

Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Scrutiny Board Statement: ICT Resourcing – Recommendation Tracking

Scrutiny Board Recommendation	Agreed (Yes/No)	Initial Response	Recommendation Tracking
<p>Recommendation 1 –That corporate challenge should be carried out at CLT level and that projects are assessed/ reviewed/ rejected/ agreed at this level. Provision should also exist for projects to be paused or stopped in order to direct resources to new, more important projects.</p>	Yes	<p>This recommendation was discussed between the Chair of Scrutiny (Strategy & Resources) and the Deputy Chief Executive in early 2016 outlining the need for Corporate challenge.</p> <p>This has also been incorporated into the planned peer review (Recommendation 2).</p> <p>In addition to the existing prioritisation at Directorate Leadership Teams and nominated IM&T steering groups, a newly constituted member/officer IM&T steering group (Recommendation 3) will also review the portfolio of projects.</p>	<p>Directorate steering groups have been in place for all areas (except Strategy & Resources/CEL/Citizens and Communities) to review projects and provide challenge on whether these should progress. These arrangements will need reviewing to reflect the Council’s new organisational model</p> <p>The LGA peer review made a specific recommendation regarding prioritisation: Recommendation 4: Prioritise further, focusing on what will make most difference. With the financial challenges that you face, stop thinking that everything can be done</p> <p>A cross party Members Steering Group is to be set up to be informed and learn about the direction of Digital and Information Services. The prioritisation of service led projects and programmes that are enabled by DIS will be done through other member forums. Technology is an enabler, the means to an end not the end itself.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 2 – That ICT arrange a peer review of the governance arrangements in place for project management.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Discussions were held with colleagues in Equalities team regarding their experience of peer reviews and contact was then made with Local Government Association in April 2016 regarding options for a peer review of our governance arrangements.</p> <p>The brief given to LGA was to undertake a review of our current arrangements for prioritising Council projects and for guidance on best practise approaches to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resource is focussed on Council priorities • Make recommendations on how we review the live portfolio of work and make decisions to delay or halt projects based on changing priorities or changing requirements of existing projects. • Ensure there is specific consideration of the IT resource implications <p>Discussions highlighted that LGA do not specifically undertake this type of review however, with a wider peer review planned for Leeds City Council in July 2016 using LGA services we have agreed with the Chief Officer Strategy & Improvement to incorporate the review of project prioritisation within this wider peer review.</p>	<p>The LGA peer review has made a specific recommendation regarding prioritisation:</p> <p><i>Recommendation 4: Prioritise further, focusing on what will make most difference. With the financial challenges that you face, stop thinking that everything can be done</i></p> <p>New governance arrangements around Directorate Steering Groups is addressing this issue and being applied consistently across the Council</p>

