



Social Care Business Process Modernisation

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for prudential borrowing to be used to procure ICT equipment and software to support the implementation of electronic social care records and an integrated childrens system and associated business improvements in social care.
- 1.2 Subject to any issues raised at the meeting, I support the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To approve the programme of ICT investment within Social Services set out in this paper for inclusion in the capital programme.
- 2.2 To approve the financing of the programme on the basis set out in Section 1.5 to Appendix 2, including:
- up to £696k of capital expenditure to be funded from additional corporate prudential borrowing, the remainder to be funded by existing capital budgets
 - the creation of a £125k Social Services ICT modernisation reserve from the existing 2005/6 budgets to be used to fund the scheme revenue costs in 2007/8 and 2008/9
 - the balance of the scheme financing costs to be met from existing Social Services ICT revenue budgets and future efficiency savings
 - the remaining balance of the the uncommitted Social Services ICT revenue budget to be vired to fund wider budget pressures within the department in 2005/6 and 2006/7.
- 2.3 To allow the Director of Finance the flexibility to agree a reduction in the scale of corporate prudential borrowing should additional supported capital resources become available to the Social Services ICT budget, beyond those planned for.



Social Care Business Process Modernisation

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 Business process modernisation and development is a necessity for every organisation. In today's world these processes are inevitably intertwined with ICT projects. The social care service is a prime example of this. The requirement to have an Electronic Social Care Record (ESCR) in place by October 2005 and an Integrated Children System (ICS) by December 2005 is a performance duty on all Councils with Social Services responsibilities. These two specific aspects of the programme are advancing within the department. However, in order to extract the full benefits from having such systems there are several associated projects which are essential, these are listed at Appendix 2. These projects range from having sufficient computers in place for the workforce, to providing them with mobile capabilities. These projects will deliver 24/7 access to information, data capture at source and information sharing capabilities. These requirements for all councils are detailed within the ODPM priority outcomes for Electronic Government (e-gov) initiatives. There has also been a recent draft publication of e-Service Delivery Standards for Adult Social Care, minimum standards for all councils to adhere to are proposed.

The projects contained within this paper are the departmental requirements against the e-government priority outcomes, other Department of Health (DOH) initiatives and the modernisation agenda. The savings outlined in the paper will all contribute to the Gershon efficiency requirements. Appendix 2 contains the full report of the Social Care Manager responsible for the project.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. It is difficult to see any viable alternative plan. The option is either to make the investment in new systems and therefore gain the benefits as outlined in the report. Alternatively we can continue as we currently are with the risk that this may lead to deterioration in relative performance.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Full report of the Social Care Manager and Cost Schedule

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The financial implications are detailed throughout the report in Appendix 2 and seek approval to £696k additional prudential borrowing and a plan for funding this within existing revenue budgets. Members are requested to consider in particular the project costing set out in Section 1.5 and the detailed efficiency savings set out in Section 1.6, which are taken into account in the project costing.

Legal

2. The introduction of modern systems will allow for compliance with information sharing aspects of the Children Act. The investment will allow services to meet Freedom of Information requests faster and be more compliant with national information governance guidelines.

Personnel

3. Clearly trade unions will be included throughout the process. It is clear staff will need to adopt new ways of working for which they will receive training, guidance and support. They will gain more flexibility and this will contribute to the work life balance initiative. Any reduction in administration posts required will be carefully managed in accordance with the Council Personnel policies.

Equalities impact

4. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken for each system introduced. Actions will be taken to ensure no member of staff or public are disadvantaged.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The target to handle all new referrals using ICS forms and have Electronic files forms part of the inspection regime for Social Services, therefore it will impact on the overall rating awarded to the service. This will consequently feed into the authorities CPA rating for 2005/6. The introduction of modern systems will contribute to the Council's priority of modernising social care.

Full report of the Social Care Manager

1.1 This report contains the first stage requirements for social care. The future direction of system requirements is summarised at paragraph 1.9 on page 9.

