

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 JUNE 2001

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

0.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 0.1** To seek approval of a strategy for progressing electronic-government initiatives within East Ayrshire.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1** Advances in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) coupled with increasing demand from many sections of the public for electronic access to council services, has generated a new agenda designed to help the public sector and national government to modernise the way in which services, policies, and programmes are designed and delivered. The overall aim of this approach, which is commonly known as 21st Century Government, centres services around customers' needs, rather than structures of government. All levels of public service are encouraged to make full use of the potential of electronic service delivery to improve the speed, responsiveness and quality of public services.
- 1.2** The Prime Minister has set targets for electronic service delivery that have been endorsed by the Scottish Executive. These targets are for 25% of those services that can be delivered electronically, to be made available electronically by 2002 with the full 100% being available electronically by 2005. In addition, 90% (by value) of low value procurement should be carried out electronically by the end of 2001.
- 1.3** To ensure that the council can deliver a co-ordinated and effective approach to 21st Century Government in general, as well as meeting the targets for electronic service delivery, a draft strategy has been prepared for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee. The draft strategy is attached at appendix 1. Once approved, a detailed action plan to implement the high level strategy and its associated initiatives will be developed and monitored on an ongoing basis.
- 1.4** The strategy concentrates on 5 overall objectives. These are:
- improving infrastructure;
 - increasing access;
 - developing skills;
 - delivering online, and
 - sharing information.

- 1.5. A number of associated approaches that are common to each of these overall objectives are also set out within the strategy. Appropriate links are made with other central and local government initiatives, strategies, and standards.

2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 There are significant resource implications for developing the e-government agenda across the public sector as a whole. Some central government funds have been made available on a pump-priming basis through initiatives such as the Modernising Government Fund, Modernising Health Services Fund and National Grid for Learning. All other initiatives that are generated by this strategy will require to be funded from within existing resources or by leveraging in, wherever possible, external funds. The detailed resource implications will be set out against each of the tasks in the action plan (which will be developed on approval of the attached strategy).

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Enhancing the electronic delivery of services is an important part of the council's decentralised approach, where services are delivered in ways that are responsive to the requirements of individual customers, citizens and communities. The approach adopted by the council, which makes sure that developments in ICT initiatives are linked to improvements in support and training for ICT skills within communities, will contribute towards closing any digital divide within East Ayrshire.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Nil arising from this report.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The committee is asked to consider and approve the attached strategy for electronic-Government in East Ayrshire.

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources
30 May 2001

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

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Electronic Government

East Ayrshire Council's Strategy

E-Government: East Ayrshire Council's Strategy

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E-Government: East Ayrshire Council's Strategy

1.0 Our Vision

We want everyone in East Ayrshire to have easy access to the widest possible range of electronic on-line public services.

We want our communities and our employees to have the skills and the confidence to play a full part in the information age.

2.0 Introduction

Councils are expected to be able to deliver 100% of their services electronically by the year 2005. East Ayrshire Council is committed to meeting this target, but wants to match it with a commitment to empowering our communities to take full advantage of e-government services. We want to use our role as community leaders to encourage our partners to develop a common vision and make a similar commitment.

This strategy outlines our e-government objectives, the initiatives that are ongoing or are planned to meet these objectives, and the associated actions that the Council and its partners will have to take to secure comprehensive e-government in East Ayrshire. High-level actions are contained within this document. A separate detailed action plan that includes arrangements for implementing actions and monitoring progress is attached as an appendix 1.

3.0 Overall Objectives

We have five overarching ICT objectives. We want to work with our partners in East Ayrshire to:

- **Improve Infrastructure**
- **Increase Access**
- **Develop Skills**
- **Deliver On-line**
- **Share Information**

We are committed to using the council's resources and to work in partnership with others to make significant progress in all of these areas in advance of any Scottish or UK deadline. We have made substantial progress to date and can build on our experience and expertise to ensure that our overall vision for e-government services in East Ayrshire is met. We will examine our business process and use ICT to make sure that our services and the way we deliver them meet the needs of our public.

4.0 Objective 1: Improve Infrastructure

To stand any chance of securing our vision for e-government, we require a safe, secure, extensive and robust broadband ICT infrastructure in East Ayrshire that can deliver electronic services throughout the community. This should link council offices with public agencies, with colleges, schools, and commerce. It should provide a resilient communications infrastructure for additional services such as telephony, access to information and images (through for example video conferencing), and widen the benefit of all these services to the public and employees alike.

