Belfast City Council

Report to	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	ICT Strategy
Date:	22 February 2013
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are central to the delivery of the Council's corporate plans. How we use technology to manage our information has a critical and expanding role in improving access to our services and provides new ways of working which can improve both service quality and staff productivity.
1.2	We all now expect ICT to enable: - increasing mobility, - access to information wherever we are, - location-based information which can shape how we make our decisions, - access to social networks to deliver a personally relevant experience that is integrated into, and initiated from, various social platforms.
1.3	This means that the Council requires an ICT Strategy which ensures that the right set of policies, working practices and supporting technology are put in place because information technology and the management of our information: - is an essential element of good corporate governance, - provides Members and Chief Officers with the right information to support effective decision making, - challenges our thinking on how we deliver services and supports innovation in service design, - sets direction in terms of investment in technology assuring alignment to corporate objectives, - and provides the basis of accountability to Elected Members and the citizens of Belfast for the stewardship and use of IT resources.

2	Key Issues
	Key elements of the Council's ICT strategy should include:
2.1	**Strategy and Business Alignment** It is important that the Council invests in the right technology to meet the business objectives of the Council both corporately and at service level. This becomes more important in the context of modernising public services and the drive to deliver efficiency and value for money. It is essential that planning for the use of IT is fully integrated with the financial, capital, human resources and business planning processes of the Council.
2.2	**Management and Governance** The Council needs to direct and control IT resources to achieve the objectives of the Corporate Plan as well as employing good practices for managing the business operation of IT.
2.3	**Business Applications** Critical to the delivery of the council's goals will be the plan to evolve our business applications to support our business strategy and underlying processes.
2.4	**Technology and Architecture** A critical element of the framework is the underlying technology infrastructure and the processes for developing, deploying, enhancing and supporting the business capabilities using technology solutions. It is equally critical that these solutions are measured in terms of their fitness for purpose and return on investment. Reporting on performance of KPIs against targets will form part of the routine measurement of the performance of our ICT services.
2.5	**Organisation and skills** An essential element is the capacity of the Council in terms of its IT skills as well as management ability to deliver change effectively and create and promote an environment of productivity, learning and employee satisfaction.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	Cost of external assistance to develop an ICT Strategy £25,000 - £30,000
3.2	The ICT Strategy will result in the development of a number of capital projects for which business cases will be developed. These projects will be taken through agreed project approval processes to ensure strategic fit and affordability.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	N/A

5	Recommendations
	Members are requested to:

	1. Note the contents of the report. 2. Agree to the commissioning of external assistance to facilitate the development of an ICT Strategy

6	Decision Tracking

7	Key to Abbreviations

8	Documents Attached