Select Committee on Economic Regeneration 11th January 2006

Joint Report of the Corporate e-Champion and the Director of Finance

E-Government Progress Report

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with information about our latest Implementing Electronic Government submission to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on 19th December 2005.

2. To provide Members with the final report on the Council's performance against Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 157, which required 100% e-enablement of all services by 1st January 2006.

3. To provide Members with an update on the Council's position regarding the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) programme for 'Priority Services and Transformation Outcomes'.

4. To provide Members with information about the next phase of the National e-Government Programme.

Background

IEG5

5. We have provided the ODPM with our IEG5 submission, in the prescribed format and within the deadline of 19th December 2005 after approval by Cabinet on 14th December 2005. This is now published on our website along with other plans and polices.

6. This statement confirmed our good progress with e-Government and our intentions to meet all the targets set by the ODPM. However, as will be covered in further paragraphs, the national picture is that the programme has been a major success in terms of e-enabling services, but there is a big gap between what is possible and what citizens are actually exploiting. We believe this is reflected locally at Dudley.

BVPI 157

7. The Council has achieved the target of 100% e-enablement as measured by BVPI 157 and as recorded on the ESD Toolkit.

8.	The 29 'Required' Priority Outcomes were required to be delivered by end December 2005. Our IEG5 return to the ODPM confirmed that we were still on target to achieve all of this within the deadline.

9.	There are a further 25 'Good' Priority Outcomes that require completion for end March 2006. We confirmed our intention to deliver all of this within the deadline in our IEG5 submission.

10.	Of these 25 'Good' Outcomes, 11 have already been completed and 14 are still to be completed, although some of these are already at a very advanced stage.

11.	The remaining 14 Good Outcomes are listed in order of anticipated risk in Appendix A, with those highest risk listed first.

Next Phase

12.	The next phase is now emerging. This will be based around driving take-up of e-enabled services and of transforming local services. A rough timescale is emerging of 2005-2010.

13.	The government will be launching a national advertising campaign using the press, radio and outdoor media. They will be targeting the 46% of the population that they have identified as already carrying out their business on-line. The harder to reach groups will be the subject of future initiatives. This will be followed up after the local elections by a local 'call to action' which will be on a regional/sub-regional basis. Our Marketing and Communications service will be co-ordinating this with other West Midlands councils and with any of our own Dudley based marketing and promotion campaigns.

14.	Council based services will also be integrated over a period of time with the national portal website www.direct.gov.uk. This will mean that citizens can access our website directly or through Directgov acting as an intermediary.

15.	The national strategy 'Transformational Government – Enabled by Technology' is likely to have some influence over councils during 2006 and we will be keeping closely engaged with the deployment of this strategy.

16.	Locally at Dudley there will be many opportunities to build on what we have in place, to improve quality and standards, to integrate electronic channels more closely with telephones/face-to-face and Dudley Council Plus.

Finance

17.	The costs of meeting the BVPI 157 targets and ODPM priorities will have to be met from within existing resources or bid for from new funding streams. To date, much of the funding for projects has come from a combination of departmental funds, ICT corporate strategy fund and IEG monies. IEG4 has attracted further funding of £150,000 for 2005/6. We do not anticipate any further IEG funding beyond this. The take-up of electronic channels provides scope for efficiency savings which will contribute to our Gershon efficiency targets.

Law

18. Section III of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything which is incidental to, conductive to or which facilitates the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

19. The introduction of electronic services and the ability for people to access the Council from free facilities such as PCs in Libraries, and PCs in their own homes 24 hours per day 7 days per week is intended to make the council more accessible and transparent. Some of the Priority Outcomes are directly relevant to those with disabilities, for example the Council Website has to meet national and international accessibility standards for those with impaired eyesight.

20. The government's initial marketing campaign is deliberately targeted at those who are already using the Internet to self-serve by booking holidays, making enquiries, paying bills etc. However, this is intended to free up channels such as telephones and face-to-face to become more available to those who perhaps will benefit the most from a more personal contact with the council.

Recommendation

21. It is recommended that:-

*   Members acknowledge the success of the council in meeting the targets set for the end December 2005.

*   Members consider the remaining 14 ''Good' Priority Outcomes and determine whether they wish to make their own assessment of progress in any specific areas.

*   Members acknowledge and support the achievements to date, and also support the planned take-up phase where the real benefits should arise.

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(e-Champion)

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List of Background Papers

- Monthly snapshots of performance against BVPI 157 are stored on the e-Dudley Intranet site at http://insidedudley/edudley/edudley.asp using the 'BVPI 157' menu.

- The ESD Toolkit is available online at www.esd-toolkit.org (although registration is required for full access to all the facilities).

- The ODPM Priority Outcomes can be viewed on the Internet at www.localegov.gov.uk and our own performance management system can be viewed on the Intranet at http://vpqd/poc .