1.2 **ESCR Benefits**

Service users expect a good consistent service from all government organisations. To achieve this each organisation has to keep records of what it is doing and how it is doing it. This is necessary to ensure:

- **consistency** in service delivery over time, as staff change or move on
- **continuity** of service delivery when regular members of staff are not available because of leave, sickness or other absences
- **quality** of service delivery through monitoring by managers, inspectors, complaints mechanisms or other means.

Having a record in electronic format enhances the responsiveness of services in a number of ways:

- It makes managing the volume of material to be recorded easier
- Records can be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Records can be accessed from remote locations (i.e. you do not have to be in the office to get hold of the record)
- Several people within an organisation may access and update records at the same time, for example an occupational therapist and social worker may work together to support a service user; a fostering specialist worker may work with a child's social worker, this can only be achieved with sharable electronic records
- Selected material from records may be shared more easily with partner agencies where services are delivered by a number of organisations.
- Service users can more easily be provided with access to their own record.
- Records can be transferred between local authorities when service users move, enabling a more consistent continuous service to be maintained.
- Establishing common standards of recording should enable staff moving between jobs or covering for colleagues to more easily familiarise themselves with the record they are working on, and so provide a better service.
- Additional security can be provided, with backups, rather than just one file.

1.3 **ICS Benefits**

The Integrated Children's System will provide an assessment, planning, intervention and reviewing model for all children in need under the Children Act 1989. Its development will bring together the Assessment Framework and Looking After Children System, so that the dimensions in the Assessment Framework will be common to work with all children in need and their families. The Integrated Children's System is designed to ensure that assessment, planning and decision making leads to good outcomes for children. The Integrated Children's System will set out what information will be collected when working with children in need including those looked after away from home, children for whom the plan is adoption and care leavers. Practitioners will be able to enter this information directly into a

computerised system with software and visual displays designed to assist them in the organisation of the material. This approach to work with children and their families reflects:

- a holistic understanding of children's developmental needs and the capacities of their parents or carers to respond to these needs, within their wider family and environmental context;
- a coherent process - from first contact with the child and family through assessment, decision making and subsequent interventions to review – which is focused on bringing about optimal outcomes for children;
- use of the dimensions in the Assessment Framework throughout the process;
- a common language for all professionals working with children and families irrespective of their service area;
- development of a single data entry system which will eliminate the repetition inherent in the current paper based recording forms for the Assessment Framework and Looking After Children System; and will enable data about individual children and families to be used for planning at individual and strategic levels.
- There will be many practical benefits of an electronic recording system for child care workers. File management, storage, faster access etc.

1.4 Service Redesign

There follows a hypothetical scenario of what the service may look like should the proposed systems be implemented.

Scenario

John is elderly and living on his own. John has recently been ill and needs some help at home. John contacts adults social services to see whether he is eligible for assistance. John's call is answered by Call centre/ Adult reception service and his contact details and information are recorded on the CRM system and passported to the social care core system. The contact is filed in John's ESCR.

The contact is electronically routed through to Anne the service manager and she decides that a needs assessment may be appropriate. Anne decides to allocate Tina, a Domiciliary Service Organiser, to John. This action sends an allocation to Tina and John's contact information and details appear in Tina's in tray on her computer desktop.

When Tina logs onto the system she notices she has a new piece of work waiting for her. Tina suspects there may be other information about John already available to her so she checks whether John is known to the department or the health community by checking the ESCR system and logging onto the Single Assessment Application (SAP). The SAP application is a community wide application, designed to support professionals from many disciplines and organisations. Simultaneously, this requires the public to present their needs once only to public sector organisations, such as Social Services and Health. Whilst John is not known to Social Services he has recently had an assessment with a practice nurse and the details are recorded on the system. From this information Tina decides she does not need to visit John and can allocate him a Home Care Assistant after a dialogue with

him on the telephone. Tina records her conversation with John and takes a copy of the health assessment and files them both in Johns ESCR.

Tina then logs onto the homecare scheduling system and allocates Susan, a home help to visit John twice a week. Tina sends Susan an SMS to let her know that she has a new visit to John on her rota from tomorrow morning. Tina also sends John a confirmation letter. When Susan receives the message on her XDA (hand held computer device) she logs into the scheduling system and picks up all of John's details and requirements. Susan sets herself a reminder for the morning on her XDA.

