Huntingdonshire District Council ICT Strategy 2009-11

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ICT Strategy 2009-11

1 Foreword

1.1 There can be few activities that the Council undertakes that are not enabled or supported in some way by the use of ICT. In order to deliver information and transactions on behalf of our customers and constituents, ICT is key tool. Whether it be self-service by customers using our web site, frontline employees using corporate systems to provide a mediated service, or back office employees using systems to provide support services, the "glue" which holds a service organisation, such as HDC, together is its ICT.

1.2 No longer is ICT delivered to a limited number of geographical locations; with the implementation of the Council's Flexible Working Strategy we expect our ICT to available from our homes, on the move via mobile devices, via any internet connected PC, as well as from any workstation that we choose to use within the Council's office network.

1.3 However, we also want the ICT to be as "transparent" as possible. We want to be able to access and manipulate information freely to serve our customers - be they internal or external – but with the necessary controls to ensure information security. We want systems to be easy to use with the right level of training. In short we want the ICT to support & enhance our work, not to get in the way. We also want be assured that information is secure and is accessible only by those who have authority to read it.

1.4 We want our ICT services to be delivered in an economical manner – not necessarily "cutting edge" but using reliable, "industry" standard products which will grow (or contract) with the ICT needs of the Council.

1.5 This 3 year strategy sets out the Council's approach to delivering the vision outlined above. It assesses where we are in terms of our ICT strengths & weaknesses, identifies the ICT objectives that are necessary to support our corporate plan **Growing Success** and sets out the steps that are required in order to achieve those objectives.

1.6 The *purpose* of the **ICT Strategy** is to:

- Focus ICT activity on achieving & supporting the objectives of the Council;
- Ensure information security;
- Provide high quality, appropriate ICT training to all employees - according to need;
- Steer the acquisition of new technologies, manage obsolescence, and provide for technology refresh;
- Set out IMD's work programme to provide and maintain the Council's ICT infrastructure.

1.7 The Council has much to be proud of in its provision of ICT. However, there is room for improvement and this strategy is designed to close that gap.   There are also opportunities to build on our expertise such as in the provision of our LLPG and web services.   The investigation into shared service provision for these areas – potentially others – is a clear objective for this strategy.

1.8 This strategy does not detail every project but identifies the key ones which have the potential to provide step changes in ICT service provision.

ICT Strategy 2009-11

1.9   IMD seeks a partnership with Council Services, suppliers and, potentially, other organisations to deliver this strategy on behalf of the Council - in a manner which offers good value for money to the local taxpayer.

1.10   This strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis (the next review is scheduled for November/December 2009) with a view to maintaining 3 year planning horizon for ICT. It should be considered in the context of the following Council strategies/policies:

- Growing Success (2008 revision)
- Flexible Working Strategy
- Customer Service Strategy (July 2008)
- Web Strategy 2009-11 (considered by Cabinet on 18/12/08)
- Information Security Policy (agreed by COMT in March 2008)

1.11   Overall accountability for delivering the strategy lies with the Head of Information Management, with the IMD Operations Manager responsible for the delivery of projects within the ICT Programme. The IMD Development Manager has the responsibility for delivering complementary development projects which will support this strategy.

2   Where are we now?

2.1   Appendix 1 provides a SWOT analysis (as of October 2008) of ICT service provision at HDC.

2.2   This strategy seeks to maintain and build on the strengths and opportunities identified and to address the following key weaknesses and risks.:

2.2.1   **Corporate ICT Issues:**

a. Telephony system requires updating to digital-based technologies;
b. Business Continuity plans are underdeveloped;
c. Server room at Pathfinder is at capacity & subject to air conditioning failures;
d. Large number of individual servers (c 80) requires substantial maintenance & represents multiple points of failure;
e. Little service input into the governance of the ICT Programme;
f. Multiple Access & Excel-based databases with no overall control leading to data duplication & use of (largely) unsupported databases in service-critical processes;
g. No encryption of portable media devices (eg USB sticks) leading to increased risk of data loss;
h. Adoption of "green IT" could be improved;

These Corporate ICT issues are addressed through the projects outlined in section 4.

2.2.2 **IMD Specific Issues***:*

i. Specific ICT skills/knowledge reside with relatively few members of IMD;

j. Resolution of operational problems sometimes require Development team resources to resolve thus reducing development capacity.