4.1 Achievements and Aspirations

We have an extensive wide area network (WAN) which has been the bed-rock of the Council's development to date. However, we need to increase bandwidth and we need to ensure appropriate security and resilience to protect the interests of our own and partner networks, and of individuals. The council has already invested substantially in local ICT infrastructure and intends to continue this investment.

What's more, we have secured through the Modernising Government Fund (MGF), support to increase the bandwidth still further. We need to ensure that we have the capacity to deliver the level of services that we want and, in particular, so that we can provide high quality communications including video conference links between facilities.

East Ayrshire Council is also the lead partner in the Ayrshire Electronic Community (AEC) and this currently has a role to play in our infrastructure development. The Ayrshire Electronic Community has developed a communications hub that links health services, youth initiatives, colleges, and some government agencies. The council is also linked to the communications hub. Bandwidth improvements coupled with the Ayrshire Electronic Community's hub will deliver a high speed, high quality, robust network capable of meeting our expectations for increased usage to 2005.

The council will lead a discussion with our partners on the appropriate data and infrastructure standards that must be met by everyone linking to this ICT infrastructure.

4.2 Action

- A. Increase and rationalise network bandwidth to acceptable level for data, voice and video-conferencing communications.**
- B. Rationalise ICT budgets associated with ICT provision to help maximise economies of scale and to be transparent at all times in the cost of our ICT initiatives**
- C. Develop and agree network data, infrastructure and security standards based on the Information Age Government Common Framework guidelines.**

5.0 Objective 2: Increase Access

The Council believes that there is little point in being able to deliver public services electronically if significant sections of the population are excluded from the digital age. We have a number of initiatives ongoing that increase the accessibility of on-line services. We have ambitious plans to extend these still further before 2005.

5.1 Achievements and Aspirations

Through the Ayrshire Electronic Community, we have delivered 8 support and learning centres an additional one will open in Summer 2001 in Shortlees. These range from centres aimed at people with some ICT skills where only limited support is available, to learning centres where there is formal teaching of groups and individuals, some of it delivered on-line. AEC has also supported a specialist youth development centre that targets young people and provides them with access points to on-line services.

The Council has provided a number of public access kiosks (or information points) available in supermarkets, sports centres, and community centres where people can access on-line services. We have introduced public facing touch screen access points in council offices and libraries where there is access to public and voluntary sector on-line information and services.

We want to increase access still further and have the following targets:

- Up to 12 more support and learning centres across East Ayrshire by the Ayrshire Electronic Community, or the Council's Community Education Service or other council partners by April 2002.
- Mobile access to on-line health information provided through the Community Health Improvement Project, supported by East Ayrshire Council, the Coalfield Area SIP and the Ayrshire and Arran Health Board

The Council also recognises the central role that libraries play in many of our communities. We are committed to using these to increase access to on-line services and to develop an improved skills base in our community via the Peoples Network (PN) project funded by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). Some libraries currently provide Internet access facilities to the public. We are developing a project for implementation from 2001 onwards that will link all our libraries and provide support and learning facilities in them.

Again, with support from the Modernising Government Fund, we intend to install 7 new public facing touch screen kiosks or information points in public locations by March 2002, and a further 7 via the AEC project by December 2001.

5.2 A Common Approach To Increasing Access Via Ict.

Citizens require means of access to online services if they are to use them. The conventional telephone will continue to provide access and to more and more public services in future. So will the Internet. In the next three to five years, many more people will also be able to access electronic services through channels

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offering internet-type services. Digital TV and WAP/G3 (web-enabled mobile phones) are just two rapidly developing channels, but others may emerge.

The council recognises the important of making online public services available in multiple forms (Internet, digital TV, WAP, and other mobile methods).

Framework policies will be established and continually revised for each major delivery mechanism. In developing services using these technologies for access, the Council will comply with the nationally published guidelines.

The Council accepts the technical standards and guidelines that Central Government has already developed for web sites, call centres and digital TV etc. and we will apply these to Council services. The Scottish Executive will track development of these standards and will seek to influence that development where issues of particular importance to Scotland are under consideration. Unless there are clear reasons for doing otherwise, the Executive expects to keep Scottish technical standards in line with those in the rest of the UK.

The council supports the grouping and delivery of services via customer focussed portals where individuals can access the full range of relevant public (and sometimes private) services through a single online access point.

A Scottish government portal will be created, to deliver public services in a convenient, customer-focussed way. Services are to be grouped around life episodes rather than organisations. A broad range of Scottish organisations will work together to develop the information and services required for each life episode – including the Scottish Executive, UK Departments, local government, health boards, the police – as well as commercial organisations and the voluntary sector. This will ensure that citizens in Scotland are able to access services which are appropriate and relevant to Scotland. The portal will also include a wide range of services that are not life episode based.