- Appendix B contains a glossary of terms.

Outstanding Good Priority Outcomes

POC Ref.	Description	Owner	Comment
G2	Community Websites	DELL	The directorate has identified potential suppliers of suitable solutions and are committed to meeting the target.
G12	Smartcards	DELL	There is recognition nationally that G12 is difficult to achieve and therefore DMBC's position with this project is not unique, in fact we are probably ahead of many other councils. We expect to be sufficiently advanced/committed that the target will be considered as met by end March.
G8	Single Business Account	DUE	This was profiled nationally as the second most difficult of the 'Good' Priority Outcomes, and the directorate should be complimented for the significant progress made, given its inherent complexity and initial ownership issues. Current plans envisage a phase 1 implementation within the target date.
G24	Customer Relationship Management Integration through workflow	CATS	Nationally this has been assessed as one of the more difficult targets to meet. The CRM system includes a workflow facility and this should be operational by the target date. CATS have an interface/integration strategy, and work is in progress with the supplier towards implementation. Workflow is well established in Revenues and Benefits and Process WorkFlow is now available within the CATS team.
G17	Joint Assessments Using Mobile Technology	SSD	WE have recently carried out an assessment which indicates we may well meet or come close to meeting the requirements. This needs to be confirmed.
G22	Internet Targets and Measures	DC Plus	We are engaged on the ESD Toolkit volumetrics pilot and this should provide sufficient basis to claim completion by the target date.
G25	Single Notification of Change of Address	CATS	The CATS Development Team consulted on a change of address proposal in late 2005. Provided this is followed through we should be able to deliver this outcome on target.
G14	GIS-based presentation of information on roadworks	DUE	There is a clear plan and this should be delivered within target.

POC Ref.	Description	Owner	Comment
G15	Mobile processing of Council Tax and Housing Benefit claims directly from citizens' homes	Finance	This is all part of the implementation of new software and hardware associated with replacing the legacy mainframe service and should be achieved within target.
G18	E-Skills Training	C Execs	An e-skills training pilot (European Computer Driving License) project is in progress within the Directorate of Finance and there is a dependency on the review of the pilot to help formulate the Council e-Skills training policy. A review of the pilot has been promised and should be carried out soon to support the formulation of the policy.
G19	Adoption of ISO 15489 for Electronic Document Records Management	ICTS	The council has formally adopted the standard and work is in progress to identify the current status and any gaps that will need to be addressed
G21	Compliance with Government Interoperability Framework (e-GIF)	ICTS	We already meet all interoperability requirements that we are aware of and we are developing our capabilities for the future.
G20	Conformance with level AA of W3C Web Accessibility Initiative	ICTS	We now have a Content management system for our website and this goes a long way to ensuring standards are met. Some pages are already compliant and this will increase over time. We will achieve a satisfactory level before the target.
G23	Adoption of recognised guidelines for usability of website design	ICTS	We have adopted the guidelines and are ensuring that these are being applied. We will achieve a satisfactory level before the target.

ICT Glossary

Access Channels	The means by which citizens can access information or services from the council, such as phone, walk-in centre, Internet etc
Authentication	The process of ensuring that someone, often a computer user is the person they claim to be and therefore entitled to a specific services
Broadband	A service which enables high speed connection between computers
BVPI 157	An Audit Commission indicator which tracks an authority's performance in making its services capable of electronic delivery and access.
Change Management	The process by which organisations develop and improve and the means by which that change is managed.
e-democracy	The process of allowing citizens to contribute to the democratic process electronically. Include consultation, registration and voting.
e-enablement	The process of making services electronically accessible, for instance through the Internet
e-procurement	Acquiring and transacting purchases and contracts electronically
EDRM	Electronic Document & Records Management
ESD toolkit	A system set up by the IDEA for recording and measuring interactions with the public to assess progress towards developing electronic solutions
IEG Statement	Implementing Electronic Government, a report that Local Authorities have had to produce for the last 4 years to obtaining limited funding to support e-government initiatives
Infrastructure	The combination of equipment that an organisation uses to deliver services, in this case an electronic service.
Interaction	The point at which the citizen and Council come together - could be a payment or request for information or services etc
Modems	Equipment that links Computers together over voice telephone lines
Network	A physical structure which enables information and messages to flow between computers (usually in the form of a fibre-optic cable) and supported by appropriate programmes and hardware
Priority Outcomes	A set of 73 Specific targets that the ODPM requires local authorities to achieve. They are broken down in Required (29 targets) required by the 31/12/2005, Good (25 targets) required by 30/3/2006 and Excellent (19 targets) for high striving authorities.
Web Content Management	A system which allows dynamic web content to be generated and modified more efficiently by non technical staff.