These IMD specific issues are being addressed through a), a re-structure of IMD which took place during May 2008 and b), the introduction of the ITIL (a service delivery framework).

3 Where do we want to be?

3.1   Vision

ICT's role in underpinning and delivering effective, efficient and cost effective services is clear – at an operational level the Council could not operate for any length of time without it. However, ICT has evolved over the last few years to become a key tool in enabling, and promoting, change and service transformation. For example, ICT is crucial to transforming where and how employees actually carry out their jobs, and ultimately where and how the Council delivers its services. ICT is also increasingly being used to provide a single, unified view of customer requirements (eg through the CRM – the Customer Relationship Management system) so that services can be "joined-up" and unnecessary contact with customers avoided – saving both customer time and Council money.

3.2   A number of the key principles that underpin the vision are listed below:

Note: some of the many linkages to Growing Success aims and objectives are showing in brackets.

a. ICT should be customer focussed (for both internal and external customers); [to make it as easy as possible for customers to access our services and get appropriate information]

b. ICT should help drive standardisation in order to reduce costs; [to use Council resources efficiently]

c. ICT should add value by increasing efficiency (after underlying processes have been improved through re-engineering) or by delivering additional benefits that would not be possible without ICT; [to use Council resources efficiently]

d. ICT should enable the integration of services and partnership working - both within the Council and with external organisations; [supporting effective partnerships]

e. ICT should enable the smarter use of accommodation (through flexible working); [to use Council resources efficiently]

f. Information – which should be stored only once – should be (appropriately) accessible 24x7 (ideally) by Services and by customers; in a variety of different formats - including spatially (eg via GIS); [to support the provision of high quality customer services]

g. Information security must be a key priority for both information users and IMD;

h. Procurement of new ICT should be undertaken to allow a convergence of systems with partnering organisations (thus facilitating shared services should this appropriate in the future);

i. ICT should be used to codify knowledge and use this to enhance service delivery; [to learn and develop]

j. ICT service delivery should contribute to the Council's need to reduce overall capital & revenue spending year on year;   [to use Council resources efficiently]

k. The ICT service should aspire to be in the top quartile when assessed against national public sector benchmarks.

4   How do we get there?

This section outlines the main projects that, when taken to together, will address the areas requiring improvement, build on strengths and help move the Council towards the vision outlined above.

4.1   Enhanced Customer Services

ICT will continue to support the delivery of high quality customer services.   This will be achieved by a number of programmes, projects and activities, including:

Note: Action Plan references – see Appendix 2 - are shown in brackets.

4.1.1   **Review cost-effectiveness of CRM and Call Centre Telephony infrastructure [1]**.   Currently the Call Centre shares technology – the CRM and telephony – with the County which provides these services for the Council.   The managed service contract will be due for renewal, or replacement, in 2012.   The assessment of alternative models, and possible introduction of a new model, will be a significant undertaking for the Council.   One of many possible models would be to share services (including the ICT infrastructure) with one or more district Councils.   The relocation of the Call Centre from Speke House will require a re-assessment of the networking requirements.

4.1.2   **Develop Web-based Facilities [2].** This is addressed in more detail within the Web Strategy.   However, the move to a MyCouncil web model with its greater customer focus – eg allowing personalised content - will require a significant investment of web and development team resource.   Again the cost could be offset by collaborative work with other Councils and/or the provision of a hosted service by HDC.

4.2   Working Smarter Projects

The **IMD Working Smarter** programme is an emerging set of projects which, when taken together, will deliver a wide range of benefits. However, the main focus will be on delivering improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. This will be achieved through the application of business process improvement techniques and the appropriate application of technology to those improved processes and information systems.   The programme will be fully defined in a document to be considered by COMT in Q1 of 2009 but the key ICT-specific projects are listed below.

ICT Strategy 2009-11

4.2.1 **Improve the reliability and interoperability of the voice and data systems [3].** By the end of 08/09 the new HQ campus and Eastfield House will have a single network which will carry both voice and data traffic. This will allow much greater flexibility & interchange in the handling of voice and data information. This solution will be considered for other "satellite" offices – specifically the Leisure Centres - of the Council. It is essential that any adoption of Voice over IP (VoIP) technologies at satellite offices uses the same system otherwise support costs will rise and system incompatibilities may be introduced which could impact service delivery.

