

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17TH MARCH 2011

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

- Lead Cabinet Members**
- **Corporate Management and Finance
Councillor Terry Laing**
 - **Children and Young People
Councillor Ann McCoy**

EIT REVIEW OF DEVOLVED ICT, OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

1. Summary

This report outlines the outcome of a consultation with Headteachers regarding the findings of the EIT Review and the proposal to transfer the School ICT Unit (SICTU) into Xentrall Shared Services and makes an alternative proposal.

2. Recommendation

That the SICTU is subsumed into the newly established E Learning Service managed by the Head of Children, Schools and Complex Needs.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision

The alternative proposal is more in keeping with the emerging E Learning Agenda for schools and the way in which schools seek services from the Council.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held:-

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc., whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to an in accordance with the provision referred to above.

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17TH MARCH 2011

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

DEVOLVED ICT EIT REVIEW, OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

EIT REVIEW OF DEVOLVED ICT, OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

Summary

This report outlines the outcome of a consultation with Headteachers regarding the findings of the EIT Review and the proposal to transfer the Schools ICT Unit (SICTU) into Xentrall Shared Services and makes an alternative proposal in the light of both the consultation and the emerging changes resulting from the loss of Grants and for the financial pressures on schools.

Recommendation

That the SICTU is subsumed into the newly established E Learning service managed by the Head of Children, Schools and Complex Needs.

Detail

1. In December 2010 Cabinet considered the finding of a task and finish EIT Review of devolved ICT and agreed that the Head of Support Services (CESC) should consult with Heads regarding the proposal to transfer the SICTU function into Xentrall Shared Services. SICTU provides technical ICT support to primary and secondary schools mainly within the Borough but also to some schools in the Tees Valley. It does so within the arrangements that pertain to many services provided by the Council for schools in that there are Service Level Agreements and the Unit is entirely reliant on schools for its income.
2. The service is well regarded by schools and, in discussions with Heads about the present financial constraints within the Council and their impact on services provided to schools, the Heads have indicated their continued financial support for the service.
3. As indicated in December there are related issues to be resolved over the coming months. The loss of the Harnessing Technology Grant has placed pressure on the availability of resources to continue the scale of service presently provided through the Northern Grid for Learning. These include the broadband network and curriculum support. How these services are commissioned or provided in the longer term, probably from 2012, is unresolved. It is however the firm view of Heads that the management and consideration of all such services should be within a single area of responsibility. They have therefore supported an alternative proposal that SICTU should be managed within the E Learning service under the Head of Children, Schools and Complex Needs. In that way all issues to do with ICT support to schools is concentrated in the one service and a new configuration of service delivery to schools can emerge from there.
4. Whilst the original proposal had envisaged placing SICTU within a service closely related technically to the SICTU service, it had not been envisaged that savings would accrue.

The new proposal would not in itself generate savings but bring together the expertise to conclude the deliberations about the future service to be made available schools within the new reduced financial allocation.

5. It is therefore recommended that SICTU transfer to the E Learning service within Children, Schools and Complex Needs in Children, Education and Social Care.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. The revised proposal is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no community strategy implications arising from this report.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10. This report is not subject to an Assessment as it is making no major changes to any policy or service provision.

CORPORATE PARENTING

11. Schools have been consulted on the EIT proposals and their response forms the substantive part of this report.

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Education Related Matters

Yes

Background Papers

Devolved ICT EIT Review – Findings
Report to Cabinet 18 December 2010

Ward and Ward Councillors

Not Ward specific.

Property

The proposal may involve internal office moves in due course.