
By: Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services
Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform
Peter Bole, Director of Information and Communication Technology

To: Cabinet Meeting – 18 July 2011

Subject: ICS Programme Update and Strategy

Classification: Unrestricted.

1. Introduction

Following assessment by OfSTED areas for improvement were identified related to the Integrated Children's System ("ICS") in use by the Council and partner organisations.

The Council has initiated a wide-ranging programme of activity to address the concerns raised in the OfSTED report including the ICS Programme to improve the contribution of technology to the work of Children's Services.

This report describes:

- The work done to date and improvements implemented by the ICS programme;
- The roadmap for the ICS Programme, outlining a strategy for refreshing technology solutions deployed in support of Children's Services.

2. Relevant priority outcomes

- The ICS programme was tasked with addressing issues raised by OfSTED who made a number of observations relating to the ICS system, highlighting the lack of integration between multiple systems and identifying opportunities to deliver: improved records management; better support for business processes; and an enhanced experience for system users. It was recommended that a detailed review of the ICS system should be carried out and works undertaken to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Following a competitive procurement process the council engaged PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to undertake the review, using experience and cost as the basis for the selection of this company ahead of other bidders.
- The findings of the subsequent PwC review indicated that the council's current ICS solution is unlikely to meet the transformation requirements

for the Directorate and the wider needs of the Council in the long term unless significant development were undertaken by the supplier.

The report also recommended that a number of improvements around change management, business procedures and process definition be implemented irrespective of future system requirements. Such changes were identified as the most pragmatic means of addressing the immediate concerns raised by OfSTED, while informing future system requirements.

Two separate workstreams were established in response:

- The first workstream, referred to as the Tactical Plan, has focussed on short term improvements to build confidence in the system by responding to areas identified as high priority and providing staff with a mechanism to engage and see improvements coming from their contribution. Areas of focus include:
 - Addressing system capacity, specifically improved performance and reliability, followed by enhancements to functionality;
 - Reinforcing guidance about the processes and systems to be used; providing leadership support and ensuring consistent application across all teams;
 - Refreshing and formalising the governance arrangements to realise maximum benefit from improvement initiatives;
- The second workstream has assessed areas for strategic improvement and concentrated on future solutions that will allow the council to build on the benefits being derived from the current improvement programme. This includes:
 - Reviewing business processes to inform a robust requirements specification, service level definition and functionality demands of systems to support of further service improvement and productivity;
 - Reviewing the organisational structure and operating model required to deliver maximum return on investment against both service and best value criteria;
 - Market testing to determine the most appropriate IT solution for the future.

The two work streams have formed the core of the ICS Programme, which is part of the wider improvement programme for Children's Services in Kent.

3. Financial Implications

The initial workload has been funded from within existing corporate funding including the CSS Improvement Budget. Implementation of a replacement system capable of supporting the next stage of service improvement will require additional capital expenditure.

The project will be funded by seeking approval to an amendment to the prudential borrowing in the 2011/12 capital programme, as soon as we

have robust financial estimates of the cost. Precise costs are as yet unknown but indicative figures show the costs will be between £1m and £1.5m. For each £1m of borrowing, the implication on the revenue budget in 2011/12 will be approximately £15k, reflecting interest only costs on borrowing as it occurs during the year. No provision will need to be made for repayment of the principal sum in this year.

This £15k will be met from the forecast under spend on capital financing. The full year impact on the revenue budget will be approximately £180k per year for a period of seven years, for each £million borrowed. This will be factored in to the overall financing of the capital programme in the 2012/13 revenue budget build.

4. Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications known at this time.

5. Main body and purpose of report

Progress to Date

The opportunities for service improvement are complex and interdependent - there are no quick fixes. Significant progress has been made in the workstreams, which allow the programme of system replacement to be initiated

The following sections describe the main areas where progress has been made to implement a sustainable mechanism for delivering further improvement moving forward.

