WIRRAL

**COUNCILLOR
ANN MCLACHLAN
CABINET MEMBER FOR
TRANSFORMATION, LEISURE
AND CULTURE**

CABINET

7 November 2016

IT DISASTER RECOVERY SCRUTINY REVIEW

Councillor Ann McLachlan, Cabinet Member - Transformation, Leisure and Culture, said:

"Ensuring Wirral's IT systems are fit for purpose and robust, with adequate safeguards in place to continue providing services when issues occur is incredibly important.

"I am grateful to the Members who took part in this scrutiny review and believe their work and the recommendations it has led to will be hugely valuable."

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings of a scrutiny review set up to review the Council's IT disaster recovery arrangements. The review was commissioned by the former Transformation and Resources Policy and Performance Committee then approved and referred to Cabinet by the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 12 July 2016. The report sets out a series of recommendations that the scrutiny panel have put forward aim to help improve the Council's response to disaster recovery.

This work supports enabling project activities to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan. The report affects all wards in the borough, but is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- Cabinet endorses the findings of the report and approves all the recommendations arising from this review.
- The Cabinet note the progress made since 2014 to address the historic weaknesses across the Wirral Council ICT estate and to improve the Council's ability to cope with and recover from a variety of Business Continuity risks.
- A future report is brought back to Cabinet by the Chief Information Officer setting out how the Council is responding to this review and taking forward this work.

1.0   REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1   For Cabinet to endorse the findings of this review so that implementation of the recommendations can commence.

2.0   OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1   No other options have been considered.

3.0   BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1   The scrutiny report appended to this cover report sets out the findings and recommendations arising from a Scrutiny Review completed in May 2016. The Review was commissioned by the former Transformation and Resources Policy and Performance Committee.

3.2   A Report to the Transformation & Resources Policy & Performance Committee on 21 September 2015 revealed that Wirral Council's IT infrastructure had suffered from underinvestment for a number of years. It emerged that there was some uncertainty regarding the existence of a comprehensive and up to date IT disaster recovery plan for Wirral Council. Disaster Recovery had also been identified as a significant risk in the Council's risk register.

3.3   The Review Panel's objectives in doing this work were to receive assurances that the Council establishes effective IT disaster recovery arrangements and takes steps to mitigate risks relating to IT disaster recovery highlighted in the Council's risk register. It was also an aim of the Panel to raise the profile of IT disaster recovery across the Council.

3.4   Since October 2014, the Wirral Council Digital Service has been working to mitigate the vulnerabilities and weaknesses across the Council's ICT infrastructure. As part of this programme of work, the Digital Service investigated locations that could be used to separate the two data centres which are situated in the same building complex at the Treasury in Cleveland Street, Birkenhead.

3.5   Following the options appraisal, the Digital Service recommended that the Council enter into a contract with Merseytravel to occupy space in their data centre in Liverpool. This option was approved because it demonstrated exceptional value for money reduces the risk of a total ICT infrastructure failure to almost zero.

3.6   The contract with Merseytravel was signed in early July 2016. Since then the Digital Service has engaged specialist partners to:

(1) Link Wirral Council's optical fibre network to the Merseytravel network;
(2) Design the network equipment architecture that will be installed in Wirral Council's data centre and in the Merseytravel data centre;

3.7   In addition, The Digital Service has started the procurement process to identify and engage a specialist partner to plan and deliver the final equipment move (servers, storage, etc.) and commissioning ensuring that service disruptions are avoided wherever possible.

4.0   LEGAL

5.1   A full assessment of the legal implications will be undertaken in developing the approach to implementing the recommendations of this review. This will be included in a report back to Cabinet.

5.0   RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1   A full assessment of the resource implications will be undertaken in developing the approach to implementing the recommendations of this review. This will be included in a report back to Cabinet.

6.0   RELEVANT RISKS

7.1   There are none arising from this report.

7.0   ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

8.1   Consultation with relevant service departments and partners has been undertaken as part of this scrutiny review.

8.0   EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1   Consideration of an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the work to implement these recommendations.

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APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date