In the morning Susan visits John and when she arrives she uses her XDA to record the time she arrived at John's house. Susan then undertakes her duties and when she is ready to leave she records the time she left on her XDA. The times recorded by Susan are sent back to a central server by the XDA and routed through to the scheduling system. Tina logs into the scheduling system and checks that John received his visit and the duration of the visit relative to the planned time and duration. Had the visit information not been recorded Tina would have received an alert notifying her of the fact.

Quite clearly within the above scenario there are several different systems in operation but they are all integrated with each other and equally as importantly, into a business process which is well documented and well understood by all participants. There are a whole host of benefits relative to existing paper processes and systems to be derived from the implementation of the projects. Please see Efficiencies section (paragraph 4.0).

1.5 Project Costs

There is a net shortfall of funding for the budget in the initial years, set against the available Social Services ICT capital and revenue budgets and the efficiencies initially available. This can be bridged if approval is given to fund the initial shortfall in capital costs through additional unsupported borrowing, provided that the available administrative efficiencies are subsequently realised.

The funding proposals are summarised below:

Financial Year	2005/6 £000	2006/7 £000	2007/8 £000	2008/9 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	Total to 2010 £000
Capital						
Capital expenditure funded by existing provision within the Social Services capital programme	432	160	0	0	0	592
Capital expenditure funded by new prudential borrowing	208	283	205	0	0	696
Total capital cost	640	443	205	0	0	1,288

Revenue costs						
Revenue cost of financing new prudential borrowing	0	48	113	161	161	483
Cashable efficiency savings – see 1.6.5	0	-5	-55	-120	-185	-365
Net extra revenue cost	0	43	58	41	-24	118
Funding of Revenue costs						
Uncommitted ICT revenue budget	163	77	-13	-13	-13	201
Funding from (to) Social Services ICT modernisation reserve	-125	0	71	54	0	0
Net revenue funding	38	77	58	41	-13	201
Balance of revenue budget funding uncommitted	38	34	0	0	11	83

In total, there is a shortfall of £696k against the available capital resources in the three years to 2005/6 to 2007/8. The proposal is to undertake additional unsupported prudential borrowing to fund this, which would lead to financing costs that would need to be met from Social Services revenue budgets from 2006/7 onwards, as the prudential borrowing was repaid over a five year period.

Cashable efficiency savings in administrative costs will arise from the investment, at £5k in 2006/7 rising to £185k on an ongoing basis from 2009/10. These are explained in more detail in Section 1.6 below, together with the wider non-cashable service benefits.

There would be no net revenue costs incurred in 2005/6, and the existing uncommitted Social Services ICT revenue budget will be used in 2005/6 to create an 'ICT modernisation reserve' of £125k, that would be applied in 2007/8 and 2008/9 to meet a net shortfall in revenue funding for the project in those years. The project will therefore be fully funded in 2007/8 and 2008/9, and there will be a remaining budget available of £38k in 2005/6 and £34k in 2006/7 respectively. That unused budget can now be vired to support the wider Social Services department budgetary pressures in 2005/6 and 2006/7.

The plan assumes the availability of £160k of Government capital grants in 2006/7 based on current announcements, but no further funding has been assumed. In the event that the external capital resources available to Social Services ICT investment were greater than this, the level of planned prudential borrowing could be scaled back. Key grant funding announcements for 2006/7 and 2007/8 are expected from December 2005 onwards, when the position will be clearer.

The ESCR project has several dimensions to it and whilst the situation is complicated with the changing structure of the service, there is a clear need for joined up effective information systems that are designed to facilitate process as well

as gather information. The investments are needed as a foundation to deliver change to operational processes, facilitate information sharing and provide management information for decision making and performance management.

Investment in IT has been limited to date in the department and basic upgrading of the existing infrastructure is required to reach minimum standards which are essential to meet the new challenges. The core IT budget for the department only allows for the maintenance aspects of the systems requirements to be covered on an ongoing basis.