a) Governance

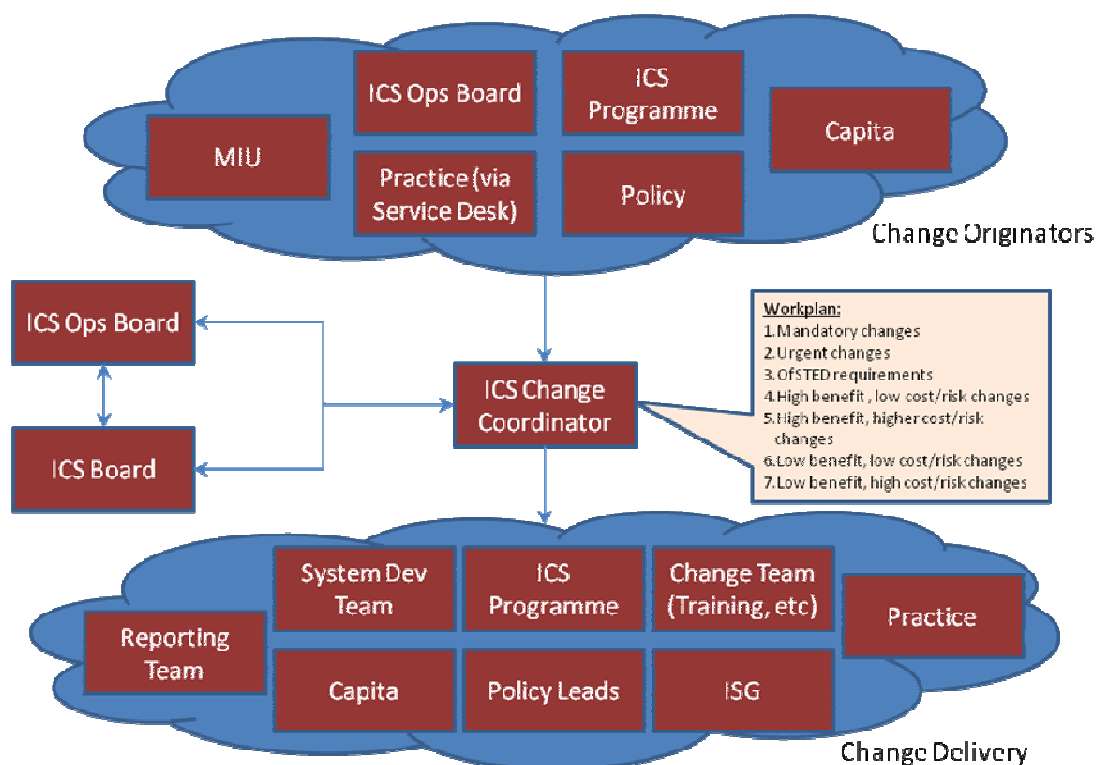
A robust governance structure, critical to the effectiveness of any system implementation, has been established and tested through delivery of improvements and change to existing systems.

This is integrated with the wider structures of the improvement programme and users have clear escalation routes for issues and decision-making. The arrangements are now fully operational.

In practice this is proving effective and providing a good framework for making decisions with appropriate senior management engagement to provide strategic guidance and ensure that both business and technical issues are considered.

b) System Management

A new mechanism has been developed to act as a coordination point for all changes as shown in the following diagram.



The role of the ICS Change Coordinator has been established and a single list of all proposed changes collated which considers the requirements of each area of the business. This list has been considered by the ICS Board who have:

- Assessed whether the change is cost effective and offers real business benefit;
- Agreed the proposed solution once it has been demonstrated that this is the most appropriate approach for the business and does not have any adverse effects;
- Agreed the priority of the change so the teams that implement changes can focus on areas that deliver most relevant enhancements.

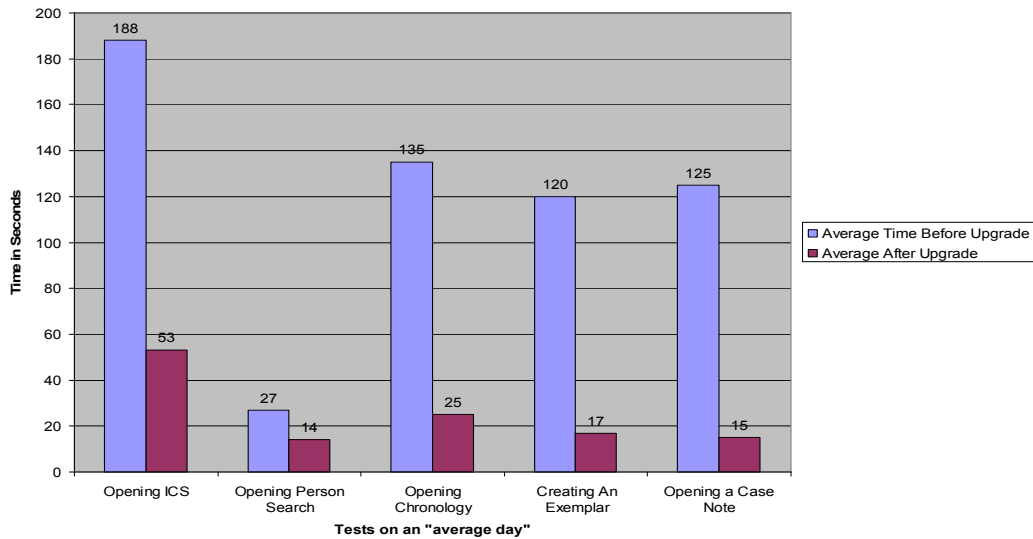
The resulting work plan is now the backbone of the improvement work for the current ICS system, with policy, practice, data quality and ICT engagement to ensure that all areas are aligned to deliver the appropriate changes.

