

## Introduction

This document summarises the original ICT Strategy and Roadmap (on the left-hand side) and the progress made in the 15 months since its approval in September 2023. It also introduces some revised elements because of changes to the global IT landscape in both the private and public sectors. The original essential illustrations have been removed and are attached at the end of the report as appendices for reference purposes.

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Purpose of this Strategy</b>                      This Information Technology (IT) Strategy defines the principles, governance, standards and methodology by which Epsom &amp; Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) will source, procure, implement, maintain and deliver IT services. Its main purpose is to ensure that IT services, of whatever nature, are aligned to business requirements and complement each other within a holistic service ecosystem.</p> <p>To achieve this, the IT Strategy is but one element in a suite of documents which clearly link (“The Golden Thread”) the council’s long-term vision for the borough to corporate, department, team and individual deliverables. <b>(Appendix 3 – Reference Diagrams and Notes)</b></p>	<p><b>Purpose of this Strategy</b>                      The overall purpose of the Strategy remains the same with the underlying goal to achieve the council’s objectives by effective use of its IT infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Benefits of this Strategy</b>                      The benefits of this IT Strategy are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear vision of where we want to be and what is important to us.</li> <li>• Clear principles by which our services are selected and delivered.</li> <li>• A defined governance framework within which IT Services are managed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Benefits of this Strategy</b>                      The underlying benefits of the strategy remain the same.</p>
<p><b>Constraints</b>                      This IT Strategy defines ‘where we are’, ‘where we want to be’ and the principles we will use to move from one state to the other. It also defines our agreed, priorities. The strategy section of this document is by its very nature, high-level and consequently not constrained by the inevitable pressures and limits on the resources (people, financial, technical) required to deliver it.</p>	<p><b>Constraints</b>                      Due to a variety of reasons the original envisaged Roadmap timelines no longer align with the anticipated milestones.</p> <p>In the 16 months that has passed since the ICT Strategy was approved a number of the projects have progressed, while others have been delayed.</p>

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Constraints – (Cont.)</b>                      The roadmap section aims to provide a more detailed view of the intended project work and major changes, setting out the currently envisioned phasing of these over the coming three years, noting major milestones and interdependencies.</p> <p>It must be appreciated that most projects are yet to be fully scoped, and as such timing, duration and sequencing of them is indicative. Further, the largest constraint to delivery is staff resource, both technical IT staff and end users, the latter who often have a major roll in determining design, testing, providing data, etc. Given the many work pressures and slim resources available project planning is a challenge and often delays in one area have a knock-on impact elsewhere.</p>	<p><b>Constraints – (Cont.).</b>                      These changes can be seen in the updated version of the ICT Roadmap Timeline (<b>Appendix 2</b>).</p>
<p><b>Background</b>                      In Spring 2022, following on from the global Covid pandemic, a wide-reaching review was instigated with the aim to ensure EEBC IT services could meet the near-term and future requirements of the organisation. Maple Networks were commissioned to undertake this review. The outcome of the IT Strategic Review provided a clear understanding of the current state of EEBC IT services, the capabilities of both the IT Team and the wider user base, constraints (technical, financial, resource and skills) and a clear set of tactical and strategic objectives to better align IT Services with the requirements of the organisation.</p> <p>The review noted that there had been a long-term underinvestment in IT services and that, in part as a consequence of this, there was a significant number of aged, legacy systems and stored technical debt . The report also noted that despite the multiple challenges and constraints, recent progress had been made in remediating a number (although by no means all) of the legacy issues and stabilising the infrastructure platform upon which IT services are delivered.</p>	<p><b>Background</b>                      The background and rationale behind the strategy and the direction remains unchanged, however the accelerating plans for 70 East Street and Bourne Hall are adding a further dynamic.</p> <p>The relocation of the Council Chamber to Bourne Hall has necessitated further examinations of the wider technical estate and this includes other satellite sites including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longmead Depot</li> <li>• Longmead Social</li> <li>• The Playhouse</li> <li>• Ashley Road CP</li> <li>• Hook Road CP</li> <li>• The Downs Keepers Hut</li> <li>• The Countryside Office</li> </ul>

<p>This EEBC IT Strategy builds on the findings of that review and defines the framework in which future EEBC IT services will be delivered.</p>	
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<p><b>IT Service Goals</b>                      The IT Service Review afforded the opportunity to set clearly defined goals for the future delivery of IT services. These are summarised as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The infrastructure should be highly available, highly secure, and high performing, providing the flexibility and agility for the council to deliver services as required and at pace.</li> <li>2. The application landscape should be simplified, centralised and easy to use, with particular focus on resident facing applications including the website and obtaining access to their data.</li> <li>3. The internal user experience should be improved, thereby enabling increased officer mobility, effectiveness and efficiency.</li> <li>4. The resident experience of public facing services should be reviewed and improved. Online resident services should be easy and intuitive to use, thereby encouraging channel shift to more efficient means of engagement and service delivery.</li> <li>5. Data should be consolidated with a single point of truth (Golden record).</li> <li>6. All systems and data should be secure.</li> </ol>	<p><b>IT Service Goals</b>                      The main objectives of the IT Service Review remain unaltered with the points below noted against each numbered item:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This is a core principle of the infrastructure to ensure that it is both secure and flexible it also has the capacity to change to the demands placed on it.</li> <li>2. The application landscape has been reviewed and whilst some simplification has taken place the complexity of the services we provide, and the software required make this a complex area to rationalise and provide value for money.</li> <li>3. Changes and updates to some of the platforms will help achieve the aim of increased efficiencies through quick and responsive user interfaces.</li> <li>4. Changes to public facing services and specifically those delivered over the internet are being reviewed to make them more accessible with a specific focus on mobile devices that residents may use to interact with the organisation.</li> <li>5. Where possible the ‘Golden Thread’ for user data will be applied to reduce data duplication and more efficient handling of records</li> <li>6. All procured services are seen in the principles of the ‘Secure by Design’ framework used by central govt.</li> </ol>