At present there are significant deficits in the standard of office environment for front line staff. Many staff still do not have access to a computer in the room where they work. There is an expectation from DFES and CSCI that all staff have 1:1 access to a networked computer. Moreover, 260 computers are greater than four years old and are in urgent need of replacement.

Many buildings require significant sums of expenditure to bring them up to an acceptable modern office environment standard. The roll out of ICT equipment to some parts of the department is restricted by a lack of space and suitability of existing office furniture. In order to comply with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) regulations several chairs and desks will need to be replaced. This specific furniture requirement is included within this funding request.

Projects can be grouped under some broad headings:

Description	Capital Cost £k
Document Management	100
ICS	145
Infrastructure	868
Project Management	175
Total	1288

The vast majority of infrastructure projects need to be undertaken to link into corporate technologies even if the service did not have system plans of their own.

1.6 Efficiencies

ICS is a tool to improve the quality of child care assessment and decision making, so that both are based on access to all the available information, it is not designed primarily as a cost cutting or efficiency measure. Indeed many of the projects are focussed on achieving better and faster outcomes for service users rather than efficiency gains.

The impacts of investments are complicated by the interrelatedness of ICT projects taking place in the NHS, such as SAP as described above and the Electronic Health Record. There are also implications in the NHS programme for the common work across childrens services. There are a number of areas where the department feels there will be efficiency gains from the introduction of new systems and technology. Each of these areas is briefly visited below.

1.6.1 Professional Staff time.

The life of a social worker in the childrens service or a care manager in the adult's service is a hectic one. The need to record all interactions and document rationale for decisions has added significant overheads to the professionals work load. Professional practice has also evolved to require much more formal and volumetric assessment and planning of services for clients. The introduction of a robust performance management regime has also added to the additional duties required of the professional.

In order to assist the professional to meet these additional demands and provide a quality service, the systems identified would save the professional administration and travelling time.

Whilst it is not possible to say with any certainty how much time would be saved by each member of staff from each discipline it is clear there would be savings. One possible estimate, if each professional in the department saved an hour per week through less admin time, travel time, communication time, this would equate to an opportunity cost saving of £215k. This would be available for reinvestment into a stretched service, particularly in the childrens service where there is a higher than average vacancy rate.

1.6.2 Administration Staffing Expenditure

The department currently has 44.7 FTE administrative staff in the children service and 35.8 FTE in the adults service. The investment of PC's and training for professional staff, coupled with access to email, calendar, SWIFT (departmental core system) will reduce the above needs. In particular, those staff employed for word processing and filing duties in the main.

The movement to an electronic record will eradicate the need to create and manage physical files and some part of the associated activities associated with that task, including reduction in photocopying, storing, searching, microfilming etc. This will be a gradual process over 2006/7 and 2007/8.

The department would envisage a minimum of a 10% saving in administration posts (8 FTE) with the introduction of new systems to support operational staff activities. This equates to a cashable saving of £135k per annum.

It is proposed that as part of the implementation plan and benefits realisation activities an impact assessment of the projects is undertaken post deployment. This will provide a more detailed understanding of potential efficiencies in this area.

1.6.3 Administration Activities Expenditure

In support of its open ten thousand cases at any point in time, the department incurs direct administration expenditure of over £400k per annum. It is estimated a minimum of 10-15% saving could be achieved on this base expenditure, leading to a saving of circa £50k.

1.6.4 Floor Space

With the availability of the electronic record there will no longer be the requirement to store files in the various buildings occupied by social care staff across the City. Whilst this floor space cannot be entirely aggregated and released for obvious reasons, this may present opportunities. At the minimum it will relieve unavailability of space and allow better location of staff. Whilst this is not a cashable saving it will contribute to the Gershon efficiencies programme and to the overall wellbeing of staff.

The estimated savings in financial terms for the space that would be created is circa £35k per annum, based upon annual corporate recharge rates to the social services department.

1.6.5 Efficiencies Phasing

Whilst it is not an exact science to predict at what point in time efficiencies will crystallise, the table below gives one broad prediction of what point in time efficiencies of the programme may be realised.

