



Report to Cabinet
Subject ICT Disaster Recovery Provision
Date 6th September 2007
Author ICT Projects Team Manager

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this information report is to update Cabinet in respect of arrangements that have been put in as a core foundation to provide continuity for critical IT Systems in the event of total loss.

Facilities have been put in place in Partnership with Mansfield District Council, Broxtowe Borough Council, and Newark and Sherwood District Council and include reciprocal arrangements not only in the event of a 'disaster' but also include outline agreement on day to day collaborative working.

Supporting the provision is another Partnership initiative, which will connect all 4 Councils IT Networks together. Details of this arrangement are at appendix 1.

2. Background

During September 2006, Senior Managers considered a report outlining the ICT Disaster Recovery Issues and the potential to put in place suitable arrangements in Partnership with other local Councils.

At that time, 3 Councils were involved (Gedling, Broxtowe and Mansfield) and initial proposals included the sharing of both accommodation and ICT Network facilities.

Officers investigated a number of stands:

- The provision of 'Capacity' within each Partners ICT Network
- External 'Data Centre' facilities, both commercial and the County Council
- Mobile recovery facilities

During the options appraisal period, the 4th Council, Newark and Sherwood, joined the Partnership.

Deliberations determined that the most cost effective and viable solution would be to collectively acquire a mobile recovery solution. A subsequent formal procurement exercise followed, resulting in the appointment of Adam Continuity.

3. Operation and Benefits

The facilities acquired will provide the following operational benefits:

Upon Invocation – Total Loss

The delivery of a suitably equipped Mobile Recovery Unit to one of a number of pre-determined locations together with appropriate technical assistance to 'recover' Application Systems (from off-site media) in the order determined by the Council. The Unit is self-contained and can operate independently pending suitable connection to power and IT Network facilities.

The Unit is initially available for a period of 90 days, (13 Weeks); this period can be extended at an additional pre-agreed charge.

Upon Invocation – Partial Loss (For example a critical IT Server)

In the event of unsatisfactory remedial arrangements from the Councils ICT Hardware support arrangements, the delivery of a suitably configured replacement Unit to the Council, together with appropriate technical assistance to 'recover' Application Systems (from off-site media) Again, the Unit is initially available for a period of 90 days, (13 Weeks); this period can be extended at an additional pre-agreed charge.

Rehearsals

The facility includes the provision to 'rehearse' for the eventuality of a 'disaster'. One 'test' per year is included in the cost, 5 more rehearsals are available per annum, if required, at a pre-determined charge.

Added Value Partnership Arrangements

To support the external provision, partner Councils have agreed the following:

- IT Network Connectivity (Details in accompanying Report)
- Accommodation
- ICT Technical Support
- Alignment of 4 ICT Disaster Recovery Arrangements into a single 'Plan'

- Alignment of High Level ICT Security Policies

Please note, the arrangements are based on non-current Invocation. However, Partners have agreed that the incidence of more than one Council suffering total loss at the same time is unlikely. If this should occur, Partners have agreed to share the available provision. This means that a fewer number of Applications per Council could be recovered.

Follow On Actions

There are a number of follow on actions are required, some of which may require additional funding, in order to realise the full potential of the facilities as detailed:

Task	Target
Network Segmentation	August 2007
Inter Council Connectivity (Wide Area Network – WAN)	September 2007
Mobile Recovery Unit Parking	September 2007
Evolution of a single Partnership ICT Disaster Recovery Plan	September 2007
Rehearsals	November 2007
Accommodation and Related	December 2007
Harmonisation with the Corporate Business Continuity Plans	March 2008
Mobile Unit Connection	March 2008
Dealing with 'other displaced Staff'	March 2008
ICT Network Consolidation	From April 2008
Plan for Permanent Arrangements	March 2009

4. Resource Implications

Partners have acquired the external provision at an annual cost of £19,700 for a 3 year Contract. This equates to £4,925 per Authority per year. There will be local differences in the charges, which relate to the different equipment schedules.

This represents a considerable cost avoidance, saving as, individually; the Council would have faced the total cost of £19,700 (per annum) for the provision. In addition, initial quotes from Suppliers, who were given the outline requirement, came to £40,000 per annum for a single Council or £10,000 per Council per annum on a Partnership basis. Early deliberations with potential Suppliers suggested that a minimum 5-year Contract period would be required.

The cost of the base provision can be met from the Councils existing budget provision. Although some developments above will require additional funding in future budgets wherever possible the use of existing budgets will be considered.

5. Recommendation

Cabinet are asked to note both the content of this report and the follow on actions that are now required to compliment the provision.

Appendix 1 - Inter Council ICT Network Connectivity

1. Background

Members are aware of the increasing need to establish partnership arrangements. This view is supported by the White Paper (October 2006), The Chief Executives Vision, (December 2006), and The Gedling Transformation Programme (July 2007). It is anticipated that Councils will face additional encouragement to engage in partnership activity when details of the Comprehensive Spending Review for 2007 is announced later this year. A significant building block or enabler is the ability for Councils to electronically interact by trusted, secure means.

The purpose of this information report is to update Members in respect of arrangements that have been put in place to provide secure connectivity of the ICT Networks between local Partner Councils.

2. Operation and Benefits

The facilities acquired will provide the following operational benefits:

ICT Disaster Recovery

The details of which appear in the main body of the report.

Shared Connection to the Internet

The Council has a dedicated, managed connection to the Internet. The annual cost of this service is £11,500. Interaction with the Partners and the current and potential service providers suggest that the deployment of a single, shared connection would realise a considerable saving. (Perhaps £2,000 - £3,000 per year) Partner Councils spend similar amounts.

Shared Connection to Government Connect

A report, November 2006, put forward proposals to engage with the National Government Connect Initiative. The potential ongoing costs for Government Connect for Gedling are in the region of £30,000. Indications suggest, based on activity between Derbyshire Councils, that a shared connection is possible thus providing potential for cost avoidance. (Please note, The Council has yet to approve any ongoing expenditure in respect of Government Connect)

Application Hosting

A viable connection provides the opportunity for the Council to host (Hub) and have provided (Spoke) Application Systems. Current potential examples are Payroll for Mansfield District Council.

3 Resource Implications

Partners have acquired the external provision at an annual cost of £41,760 for a 3 year Contract. Gedling portion is £5,220 per annum. There are local differences in the charges, which relate to the different connection requirements.

In addition, there are one-off installation charges of which Gedling portion is £7,500. The cost of the facility can be met from the Councils existing budget provision.