There is a need to preserve and enhance customer choice – some customers may be reluctant to accept certain services electronically. Others may be unable to receive services electronically due to disability, or lack of access to the necessary equipment (e.g. telephone, computer, digital TV). It is vital that these customers do not find that they are also disadvantaged by electronic delivery worsening their access to Council services. The Council therefore supports the delivery of services through multiple methods that are appropriate to the customers of that service, and which meet the needs of excluded groups.

Appendix 3 maps present and planned facilities providing public access to the on-line services in East Ayrshire. The overall design of services also needs to reflect the needs of all customers. Such an approach has the potential to significantly enhance the availability, accessibility and convenience of public services.

5.3 Action

- D. Plan and co-ordinate the roll-out of new support and learning centres, public access terminals, and on-line access points and portals in libraries and other venues across the whole of East Ayrshire so that all communities and individuals have easy access to on-line services.**

6.0 Objective 3: Develop Skills

As well as increasing access to on-line services in our community, we want to develop the skills of local people so that they can take full advantage of on-line services and increase their employment options. Our objective of developing ICT skills within the community is an important part of securing digital inclusion. In addition, the development of ICT skills amongst our employees is essential to deliver and support such on-line services.

6.1 Achievements and Aspirations

The Council established the CONDUIT learning programme in 1997. Since then, 24 trainees per year have learned new ICT skills and the vast majority have secured placements or full time employment in local businesses or voluntary organisations, or progressed to further education via colleges. They have gained valuable work experience using their new found skills and many have moved on to permanent employment.

We have opened learning centres through the Ayrshire Electronic Community where community groups and individuals can learn new ICT skills. These are delivered either by tutors funded by the Council's Community Education Service or on-line with material developed by the local colleges.

In Darvel, a project led by the Parents and Teachers' Association of the local secondary school, and supported by East Ayrshire Council and Kilmarnock College, provides training and support for parents of school pupils in ICT skills. This project helps parents to play a more active part in the ICT studies of their children, as well as contributing to their own personal skills development.

The council is committed to developing the ICT skills base in our community still further. We have a target of training more trainees through the CONDUIT programme, the Ayrshire Electronic Community intends to open further support and learning centre, and the council has secured funding for further support centres from the Modernising Government Fund. The family learning centre in North West Kilmarnock and the community learning centre in Shortlees in Kilmarnock, will both also play a key part in developing ICT skills in the local community. In addition all 23 libraries in East Ayrshire will provide learning and support facilities via the Peoples Network.

Our links to the Ayrshire Electronic Community, and with the colleges as part of the MGF project, mean that we have access to the West of Scotland network of colleges (WesNet). We are working with our partners to develop and deliver on-line tutorial material.

The Council also recognises the role that it can play in developing the skills base in the local community by the provision of training and support for its employees and by empowering its community development staff to work with groups and organisations to promote ICT training and development. We will work through the National Grid for Learning Communities Channel to provide information, advice, support, strategies and tool kits to increase community access to life-long learning, social justice and active citizenship.

The Council is determined to provide a full range of ICT training to its employees through its own Personnel Services section and through the Scottish Power Open Learning Centre. East Ayrshire Council employs almost 6000 people locally and recognises that each and every one has the potential to become an e-advocate.

6.2. A Common Approach To E-Skills For Public Sector Employees

The Council will need to ensure that it has the right skills in place throughout its services to deliver the goods. This will include -

- All Council managers need to be able to see beyond the bounds of existing organisational structures and service delivery, to achieve a greater degree of linkage with other departments and organisations, and be able to see the potential for new or transformed services delivered in new ways.
- All Council staff need to be able to take the customer's point of view of how services could be delivered, and be comfortable with using new technology.
- All ICT managers need to be aware of common ICT standards, be able to explain to non-specialists how new ICT can be applied to business delivery, and be able to plan and manage major change projects.
- All ICT staff need to be aware of common ICT standards, need to be able to work closely with non-specialist colleagues in the delivery of change.

The Council, as part of our own overall business planning arrangements, will require to review business planning processes, the skills required to deliver Information Age Government; the current availability of those skills; and set in action training to remedy any skills gap.

6.3. Action

- E. Plan and co-ordinate the provision of teaching and tutoring at the network of ICT support and learning centres in East Ayrshire.
- F. Develop the ICT and business process skills of all council employees, but particularly community development staff who are in a strong position to support community groups and organisations.
- G. Deliver further ICT training to long-term unemployed people through CONDUIT.

7.0 Objective 4: Deliver On-line

East Ayrshire Council, in common with all UK authorities, is determined to meet the government's target of having 100% of its services available electronically by the year 2005.