4.2.2 **Reduce risk to the Council through enhanced ICT Business Continuity (BC) & Disaster Recovery (DR) planning [4].** With ever greater reliance on voice and data systems it is essential that the availability of systems is maintained in the event of system disruptions - either from internal or external sources. Therefore, there is a need to extend the existing BC plan (providing the resilience) and DR plans (robust and tested recovery procedures).

4.2.3 **Make better use of accommodation and reducing unnecessary travel [5].** We will continue the roll-out of technologies which support remote & mobile working. Additionally, subject to available funding, it is proposed that a centrally managed wireless network will be installed in the new HQ campus alongside conventional wired networking to provide additional functionality (for example, to support "hot desking").

4.2.4 **Improve the efficient & effective management of severs [6].** The market for server virtualisation is reaching maturity. It is therefore appropriate to explore the options available to virtualise and consolidate our servers. This technology opens up opportunities to deliver BCP "in-house" or in collaboration with other organisations (specifically other Councils) reduce costs as well as providing more flexible approaches to server management.

4.2.5 **Reduce the overhead of supporting desktop systems [7].** An extension of "thin client" computing - currently working well for Leisure Services – is proposed for other areas of the Council. Primarily Citrix will be the main delivery mechanism for Flexible Working but it will also be trialled as a possible replacement for the standard desktop. This will complement and follow the server virtualisation project.

4.2.6 **Improve ICT Service Delivery Standards [8]** through the introduction of the ITIL service standard framework This will help address a number of identified weaknesses, for example, improve hand-over between development and operational teams within IMD also the improved sharing of knowledge & experience.

4.2.7 **Make a greater contribution to environmental improvement [9].** Continue working with the Environmental Management Service and the Carbon Trust to develop an action plan which will enable the Council to embrace "green" computing.

4.2.8 **Enhance information security, sharing and collaboration [10].** Develop our existing SharePoint technology and support with a view to enhancing functionality, thus allowing employees to share documents more effectively via the Intranet. Introduce data encryption and link to Government Connect in order to protect the security of personal and sensitive information. Re-investigate the large volume of small system databases and data sets which exist within the Council. Consider dropping MS Access from the desktop within the life of this strategy and replace this with more sustainable database facilities.

4.2.9 **Share data between applications more effectively [11].** The value of many applications can be substantially enhanced if data can be readily exchanged between applications – this avoids duplication and mistakes introduced by "dual-keying". The Council already uses the Microsoft product Biztalk to integrated LLPG data with the CRM (Customer Relationship Management system) held at Speke House. However, other products merit further investigation (eg improved functionality, lower development costs) and this will be undertaken during the lifetime of this strategy.

4.2.10 **Investigate opportunities for Shared ICT Service Delivery [12].** Where there is a clear business case to do so we will look at different shared service models - subject to the overall guidance provided by Cabinet. Due to the investments made in the Eastfield and new Pathfinder ICT infrastructure, and the anticipated move to virtualised servers, HDC will have the capability to scale up this infrastructure should it be appropriate for HDC to host shared ICT services at a future date. The strategy will include activities to examine the exploitation of this new capability.

5   Governance of the ICT Programme

5.1 A recent internal Audit report identified the need engage more with services in the implementation of the ICT Strategy so as to generate greater corporate ownership. It is therefore proposed that a number of service heads should be invited to sit on the Programme Board for the ICT Programme [13].

5.2 The rolling programme of Service Insight Meetings (SIMs) between services and IMD provides valuable two-way communication. Firstly, they give IMD a better understanding of the longer term objectives and aspirations of services (hence enabling the ICT required to support these objectives to be more readily identified). Secondly, there is an opportunity for services to provide direct feedback on the implementation of ICT service developments and plans.

6   Resources Required

6.1 It is anticipated that the 2008/09 levels of capital & revenue (including those bid for in the 2008 MTP round) will be sufficient to deliver the programme of work outlined in this strategy. However, there are particular areas of uncertainty (specifically scope & cost) around the virtualisation and MyCouncil projects. More detailed business cases will be prepared before proceeding with these projects.

6.2 As ICT is used more and more to drive efficiencies in other parts of the Council there will be, necessarily, more ICT to support. However, IMD will continue to seek its own internal service efficiencies as a means of offsetting this additional ICT workload.

