

3 April 2014

Paper Title	NRW ICT Strategy
Paper Reference:	NRW B O 29.14
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Purpose of Paper:	To provide an overview of the NRW ICT Strategy
Recommendation:	To note progress
Decision Required:	Not applicable

Introduction

1. It is intended that this briefing note will provide the Board with an overview of NRW's ICT Strategy over the next five years. This strategy covers a wide range of aspects, including transformation strategy, separation from Associated Bodies, development of skills, adoption of emerging technologies and the Cyfoeth Apprenticeship Scheme. The Strategy aims to enable the business to deliver its priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Overview

2. The ICT Strategy will equip Natural Resources Wales with a flexible, up to date infrastructure that will support the Business in carrying out its environmental functions over the next five years. It embraces the availability of cloud technologies, moving us away from traditional on-site infrastructure and aims to allow our users to access systems anytime, from anywhere.
3. At the same time, this document illustrates the timeframes and strategy of the migration path away from CCW, FCW and EA systems, to a NRW infrastructure, offering a shared experience for users. It will provide a performant, resilient and reliable system which will help our staff to be the best they can be.
4. Increasingly, access to systems from diverse locations is required to support environmental, incident and home workers, and as countrywide infrastructure improves, we must ensure we are in a position to take advantage. NRW will also connect its sites via PSBA (Public Sector

Broadband Aggregation, described later) which will help our staff work together and communicate more effectively. The aim is that our staff will be able to work together whether in a forest, on a mountain, at the beach, working from home or in the office.

Budget and Economy

5. Many of the outcomes described in the strategy document substantially reduce our ongoing ICT costs and enable us to work effectively within budget and help achieve the desired savings. In addition our decision to grow our ICT Team, rather than utilise an external company, means we are able to invest in the skills of our ICT staff and along with the apprenticeship scheme also improve the wider ICT skills landscape in Wales. The Cyfoeth Apprenticeship Scheme is available to Public Sector bodies, Private sector companies and third sector organisations.

Environmental Aspect

6. In keeping with our environmental credentials, we are reducing our dependency on on-site infrastructure and dedicated datacentres, using shared facilities leveraging benefits of scale for greener power and cooling where appropriate. On the desktop, we are rolling out small form factor PCs that use only 65 watts. As well as these factors, the introduction of communication tools such as Lync which allow multiple participant video and audio conferencing, as well as remote support and file sharing, will reduce the need for staff travel substantially. We can also communicate with external stakeholders via this method too.

Data sharing

7. It is our vision, where possible, to reuse the large quantities of data that NRW collects (both manually and via telemetry systems), making it available to external parties on both a commercial and non-commercial basis. A data portal will be created to provide online access via the browser to our data catalogue.

Online Services

8. One of our key commitments is to our customers, and in keeping with Central Government strategies, we will deliver secure, accessible, effective, easy to use, online services to our customers that will be integrated with our processes. These online services must be simple yet best in breed, as they will represent for most of our customers their only chosen method of interaction with us.

Next Steps

9. The strategy document has been published, however it is will be treated as a living and breathing document which will be reviewed on a regular basis. These reviews will take into account comments received from all stakeholders, changes in organisation, strategies of other Welsh and UK Public Sector Bodies, Cabinet Office guidance and emerging technologies.

Risks

10. The risks relating to delivery of Strategy items will be managed through the Solution Design Authority, and the NRW ICT Transition programme.

Financial Implications

11. The strategy seeks to reduce costs for

- I. Travel - by providing video conferencing facilities at the desk for all staff
- II. IT Outsourcing – by building our internal capability and reducing the
- III. Datacentres (via use of cloud technologies where possible)
- IV. Costs levied by associated bodies for use of their infrastructure and applications

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

12. ICT solutions put in place will each be subject to scrutiny to ensure that the needs of assisted users are met. The Assisted user community is represented at our Solution Design Authority meetings.