Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Scrutiny Board 1   **Date:** 21 March, 2018

Subject: ICT and Digital Service

1 Purpose of the Note

1.1 To provide Scrutiny Board 1 an overview of the ICT and Digital service.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Scrutiny Board 1 is asked to note:

2.1.1 The role ICT and Digital play in supporting the Council's priorities

2.1.2 The ICT and Digital team structure and the apprenticeships available each year through the Entry to Employment Team.

2.1.3 The uptime of systems, the security of the network and the ability of ICT and Digital to restore services in the event of an incident.

2.1.4 The issues facing the service now and in the future.

2.1.5 The Board identify any further recommendations for the relevant Cabinet Member.

3 Information/Background

3.1 The application of ICT across an organisation can have positive effects on the operations of any service and acts an enabler for business transformation. ICT aids decision making by having key information in the hands of managers and decision makers so they can make informed decisions.

3.2 ICT and Digital publish two strategies that support the Council's priorities, the Corporate ICT Strategy and the Digital Coventry Strategy.

3.2.1 ICT and Digital supports the sustainable growth of Coventry's economy by ensuring residents and businesses have access to superfast broadband speeds as a minimum. The recent investment of £2.55 million to the CSW Superfast Broadband project will see 99% of homes in Coventry having access to superfast broadband speeds by summer 2019.

3.2.2 It improves the quality of life for Coventry people through the use of technology to monitor traffic and air quality across the city. The investment of free public Wi-Fi across the city centre will see the implementation of a low power network that will enable the installation of further sensors that could monitor anything from weather, traffic, and air quality and population footfall.

3.2.3 ICT and Digital will support the delivery of our priorities with fewer resources. The on-going development of the corporate data warehouse will ensure that the Council's information assets is available for analysis and reporting, ensuring that key information is in the hands of decision makers.

3.3 The ICT and Digital Service comprises of 100 permanent full time equivalents (FTE). The functional teams, reporting in to the Head of Service, are:

3.3.1 Service Delivery Managers – who ensure that our "business as usual" services and systems are operational on a day to day basis
Infrastructure Operations – who look after our servers, databases and storage

Network Services – who look after our computer network, Wi-Fi and telephony system
ICT Security – who look after the day to day security of our computer network and email system
User Support – who provide first line support to our users via our Service Desk
Systems and Web Development – who provide software developments primarily against our Office 365 and Firmstep (Customer Portal) environments
Systems Integration and Data – who provide our Corporate Data Warehouse (for management information from systems) and systems integration platform (how our systems talk to each other)
ICT Strategy Delivery – who provide "consultancy" type services engaging with the service areas of the organisation to help them get the best from technology and use technology best to provide process improvements. This also includes a Project Management function
Systems Management – who provide day to day support for the use of our line of business systems
Technical Architect and Cloud Services and Identity Architect – who provides technical design of solutions to best fit customer needs

3.4   There are two contractors working in ICT and Digital. One providing implementation support as part of our unified communications rollout (Mitel) and the other providing UNIX (specialist server operating system) support.

3.5   We offer apprenticeships in teams across ICT and Digital with up to 3 in place each year, rotating around teams. These apprentices are recruited through the Council's Entry to Employment team. Work Experience placements are also planned through this team.

3.6   The majority of core line of business (LOB) systems have a planned uptime in excess of 99%. Where there is a planned change on a system, such as an upgrade, then the system is taken offline normally over a weekend or before hours during the working week.

3.6.1 The uptime of core systems for the last 3 months are:
Agresso (Finance) – 100%
Care Director (Adult Social Care) – 99.9%
Protocol (Childrens Social Care) – 100%
Academy (Revenues and Benefits) – 100%

3.7   Application support is handed in its entirety by ICT & Digital. However there are services that provide System Administration support locally within service areas. Adult and Childrens Social Care have a Business Systems Team. Revenues and Benefits have a Support and Control Team (SACO) that provide system administration support for Academy. Finance have a Money Matters team that provide a similar function for Agresso.

3.8   The corporate network infrastructure, including school end points and distribution sites is monitored by the Network Services team using Solar Winds.
Infrastructure Operations monitor our Windows Server estate using Microsoft Service Centre Operations Manager. The Unix Server estate is monitored by a third party, Esteem. Our Databases (SQL and Oracle) are monitored by Well Data, a third party organisation. Our Internet Service Provider (ISP) is through Janet.

3.9   All backups and restores are completed overnight and are held off-site in a disk library. Where databases need backing up or restoring as part of a core LOB upgrade then these are co-ordinated with the third party support service.
ICT & Digital have completed test backups and restores. This are tested every 6 months to ensure we are able to bring core LOB systems back in to service.

3.10   All our critical storage access network (SAN) data is replicated once a day to the disaster recovery SAN which is located at Jackson Road. We have a full test/development infrastructure at Jackson Road that will be used in the event of activating our business

continuity plan. This will restore critical services only. The business continuity has not been tested in its entirety.