6.3 Additionally work is underway to reduce telephony costs for both landlines and mobile devices.

7   Risks

7.1 The following main generic risks associated with this strategy have been identified:

  a. The Council adopts technologies which prove to be immature, difficult to maintain or otherwise not "fit for purpose". Mitigation: we use an industry standard project management methodology. This encourages thorough

investigation into proposed solutions as well as incorporating best practice to help ensure project benefits are identified and realised. It is an ICT policy not to be early adopters so that others identify the risks associated with new technologies before HDC.

b. Technology projects tend to be complex, this increases the risk that they fail. Mitigation: We build multi-disciplinary project teams including technologists, business analysts and service representatives – this helps to ensure a wide range of skills are available to the project manager to mitigate this risk. We also research similar projects to try to learn from others who have carried out similar projects.

c. The ICT Strategy may not be properly aligned with Growing Success and/or may not fit the business need. Mitigation: we have adopted a proactive approach to consultation with services – the SIMs. The use of business analysis skills within project teams helps to maintain a focus on the aims & objectives of the Council. Participation by other heads of service on project boards helps to broaden the perspective of the project teams.

d. The ICT Strategy may not be deliverable within available resources. Mitigation: we will seek to collaborate with others to minimise costs and will investigate different models (eg shared services) to defray costs.

There are many more risks associated with individual projects and these will be managed through project risk logs.

8   Conclusion

8.1   ICT continues to be a key function, both for the smooth running of day-to-day service provision, and also as an enabler to effect step changes in the way the Council provides services.

8.2   ICT provision at HDC is sound and improving. The main areas of weakness will be addressed by the projects outlined in this document [Action Plan ref. 6, 7 & 8]. In particular the introduction of virtualisation to the server environment and, possibly, to the desktop environment have the potential for radically improving the capability & management of these areas. The introduction of ITIL will improve IMD's overall performance and thus the quality of ICT service delivery.

8.3   There are significant additional developments within this strategy which present particular challenges. For example, the development of the MyCouncil web site and the (potential) replacement of the Call Centre technical infrastructure [Action Plan ref. 1]

8.4   "Green computing" is an increasingly important area of interest both within the industry and also it clearly contributes to the Council's Growing Success objective "to help mitigate and adapt to climate change". This strategy's action plan contains activities [Action Plan ref. 9] designed to improve the Council's ICT performance is this area.

8.5   Shared Service delivery is a potentially important area for achieving savings and /or defraying development costs for the Council. Also the choices that the Council makes in procuring its ICT can lower the barriers to effective shared working with other organisations [Action Plan ref. 12].

8.6   The Flexible Working project has delivered early successes and through the implementation of this strategy it will continue to develop further opportunities for efficient working practices [Action Plan ref. 5].

SWOT Analysis of ICT Service Provision at HDC (as of October 2008)   **Appendix 1**