7.1 Achievements and Aspirations

To date, we have prepared for this by launching the council's Website (in 1996), the Council Intranet (1997), "touch screen" Information Points (1997 onwards), and engaging with other public sector partners through the Ayrshire Electronic Community (1999) and MGF (2000). We have now reached a critical level where our early investment in improving infrastructure, increasing access, and developing skills, mean that we can now move on to deliver council services on-line, secure in the knowledge that our communities are ready to receive them.

Initially, our Website concentrated on delivering information and content about Council and community services. Now, we want to shift its emphasis so that it is more about delivering public services on-line, rather than simply delivering public information on-line. We will require to establish a multi-disciplinary team from all Council services to devise, design, and deliver a new web presence for East Ayrshire. This team will build on our substantial progress to date but will also focus on being ready to deliver our council services on line as early as possible.

Our vision of electronic government in the 21st century involves seamless access to all public services through a common Council portal. While this seems obvious and straight forward, there are a number of difficult issues that must be addressed if we are to provide a single log-on, single authentication and secure avenue into all legacy council systems and all appropriate systems in other government and public agencies. However, we are determined that the scale of these issues should not stop us from making progress.

We have secured a partnership arrangement with Microsoft Limited (through the MGF project) that will allow a full functional analysis of all of these issues and the range of options for addressing them to be set out. At that stage, the Council will wish to speak with the Scottish Executive and Cabinet Office about using East Ayrshire as a pilot authority to provide this genuine seamless access to public services through a life-event portal.

However, we recognise that there will still be a preference amongst many in our population to access services in person. While we can still provide this facility through many of our local offices, we want to take advantage of video conference links for example, to widen the services that can be delivered 'virtually in person' in council offices and in our partners premises.

Our Modernising Government Fund project includes expenditure on video conference links between departments and agencies over the improved broad band network. Our links with the AEC project has already delivered a video conferencing facility connected to the Benefits Agency, in the Dalmellington local office.

We also want to improve interactive telephone access to the Council and investigating the extension of the hours that people can get telephone access to the bulk of council services. The development of this or any associated “call-centre” or “contact centre” approach will rely on the web-enablement of many of our information and business systems.

The goal of seamless access constitutes a major ICT development cycle which will be integrated into the work that we are doing to improve our Website, Intranet and the exercise that we are conducting with Microsoft Limited. It also presents a challenge and opportunity for Council service managers to reassess and reprocess their businesses.

7.2. Action

- H. Create corporate E-government business team**
- I. Revise and re-launch the council's web presence.**
- J. Develop options for truly seamless access to council business systems through a common web browser interface.**
- K. Increase the number of public services that are available on-line or by video-conference in all partner and council locations.**

8.0 Objective 5: Sharing Information

8.1 A Common Approach To Data Sharing

It is important that the Council develops a culture in which sharing and re-using data is encouraged and departments routinely make a wide range of information available to each other (where this is compatible with the protection of personal data).

Audit Scotland's recent publication "Common Data, Common Sense" on modernising information management in Councils sets out a useful approach to improving data sharing and data management.

The council will help to develop, and play a full part in, a secure ICT environment within a government that allows and encourages information to be shared.

The Government Secure Intranet (GSI) links UK Government bodies to each other and to a range of useful electronic information services (such as government, travel, news, business and procurement). The Scottish Executive's computer network is connected to the internet through the GSI, with most staff having access to the Web through this link. The GSI also enables transmission of secure emails to any recipient who is connected to the GSI. To help in this process the website also provides a directory of those civil servants connected to the GSI.

There are a significant number of other departments and agencies in the process of joining the GSI. The Scottish Executive is committed to supporting the further extension of GSI within Scottish Administration to all agencies and departments. Discussions are currently underway aimed at Scottish local authorities joining a GSI based extranet (the LGSI project which will connect Scottish local authorities in a similar manner to the GSI described above).

8.2 Action

- L. Install connections to LGSI network**
- M. Plan and co-ordinate sharing of data between Council departments and services**

9.0 Business Processes

The use of ICT cannot be viewed in isolation from the delivery of services. ICT is not an end in itself. Our ultimate aim is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services we provide and to ensure that the council is accountable to the public. Changes will be needed in the way services are delivered and business processes will alter to meet the demands of an increasingly ICT aware public.

When considering what is capable of being delivered electronically, the Council will consider all of the services that it is responsible for; the types of interactions relevant to each service; and the presumption that all or some part of the interaction can be provided electronically (unless there is a legal or operational reason why this cannot be done).

