SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO:	Leader and Cabinet	12 October 2006
AUTHOR/S:	Chief Executive / Assistant Director Finance and Resources (ICT)	

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

Purpose

1. To recommend to Council the adoption of the *Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2006 - 2009.* A copy of the Strategy is enclosed separately for members of Cabinet.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.

Quality, Accessible Services	To provide direction and guidance for the development of ICT services over the coming 3 years whilst maximising the benefits from our investment and electronic service delivery programme. To ensure service provision and delivery to the resident is effective and efficient.
Village Life	
Sustainability	
Partnership	

Background

3. The Council's last formal *ICT Strategy* was produced in September 2003 and identified the Councils intentions and direction to be followed for the 3-year period to 2006.

4. In conjunction with the Councils commitment to the central government IEG (Implementing Electronic Government) programme, the strategy outlined the approach to replace our older legacy systems with more efficient, effective web enabled applications that would be able to support the increasing demands being made by both officers and citizens alike.

5. Much of that work is now completed or very close to being completed, the strategy has achieved it's aims and now needs to look to how we deliver the benefits from its implementation – the *ICT Strategy 2006 – 2009.*

Considerations

6. Over the last 3 years, the Council has worked to ensure compliance with the requirements of the IEG programme and this was measured by the ODPM through a number of successive statements. The final statement, IEG Statement 2006 submitted to the ODPM in March 2006, identified the Councils position for the delivery of e-enabled services.

7. The BV indicator 157 was (and still is) the government's benchmark for measuring the level achievement. South Cambridgeshire District Council was pleased to declare itself 100% compliant with the requirements.

8. The ICT Strategy 2006-2009 takes account of those significant achievements and seeks to build on its successes. Maintaining the high standards already achieved and developing the systems further to ensure improve efficiencies is key to the future.

Taking into account the Councils financial position, the ICT Strategy needs to support the Councils aspirations in a cost effective and pragmatic manner whilst ensuring our investments are fully utilised.

9. As in the previous strategy, one of the most significant elements of the papers is the continuing commitment to the Contact Centre and the integration of associated systems. This is consistent with Cabinet's resolution of 9 December 2004.

Options

10. To review the current document, ICT Strategy 2006 – 2009, and approve its subsequent publication.

Financial Implications

11. This paper does not directly affect the financing of IEG and ICT, but the requirements will be reviewed in line with the normal budget setting and approvals process.

Legal Implications

12. None.

Staffing Implications

13. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this paper. However, there are points to note:

- In support of the Transformation Project, the Contact Centre is seen as a fundamental element of the programme. Reviews of service delivery and the BPR (Business Process Re-engineering) work may bring forward recommendations to review working practices and resourcing including possible transfer of more services or elements of services, to the Contact Centre.
- Realising all of the benefit from the IEG programme will continue to require adequate staffing from the ICT Division as well as from within the user departments. This may require secondments of staff into projects.

14. Opportunities will arise for officers to utilise electronic services from locations in the district other than South Cambridgeshire Hall, this will reduce travel costs and should allow for making the officers more efficient in carrying out their duties. For our residents, many aspects of the programme will reduce travel by providing access to services electronically. As above, working practices may change and staff will have to be flexible in their approach to the adoption of any new practices / protocols.

Risk Management Implications

15. Regular updates and revisions ensure best practice and reduce any possible risk exposure to the Council. Whilst 3 years is seen as the natural term for the strategy, it is recognised that major shifts in IT development may bring forward the need for earlier revisions hence the requirement for the stated annual reviews.

Consultations

16. ICT
    Management Team/e-Government Programme Board
    Cambridgeshire Direct
    Cambridgeshire County Council
    SOCITM

Recommendations

17. It is recommended that Cabinet recommends to Council (and Council approves) the,

    (a) adoption of the ICT Strategy 2006 – 2009, and

    (b) delegation of approval of subsequent changes to the ICT Strategy 2006 – 2009, to the Resources, Staffing, Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder and the Chief Executive.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

    ICT Strategy 2003 – 2006
    Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) 6
    Cambridgeshire County Council Corporate ICT Strategy 2004 – 2007

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Members are encouraged to refer questions or concerns to the contact officer before the meeting, due to the complexity of the subject.