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>IT Service Principles</b>                      To meet the identified service goals, IT services will be scoped,</p>	<p><b>IT Service Principles</b>                      These principles remain in use as they are at the core of the IT</p>

<p>sourced, implemented and delivered in accordance with the following principles:</p>	<p>service.</p>
<p><b>Cloud Centric</b>                  In line with the Government’s Cloud First policy, IT services will be sourced and delivered through Cloud services as opposed to on-premise hardware and software. Adopting this approach will enable the council to migrate away from on-premise hardware and software, which are increasingly difficult and costly to maintain, onto services and platforms which are modern, scalable, resilient and secure.  <b>(Appendix 3 – Reference Diagrams and Notes)</b></p>	<p><b>Cloud Centric</b>                  Overall, the ‘Cloud First’ view of the services is at the core of the strategy but with an understanding that the overall tech landscape is moving, and many organisations are now adopting a ‘Cloud Preference’ model versus trying to push everything into the cloud irrespective of suitability and cost.                   In the future it maybe more cost effective to have some services on-premise and the Roadmap allows for future reversion of some services if need be.</p>
<p><b>Customer Centric</b>                  In procuring IT services we will ensure that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The customer (whether that be internal colleagues, external residents, or both) is at the forefront of our choice of service.</li> <li>• IT services are intuitive and easy to use.</li> <li>• IT services are reliable and available when required.</li> <li>• Staff are trained and supported in order to derive the greatest value from our digital services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Customer Centric</b>                  These principles remain unchanged as these are core to our objectives.</p>
<p><b>Digital by Default</b>                  Our IT services will be designed as part of a holistic ecosystem to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide (authorised) staff with a seamless view of the customer.</li> <li>• Enable the customer to access the services they consume regardless of the backend application in which their data is held.</li> <li>• Enable business process reengineering and automation to be implemented, thereby increasing service efficiency and data accuracy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Digital by Default</b>                  These continue to be developed with the ‘Golden Thread’ view of the customer in mind.</p>

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
IT Service Principles – (Cont.).	IT Service Principles – (Cont.).
<b>Secure by Default</b>	<b>Secure by Default</b>

<p>Our IT services will be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure from internal and external threats.</li> <li>• Maintained and patched to the appropriate level.</li> <li>• Current (in contract and mainstream support). By direct consequence all existing, non-current, legacy systems will be decommissioned.</li> <li>• Used by staff who are appropriately trained in IT security.</li> </ul>	<p>The ongoing modernisation of the IT infrastructure supports these objectives with the removal of old obsolete hardware and software to modern industry standard models.</p>
<p><b>Interlinked with Corporate Strategies &amp; Plans</b> In addition to the four core principles set out above, IT services will align with and actively support the principles and outcomes defined in related corporate strategies and plans.</p>	<p><b>Interlinked with Corporate Strategies &amp; Plans</b> <i>Unchanged.</i></p>

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Accommodation Strategy:</b> IT services will support and facilitate the developing corporate Town Hall/70 East Street reviews by ensuring that end user devices and applications enable flexible work styles, mobility and collaboration, thereby potentially reducing the overall office space requirement. The migration to Cloud services and related reduction in on-premise hardware will reduce the requirement for dedicated IT equipment rooms and associated power usage.</p>	<p><b>Accommodation Strategy:</b> The link between the new ways of working coupled with the associated hardware and software that support it is fully understood.  The updated design of 70 East Street incorporates a small, centralised data hub that could in the future be used to run some services on premise if the need arose.</p>
<p><b>Climate Change Action Plan:</b> The migration to power efficient Cloud services and related reduction in on-premise hardware will significantly reduce IT related power use , supporting the council’s aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2035. o The deployment and use of laptops will better support officers to work flexibly, reducing travel and associated emissions.</p>	<p><b>Climate Change Action Plan:</b> The planned actions for the councils IT operations continues to support the objective of becoming carbon neutral by 2035.</p>

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Workforce Strategy:</b> The implementation of appropriate devices, services and training will enable staff to work seamlessly from multiple locations and become</p>	<p><b>Workforce Strategy:</b> Close coordination has taken place with the ‘New Ways of Working’ (NWOW) workstreams to ensure that the IT estate and its associated</p>