3.11 We engage a qualified 3rd party every year to perform an IT Health check as part of our PSN (Pubic Sector Network) compliance. This is a week-long penetration test by skilled individuals on several areas of ICT infrastructure including wireless, remote access, internal and external services. The output is a detailed report of findings and recommendations. The report, along with our remediation plan, is submitted to the Cabinet Office as part of our PSN submission.
The PSN is the government's high-performance network and penetration testing is the practice of testing a computer system, network or Web application to find vulnerabilities that an attacker could exploit.
With PSN compliance ICT & Digital can demonstrate that our security arrangements, policies and controls are sufficiently rigorous for us to interact with the PSN and those connected to it.
We also perform ad-hoc 3rd party security testing when we publish new services to the internet that contain sensitive data. A formal report is produced that we assess before going live.
Regular (weekly or monthly) vulnerability scans are undertaken using a tool called Nessus. We scan internal and external server networks as well as networks used by standard users. This helps us with visibility of internal vulnerabilities and our strategies for patching.

3.12 The majority of our core LOB systems are supported. However with over 600 applications in use there are a small number that we do not have 3rd party support for due to the supplier being no longer in business. For example Scotland Yard which provides a lone worker off-site check in service. In these instances we are looking for alternate solutions based on user requirements.

3.13 ICT and Digital have a small systems and web development team that focus primarily on form development for the corporate CRM system, Firmstep, and SharePoint end solutions.

3.14 The over-arching application strategy is to procure off the shelf products that are cloud based or externally hosted in the first instance. There is one exception to this in relation to the development of a Salesforce based solution for Planning and Building Control. We are working alongside the supplier Arcus and other Planning authorities to develop the base product so that it is fit for purpose to an agreed standard. The development of this Salesforce based solution is a critical part of our Systems Consolidation strategy.

3.15 The Digital Coventry strategy is the focus point of our digital aspirations for Coventry City Council and the city. The Strategy Delivery team support procurement of systems and services and promote the use of digital as part of this process.

3.16 Server operating systems are upgraded to the latest versions in line with documented end of life support notifications.
We are currently planning the move to Windows 10 which will be delivered by January 2020 – the advertised end of support date for Windows 7. Our estate at this point will be a mix of Windows 8.1 and 10 as currently not all vendors offer LOB support for Windows 10.

3.17 The upcoming themes for review as part of our strategy update will include Technology Consolidation, Artificial Intelligence/Automation, Big Data/Machine Learning and Cyber security.

3.18 The current ICT & Digital Service Plan is included as Appendix 1 for full detail of our current service priorities and plans.

3.19 The current challenges that the service face are:

3.19.1 Staff retention – This has been an ongoing challenge. The ICT jobs market is very buoyant and traditionally local government offers towards the lower end of market rate for

ICT jobs. We tackle this through the exciting and varied technology we use and development opportunities to get involved in a lot of transformational work for staff.

3.19.2 Cyber security – The threat landscape is ever changing and developing. It is a challenge to keep defences up to date. We have a bid for further funding in the pre-budget report to support specifically in this area.

3.19.3 Doing more with less – Like the rest of the organisation, the financial context is challenging and we continue to strive to deliver more and more from our ICT & Digital estate with tightening budgets and cost increases from suppliers. We tackle this through continual reviews of our processes to make sure we are as efficient as possible. We also continually review our contracts to ensure we are getting best value from our suppliers.

3.19.4 Speed of technology change – Technology changes and develops incredibly quickly. It can be challenging to understand and review the sheer amount of new technologies the market has to offer and assess what benefit they might bring to the organisation and citizens of Coventry. We tackle this via our the Architect roles within our teams who are technical specialists who keep a close eye on the technology market and provide an in-depth assessment of the suitability of new technologies.

3.19.5 User adoption – Linked to the above we have 5500 users all with varying degrees of technical skill and capability. As technology moves on it is important that we keep up with the appropriate latest trends. It can however be difficult to roll out new technology or changes to such a large and diverse workforce. We tackle this by working closely with our HR and Organisational development teams supporting programmes such as our Digital Change Agents.

3.19.6 Structure, Strategy and Target Operating Model – since the service came together as a single service in April 2017 there has been a need to perform a restructure. This was put on hold due to the amount of work going into the successful delivery of the technical components of Friargate, Broadgate House and the Council House. This is alongside a need to review the ICT Strategy and Target Operating Model (how we do what we need to do). The structure, strategy and target operating model are a priority for the first half of financial year 2018/19.

3.20 Next steps for the short to medium future include the review of the target operating model mentioned above in 3.20.6, and a refresh of the Corporate ICT Strategy. The current strategy was focussed on the enabling technologies to enable the organisation to move to One Friargate. The upcoming themes that will be included are Technology Consolidation, Artificial Intelligence/Automation, Big Data/Machine Learning and Cyber security.

3.21 The strategy will also look to support the delivery of the City of Culture programme.

Gary Griffiths
Lead ICT Strategy Delivery Manager
02476 786751