STRENGTHS	AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT
1. **Highly rated Help Desk** (evidenced by annual & ongoing surveys) 2. **ICT Training** (evidenced by high take-up of courses offered) 3. **Very high availability of data network** (in excess of 99.9%) 4. **Very broad ICT skill base across IMD** (reduces need for bought-in consultancy) 5. **Motivated IMD employees** (low staff turnover) 6. **Improving communication of future service ICT needs** (via regular Service Insight Meetings) 7. **Good exchange of ICT management knowledge within Cambridgeshire** (via regular ICT Managers' meetings) 8. **Good use made of work done by other Councils** (eg through membership of SOCITM and networking) 9. **Collaborative development of ICT infrastructure** (eg CRM, LLPG, call centre telephony, shared web site A-Z, Cambridgeshire portal) 10. **Technologies (eg Citrix, BlackBerrys) to support the Flexible Working Strategy are having early successes** 11. **Corporate solutions eg GIS, CRM, EDM, VoIP provide opportunities for information sharing and efficient infrastructure provision** 12. **Centrally provided ICT minimises risk of incompatible systems** 13. **Remote support of desktop systems reduces need to attend in person** 14. **Good communication of ICT issues** (Team News, IMD Newsletter, use of intranet & email system, training) 15. **Use of industry standard software** eg Microsoft provides compatibility with other organisations aiding information exchange and supplier software based on Microsoft products 16. **Relatively up-to-date Desktops** (ie PCs, Operating Systems & Office suite) 17. **Introduction of SharePoint has provided many benefits** (eg much improved file structuring, enhanced searching and the ability to develop information applications rapidly)	1. **Telephony** - Issues with VoIP telephony at Eastfield & analogue telephony at Pathfinder (new VoIP system should resolve issues but satellite offices – including Leisure - currently outside VoIP roll-out plans (MTP bid pending)) 2. **Server room at Pathfinder at capacity (& subject to air conditioning failures) slowing deployment of new systems** (new server room at Eastfield and in Building D will remove this constraint) 3. **Limited commonality of systems between HDC and partners, or potential partners, acts as a barrier to shared service** 4. **No encryption of portable media devices (eg USB sticks) leading to increased risk of data loss** (Information Security project underway, awareness raising undertaken since November 07) 5. **Large number of individual servers c 80 requires substantial maintenance & represents multiple points of failure** (server virtualisation project – if approved – will mitigate) 6. **IMD Operations' priorities currently dictated by needs of the Accommodation Project preventing progress on key** projects eg virtualisation 7. **Multiple Access & Excel-based databases with no overall control -> data duplication** (CRIMP project is helping to resolve but a significant undertaking) 8. **Adoption of "green IT" is a largely undeveloped area** (but server virtualisation & the introduction of "blade servers" will contribute; also need user support eg turn off screens overnight) 9. **Current lack of flexible BCP and virtualised servers do not allow HDC to compete effectively for the hosting of shared services** 10. **Large number of software packages to support (c 200)** - IMD support is very limited in certain application areas, PC re-builds can be complex 11. **Unable to roll-out software to desktops remotely** (desktop virtualisation would address this) **AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT (cont.)** 12. **SharePoint development plan/road map is not visible** (work is in

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progress to produce this)

13. **Handover from Development to Operations is not always as efficient and effective as it could be** (restructured teams and recently restructured IMD management will improve this, as will the introduction of ITIL)

14. **Resolution of Operational problems sometimes require Development team resources to resolve** (IMD re-structure and the introduction of ITIL methodology will help alleviate this)

15. **No comprehensive strategy for Business Systems exists** (will be developed partly through closer liaison with services eg SIMs)

16. **Better project management for ICT Projects would deliver more predictable delivery dates**

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OPPORTUNITIES	RISKS
1. **LLPG team have (multiple) award winning skills which could be deployed to other Councils and reduce costs/generate income for HDC** 2. **Development template for new Council web site (MyCouncil) could be shared with other Councils reducing costs/generating income** 3. **Improved working practices** such as the implementation of ITIL and Server Virtualisation would enhance ICT service provision, for example, improve resilience. 4. **Performance Management** is generally underdeveloped and the quality of ICT service is not benchmarked against national public sector organisations; development of this area will encourage knowledge sharing and greater insight into ICT service delivery; 5. **The end of the Call Centre Managed Service contract with County in 2012 offers an opportunity to improve the current model for providing the technical infrastructure for the Call Centre** 6. **Adoption of virtualised servers would greatly improve the opportunities for enhanced business continuity & allow HDC to compete more effectively to host shared services** 7. **IMD Development team has project management skills/experience which can be used to increase the likelihood of delivering successful ICT infrastructure projects** 8. **Freedom of Information and Data Protection are the responsibility of different divisions** (IMD and Legal& Estates respectively) – there may advantages in bringing these functions together 9. **The CCTV network is not managed by IMD** – there may be benefits to the CCTV team in bringing this under a single network management structure 10. **Improvements in the management of suppliers may lead to cost reductions/improved levels of support** 11. **Introduction of upgraded MS Office suite could result in productivity improvements** 12. **Better technology "horizon scanning" should improve our strategic choices**	1. **Financial pressures may reduce capacity of IMD a) obliging services to find their own local solutions rather than benefitting from a corporate approach, and, b) delaying or removing the introduction of new systems which would provide efficiency savings** 2. **Stringent security arrangements required for the introduction of Government Connect (ie CoCo compliance) may be costly to implement and restrict HDC's ICT flexibility** 3. **Need to service Accommodation Project reduces availability of support for other projects** 4. **Loss of skilled staff / scarce ICT skills/knowledge with relatively few members of IMD** (further skills transfer & better knowledge-bases required) 5. **Some service-developed systems have no centralised support from IMD or backup support within the service** (a business risk) 6. **Little Service input into ICT Programme governance** may lead to systems development which are not properly aligned to business needs (SIMs provide high level input) 7. **Dependency on Microsoft software** (reduced opportunities for competitive procurement but compatibility with suppliers' applications increased)

