

Business technology strategy

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1. Introduction

Our organisational objectives are:

- Meeting the housing needs of our current and future customers;
- Supporting our customers to be more independent and healthy, and our communities to flourish; and
- Ensuring that our business grows, is well run, responsible and financially secure.

This Business Technology Strategy supports the delivery of our organisational objectives as it underpins services directly provided to our customers as well as the back-office teams that support front line services.

2. Purpose

This strategy outlines how we intend to make use of technology in a managed way, with a set of strategic principles and goals.

Our overall aim is to provide an IT Service that meets the needs of our users. We want a service that is efficient, effective, secure, and that provides with high availability, data integrity and reporting capabilities, all within the constraints of our budgets and the market.

The expected outcomes are:

1. Increased proportion of mobile IT assets (computing and telephony) – the allocation of which will be based on job role profiling, as they will have access to information and systems;
2. Reviewed hosting arrangements that may incorporate more public cloud hosting while managing risk appropriately;
3. Continuing focus on information governance that embeds the culture of information asset ownership, and maximises the use of structured data and information systems to improve data management and integrity;
4. Continuing focus on IT security with a view to gaining ISO27001 certification; moving towards an ISO27001 standards-based information security management system;
5. Rationalisation of applications and devolved elements of system administration (to team/department/user group level) where possible/appropriate whilst maintaining central governance and standards;
6. "Bought" vs "made" applications where we take advantage of standard products with a core functionality that meets our needs, supplemented with in-house configuration/development;
7. Resilient, skilled and flexible staff within the IT Service;
8. Colleagues across the business who are skilled to a level that provides the required organisational regulatory and compliance assurances; and
9. Continued sourcing on a hybrid basis with outsourcing of core infrastructure to specialist partners supplemented by in-house service delivery, application support and development, and information governance.

3. 2021-2022

Key areas of work	Outcomes and benefits
1. Focus on IT security and IG through robust user and asset management, identification, authentication – cradle to grave management of accounts linked to role profiles	Reduce risks of IG breaches and inappropriate information access or leakage through user and device management Improve IT hardware spend by reducing duplication and over-allocation of IT assets, leading to increased costs in licensing and support
2. Extend access to mobile and flexible working technology through the provision of devices appropriate to job roles. Enable the mobilisation of data and applications with a robust and secure connection to our core systems	Efficiencies arising from increased productivity (data entry at point of origin, less double handling, reduced travel time etc.) Reduced risk of data breaches arising from reliance on paper files Improved customer service
3. Complete a business wide review of our portfolio of property systems and implement the outcomes of the review, and replace our legacy housing management system	Ensure systems fit for purpose now and moving forward; Property systems that address key compliance / health and safety risks; Mitigation of risk arising from redundant hardware and software.
4. Develop master data sources for customer, staff and property data linked to the increased use of key managed systems	Reducing the use of unmanaged data sources and local solutions built in Excel, Access, or unsanctioned SaaS (software as a service) that do not link to the key data sets.
5. Manage the number of applications in use to minimise duplication and the overlap of capability	Minimise the risk of data integrity issues and better managing data complexity; License and infrastructure cost reduction; Process efficiencies via less duplication of data entry, manual processing and data integrity risk; Better manage data protection risks with fewer paper processes.
6. Leverage the investment in the EDRMS	Further strengthen our information governance and information asset ownership model; Retirement of less secure, unmanaged local solutions using Excel and Access based systems; Use document workflow capability to reduce paper processes.
7. Develop the use of the managed print capability	Reduce print costs; Reduce paper output to mitigate data breach risks of uncontrolled printed documents; Improved document scanning capability and workflow potential.
8. Review options for future delivery model post Capita contract	Potential to reduce costs and improve performance.
9. Telephony reviews – Careline (linked to technology obsolescence), contact centre solution, softphone deployment	Avoid technology obsolescence (Careline) and embrace new product offers; Leverage O365 licencing/product suite; Support new ways of working.

Note: there are many other projects that are captured on the IT project road map.

4. Resourcing

To successfully deliver this strategy will need to ensure it is adequately resourced with people (right skills, knowledge and availability) and monetary budgets.

Where key areas of work require additional/different resources to those currently provisioned this will be reviewed and escalated through the governance structure as appropriate.

5. Scope

This strategy outlines the scope of service delivery by our in-house IT service and contracted partners. The detail of the scope of service and delivery model provided by each organisation is covered in either our internal procedures or guidance documents or via contract / service level agreement (SLA) documents where service is delivered by partner organisations.

As well as defining what is in scope of the service and strategic framework, it is also important to make some links to what is explicitly out of scope.

