



Leicester
City Council

Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny
Cabinet

22nd January 2004
2nd February 2004

Best Value Review of e-Government Final Report and Improvement Plan

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR (ICT & CUSTOMER ACCESS)

1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

1.1 The Council's ICT function was subject to a Best Value review during 2002/3. At the time it was decided to review our progress towards e-government separately. This report concludes the e-government review and makes recommendations for improvement.

1.2 The scope of the review was to:

- Ensure the Council is able to achieve the 2005 target of 100% of relevant services being accessible electronically (BVPI157).
- Consider whether the Council is fully embracing the potential of e-government.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

2.1 Endorse the improvement plan attached as Appendix A.

3. SUMMARY

3.1 How the review was carried out

3.1.1 The IDeA (Improvement Development Agency) has produced a methodology (the Electronic Service Delivery toolkit) for calculating progress towards the 2005 BVPI-157 target of 100% of relevant services being accessible electronically. The toolkit lists all those services that Government would expect to be e-enabled. This review analysed progress against each of the listed activities. Departmental lead officers were required to document their work plans to achieve the 2005 target and identify any areas where progress would not be made.

- 3.1.2 To determine whether the Council is fully embracing the potential of e-government we ran workshops in each department to identify awareness of the programme, constraints to progress and to debate how we might overcome these constraints. In total over 100 staff attended these events.
- 3.1.3 A timely Audit Commission review of our progress towards e-government was a useful contributor to this exercise. This review involved interviews with representatives from all departments and a detailed analysis of our e-government plans and progress to date. We also consulted with staff generally via a questionnaire at October's IT awareness event. 130 staff completed questionnaires.
- 3.1.4 The public were consulted via a short questionnaire in Customer Services Centres, libraries and centres for people with disabilities. In total 411 completed questionnaires were received.

3.2 Summary

- 3.2.1 The authority's progress in e-enabling services is steady with forecasts of 72% by March 2004 and 86% by March 2005. We forecast that by December 2005 98% of our services will be e-enabled. The areas that will not be e-enabled are areas where we are dependent on the progress of others, for example Registration Services is dependent on a National Government project that will not come on line until 2006. We are confident that if we exclude the handful of functions that are effectively beyond our control we are on target for 100% of services being e-enabled.
- 3.2.2 The final report recognises the distinction between e-enabling services and achieving a high level of use and the Improvement Plan includes tasks to further raise the profile of these new access channels to encourage take up.
- 3.2.3 Section 9.1.2 of the final report considers the question 'Are we fully embracing the potential of e-Government? Is our planning joined up?' We can identify many excellent examples of services using ICT to improve the way we do business, and can demonstrate the good progress we're making on various national e-Government projects (above average compared to other Council's). However, the Council's Heads of ICT group (formed following a recommendation in the ICT BV Improvement Plan) has identified areas where we could be more joined up (for example the use of smartcards and a number of ICT related research and development projects) and are taking action to address the issue. Similarly we need to continuously seek ways of improving connectivity with external partner agencies such as the Police and the Health Authority. These issues will be addressed within the ICT and e-modernising Leicester strategy that is on target for completion by end May.
- 3.2.4 The following Improvement Objectives were agreed by the Review Group:

- Heads of ICT to continuously review progress towards the BVPI157 targets and report any issues of concerns to its parent group, SRG, for action/resolution as required.
- Heads of ICT should work in collaboration in order to avoid duplication of effort and ensure joined up working across services spanning the authority. In particular, departments to work collaboratively on central shared services including authentication, e-payment, e-procurement and security
- Develop a joint ICT/E-modernising Leicester strategy as a matter of priority.
- Continue to raise awareness and understanding of the e-Modernising Leicester programme in general and the 2005 targets in particular.
- Actively promote the Council's web site, in particular the interactive facilities that are available.
- Further promote awareness of free Internet access in Libraries.
- Develop an e-Modernising Leicester equality checklist.

4 FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

4.1.2 Departments have indicated in their detailed analysis that they can achieve their 2005 targets within existing budgets.

4.1.3 The development of the Council's joint ICT/e-modernising Leicester strategy will allow us to better understand the financial implications of our ICT aspirations. The detailed planning should be complete by May 2004.

4.2 Legal Implications

4.2.1 None.

4.3 Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph references within supporting information.
Equal Opportunities	YES	Section 10
Policy	NO	
Sustainable and Environmental	NO	
Crime and Disorder	NO	
Human Rights Act	NO	
Elderly/People on Low Income	NO	
Property	NO	

5. Consultations

5.1 Strategic Resource Group, Corporate Directors' Board, RAD Policy Board, Heads of ICT.

6. Officer to contact:

Jill Craig
Service Director (ICT & Customer Access)

DECISION STATUS

Key Decision	Yes
Reason	Significant effect on two or more wards
Appeared in Forward Plan	Yes
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)