Description	2006/7 £k	2007/8 £k	2008/9 £k	2009/10 onwards £k
Professional Staff Time	25	75	150	215
Floor Space	10	35	35	35
Sub total non Cashable	35	110	185	250
Admin Staff	0	35	80	135
Admin Expenses	5	20	40	50
Sub total Cashable	5	55	120	185
Grand Total	40	165	305	435

From point of final investment, the programme would have a total capital payback period of 4.5 years and a corporate investment payback of 2.5 years. This duration of payback is generally acceptable for ICT projects.

1.7 Non financial Benefits

As any service oriented department is reliant on information passing through the organisation to reach an outcome, the introduction of new technology should speed this process up. This should lead to faster decision making and throughput for service users.

In addition to the potential efficiencies described above there will be the softer benefits of information access, transfer and recording improvements for all staff. The ability to gather and use information more systematically and quickly will be enhanced. Inevitably a better more motivated workforce, as the department will be innovating and providing practitioners tools and skills to do their work more efficiently and more effectively.

Management capability to access information, audit activities and assess decision making will also be enhanced.

Benefits from sharing and re-using records may include:

- immediate access to documents as soon as they are filed
- reduction in filing delays and bottlenecks, which can make recently used documents hard to find
- ability to share documents easily with colleagues anywhere on the estate, promoting knowledge-sharing.
- sharing of information about files, their subjects and controllers across a department, again supporting better information sharing
- promotion of organisational learning and understanding
- swifter and more effective and comprehensive evidence-based decision making
- availability of effective records to ensure that new staff can 'hit the ground running
- improved retention of knowledge when staff retire, leave or move posts.

Environmental benefits may accrue from:

- long term reduction in requirement for paper
- ability to recycle more existing paper
- reduction in transport of paperwork
- improved accommodation environment as storage requirements are reduced.

1.8 Risks

Modernisation of the service on a client basis over the next couple of years will be extremely difficult. To be implementing new technology simultaneously will add to the complexity of the situation. However, in order to move the service forward this decision should be taken now.

More specific risks to the project will be focussed on retention of skills and resources to deliver the projects and the engagement of third party suppliers to meet requirements fully in an integrated manner. Suppliers will need to work together and in partnership with the authority to integrate systems and join up processes.

Staff working within social care delivery will need to be receptive to training and acquiring new skills, working with new systems and processes. Corporate changes such as common access points for all services will also impact on staff, services and structures. Staff propensity to change will be thoroughly tested and this needs to manifest itself in behavioural change if benefits are to be realised.

The fabric of existing buildings is poor and they are not conducive to modern office working. The ability to work from these bases in their current condition in a peripatetic way will be extremely challenging.

The benefits realisation aspect of the implementation will have to be managed very tightly to ensure opportunities for improvement and efficiency are captured.

1.9 **System Strategic Direction**

The social care aspects of service delivery are keen to utilise corporate technologies and align closely to the strategic direction of the authority, thereby maximising efficiencies. The existing social care system provider is operating technologies which can co-exist alongside the corporate infrastructure and be perfectly capable of interfacing with corporate systems. However, there would be some duplication and inefficiency within this set up.

In order to properly assess the best way to move closer to the corporate direction of travel a feasibility study is under consideration. As a detachable part of this study the adult social care service is keen to assess the viability of an e-forms and mobile working solution, without the use of the existing core system provider. It is envisaged these solutions will bring further benefits to the authority.

At this point in time cabinet approval is sought:

- a) on approving the feasibility work (no marginal cost).
- b) acceptance in principle for the requirement of a mobile working and e-forms solution for social care services and thereby
- c) a commitment in principle to review future investment requirement for such solutions should they become available within the overall ICT framework of the authority.

It is understood that technology can drive efficiencies. However, it is the business need that is the critical factor and technology will play an enabling role.

1.10 **Summary**

This request for funding if successful will have far reaching implications for both the adult and children social care service. The operational benefits are irrefutable and consequently are being driven hard by government and regulators alike. In addition, there are significant financial and non financial benefits to be taken advantage of, as illustrated above. Without this investment social care services will not be in a position to modernise and engage with corporate and health community developments. Moreover, the authority will suffer set backs in performance relative to other authorities who are investing and modernising systems and infrastructure.