9.1. Actions

- N. Define and record all Council services
- O. Define those transactions capable of being delivered electronically and prioritise in implementation plan.
- P. Co-ordinate all ICT projects to ensure economies of scale, added value and eliminate duplication.

10.0 Our Approach

We have set out our clear objectives and the actions that we will take to secure each one. However, there are a number of related initiatives that the Council wishes to progress, either on its own or with partners, to create the overall environment for electronic government in the 21st century.

10.1 Improving Participation and Local Democracy

Taking advantage of new technology to deliver Council services on-line is vital, but so is taking advantage of the opportunity that ICT creates to further our local democracy. We want to create better and extended access to council officers and elected members by email and the Internet. We want to provide video conferencing between the public and all public services. We want to create an environment where individuals and organisations can have better access to information, but also increased access to the decision making and service planning function.

10.2 Clustering Our Public Services

While our improved ICT infrastructure will mean that more services can be delivered in or close to people's homes, a physical presence for many public services will still be required. There are substantial benefits that can be delivered from clustering public services in well thought out campus locations. With support from the Modernising Health Service Fund, we have created such a campus in Dalmellington that will be a base for Primary Health Care Services, emergency services, Council services, and commerce. We have a similar initiative for Drongan and we will always seek to co-locate our services with a public sector partner wherever possible.

10.3 Convergence

ICT is converging. We are taking advantage of this with our infrastructure improvements by providing our voice connections over our broadband network. While our efforts to date on increasing access have focused on provision through personal computers and information points, we recognise that digital television is likely to be one of the preferred methods of accessing on-line services in the future. As we redesign our Website and "web enable" services, we will make sure that it we are ready for digital television advances and advances in mobile access to the Internet.

10.4 Councils Will Have A Power of Community Initiative

There is likely to be a statutory requirement to undertake community planning. As our bid for support from the Modernising Government Fund has been successful, then we can take advantage of the council's corporate GIS system and widen access to it amongst our core community planning partners. Even without Modernising Government Fund support, we would have hoped to do this, although it would be more difficult and take longer to achieve without the boost to infrastructure investment that MGF brings. This means that all organisations can use common sets of data to identify areas of greatest need in East Ayrshire when it comes to prioritising the use of limited resources.

10.5 Security

Security of Council and partners IT systems is vitally important. Security of personal information held within those systems is equally important. These are challenges that the public sector has to face on a daily basis. However, as we widen our network to include other public sector partners and third sector organisations, the need for security standards increases. The council is committed in principle to working with other councils and CoSLA to develop the Local Government Secure Intranet (LGSi) using similar security standards to the Government Secure Intranet.

The importance of being seen to address the essential aspects of security - confidentiality, integrity and availability - will increase as more direct communication with citizens and the private sector evolve. Citizens will expect that their communications with the Council will be private, based on accurate information, and will be available when they need them.

The Council will adopt BS 7799 as the basis for specified standards for information security.

Implementation of clearly articulated, consistent, workable and effective security procedures is seen as key to securing public confidence in information age government services. Authentication will be a key issue both for service providers and users of these services. Common standards on other issues including trust services, encryption, information transfer and network security, while relatively technical and largely invisible to most citizens, are also important components of a credible approach to security.

A framework setting out security requirements for e-services, and associated internal services has been delivered by the Cabinet Offices Centre IT Unit in conjunction with representatives of devolved administrators. The council will accept these standards wherever relevant and practical and where resources permit.

The guidance is mandatory for the Council should we plan to use smartcards in the delivery of public services, and other public sector bodies are strongly recommended to adopt it. This will help achieve maximum economies of scale and convenience for card users.

10.6 E-Procurement

The council wants to be able to take advantage of the electronic delivery of services that many of its suppliers now have. The development of an e-procurement strategy, for implementation across the council, will require to take into account revised business practices.

There are a number of factors supporting the case for e-procurement. These include:

- Reduced acquisition costs by the removal of paper and associated labour**
- Benefits through the aggregation of common items**
- Facilitates benchmarking of prices and processes**
- Better management information**
- A clearer and more effective audit trail**
- Cutting the cost of doing business with government**
- Platform for effective collaboration across the public sector.**

The Scottish Executive established the Procurement Supervisory Board in January 2000. The remit of the Board is to oversee the Executive's procurement strategy advising on priorities and opportunities for improvement in the light of Ministers' wider objectives on efficiency, modernisation and competitiveness in the public sector in Scotland. The Board is setting objectives on value for money savings and the implementation of e-procurement. The Board has reported its preliminary recommendations to the Minister for Finance. Work is underway on the development of an implementation schedule for e-procurement and an advert has been placed in the Official Journal European Community. The e systems will be developed with the wider public sector in mind.

