

Shared ICT Service Joint Management Board Discussion Paper

INTRODUCTION

1. Southwark remains committed to the Shared ICT Service (SICTS) and believes it is the best option to deliver the robust, reliable technology that underpins many of our services, and will enable much of the digital transformation underway across the authority. It is this digital transformation that can enable improvements in our services to residents, drive performance improvements and deliver efficiency savings. Consequently, a strong, successful SICTS remains critical to the delivery of our Council Plan and is likely to play a similarly critical role in both Lewisham and Brent.
2. Southwark is experiencing ongoing IT delivery challenges in both the project and business as usual spaces. It is not unique in this regard as many of the challenges exist across all partners in the SICTS. Some of these challenges are a consequence of legacy technology choices and historic underinvestment. However, the majority are due to issues within the SICTS.
3. A significant challenge is the perception that the SICTS is not a shared endeavour but instead Southwark are in receipt of a service defined and delivered by Brent. This has contributed to a sense of frustration and does not resonate with the core principles enshrined in the Inter-Authority Agreement.
4. Other challenges have also emerged including the current operating model's capacity to operate at the scale required to serve three local authorities. When Southwark joined, it almost doubled the size of the SICTS. Delivering a service at that scale is a very different proposition and the SICTS needs to revisit its operating model – including structure, governance and processes – to address these challenges.
5. These challenges have given rise to a number of questions internally within Southwark. These questions and what Southwark think the answers might be are shared below. Through this dialogue and with decisive action emerging from it, it is envisioned that all partners in the SICTS can reach consensus as to how the SICTS can progress.

QUESTIONS

How do we create and maintain independence and the appearance of independence for the SICTS?

6. Southwark would like to see the appointment of a Managing Director (MD) to lead the SICTS. This MD will be employed by Southwark or Lewisham to increase the perception of neutrality, but will be accountable solely to the Joint Management Committee i.e. they will not sit within the line management structure of any of the authorities within the SICTS.
7. Improve the budget reporting from the SICTS to provide all partners with transparency around cost and clear management accounts that enable the distinction between costs to run the service (revenue) and costs for one-off change (capital) to be made.

How do we address the management capacity issues within the SICTS?

8. Task the MD with implementing a new management structure for the SICTS to ensure the following areas of operation are both appropriately managed and have a clear voice in the strategic and operational development of the SICTS.
 - Service delivery, including the service desk and account management
 - Enterprise architecture
 - Programme and project delivery
 - Information risk and assurance
 - Operations including infrastructure, networks, telephony, desktop and end user compute
 - Procurement, finance and contract / vendor management
9. The new management structure should be recruited by all three councils, working together, with no automatic transfer across from the existing roles within the SICTS.
10. Responsibility for information risk and assurance must be assigned to a senior role within the SICTS management team.

How do we address the capacity issues across the SICTS?

11. Jointly commission an independent review of capacity so that resource and funding gaps can be identified to enable the successful running of business as usual IT and the delivery of projects. This should include exploration of both a separation of resources for business as usual IT and project delivery and/or a clear matrix management model for project delivery accessing and utilising those resources.
12. Agree that each council employs a technical architect to ensure that individual council needs are well represented and institute a Technical Design Authority (TDA) to jointly make and agree technology decisions and roadmap. In addition, there is a requirement for this group to integrate with the enterprise architecture component of the SICTS.
13. A gap analysis should be performed to identify where security controls can be strengthened and where additional security monitoring tools are required.

What do we need to do now to start the improvement process?

14. Implement a Service Improvement Plan (SIP) overseen by a new Recovery Board¹
 - a) Constitute the Recovery Board from the appropriate senior managers from all three boroughs.
 - b) Appoint a dedicated programme manager to deliver the plan. It is worth noting that there may be additional capacity needed in specific areas to deliver the service improvement plan and this will require additional investment from all three authorities.

¹ The SIP and associated costs are subject to a separate report to the Joint Management Board. The SIP will be overseen by the Recovery Board consisting of the appropriate senior managers from the three authorities. Membership of the Recovery Board and how it interfaces with existing governance arrangement should be agreed separately.