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<p>Recommendation 3 – That a member group be established as a forum for officers to share the challenges and opportunities facing ICT. This to cover ICT, Information Governance, Digital and City agendas.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>At present there is no Members Steering group for ICT.</p> <p>A Cross Council IM&T Steering Group exists to consider cross cutting initiatives, overall priorities, challenges and opportunities, this is in addition to directorate specific steering groups all of which are part of the governance arrangements for ICT/IM&T. Attendance at this cross Council IM&T Steering group has dwindled and its original purpose is not being adequately fulfilled.</p> <p>It is therefore our plan to create a combined Member and cross Council IM&T Steering group. This will give Members the opportunity to directly comment on Directorate/cross council priorities and Member attendance is also likely to raise the profile of the group and assist in securing regular directorate senior officer attendance.</p> <p>Outline terms of reference and agendas are to be drafted and the new steering group will be in place by 3rd Qtr 2016/17.</p>	<p>The cross council officer/member steering group draft Terms of Reference were produced but the group not yet formed as discussions took place regarding the role of Members. Further discussions have taken place between Lead Member covering DIS and with Chair of Scrutiny (Strategy & Resources)</p> <p>A cross party Members Steering Group is to be set up to be informed and learn about the direction of Digital and Information Service. The prioritisation of service led projects and programmes that are enabled by DIS will be done through other member forums.</p> <p>Technology is an enabler, the means to an end not the end itself.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 – That a clearer indication is given on the resources available to achieve the place based initiative and the timescales involved.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The scope of the place based initiative is still being developed. Once this is complete, a report will be provided by the ICT Chief Digital Officer.</p>	<p>Requirements have been collated to create a Joint City team and recommendations presented to the Partnership group.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 5 – That the Council continues to develop strong graduate and apprentice schemes to resolve its long term recruitment problems within ICT.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>ICT continue to use graduate/trainee and apprentice schemes.</p> <p>Three trainees from the first two cohorts of the ICT developer scheme are now in permanent roles, the two other trainees continue to progress well (commencing their second year in Sep 2016). A third cohort of the trainee developer programme will start in September 2016 with 3 new trainees.</p> <p>Discussions are underway with Leeds City College to take students on under placements within our ICT Service Centre with a view to these developing the skills to then apply for permanent entry level roles.</p>	<p>The trainee scheme for ICT Application Developers continues to be successful with 4 trainees from first two cohorts now in permanent roles, 4 trainees from second and third cohorts still completing training and recruitment to a fourth cohort underway.</p> <p>Arrangements are in place for Leeds City College students to spend placement time within IT Service Centre.</p> <p>Programme of developing existing staff into more technical roles through secondments continues.</p> <p>The outcome from this recommendation has been achieved.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 6 – That the family friendly terms and conditions of working for the Council continue to be emphasised in order to attract a more diverse workforce.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>ICT continue to stress the family friendly terms and conditions however this has not increased number of applicants for positions.</p>	<p>Whilst these benefits continue to be highlighted, other organisations offer like for like benefits and higher salaries. Sky have recently undertaken recruitment specifically focussing on encouraging women back into the IT profession on flexible terms.</p> <p>In relation to the gender diversity of the Councils ICT workforce we are significantly better placed than the industry norm with 31% female employees. <i>E-skills (the sector skills council for the IT industry) estimates in the UK that the number of women working in the technology sector has fallen from 17% to 16%.</i></p> <p>This recommendation has not addressed the outcome of improving our recruitment of staff.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 7 – That ICT undertake an exercise in relation to the cost benefits of introducing higher grades and the potential savings this might generate if this resulted in the use of fewer agency staff.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A cost comparison has been undertaken on five key posts within ICT which are hard to fill and where agency contract resources are used. This demonstrates a cost saving to the Council through employing staff on higher salaries as opposed to paying agency contract rates. Details are contained in Annex A.</p> <p>The Chief Officer HR provided input to the Scrutiny Board advising that potential blanket increase in salaries paid would not necessarily resolve the issue and would more likely have a detrimental impact on pay scales across the authority.</p> <p>ICT ask that Scrutiny acknowledge that without a salary/grade structure which allows for higher rates to be paid to staff filling technical posts, then the situation will not improve and agency staff will continue to be used.</p>	<p>Agency (contractor) staff will continue to be an important element of the workforce, providing additional capacity and skills to deliver Council projects. There is however an important balance required with permanent staff to ensure systems can be supported beyond project 'go live' and that we have the appropriate skills in-house to provide due oversight of the work contractors complete on our behalf.</p> <p>There has been a continued attrition of skilled permanent staff and we have reached critical point in some technologies where we do not have enough staff to support systems and are unable to attract new permanent employees due to low salaries we are offering compared to other employers. An example recently has seen the resignation of two employees within the Business Intelligence ICT team (for higher salaries in other companies) creating issues with provision of support on Housing systems and on delivery of new BI solutions to support the Council.</p> <p>A paper is being prepared in conjunction with HR to once again review the need to pay competitive salaries in order to address recruitment/retention challenges and ensure we have enough staff to deliver and support systems.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 8 – That internal processes for monitoring contracts are reviewed and specifically in conjunction with legal services, a review as to whether Vodafone was in breach of its contract and if so what remedial action could and should be taken.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This review has been completed and a report was issued to the Chair of Scrutiny (Strategy & Resources) on 29 April 2016.</p> <p>The report was produced in conjunction with Council solicitors in the Projects, Programmes and Procurement Unit (PPPU).</p> <p>A copy of the report is contained in Annex B.</p>	<p>This recommendation has been completed.</p>