



Getting value for money from ICT

Organisations large and small, public and private are now heavily dependent on Information Communications & Technology (ICT), and the staff who provide and support it. Concerns about security of information, malicious attacks on networks and compliance with regulatory requirements (Data Protection, Freedom of Information) have become an increasing burden on senior executives.

Yet many chief executives, directors and senior management are uncertain whether they have the right systems and ICT staff for their organisations' needs, nor are they necessarily comfortable that they are spending the considerable investment in the best way. Whether your IT service is outsourced or in-house, SOLACE Enterprises can give you an independent, expert view in language you will understand.

How we can help

SOLACE Enterprises is offering a new service in Scotland that utilises the extensive technological and, equally importantly, the business expertise of our senior ICT consultants. This service will provide an assessment of your ICT activities and performance; identify key areas where there are potentially better or more cost-effective solutions; identify where there are risks to the Council's information or assets and provide recommendations for the development or modification of your ICT strategy.

The detail

The initial stage will undertake a confidential assessment of current ICT performance from both the ICT (delivery) and user perspectives, comparing these with industry standard criteria, including the well-established benchmark data available from SOCITM (Society of IT Managers — the well-established public sector body). This will be derived primarily from: Service Level Agreements (internal and external); supplier contracts; policies and standards; regular performance reports and statistics. Findings will be summarised in a report which will highlight key areas where it is proposed action be focused.

Once the initial report has been reviewed with you, and changes and emphases agreed and accommodated, a programme of interviews and other appropriate mechanisms will be agreed and undertaken. This will include discussions with elected members, directors, heads of service, managers and staff both within ICT and in all other departments. Where relevant, it will also involve discussion with key suppliers.

Findings, recommendations and a best value action plan will then be delivered to you in confidence. Whilst the format will be agreed with you beforehand, the scope will answer such questions as:

Desktop Services: are users receiving a high quality; is the cost per desktop comparable with best value criteria?

Network(s): are they secure; is capacity in all areas appropriate to needs; are they resilient (i.e. are there any single points of failure ?)

Servers: is the server room in an appropriate location; is it secure; is it safe from natural hazards; is there sufficient resilience; are costs optimised through rationalisation of server numbers?

Applications: do users have access to applications best suited to their jobs; are these supported and maintained?

Projects: are IT projects being delivered on time and to budget; are they managed according to PRINCE2; are the cost savings and other benefits being achieved?

Policies: are there ICT policies; are they adhered to; do all employees understand their obligations, and the penalties associated with contravention of certain policies and regulatory requirements?

The report will quantify the cost savings and other benefits which could accrue from implementation of its recommendations.

Our experienced consultant

The review will be carried out by Jim O Hagan who has over 30 years' experience in ICT. He has over 20 years' experience in systems analysis, design and management for large UK and US public and private sector businesses. He has also worked with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, London Borough of Lambeth, and the Scottish Borders Council.

For further information please contact the Resource Centre. You can either phone on **0845 601 0649** or email **resourcecentre@solaceenterprises.com** To find out more about SOLACE Enterprises and our full range of consultancy services see **www.solaceenterprises.com**