The Scottish Executive has also established an ICT Procurement Working Group with a remit to identify, quantify and secure action on opportunities for common ICT procurement strategies and approaches; to aggregate demand where appropriate; to secure effective and co-ordinated supplier management; and to report to the Procurement Supervisory Board as agreed with them.

ICT procurement is viewed by the Council as both business critical and strategic. It is an area on which the 21 st century government drive is dependent and in conjunction with other key procurement initiatives, applies across the public sector. The Councils new financial management system (SAP) will be extended to utilise the e-commerce facilities.

10.7 Sustainability

At the moment, elements of the Council's approach are delivered through partnership organisations that rely on substantial levels of external funding, such as the Ayrshire Electronic Community and CONDUIT. A sustainability plan for AEC has been produced in draft format and is currently under discussion by the AEC partner organisations.

The Council has recognised that plans must be in place to secure the ongoing delivery of these services, even if in a modified way, should external funding support decrease or disappear. Equally, technical support will be required to maintain hardware delivered through these projects if the hardware has become an integral part of the council's business systems. Sustainability plans will therefore be prepared for all of these critical areas.

10.8 Co-ordination

Just as there is a challenge at a national level to secure common approach to e-government amongst central, devolved and local government and all the associated agencies and NDPBs, there is a similar need to secure corporate co-ordination of ICT initiatives within councils.

The adoption of this strategy is an important part of that. However, the council requires to establish a set of standards and targets that must be followed by all of its departments in developing ICT initiatives. The potential pitfalls of not adopting and implementing these standards are substantial. There is a risk of duplicating facilities, of initiatives not being able to connect to the council's network and the opportunities for maximising savings through economies of scale will be lost. These standards and procedures will be developed by the council's Information Technology section for approval and adaptation across the council.

10.9 The 'E-Gov' Brand

In a relatively short period of time, when most public services are available on-line, the Council's administrative boundaries will be less important in the eyes of service recipients. The public will be able to compare council services on-line and they will want to use these services from wherever they have on-line access, rather than simply within their own council boundaries. Equally, people will become much less interested in which level of government delivers a service, and even less interested in which council department or partnership delivers an on-line service. A 'brand' is required to identify where public services are available. The brand should be recognised nationally (e.g. e-gov portal) and independent of any one provider.

The Council will encourage discussion of this issue at a national level and contribute to developing and promoting the brand.

10.10 Taking Care of Business

While the Council has a lead role to play in delivering e-government in East Ayrshire, it is also responsible for the direct delivery of many public services. We want to make sure that the business systems that the Council uses are fit for purpose, efficient and robust. We aim to introduce the following new business systems over the course of the next three years:

- SAP,
- Building and Works
- Social Work Information Management System
- Cash Receipting
- Others.

10.11. Removing Barriers

Many items of legislation include provisions, which act inadvertently as barriers to electronic service delivery. These include legal requirements for transactions to be conducted on paper, in writing, by post, at a physical location, signed etc. For example local council meetings cannot be held only by electronic means; planning applications must be in writing; votes in elections must be cast on ballot papers; bankruptcies must be declared in writing; and medical prescriptions must be written on a prescription pad. However it is also true that for some services current legislation will continue to be entirely appropriate, and the removal of such legal barriers needs to be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis.

The UK Electronic Communications Act passed earlier this year includes provisions that will enable many legal barriers to be removed through use of subordinate legislation, though others will require primary legislation.

The Scottish Executive will promote and co-ordinate work to progressively remove unnecessary legal barriers to electronic service delivery in Scotland. The Council will need to identify such legal barriers and advise the Scottish Executive whenever legislation hinders, rather than helps, public services being joined-up and being available electronically by 2005.

Government policies can unintentionally create barriers to Information Age Government and electronic service delivery. This can include requiring excessive amounts of information from the citizen and businesses; and creating overly complex policies that lead to frequent and cumbersome transactions.

The Scottish Executive will promote and co-ordinate work to progressively remove unnecessary policy barriers to electronic service delivery in Scotland. The council will need to identify such policy barriers and advise the Scottish Executive whenever existing or new policy hinders rather than helps public services being joined-up and being available electronically by 2005.

10.12 DATA PROTECTION

The Data Protection Act 1998 protects the rights of citizens whose personal data is stored in computerised systems (as well as in manual systems). The Act requires any body that processes personal data to comply with the rules of good information handling known as the data protection principles.

