of issues which cannot be immediately resolved, be they related to technology or ICT service levels, to support decision making. This project will be included in the programme of the Digital Projects Board (see 2.17).

ICT Position – Applications

2.15   Analysis of the applications portfolio is underway with the aim of quantifying total spend on software, maintenance, human resources, and understanding contract commitments. This data will feed into the initial Discovery work to be commissioned by Adur & Worthing discussed in section 3 below. An audit of Access databases has revealed 44 bespoke in-house databases which are difficult to maintain and present business continuity risk (they require bespoke knowledge and skills).

2.16   In terms of human resources, business analysis, applications development/support and data insight resources currently sit in different parts of the Adur and Worthing structure and there is a lack of strategy to steer effort and investment.   An assessment of structure and skills will also be a key part of the Discovery work.

Immediate Actions

2.17   A Digital Projects Board is being set up to establish strong project governance over current projects to ensure decisions are taken in light of emerging strategy and overlaps in spend and effort are addressed.

2.18   *Gathering data:* The Director is gathering data on ICT spend and contract commitments to be fed into the Discovery work.

2.19   *Interviews and Visits:* The Director has now visited many front line teams, as well as technical teams and gained a high level understanding of the challenges and opportunities for digital at Adur and Worthing. Visits to Harrow, Eastbourne and Monmouthshire have also been very useful in developing an approach to creating a "digital road map".

3.0   Proposals

Digital Road Map for Adur and Worthing

3.1   At present, Adur and Worthing is in a very challenging situation, lacking reliable basic ICT and telephony services. Urgent improvement is required and action is being

taken as outlined in section 2. But it is also vital that we begin to develop our own approach and build the capabilities that allow us to harness the potential of modern digital cloud-based technology – indeed potentially to develop a leading role in the sector. We will require energy, discipline and pace because it is vital to pursue both agendas together.

3.2   The internal review of the Census ICT service is welcome but alongside this the Director for Digital and Resources proposes to begin staged work on a digital road map for user-centred technology transformation, supporting Catching the Wave focus areas by delivering new capabilities for the organisation, partners, residents, communities, businesses and tourism.

3.3   It will be vital to develop this thinking collectively and collaboratively "from the outside in". To this end, residents, members, communities, local businesses and partners must all be involved along with staff in creating and delivering the digital road map and early work will involve designing appropriate participation events. As one starting point, Adur and Worthing has offered to host a south-east regional Localgovcamp in the autumn (a digital "unconference" popular with thought leaders), which will provide an opportunity to host fringe events for local groups and industry experts on developing our digital road map ambitions.

3.4   The very first stage identified for the road map ties in the urgent questions around our infrastructure and its support arrangements along with assessment of our current software choices and costs. It will explore the technology architecture that we have and begin to map out the new capabilities we will need for the future. This is a 3 week Discovery piece looking at: business need, data, applications, technology, finance and commercials. Through workshops and 1-2-1s we will gain our own understanding of our current technology position and produce a high level capability needs map to inform the next stage of the work and also to inform key decisions about ICT service requirements going forward.

3.5   Subject to approval by Councils Leadership Team who will receive a presentation / discussion on July 22nd 2014, we propose to engage Methods Consulting via the G-Cloud procurement framework. Methods (methods.co.uk), an independent technology consultancy, have more experience than anyone of implementing public cloud solutions into local government. The Discovery work will be 25 days at a cost of £16.5k, being a 2 week sprint and 1 week review using an agile project approach, during September.

3.6   It is expected that these findings, along with the continued assessment and design work of the Director, Councils Leadership Team and Cabinet colleagues, will lead to next stage proposals for Joint Strategic Committee in the autumn. These next stage proposals, developed within a broader "digital road map" concept for our areas, will include recommendations for telephony, ICT services (infrastructure and desktop support), and the undertaking of a 9 week blueprinting exercise (through a consultant) which will examine the business case for investment in a fundamental technology refresh to reduce overall revenue costs in the long term and deliver significant multiple customer and business benefits. It is not yet clear what level of ongoing external support will be required, but this will very likely be a vital component for affecting change and introducing new skills into the organisation. There are also emerging commercial opportunities through partnership with another council and private enterprise which the Director is actively exploring at present.

3.7 It is proposed that the staged approach to consultant engagement will effectively manage financial risks and help build confidence and understanding incrementally. For the first Discovery work, the consultancy Methods undertake to handover their findings to another supplier if that were needed, and indeed discussions with other consultancies, councils and technology agencies will continue as we strive to develop the right mix of contributions.

4.0 Legal

4.1 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.

4.2 Alternatively s1 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

4.3 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.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 The Methods Discovery work (£16.5k) will be funded from existing budgets within the Digital and Resources Directorate.

5.2 The set-aside of £225k proposed in the capital strategy 2014/17 to support the emerging digital strategy will be used to fund new software services and associated implementation costs. This will be subject to the approval of the Joint Strategic Committee in later reports.

5.3 It should be noted that there may be further revenue resources required later in the year to take the strategy work forward as a result of our findings. Again, this will be subject to the approval of the Joint Strategic Committee.

6.0 Recommendation

That Joint Strategic Committee:-

(i) Notes and agrees the immediate actions being taken by the Director for Digital and Resources and Census ICT to address the urgent issues with telephony and ICT services.

(ii) Approves, subject to Council Leadership Team approval on July 22nd, the Methods Discovery Consultancy work.

(iii) Approves the staged approach to creating a digital road map for the councils, agreeing the emergent nature of the strategy and the commitment to

developing it with a range of stakeholders

Local Government Act 1972
Background Papers:

Joint Strategic Committee on New Ways of Working / Accommodation Project, 5th March 2014

Contact Officer:
Paul Brewer
Director for Digital & Resources
paul.brewer@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Schedule of Other Matters

1.0   Council Priority

1.1   The proposals are in support of the Catching the Wave focus areas, in particular adaptive councils.

2.0   Specific Action Plans

2.1   These proposals will assist the delivery of Catching the Wave, particularly by creating the "digital commons", the platform upon which new personalised services can be delivered and new community support networks can be built.

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   Digital inclusion issues will be a key feature in the digital road map, where needs such as wi-fi and broadband provision will be addressed, and device trends and application use-ability and simplicity are key to success.

5.0   Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1   New digital services can help with engagement and involvement of young people and in connecting them to support. Improved multi-agency working through digital tools like Patchwork can also help improve communication between enforcement and support agencies.

6.0   Human Rights Issues

6.1   Privacy and security issues are the most important issues for citizens in relation to government use of digital 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   A failure to act to radically improve the digital offer risks a continued experience of loss of telephony and ICT services which is very damaging.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 None so far

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Risks are managed through a staged approach to developing the digital road map. Strong project governance will be essential as the programme develops.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 None identified

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Methods are being engaged through the G-Cloud framework with the support of the procurement team and the engagement is fully compliant with procurement rules.

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 None at present