<p>more effective and efficient in the tasks they perform. This will support staff wellbeing, making the council a more attractive place to work and supporting staff retention.</p>	<p>policies and procedures align to achieve maximum efficiency.</p>
<p><b>IT Service Governance</b>                  We will implement a governance structure which ensures that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT (in conjunction with Senior Management Team) own the IT Strategy and all IT resources.</li> <li>• Our agreed IT Strategy principles are adhered to.</li> <li>• There is the required clarity on reporting channels and approval processes (inc: Project initiation and funding decisions).</li> <li>• IT services remain aligned to business requirements.</li> <li>• There is the requisite level of oversight and scrutiny.</li> </ul> <p>It is inevitable that the call on IT Team resources to deliver what is an extensive and ambitious programme of work whilst maintain the existing infrastructure and services will exceed the available capacity. Our governance and principals will ensure that ALL IT programmes, project and work is co-ordinated, of value, strategically aligned and prioritised within the resource available.</p>	<p><b>IT Service Governance</b>                  The agreed principles for governance continue to be refined and actions from audits in 2021/22 and 2022/23 have helped shape the direction of travel.</p> <p>Further work is required across the whole council to ensure that all projects that have any kind of ICT input are fully understood with dependencies accurately captured.</p> <p>A redesign of our change management capability looks to ensure that all ICT changes are captured and effectively communicated to relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Resource Ownership</b>                  As we implement our strategy it is important that IT services are seen as a corporate resource. IT will therefore be responsible for the selection, procurement and management of IT resources including, but not limited to, laptops, monitors, mobile devices, applications, licences, etc. By taking a clear, corporate approach to IT resources we will avoid situations whereby they are underutilised or deployed less effectively than they could be.</p>	<p><b>Resource Ownership</b>                  The implementation of the ICT Strategy since its publishing over a year ago has seen the deployment of laptops to almost all staff in the town hall as was envisaged. These laptops are centrally managed and maintained by the IT team with clear lines of responsibility to show they are corporate assets and not those of the user or individual departments.</p> <p>This methodology is also applied to other IT resources per the strategy. This means that there is clear definition where the ownership of equipment remains and thus the support that goes with it.</p>

Approved ICT Strategy Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>IT Service Quality &amp; Standards</b>                  IT services will be delivered to appropriate standards using agreed methodologies to ensure compliance and quality criteria are met.</p>	<p><b>IT Service Quality &amp; Standards</b>                  Work continues on the definition of a service catalogue to detail all the IT services available to the organisation.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITIL – We will design and deliver services using the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) methodology.</li> <li>• GCSx/PSN – We will connect to secure government services and in doing so we will ensure IT services are secure and comply with the required standards including the Code of Connection.</li> <li>• PCI/DSS - Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) is an information security standard used to handle credit cards from major card brands.</li> <li>• Project Management – We will deliver projects using project management methodologies appropriate to the size and type of project. Eg: Prince 2/Agile.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT Staff are expected to have completed an introduction to ITIL as a minimum standard so that they are aware of the core practices of providing IT services.</li> <li>• Connections to government services remain in place with stringent controls over access.</li> <li>• Similarly, connections to commercial services like those for payment gateways are strictly controlled and defined.</li> <li>• Projects of all sizes have to conform to recognised project management principles, typically with a PID capturing the high-level detail and Project Plans detailing the actions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>IT Services Collaboration &amp; Shared Services</b>                  EEBC is a small council and as such has limited resources and few internal opportunities to benefit from economies of scale. To address this, IT Services will actively seek to learn from councils (and other relevant organisations) who have previously implemented services on our roadmap and not just “reinvent the wheel”. Where appropriate, we will collaborate and partner with others, thereby sharing resources, risks and costs. Whilst this may extend to joint procurements, we do not envisage entering into any form of shared service arrangement.</p> <p>The in-house IT Team, in conjunction with internal stakeholders, will be responsible for defining and delivering services. We will consider selective outsourcing of low-level services where it is most cost effective and efficient to do so</p>	<p><b>IT Services Collaboration &amp; Shared Services</b>                  The position around collaboration and shared services remains the same but we have recently examined some of the services we consume with that of a neighbouring council. This work helped form decisions on our PSN connectivity and our infrastructure estate.</p> <p>The position regarding the commissioning of services opposed to delivering them in-house remains the same and will always be considered with efficiencies and value for money in mind.</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Purpose of this Roadmap</b></p> <p>The Information Technology Roadmap details the direction and priority projects scheduled to run throughout the period 2023 – 2027. This roadmap will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State our vision for delivering technology services and contributing to the council’s carbon emissions targets.</li> <li>• Map the current state of IT infrastructure and services and the issues which need to be addressed.</li> <li>• Define our priorities and the areas we will invest in to deliver services aligned to business requirements.</li> </ul> <p>By planning, prioritising, and resourcing the IT Roadmap, will enable us to move from our current “as is” state to the required “to be” state, enabling a clear and focussed programme of work to be delivered with increasingly less resource being required to maintain legacy systems and to “fight fires”.</p> <p>To achieve the desired outcomes all projects will need to be fully scoped, resourced and funded. They will also require the appropriate level of authority in order to proceed. All work will be delivered in the context of our corporate ‘Golden Thread’, which links the high-level, strategic vision of councillors to the actions by officers required to achieve it.</p> <p>There are multiple factors which determine the extent to which the roadmap will be followed as defined and where it may be deviated from. Unanticipated or changing business requirements, availability of required resources (staff, funding) or changes to technology may all have an impact. Further, the roadmap focuses on strategic and project work and therefore does not detail the entirety of the IT workload, which contains a significant element of “business as usual” (undertaking minor upgrades, responding to Service Desk requests and incidents and otherwise maintaining our IT systems) which forms in excess of 60% of the IT workload.</p>	<p><b>Purpose of this Roadmap</b></p> <p>A new 5-year strategy is currently being developed by councillors and any IT priorities emerging from this will be reflected in the development of this strategy and the associated roadmap.</p> <p>The roadmap continues as a working document to detail the current developing state of the IT in EEBC with a look at the short-, medium- and long-term objectives of how IT services are consumed.</p> <p>Overall, the plan remains to try and link the Golden Thread to every IT solution to provide a seamless view of the customer and the services we provide to them.</p>

Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)



## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p><b>Target State</b> Our roadmap starts with our intended target state. This is how we envisage EEBC IT services being delivered in the future.</p>	<p><b>Target State</b> The position regarding the target state remains unchanged with the exception that a provision for a small on-premise footprint is allowed for in 70 East Street to allow for a flexible licensing arrangements in future IT services.</p>
<p><b>Core Infrastructure Services</b> <b>Data Centre Services</b> EEBC’s on-premises IT services are run primarily from a server-room located in Town Hall. This on-premise environment uses a significant amount of electricity to power and cool the servers, storage and related IT equipment. Server room electricity accounts for 10% of the council’s total electricity use and 2.8% of the council’s total carbon emissions. The server room is largely unfit for purpose, having no air-cooling resilience or fire suppression, and only limited (90 minute) power resilience.  Given the lack of resilience, a serious incident within the server room has the potential to have a significant, adverse impact upon IT services and consequently EEBC public facing services. The councils present mitigation for such an event is a disaster recovery data-centre contract (providing access to a 3rd party data centre in Basingstoke) and a separate contract for provision of a small quantity of hardware in order to recover critical services.  Whilst our Cloud-centric strategy is gradually reducing the number of on-premise services there will remain a medium term need for a physical hosting requirement and, in view of the Town Hall/70 East Street reviews, it is timely to consider our service requirements, strategic priorities and the existing service risks.</p>	<p><b>Core Infrastructure Services</b> <b>Data Centre Services</b> The position regarding the server room remains unchanged with a forward looking ‘Cloud Preference’ strategy in place- accepting that in the shorter term some elements of the infrastructure will need to remain on-premise prior to their upgrade or removal and or replacement with alternatives.  The ongoing move to East Street is highlighting the need to find storage for existing digital elements and to look at how we will store, manage, and manipulate paper records that will be digitised in 2025.  Over the last few years there have been significant geopolitical changes, and this has led to increases in costs of providing services of all types across the board. ICT is not immune from these changes and the costs of moving to hosted datacentres and other cloud elements has increased exponentially.  Currently we do not have sufficient storage in the Microsoft Cloud to receive all the on-premise data, so we are looking at various options on where we will store the data. It is likely that we will use the planned datacentre move to procure some bulk storage in the Cloud. This would be differentiated between ‘Archive’ and ‘Active’ storage based on its usage and the required retention period.</p>

<p><b>Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)</b></p>	<p><b>Update (December 2024)</b></p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p><b>Data Centre Services – (Cont.).</b>          Having considered the available options it is proposed relocate our existing IT server hardware to a hosted data centre. This will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a more secure and resilient environment for existing EEBC IT hardware.</li> <li>• Reduce or negate the requirement for separate disaster recovery data centre and hardware contracts.</li> <li>• Negate the requirement for a server room to be built as part of the Town Hall/70 East Street reviews, with associated build and on-going maintenance costs avoided.</li> <li>• Contribute to the council’s carbon neutral by 2035 target.</li> </ul> <p>The “as is” move of existing hardware and services will be the one phase of a multi-phased migration to our desired target state. To facilitate this journey we will procure services of a hosted data centre provider offering rack hosting, network and telephony infrastructure, IaaS and PaaS. In conjunction with Microsoft365, Azure and other vendor specific SaaS, this will provide a number of options for future service provision as existing hardware reaches end of service life and/or service requirements change.</p> <p>Whilst further work is required, initial estimates indicate that data centre hosting services for our existing hardware will be broadly cost neutral (when compared to existing run costs and the likely future replacement cost of hardware) whilst providing a number of significant benefits as detailed above.</p> <p>The diagram below (<b>Appendix 3 – Reference Diagrams and Notes</b>) shows the broad phasing, although delivery of the roadmap will require multiple phases to migrate and upgrade individual components of our complex technology infrastructure and services.</p>	<p><b>Data Centre Services – (Cont.).</b>          As indicated our review of the infrastructure and future need in the next 5 to 10 years could look quite different. Whilst a move to Cloud services remains a core tenant of this strategy the complete removal of on-premise hardware at 70 East Street is impractical. Firstly, the building will require some form of ‘Comms Room’ to house all the networking hardware that will service the building in terms of WiFi and physical network connections. Secondly in the decision that no alternative power will be provided by a backup generator means that a secondary power option will be needed. This will consist of the UPS (battery backup unit) that was purchased in 2022 to be transferred to East Street. This unit will provide power to critical hardware, the network and switches in the case of a power cut. It has a significant footprint and will be homed in its own dedicated room with other network equipment.</p> <p>However, the underlying issues with the EEBC datacentre in terms of its outdated equipment remains and there are cost benefits to be achieved in migrating to new hardware be this in externally hosted platforms or small scale locally hosted arrangements being built into the plan for 70 East Street.</p> <p>The key issue with this work is to ensure that as an organisation that we are able to ‘flex’ our infrastructure requirements to leverage the best elements available while looking to provide value for money.</p> <p>Another factor in having a small on-premise footprint in 70 East Street is time. The planned year for the move from the Town Hall to East Street leaves very little time to arrange the digitisation of all paper records and it is possible that at least some elements may be hosted on-premise at 70 East Street while we are still in the process of completing the migration to cloud.</p>
<p><b>Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)</b></p>	<p><b>Update (December 2024)</b></p>
<p><b>Network Services:</b></p>	<p><b>Network Services:</b></p>