These 8 principles require that personal data shall be:

- **Fairly and lawfully processed**
- **Processed for limited purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes**
- **Adequate, relevant and not excessive**
- **Accurate**
- **Not kept longer than necessary**
- **Processed in accordance with data subject's rights (a data subject is an individual who is the subject of personal data)**
- **Secure**
- **Not transferred to countries outside the EEA without adequate protection.**

The Act provides citizens with certain rights in respect of personal data held about them. These include the right of access to such data, a right to prevent processing likely to cause damage or distress and a right to take action to correct or destroy inaccurate data held about them. The Act also requires public bodies who share information about individual citizens to comply with the data protection principles when processing such information.

The Act sets out measures that regulate the way information about citizens held on computers can be used. This protects citizens by requiring their consent to the way that information can be used – and prevents public bodies from sharing information about individual citizens without their consent. The Act applies to the United Kingdom and the Council is bound by its provisions.

10.13 MAKING IT HAPPEN

LEADERSHIP

The council recognises that effective leadership is crucial to delivering the initiatives outlined in this strategy.

The Council has appointed both Councillor Farrell and the Depute Chief Executive to be 21st century government advocates, and a Local Government Advocates Forum has been set up to oversee developments.

PLANNING

Objectives for electronic service delivery need to be built into the overall business objectives of the Council. Electronic service delivery targets clearly need to be considered relative to other Council objectives, and overall business strategies need to reflect this. These plans will need to include:

- **Analysis of business requirements and benefits of applying e-business methods;**
- **Examination of information and transaction flows between the Council and its customers (B2C), the Council and other organisations (B2B), and transactions with internal customers;**
- **Plans for progressively increasing the proportion of services delivered electronically;**
- **Plans for converging with common technical standards;**
- **Analysis of relationships with customers and application of customer relationship management techniques;**
- **Identification of further opportunities for working with partners to deliver services, and for achieving customer focused services;**
- **Identification of opportunities to deliver early results, and achieving benefits for customers, and**
- **Plans for tackling any skills gap.**

PRIORITISING SERVICES

Some services will be better candidates for electronic service delivery than others. As a part of the e-business planning process the Council will identify those services where electronic delivery is expected to achieve the greatest benefits for the customer and be most successfully delivered. These services should be prioritised for early electronic delivery ahead of services where electronic delivery is expected to be less beneficial or successful. Such “quick wins” will help to promote the take up of electronic services by all groups of customers, and help achieve earlier benefits from electronic service delivery.

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Much good work is already under way within East Ayrshire, and successful roll out across the sector will be helped by easy access to good ideas already being implemented elsewhere and to general guidance on specialist subjects.

10.14 Resources & Actions

This strategy outlines the council's top level priorities for progressing the delivery of electronic services and summaries high level actions. A detailed Action/Implementation Plan has been developed that sets out the individual tools

required to meet the councils aims and associated resource and structure implications.

10.15 Monitoring and Evaluation

The council is determined to implement this strategy swiftly and effectively across all departments. A self-assessment template will be used by the to help monitor and report on its progress on an annual basis.

Appendix 1: Action Plan

Available Separately

Appendix 2: Self-Assessment Template

TARGETS	MEASURES
<p>A1. Local authorities should draw up their own e-government strategies suited to their own local needs, consistent with 'e-government' and associated framework policies, alongside best value and the other processes already underway in local authorities</p>	<p>A1.1. Does the authority have an e-government strategy? Is it linked to the community strategy? Are there links to the council's other statutory published plans?</p> <p>A1.2. How does the local authority monitor progress against the strategy? Will progress be overseen by member level scrutiny?</p> <p>A1.3. Is the authority already using or planning to use the following electronic service delivery mechanisms, if so for which services and what is the time scale for introduction:</p> <p>Internet and Intranet technologies (incl. Portals) Websites Call / Contact Centres Smart Cards Digital TV Electronic Records Management Phone/Fax Other</p> <p>A1.4. What is the volume and types of external interactions currently undertaken with the authority using ICT?</p> <p>A1.5. What percentage of all external interactions with the public do they expect to use the following technologies now, in 2002 and in 2005?</p> <p>Websites Call / Contact Centres Smart Cards Digital TV Phone/Fax Other</p> <p>A1.6. Authentication will be essential for many transactions e.g. electronic signatures. What action is the authority taking to ensure that it is aware of the developing national standards on authentication?</p>