c) Technical

The work of the ICS Programme to date has focused on improving system performance:

- . The graph below shows the difference for users at Montague House following upgrades being applied to computers. Similar upgrades have either been progressed or are scheduled for all sites where children's teams are based.

Performance Results - Montague House



- The network has been analysed to identify bottlenecks that impinge on performance at specific sites and where required upgrades have been identified, approved and orders placed;

This analysis has been important to ensure that a value for money solution is introduced which addresses the root causes of poor technical performance.

d) Storage Solution

Informed by best practice, a project has been undertaken with practitioners to assess the options available to the Council for the short and long-term storage of information with the following outcomes:

- In the short-term the current paper record storage is being consolidated and tidied up to ease the migration to the long-term solution;
- Implementation of an entirely electronic storage system for all documents, etc that cannot be stored in ICS. This system will be fully integrated into the long-term ICS system to ensure it is simple to use and secure.

The programme has also delivered or contributed to a number of critical projects, including:

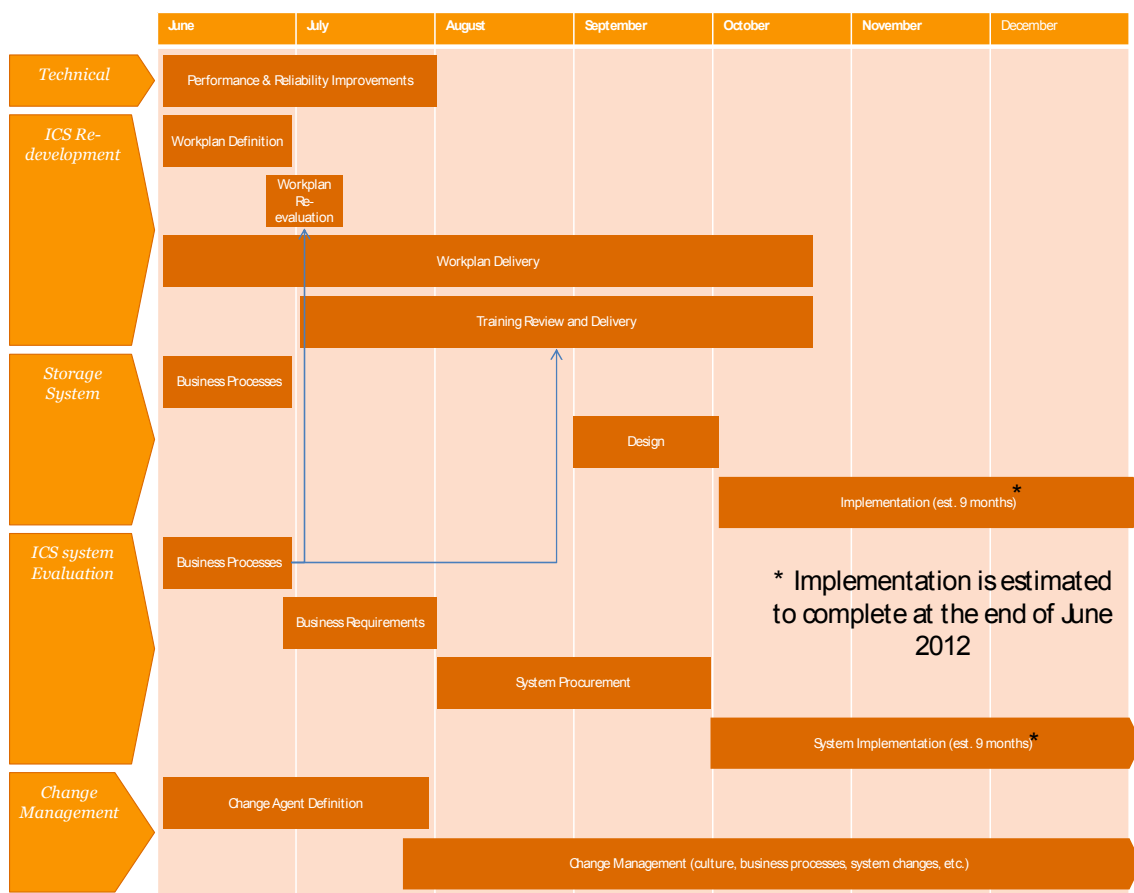
- Electronic sign-off for a number of key exemplars in the system;
- Domestic Violence notification functionality;
- Work to support new case holder roles and new teams such as the peripatetic team;
- Changes to the Family Group Conferencing exemplar;
- The development of a new Duty Case Tracker report.