<p><b>Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)</b></p>	<p><b>Update (December 2024)</b></p>
<p><b>Network Services:</b></p>	<p><b>Network Services:</b></p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>To benefit fully from the deployment of corporate laptops the EEBC corporate network needs to be redesigned. Funding of £125k was agreed by S&amp;R Committee (28/3/2023) and work on this project is in progress. The initial phase is to simplify our current network as it is overly complex and poorly documented. Once completed, we will be in a position to commence the redesign, taking into account our planned migration to a hosted data centre and requirements of the Town Hall/70 East Street reviews. The intent is to implement a secure network to support multi-site and remote hybrid working.</p> <p>As part of our network refresh project we are reviewing also our internet and inter-site links. At present we source services from six different suppliers. Some services are now out of contract with others including our main internet link and related PSN/GCSx circuit due to cease in Summer 2024. We will seek to use an appropriate Crown Commercial Framework to procure and commission services (likely from a single supplier) so as to achieve best value.</p> <p>Key aspects of our future design will be implementation of an SD-Wan based network with a landing zone for key infrastructure. Use of Cloud services will provide inherent resilience, ensuring that we have fewer single points of failure. Whilst it will be a design consideration, at this stage the additional cost of installing fully resilient site links to all EEBC sites is thought to be uneconomic given their general reliability.</p>	<p>The network redesign has been taking place alongside the gradual removal of obsolete hardware. This process has taken place in a structured way to ensure that there are no adverse effects to line of business (LOB) applications that run services like Planning, Council Tax and Housing as examples.</p> <p>This process has been made more complex as this is not a simple refresh of the network but an extension to alternative locations including 70 East Street and specifically Bourne Hall where the majority of Council Meetings will likely be held in the future. This also needs to be seen in the context of the 'Cloud Preference' model meaning that high speed internet connections are in place and secured across multiple sites.</p> <p>As agreed, there is now a rolling programme of works to upgrade the majority of sites to high-speed fibre. In some cases, these are upgrades of existing fibre connections, in others replacement of older copper connections which have reached end of life. As planned, these have been harmonised on a single supplier with resilience built in.</p> <p>The 'Unicorn' network that provided connectivity to the Public Services Network (PSN) went permanently offline in August 2024 and has been replaced with a new direct connection to the DWP. At the same time the primary connection into the Town Hall was also replaced to allow us time to continue services while we plan the move to East Street.</p>
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Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>End User Compute:</b> Feedback received both directly and through the IT Strategic Review highlights issues with the suitability, reliability and performance of the Citrix desktop service. The current thin-client based service does not fully support the use of Teams meetings and our more modern way</p>	<p><b>End User Compute:</b> As series of minor upgrades this year both physical and software have given the Citrix environment added resilience. Additional benefits are likely to be achieved as we migrate sections of the infrastructure into the cloud. There is a balance to be found in</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>of working, and to work remotely staff are generally required to use their own equipment (BYOD). Further, the current service relies on aged on-premise hardware and software which is end of life.</p> <p>Our approach is to maintain and where practical improve the Citrix environment whilst we deliver a programme to replace the current desktop offering with corporate supplied and managed laptops. To achieve this a service health check has been conducted on the Citrix environment and a number of recommendations received.</p> <p>We are in the process of reviewing and implementing these where the benefits of doing so are considered worthwhile. In addition to planned Citrix improvements, the deployment of corporate laptops and migration of data into M365 will result in Citrix being used by fewer staff, thereby reducing the load on the environment and improving the user experience for those still using it.</p>	<p>increasing availability and speed over the need to keep the older parts of the network secure until they can be migrated. This is an on-going piece of work.</p> <p>Limitations around the use of OneDrive and Teams in the Citrix environment are fully understood and the laptop roll-out has allowed us to ensure that staff are able to work both within the secured Citrix environment and outside without compromising any security arrangements.</p> <p>This model while slightly unusual provides us the opportunity to keep the network secure whilst giving staff the flexibility to carry on working while significant infrastructure changes take place in the background.</p>
<p><b>End Users Devices</b></p> <p>The draft IT Strategy (S&amp;R Committee - 23/3/2023) recommended a move to corporate laptops and improved monitors to replace the current Citrix environment and BYOD policy for home working. Following a procurement process the rollout of corporate laptops and monitors has commenced with Planning (where there is a specific need for larger wide-screen monitors) and Business Assurance (to both facilitate their mobile workstyle and to provide a temporary hub for other staff to see and trial equipment) the initial recipients.</p>	<p><b>End Users Devices</b></p> <p>The roll-out of laptops was prioritised to ensure that all Town Hall staff were enabled with laptops ahead of the move to East Street. As was originally planned this was completed in the Autumn of this year. This included the carefully staged deployment of updated monitors, with a view to ensure that equipment was procured to cover existing need and to anticipate its transfer to East Street. As a result, we have a mix of old and new equipment in use at the Town Hall.</p>

Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>End Users Devices – (Cont.).</b></p> <p>Our intent is to issue laptops to all Town Hall IT users by Autumn 2024, prior to any potential office relocation, although the laptop and monitor rollout will extend to all staff considered “hybrid ” workers. Larger monitors with in-built KVM hubs are being deployed to replace the aged square format monitors. These enable the laptop</p>	<p><b>End Users Devices – (Cont.).</b></p> <p>All the new equipment will be transferred to East Street and there is a developing plan to provide some of the non-depreciated equipment for staff to use at home subject to suitable controls around asset and insurance arrangements.</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>to be connected to the monitor, keyboard, mouse, power and network via a single cable. We will review the monitors purchased in 2019 (which have a slightly larger format) with a view to using these at least until any accommodation move takes place.</p> <p>In conjunction with improvements to the supporting infrastructure and other strategic priority projects, users will derive the desired end user experience and benefits including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significantly improved end user experience.</li> <li>• True mobility and increased levels of security.</li> <li>• Seamless use of Microsoft Teams (presence, communications and online meetings). The move to corporate supplied laptops aligns with strategic objectives to:-</li> <li>• Increase the effectiveness and productivity of staff,</li> <li>• Support the developing Town Hall/70 East Street reviews (by giving the council increased opportunities and options for “hot desking”).</li> </ul> <p>Support the corporate Climate Change Action Plan through reducing both staff travel and the amount of on-premise infrastructure running the current Citrix Desktop environment (hardware, software, and power).</p>	<p>The arrangements for ‘bring your own device’ (BYOD) device access is being reviewed as a result of the potential ‘Right to Disconnect’ legislation that the government is reviewing. This may mean that we restrict or remove the use of personal devices that staff and members use in preference to ‘corporate’ devices provided by EEBC.</p> <p>As the roll-out of the laptops proceeded we received positive feedback from staff about the equipment they now have and the flexibility it provides. The move to a hybrid way of working is a fundamental shift from the old patterns of working and the benefits will not be immediately realised but will happen gradually over time as staff attitudes adjust.</p>
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Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Microsoft 365</b> Microsoft 365 (M365) is at the heart of our end user compute solution, providing email, productivity applications (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and SaaS applications (OneDrive, Teams, SharePoint). To date the productivity apps have been deployed and we are using Exchange Online for email. Use of Teams is restricted by the Citrix Desktop and current lack of telephony integration whilst SharePoint and OneDrive are used in IT as a pilot but are yet to be fully implemented.</p> <p>At present the majority of our file-storage is on-premise and a key</p>	<p><b>Microsoft 365</b> The on-going use of M365 continues to be both inside the Citrix environment and outside of it providing flexibility to the staff and how they wish to work.</p> <p>Teams’ functionality inside Citrix is still restricted and staff are guided to make Teams calls outside of it for now. The position around telephony and potential for integration remains while we look at solutions that provide the best functionality across the organisation.</p> <p>We have recently completed a pilot telephony project at the</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>project for the council is to move the majority of it onto the M365 platform. We intend to start the departmental and corporate data migrations in September 2023 and (subject to resource availability) aim to complete by Easter 2024. Moving data into M365 is a critical component in reducing and eventually removing our current reliance on Citrix and on premise hardware, providing easier access to work services, greater resilience and supporting our future business continuity requirements.</p> <p>Work on staff personas will determine each teams/individuals IT requirements and consequently the Microsoft licence types and quantities required. Whilst we expect the total number of licences to reduce, it is envisaged that we will need to upgrade the core licence type in order to access the necessary productivity and security functionality. Consequently, we estimate that Microsoft licence costs will increase although this should be offset in future years by a reduction in telephony and 3rd party software costs.</p>	<p>Playhouse and this has helped shape thinking on the future direction.</p> <p>The data migration project continues, and we are looking at providing extra training to staff to help them migrate their files away from the on-premise storage and into the Microsoft Cloud and alternatives.</p> <p>The expected date for the move via Easter has been missed but work continues at pace to plan for the moving of the data away from the Town Hall. This position is made more complex due to the volume of physical paper files (and microfiche) that need to be scanned and archived.</p> <p>There has been significant work by both HR and Moveworks on the personas now referred to as ‘Worker Types’ to understand the needs of the workforce and their IT requirements. This is built into the overall plan for the move to 70 East Street.</p> <p>This will as expected lead to a change in our Microsoft licence arrangements and a likely increase in cost.</p>
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Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Telephony Services (fixed)</b> EEBC’s main telephony solution is provided by Mitel and currently runs on equipment at three locations, Town Hall, Longmead Estate and Bourne Hall. There is a further (non-Mitel) telephony service running from Playhouse. Whilst the Town Hall service is up to date, the three other systems are aged and out of support. Further, we appear to be significantly over licensed and being on-premise the services do not align with our agreed Cloud strategy.</p> <p>The work on personas will be used to identify which staff actually require a telephony solution. Further work will identify specific requirements with solutions then procured to align with business need. Whilst (given the relatively small number of telephony users)</p>	<p><b>Telephony Services (fixed)</b> Considerable work has taken place on the Mitel estate and the old physical hardware has been replaced with more resilient virtual machines.</p> <p>Overall, the Mitel system is over specified and will likely be replaced in the coming years with a solution that is more flexible and better suited to our needs.</p> <p>As identified in the original strategy we have a variety of use cases each with a differing need. We also need to consider what a future integration with our CRM would look like and work is taking place to understand this better.</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>there maybe economies of scale (cost, administrative overhead) in having a single solution, we are also considerate of a tiered approach to our telephony service. Our users’ telephony requirements can likely to be categorised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic: Voice calling from within Microsoft Teams utilising M365 licences.</li> <li>• Enhanced: 3rd Party Teams add-in to provide enhanced functionality such as call roaming, call pickup and/or hunting groups.</li> <li>• Specialist: To cater for areas such as the Customer Contact Centre where specialist functionality (such as integration with CRM, call recording, PCI compliance, etc) is required.</li> </ul> <p>Whilst further work is required to determine the optimal solution, it is envisaged that future telephony services will be Cloud based, will feature softphones to support hybrid working and will be delivered for less than the current cost of telephony.</p>	<p>A future telephony project will be expanded after the move to East Street has taken place. Prior to this we will also work with the Voluntary Sector Organisations that use EEBC numbers to ensure a continuity of their services to residents.</p> <p>As indicated the Playhouse telephony system has been moved to a new cloud-based solution that allows workers to take calls remotely and this provides an area where we can evaluate solutions in a near live environment.</p> <p>The plan for Cloud based telephony remains the overall goal but will likely be nuanced on the specific applications required.</p>
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Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Telephony Services (mobile)</b></p> <p>As part of the response to Covid a significant number of mobile phones were purchased and provided to staff. Many of these have since ceased to be used although service contracts have remained in place for them. To address this we are in the process of conducting an audit of our mobile service contracts and it is anticipated that we will be able to reduce these from circa 240 to under 100.</p> <p>We are reviewing also the Crown Commercial Services mobile telephony framework with a view to awarding a corporate mobile contact. This should result in a reduced monthly per device cost compared to our incumbent provider. As a result of the work currently in progress we forecast a 50% reduction to the annual cost of mobile telephony.</p>	<p><b>Telephony Services (mobile)</b></p> <p>The mobile telephony project detailed in the original strategy has been completed with around 100 handsets (and contracts) homed on a single service provider.</p> <p>However, the ‘New Ways of Working’ plan and upcoming changes to legislation require that decisions be made on the future use of corporate mobiles and potentially rescinding the decision to allow the use of ‘Bring Your Own Device’ (BYOD).</p> <p>The Right to Disconnect legislation would require EEBC to ensure that its staff cannot be contacted outside of their normal working hours. This would be difficult to manage if the user has email or Teams on their personal device.</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>Further work is required to ascertain and understand business requirements for mobile telephony. This will take into account that many staff will have (and may prefer to use) their own devices and the Council’s data security requirements.</p>	<p>The likely solution is to agree to provide corporate handsets to those in qualifying roles and to ensure that people are able to switch these off when not working.</p> <p>This would not prevent people using their EEBC laptop for Email and Teams calls outside of their normal working pattern, but it would have to be a direct choice on their part to do so.</p>
<p><b>Applications &amp; Resident Services</b> <b>Major applications</b></p> <p>Whilst a number of the council’s major applications (Financials, Payments, HR/Payroll) are delivered as SaaS a number (Planning, Building Control, Environmental Health, Revenues &amp; Benefits) are still run on premise. Several factors determine how services are provisioned including availability of a suitable SaaS offering, cost and the staff resource (both IT and departmental) required to identify, procure and implement a change in service provision.</p>	<p><b>Applications &amp; Resident Services</b> <b>Major applications</b></p> <p>The plan for Major applications remains the same with a view that future products when procured would be considered on a Cloud Preference basis. In some cases, this may become standard as larger vendors look to provide cloud service in preference to supporting on-premise setups.</p>

Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Applications &amp; Resident Services</b> <b>Major applications – (Cont.).</b></p> <p>Work is currently in progress to replace the existing Revenues &amp; Benefits Document Management System (DMS) which is aged and unsupported with a SaaS solution. There is existing Capital Budget provision of for this project, on-going revenue implications are yet to be determined. Following selection and implementation, it is envisaged that a further project will consider options for either upgrading the main Revenues &amp; Benefits application to SaaS or moving to a different SaaS provider.</p> <p>There are a number of interlinked projects running across Planning and IT including a significant number of service upgrades. This work is likely to continue for at least a further 18 months at which point we will have a better understanding of our future business requirements and options, and the continued use or otherwise of the existing</p>	<p><b>Applications &amp; Resident Services</b> <b>Major applications – (Cont.).</b></p> <p>The Revenues &amp; Benefits DMS project is currently underway with the first phase (comprising the core modules) expected to be delivered before the end of January 2025.</p> <p>The second phase comprising of additional integrations will be started and completed in the summer of 2025 after the annual billing cycle has been completed.</p> <p>Work continues in the Planning area with planned updates and upgrades now regularly scheduled into workplans.</p> <p>As expected, the plan to migrate the Planning software into the datacentre continues. Once this has been completed future projects will look at the viability of migrating to IaaS/PaaS where applicable.</p>



## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>Planning application. In the meantime, following the planned move to a hosted data centre consideration will be given to the benefits of migrating the existing Planning service onto IaaS/PaaS.</p> <p>The housing application, Civica Abritas, is currently hosted with the contract due for renewal in Autumn 2023. Having considered a number of options it has been decided to switch to Civica's SaaS. This option being marginally cheaper than the alternatives.</p>	
<p><b>Minor Applications</b> There are numerous smaller applications being used by teams throughout the council. It is likely that a small number of these could be incorporated into other applications which have the necessary functionality. Eg: The My Council Services application contains an Allotments module.</p>	<p><b>Minor Applications</b> The work continues to reduce the application estate, but in some circumstances, it is more cost effective to have a new solution.</p> <p>An example being a Licensing product that is being moved to a cloud-based service hosted by the software provider.</p>

Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Minor Applications – (Cont.).</b> Opportunities for such application rationalisation will be sought and progressed where practical, although any savings achieved by such work will be small.</p> <p>Other applications, such as the Playhouse ticketing system and the separate events booking software will require work to define the business requirements before alternatives can be sourced</p>	<p><b>Minor Applications – (Cont.).</b> <i>As above.</i></p>
<p><b>Resident Services:</b> Delivery of improved public facing services is progressing with work to complete the migration from the existing forms software into My Council Services (MCS) due to complete by End of October. Separately, work is well advanced on bookings and Waste Services.</p> <p>We will work with the Communications Team to instigate a programme of work focussed on delivering improved, online, resident services. This will encompass an upgrade and improvements to the</p>	<p><b>Resident Services:</b> Work on the forms is at an advanced stage and the delayed migration of Waste Services (Garden and General) is due to go-live early in the next year.</p> <p>A project is underway that will see primary websites migrated to Drupal 10 in the new year. One site might be migrated to an alternative platform after a feasibility study has been completed.</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>corporate website (using LocalGov Drupal) and a review of online transactional services. Capital funding for this project was approved by S&amp;R Committee (28/3/2023) which, depending upon the level of design services required, is likely to be sufficient.</p>	<p>A second phase of this work will be the complete overhaul of the main EEBC website for which some additional funding will be required in 2025 in order to complete it to coincide with the move to 70 East Street.</p>
<p><b>Security</b> <b>General IT Security</b> The move away from Citrix to corporate laptops requires us to rethink our security boundaries and the associated risks and mitigations. The upgraded corporate network will be designed to provide secure access to hosted corporate services as well as, where possible, seamless access to our SaaS providers and the use of always-on VPN technology assessed.</p>	<p><b>Security</b> <b>General IT Security</b> The likely removal of the Citrix environment remains a plan once the work to secure the network has been completed and the move to the Datacentre in place.</p>

Approved ICT Roadmap Element (September 2023)	Update (December 2024)
<p><b>Security</b> <b>General IT Security – (Cont.)</b> Currently corporate laptops are deployed with Windows 10 which is scheduled to go end of life in late 2025. In tandem with the corporate laptop programme we will develop a new, secure, corporate Windows 11 laptop image. As part of this build existing security tools will be reviewed and the benefits or otherwise of replacing these with Microsoft equivalent products (included as part of an enhanced Microsoft licence) evaluated.</p>	<p><b>Security</b> <b>General IT Security – (Cont.)</b> A project for the migration to Windows 11 is underway as part of an overall review of our Microsoft Licencing Agreement.  Windows 11 has been tested in ICT and a small select group of officers will have this deployed to their laptops ahead of a system wide upgrade in 2025.</p>
<p><b>CyberSecurity:</b> Recent Microsoft workshops have enabled the IT Team to upskill their security knowledge across a number of areas. That said, IT Security is a specialist area which requires a level of knowledge and focus beyond the team’s current skillset and capacity. Whilst the introduction of a hosted Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) service in 2022 provides some level of external assurance, it is considered insufficient to counter the ever-increasing threat of cyber-attack.</p>	<p><b>CyberSecurity:</b> Considerable attention has been paid to this element of the roadmap with secured funding set aside to continue the hardening of the IT estate. There are multiple workstreams that are being managed to ensure that critical systems and line of business applications are maintained while the underlying hardware either on premise or in the cloud is updated.  The existing SOC (Security Operations Centre) and SIEM (Security</p>

## ICT Roadmap – Update December 2024

<p>In the short-term it is proposed we maintain the existing SIEM service through to May 2024 whilst we consider options. From 2024-25 onwards it is proposed that new revenue funding is agreed to provide both a SIEM and fund specialist IT Security consultancy services to undertake regular reviews of our security posture and to assist the IT Team implement recommendations.</p> <p>A key area of our defence against a successful attack is user education. With SMT approval we will implement mandatory IT Security training for all users of our IT services and will schedule regular simulated attacks (eg: Phishing attack) to identify areas of weakness which require further attention</p>	<p>Information and Event Management) systems have been extended and a new Network Monitoring tool installed this year (2024).</p> <p>EEBC is joining the Cyber Assessment Framework for local government (CAF) and will in the coming year undertake the initial scoping and assessment phases.</p> <p>A replacement secure mail gateway will go-live in December 2024 that includes a Cloud Access Security Broker to augment our security arrangements in the Cloud (irrespective of the provider).</p> <p>The Phishing Simulation provider has been replaced and a plan to provide new modules and monitoring is underway.</p>
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