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	<p>A1.7. What plans are in place to provide training for staff in the new technologies and information management?</p>
<p>A2. Local authorities should consider designating a senior officer on the management team to oversee the take-up of the strategy across the authority as a whole.</p>	<p>A2.1. Have you appointed or are you planning to appoint an appropriate officer? What level will this officer be? Will this officer sit on the management team?</p> <p>A2.2. What plans does the local authority have to ensure that the authority's management team and elected members are kept informed of the work being undertaken?</p> <p>A2.3. How will the local authority ensure that the designated officer is kept abreast of best practice in other authorities and national developments?</p>
<p>A3. Local authorities should work towards offering electronic^① delivery of interactions which are currently paper-based and which are capable of being delivered electronically.</p>	<p>A3.1. What interactions will be available electronically and by when?</p> <p>A3.2. Have you ensured that services affected by IDeA managed national projects have been/are progressing in accordance with an improvement plan agreed with IDeA?</p> <p>A3.3. How are you planning to provide information to customers about the services available electronically?</p> <p>A3.4. How are you planning to consult the public about the new forms of service delivery?</p> <p>A3.5. What is/ the percentage of all interactions with the public which are being delivered using electronic service delivery mechanisms?</p> <p>A3.6. What is/will be the percentage of all interactions with suppliers, partners and other agencies which are capable of being executed electronically and are being delivered using electronic service delivery mechanisms?</p>
<p>A4. Local</p>	<p>A4.1.</p>

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<p>authorities should aim to provide citizens with joined-up seamless services.</p>	<p>How are you ensuring that ICT is an integral part of your Best Value cross-cutting fundamental reviews?</p> <p>A4.2. Are there any plans to link local authority IT services internally and which services will these be?</p> <p>A4.3. Are there any plans to link local authority services with other service providers and which front line services will these be?</p> <p>A4.4. What percentage of services is/will be integrated: Now In 2002 In 2005</p> <p>A4.5. What plans are in place to develop a partnership approach with central government/agencies local NGOs and other local authorities to providing seamless services? How is ICT being used in support of this?</p> <p>A4.6 Will this refocused service provision be based around citizens life episodes. If so, which episodes will be captured?</p>
<p>A5. Local authority staff should have direct access to all the computer systems they need to properly perform their function.</p>	<p>A5.1. Estimated percentage of staff with direct access to internal e-mail, intranet, internet and/or extranet: Now In 2002 In 2005</p> <p>A5.2. Has the council undertaken an audit to identify all relevant data sets currently held?</p> <p>A5.3. What percentage of front line staff ^① have direct access to all computer systems they need without recourse to other staff Now In 2002 In 2005</p> <p>① any employee of the authority or their contractor who directly provide information or services to the public</p>
<p>A6. Ideally citizens</p>	<p>A6.1.</p>

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<p>should not need to give repeat information to different parts of the local authority, e.g. in the case of change of address, if they are content to have this information circulated within the council^①.</p> <p>① subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Acts</p>	<p>Have access rights (ownership, privacy, confidentiality and use) in data sets been considered or established and a custodian identified?</p> <p>A6.2. How many different data sets have been/will be identified within the authority?</p> <p>A6.3. Within the existing privacy constraints what percentage of all available council data is being/will be shared internally: Now In 2002 In 2005</p>
<p>A7. Local authorities should ensure that they have taken advantage of the new technology in ways that will include all sections of society regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, financial status, race, religion, language, literacy, location or access preference.</p>	<p>A7.1. Where electronic services have been or are planned to be provided how will the council ensure ready access to all citizens?</p> <p>A7.2. How does the Council plan to increase knowledge of the options and services available electronically to customers?</p> <p>A7.3. How are you planning to assist those citizens who may have difficulty using the new technologies?</p> <p>A7.4 At what times will access to services via the different media be available?</p> <p>A7.5. Are you considering 24/7 or extending this service available access where there is sufficient demand?</p>

Appendix 3 – Glossary of Terms

AEC	Ayrshire Electronic Community
AIS	Ayrshire Information Society
B2B	Business To Business
B2C	Business To Customer
CALL	Community Access to Lifelong Learning
CCTA	Central Computer & Telecommunications Agency
CITU	Central IT Unit
CONDUIT	Community wide Organisation for the Development of Use of Information Technology
EAC	East Ayrshire Council
Egovernment	Electronic Government
Email	Electronic Mail
ESD	Electronic Service Delivery
GSI	Government Secure Intranet
IAG	Information Age Government
ICT	Information & Communications Technology
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
IEG	Implementing Electronic Government
LGSI	Local Government Secure Intranet
MGF	Modernising Government Fund
NDPB	Non Departmental Public Bodies
NOF	New Opportunities Fund
PC	Personal Computer
PN	Peoples Network
SIP	Social Inclusion Partnership
TV	Television
VC	Video Conferencing
WAN	Wide Area Network
WAP	Wireless Application Protocol
WESNET	West of Scotland Network
WWW	World Wide Web

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AGENDA