Appendix 2

Action Plan 2009-2011

Objective	Actions	Measures	Target	By Whom
1. Review cost-effectiveness of *CRM and Call Centre Telephony infrastructure (4.1.1)*	• Establish HDC's requirements eg potential for relocation of Call Centre from Speke House. • Identify & cost alternative delivery models If an change from the existing model is chosen: • Procure & implement replacement system	To be defined	Sep 2012	IMD Development Manager
2. Develop Web-based Facilities	Please refer to web strategy action plan			
3. Improve the reliability and interoperability of the voice and data systems	• Procurement & of new digital voice system • Inclusion of Leisure services onto digital system (subject to MTP approval) • Introduction of Outlook / telephony integration	• Eastfield, Pathfinder, Castle Hill & Centenary to be on same digital system • Leisure on digital system • Introduction of "presence" information (knowing whether a user is logged into the network – and hence contactable – aids collaborative working) • Further measures to be defined	Mar 2009 Aug 2009 Mar 2010	IMD Operations Manager
4. Reduce risk to the Council through enhanced ICT Business Continuity (BC) & Disaster Recovery (DR) planning	• Add additional application systems to system recovery contract & test • Following server virtualisation project (subject to MTP approval)	• Successful "dummy" recovery of application system sample • Successful recovery of systems as servers are virtualised • Updated ICT Business Continuity Plan (ongoing throughout server virtualisation project)	Jun 2009 Mar 2010 Mar 2010	IMD Operations Manager

5. Make better use of accommodation and reducing unnecessary travel	• Review Flexible Working Strategy with experience of using Building D • Further develop mobile working solutions • Investigate need for enhanced wireless infrastructure to support host desking	To be defined	2010/11	IMD Development Manager & IMD Operations Manager
6. Improve the efficient & effective management of severs	• Investigate the virtualisation market • Procure & implement a virtualisation model (subject to MTP approval)	To be defined	Mar 2010	IMD Operations Manager
7. Reduce the overhead of supporting desktop systems	• Roll-out Office 2003 • Investigate virtualisation of Desktop • If appropriate, procure & roll out desktop virtualisation solution	• Office 2003 on every PC • To be defined	Jul 2009 2010/11	IMD Operations Manager
8. Improve ICT Service Delivery Standards	• Train all IMD staff in ITIL standard (1st stage complete) • Introduce 10 elements of ITIL model	• Improved service delivery – SMART measures to be defined	Mar 2010	IMD Operations Manager
9. Make a greater contribution to environmental improvement	• Develop a green computing action plan • Implement action plan	• Action plan supported by Environmental Management • Further measures to be defined	Aug 2009 2009/11	IMD Operations Manager
10. Enhance information security, sharing and collaboration	• Develop SharePoint "roadmap" • Implement **Government Connect** to provide a secure network for inter-government & inter-agency data transfer • Review future of MS-Access • Review & rationalisation databases	• Plan for the development & support of SharePoint • Further measures to be defined • Operational Government Connect link • Policy for the future development of databases • Reduction in number of databases / duplication of information	Mar 2009 Sep 2009 TBA TBA	IMD Development Manager & IMD Operations Manager

11. Share data between applications more effectively	• Assess effectiveness of new approach to data exchange • Develop further links between systems	To be defined	Dec 2009	IMD Development Manager
12. Investigate opportunities for Shared ICT Service Delivery	• Explore and advocate opportunities for shared service delivery with other organisations (eg web development with other Cambs. Districts)	• Recommendations for shared service developments • Further measures to be defined	2009/11	IMD Development Manager
13. Increase participation of services in the development & implementation of the ICT Programme	• Invite HoS / AMs to take part in governance of programme • Continue and develop the SIMs (Service Insight Meetings) approach	• Programme Board established • Further measures to be defined	Apr 2009 Dec 2009	IMD Operations Manager & IMD Development Manager