Out of scope:

- Business intelligence (BI) – the underpinning technology and applications will be provisioned as part of the overall IT estate and ensure the links to our business intelligence requirements are considered as part of any IT decision-making, and we will continue to work with the DBIS Team to define what that looks like in practice, while the choice of preferred BI tool and its governance will sit with the DBIS Team;
- Facilities management (power provision, communications room facilities, structured cabling/wired infrastructure, audio/visual meeting room technology);
- Digital inclusion (DI) – the DI group will shape the implementation of our support for digital inclusion; and
- IT support for subsidiaries in the BH group where this is not covered by an agreed SLA e.g. Arcon.

6. Responsibility

Executive Sponsor for the Business Technology Strategy is the Group Director of Data, Digital & Business Technology.

Working to the Group Director of Data, Digital & Business Technology, the Head of IT Services will be responsible for the delivery of the IT and IG underpinning the Business Technology Strategy, supported by staff within the IT service having individual and collective responsibility to support, implement and adhere to this strategy.

Our Group Leadership Team, in signing up to this strategy, are demonstrating their collective responsibility to support the delivery of this strategy.

It is also recognised that there is an individual and collective responsibility for all staff at all levels of the business to adhere to the principles agreed in this strategy and detail as set out in aligned policies and procedures.

The governance relating to this strategy and the operation of the service, from the commissioning through delivery and support of the work, is outlined in the section 10 of this strategy.

7. Equality analysis

We will assess this on a project by project basis.

8. Consultation

Ongoing consultation takes place with senior managers with regard to the IT road map, plus additional input from 3rd parties, market research and networking/benchmarking, both across the specific sector and in the wider IT industry, and Group Leadership Team.

Union and staff consultation has taken place on the lower level policies that are reflected and referred to as part of the overall strategy.

9. GDPR & Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018

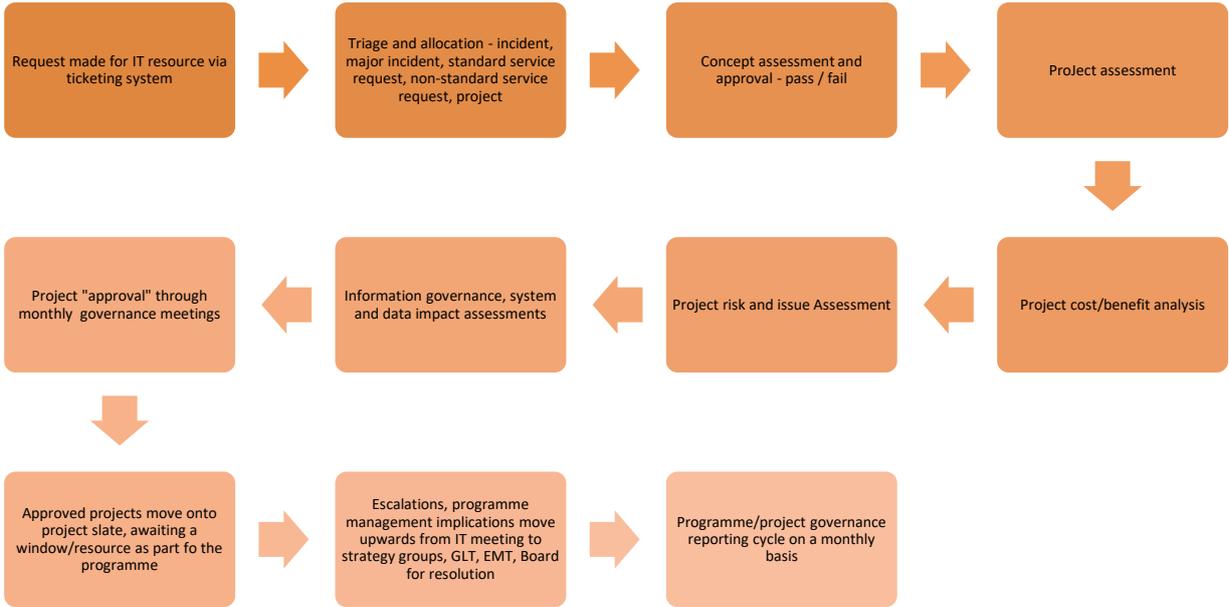
Unlike other organisational policies and strategies making reference to GDPR and the DPA 2018, and our policies in procedures in adhering to these (and other) compliance frameworks, this strategy is leading the ongoing development of our IG and information security policies, based on best practice frameworks.

10. Governance, monitoring, review and evaluation

The full strategy will be reviewed annually by Head of IT and Group Director of Data, Digital and Business Technology for continued development, adherence and relevance, taking into account the opportunities afforded by emerging technology and changes in Group Leadership Team work programme, and Senior Manager work programme derived from the Group Leadership Team work programme.

Project or programme boards will be set up as required and we already have set up a programme board for key area of work #1 (review of property-based systems). Escalations will be through to strategy groups, Group Leadership Team, Executive Management Team and Board as required.

The following governance and engagement model summarises our approach, and monthly KPI reports will be available/published in agreed areas.



Date approved	Group Board 23 September 2021
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