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**THREE RIVERS & WATFORD JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Date of meeting:** 12/09/11

PART A

AGENDA ITEM

**6**

**Title:** ICT PROJECTS AND OPTIONS APPRAISAL UPDATE

**Report of:** Avni Patel – Head of ICT

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1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report outlines the project priorities for ICT this financial year, the work that is in progress to prioritise and cost projects for next year and to give Members an update on the progress with the options appraisal for alternative ICT service delivery.

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**Report approved by:**

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## **1.0 ICT PROJECTS**

### **1.1 Background**

1.1.1 As Joint Committee Members are aware, there are currently a large number of projects being requested for progression and delivery by the ICT team.

The ICT team also needs to address the recommendations made by the recent ICT review conducted by Actica Consulting. This highlighted a number of areas where the ICT infrastructure needs to be improved in order to stabilise the ICT systems provided to both WBC and TRDC.

The ICT team is also working on the options appraisal and business case development for some or all of the ICT services provided to the Councils to be delivered by alternative methods.

1.1.2 A joint ICT steering group consisting of WBC and TRDC heads of service and directors was set up in July 2011 been set up in order to make best use of ICT resources. The group noted that we do not want to invest heavily in hardware until we are certain that we will be retaining ICT assets once the new model is in place.

It has been agreed by the ICT Steering Group to focus on delivering only the essential infrastructure improvements until the future of the delivery of the shared ICT service has been decided.

1.1.3 The ICT Steering Group has met twice and the priority and resource required to complete the project programme for 11/12 have now been agreed.

1.1.4 The next meeting, to be scheduled at the end of September will focus on prioritising projects for 12/13 after having reviewed the PIDs supplied by project leads/sponsors. This will be reported along with cost implications to the November Joint Committee meeting.

### **1.2 Infrastructure Priorities**

1.2.1 It is clearly not possible to complete all projects requested from ICT in the current timescales with the current level of resource within the establishment.

In addition, there is need to focus on the creation of a stable environment. Once this has been completed we can plan subsequent remedial work and be in the position to deliver projects.

1.2.2 A paper outlining a proposal to improve the infrastructure for both authorities was taken to the Joint Management Team meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

Here, we proposed that infrastructure work was split into 2 stages, with Stage 1 comprising of critical work required to provide stability to the infrastructure at both Councils. The resources and effort required for this work have been identified and are within budget.

The estimated time to complete Stage 1 is 12 weeks, during which time the ICT team requested a partial freeze on infrastructure changes. This means that non-essential work on the Council's infrastructure would not be undertaken during this period.

Stage 2 will be to complete essential remedial work identified from the activities in Stage 1, as well as progressing other infrastructure improvements identified in the

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Actica Infrastructure review. The full scope of this will be clearer once Stage 1 is complete at which point spare capacity in the infrastructure team will be directed towards this work.

Joint Leadership Team have agreed this in principle pending a detailed project plan for each work stream. We anticipate that Stage 1 work will begin later this month.

Details of Stage 1 and Stage 2 can be found in the first 2 rows of Appendix 1.

- 1.2.3 Although non-essential changes to infrastructure will be frozen during the 12 week period, non-infrastructure work, that is being undertaken by the ICT Business Team relating to projects will continue.

Key projects for both authorities will continue and the major project for delivery of the new Income Management system for both councils will still be delivered in October 2011 as planned.

Essential changes currently identified such as upgrades due to legislative requirements will be met using existing budget and supplier assistance where possible, otherwise these will be provided by internal infrastructure resource via overtime and weekend working.

It is also proposed that during this period, services perform preparatory work for individual client project activities not dependent on the infrastructure e.g. process mapping, project planning, procurement.

## 2.0 **ICT SERVICE DELIVERY**

- 2.1 We have appointed Actica Consulting for the delivery of an options appraisal and requirements specification, which we would use within a procurement process should this be required. The project is now fully underway and a kick off meeting was held on August 19 2011, to agree the approach to the project.

The Project Initiation Document is in progress, as well as the gathering of all required information. Keith Thomas (Actica Consulting) has begun the assessment of the market and has received staffing information from HR as well as service related information from the ICT Business Manager.

This is on track, and the expected delivery of the options appraisal and outline business case is end of October 2011, and Joint Committee will be updated with the outcome of this at the November meeting.

A communication plan and roadmap of work relating to staff consultation and procurement is also being developed.

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**Appendix 1**  
Projects List 2011\_12.xls