

Business Continuity Infrastructure

1. Contacts

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2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Cabinet recommends the creation of duplicate server facility (Appendix 1: section 8, option 4), subject to council approving the necessary funding.**
- 2.2. That Cabinet recommends to Council new capital funding of £129,800 from reserves, as detailed in Appendix 1: section 7.1, to supplement the ICT Asset Replacement Programme funding covered in the separate report.**

3. Background

- 3.1. This report introduces the Project Initiation Document (PID) covering the build and commissioning of an offsite disaster recovery solution for Chichester District Council
- 3.2. Almost all council functions rely to a greater or lesser extent on ICT systems to deliver services to our community. Any interruption of the ICT service and / or loss of data would therefore be problematic for services to continue to run effectively. Current optimistic estimations indicate systems recovery to support service restoration at a minimum of 9 weeks following a Level 3 (major disruption) event, such as fire damage to the main server room. Such a delay has been deemed to be unacceptable by the Strategic Risk Group, who have tasked officers to develop a solution to enable quicker recovery in the event of a major business continuity incident.
- 3.3. The creation of an offsite back up facility (known as a disaster recovery site), with the hosting and scalable capability to enable fast re-establishment of critical council services (within hours) will increase corporate assurance and service resilience reducing risk to a manageable level.

3.4. This proposal cannot proceed without replacement of the 'end of life' infrastructure at East Pallant House (as per associated paper).

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

4.1. A new server located remotely from East Pallant House (EPH), with appropriate cooling, security and power facilities from which Information Communications and Technology Service (ICT) will provide:

4.1.1. Appropriate network, storage and server hardware and systems (to minimise impact on essential operations during a business continuity event).

4.1.2. Ability to undertake (usual) off site backup and restoration of the council's data and systems.

4.1.3. Provide resiliency for key council systems in the event of a hardware failure.

4.1.4. The ability to scale the solution to allow for additional services in the event that longer running is required from the Disaster Recovery (DR) site.

4.2. In the event of an incident threatening the Council's ability to effectively deliver services and essential operations, Service business continuity management (BCM) plans will be mobilised. Our capacity to deliver and support these is correlated against a number of external variables: unknown nature of disaster; inability to anticipate accessibility of existing EPH infrastructure; unknown availability of replacement hardware; unknown location for constructing replacement hardware; quality control of existing 'tape' back up.

4.3. Once built, integrated and commissioned, our offsite disaster recovery solution will:

4.3.1. Remove most impact of 'disaster' unknowns: Regardless of the 'physical' situation at EPH (e.g. server room out of action, building damaged, etc.) we will have the ability to 'switch' to a backed up and operationally ready site.

4.3.2. Remove priority conflict: For the ICT service all energy will be focused on recovery of full system capability and supporting service continuity.

4.3.3. Operational options: We have designed the new remote server facility to be scalable. It is configurable so that full system capability can easily be achieved in the event of a medium to long term outage of the EPH infrastructure.

- 4.3.4. Quality control: back up will be faster and 100% verifiable, with the option of increased frequency (currently 'snapshots' taken daily, full back up weekly)

5. Proposal

- 5.1. To undertake the project in accordance with the PID and funded as shown in Appendix 1: section 7.1. To deliver:
 - 5.1.1. Replacement servers, connections and hosts at East Pallant House
 - 5.1.2. Create a mirrored replication of the EPH infrastructure at the Westhampnett Depot
 - 5.1.3. Build a new virtual private network to access the new Depot site
 - 5.1.4. Connect Depot site to the new gigabit network
 - 5.1.5. Funded from existing ARP budget and an additional £129,800

6. Alternatives Considered

- 6.1. Section 8 of the PID outlines the detail of the other options that have been considered:
 - 6.1.1. Do Nothing – The current arrangements have been deemed by the Strategic Risk Group as being unacceptable given the high reliance on computer systems across the council. This option was not therefore considered further.
 - 6.1.2. Access to WSCC back-up solution: County's strategy is to move to cloud based solutions over the next few years (by 2022). Consequently they will need to review their own DR requirements. Resulting in a lack of certainty and available server capacity in the short to medium term.
 - 6.1.3. Partner with Arun: They currently use WSCC back-up solution. As mentioned above, this will require them to source alternative arrangements.
 - 6.1.4. Cloud solution: the need for duplicate licences render this uneconomical, e.g. duplicate Northgate license in the order of £100,000 per year.

7. Resources and Legal Implications

- 7.1. Current staffing resources have been assessed as being sufficient to deliver the project outcomes. Financial resources will be required from ARP (see separate ICT report on end of life infrastructure), and £129,800 from reserves.

8. Consultation

- 8.1. During the development of the strategy a number of stakeholder engagement discussions have been held. Full details of the stakeholders can be found in Appendix 1: section 9.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 9.1. Completion of an Equalities Impact assessment is not necessary. However, improving the ability to recover systems in support of service delivery (in the event of a disaster) would deliver considerable benefits to the community and individuals awe serve across the District.
- 9.2. The project also addresses the risks associated with the current weekly full data backup.

10. Other Implications

Are there any implications for the following?		
	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder		X
Climate Change and Biodiversity		X
Human Rights and Equality Impact		X
Safeguarding and Early Help		X
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)		X
Health and Wellbeing		X
Other		X

11. Appendices

- 11.1. Appendix 1 – ‘Business Continuity Infrastructure’ Project Initiation Document’.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. None