Future Roadmap

As outlined above, work to date has been focused on:

- Addressing the immediate needs of the users and delivery of OfSTED recommendations to ensure that social workers can operate effectively;
- Putting in place a governance and management framework that will enable Kent to deliver future change supporting continuous improvement; and
- Identifying the business processes to inform the future ways of working in the Directorate.

The following diagram outlines, at a high level, the roadmap for the future work of the ICS Programme.



As the diagram shows, several strands of current work will continue, including:

- Technical improvements;
- The delivery of agreed changes and business improvements using the current system, where this is relevant to the design specification of the future system
- The work to design the most appropriate storage solution, to be implemented once the decision on future ICS solution is made as this will need to be capable of being fully integrated;

Also included in the workplan for the current ICS system is a project to review the training needs and approach for users as this will need to be redeveloped to train users on the business processes and replacement system.

The tasks completed to date have provided a sound baseline and framework within which to continue a cycle of continuous and sustainable improvement. With the framework complete, the programme has been able to move on to plan the procurement and implementation of ICS for the longer term, as shown in the roadmap above, including:

- Documentation of the business demands required of a future ICS system, using the consistent and agreed business processes across Kent as a starting point;
- Work to document the organisational structure, roles and responsibilities a workflows for ICS, using the refined business processes as a guide; and
- Market assessment of suppliers and products, using the business processes and business requirements to procure the most appropriate ICT solution for the needs of practitioners and management.

The combination of interim activities focussed on business procedure, process and requirements, together with the market research that has been completed now forms the basis of the procurement exercise for a replacement ICS solution. The required notice of the intention to procure a new solution was placed in the Official Journal of the European Union on the 1st July.

On cabinet approval of the strategy for systems replacement identified in this report, the next step of the procurement process will be to proceed to a pre qualification questionnaire followed by an invitation to quote by qualified suppliers. Under the procurement process the earliest the council may be in a position to award contract would be September 2011.

6. Consultation and Communication

This approach and future roadmap has been discussed with the ICS Board members, practitioners, technical staff of the Council and the CSS programme and Improvement board members.

7. Risk and Business Continuity Management

The scale of the improvement programme places significant demands on professional social work staff. Commencing the work to evaluate potential systems and suppliers together with the subsequent implementation programme will further increase this workload.

- Business requirements need to be built on a consistent and agreed method of working to ensure they are acceptable to all areas of the service and tie into the way in which the business operates. These then form the basis for evaluating systems;

- Without effective governance and system management, any system will suffer from implementation issues, whereby changes are introduced without user engagement and business buy-in. Also, councils without sound governance and control often implement unnecessary changes which add complexity and cost to the system making it progressively less effective and sustainable in the long-term.

The framework put in place in the initial stages of the programme to improve management of the existing solution will provide mitigation against these identified risks. The governance process has already identified that full engagement of professional staff will be required throughout. This will demand coordination of release and backfill of professional staff during both procurement and implementation.

8. Sustainability Implications

An ICS system must support effective services to vulnerable children across Kent. As such, it is critical that the right system and associated processes and controls are in place to safeguard children and deliver the needs of the community.

The improvements completed in the early stages of the programme ensure that the council is now in a far better position to procure and implement an appropriate long-term ICS system, than was the case immediately following the OfSTED report and subsequent PwC review.

9. Conclusion

The framework to provide a sustainable mechanism for delivering effective systems in support of the long-term objectives of Children's Services has been implemented.

The Council can now consider its future requirements and procure and implement an appropriate long-term system to support the future ambitions of the service.

10. Recommendations

That the overall strategy be endorsed so the programme can:

- Continue to deliver against the immediate needs of Children's Services;
- Having put in place a framework for the sustainable delivery of ongoing changes to the ICT system, practice and policies in use by Children's Service commence the procurement and implementation of a suitable long-term ICT solution.

11. Background Documents

None.

Contact – Peter Bole, Director of Information and Communication Technology

01622 696174