**IT strategy**

**Background -**

As part of the Transformation process, services have been realigned, and the previous business support functions for different service areas have been merged into one Business and Transformation Service. One of the responsibilities of the Business and Transformation Service is that of the IT and associated budgets.

**What’s Changed? -**

The result is a central resource to address overall service requirements, supporting all services equally, whilst also having an overview of requirements, and interdependencies.

Budgets have been centralised and processes streamlined, there is one point of contact to direct enquires, and to work in partnership with our Corporate IT colleagues. Work is underway to consider 4 main areas of work:

**Communication**

This strand will review our current communication methods and their effectiveness and suitability for future use, and will encompass internal communication, communication with the public, and communication with our partners.

There are also exciting plans in place to redesign the website, which has not been modified significantly in 6-7 years. The current restructure provides the opportunity to move to a new look website, with a shift in focus and structure of the current content, and to enable digital inclusion.

**Connectivity**

Developments such as wise working - hot desking from multiple locations in an efficient manner instead of being bound to a desk at a single site are leading to greater requirements for wireless connection to corporate systems, linking in to the Corporate roll out plan for wireless. In addition, we are working closely with partner organisations such as Health, which means that we need to be able to use other networks, and the need to be able to share out networks is increasing.

**System developments**

There are several large system developments affecting core systems in the pipeline– such as an upgrade to the database where we keep all out client information, a move to paperless files, improvements to our HR systems. The IT Strategy Project group will ensure that we are taking these developments into account when making decisions, and are able to use and prioritise our resources effectively.

**Device management**

A single approach to managing assets is required to ensure consistency and transparency. In addition, strategic and coordinated approach is required to ensure different devices are compatible and compliment rather than duplicate, and are sustainable, affordable and fit for the future.

**What difference has it made?**

Work has recently started and will result in a whole host of benefits. We will be modernising our ways of working, making sure our work force have the right device and the right access for their job. This in turn will mean good customer service, as well as taking advantage in the growth of new technology.

We will also growing in our ability to provide easily accessible and up to date information electronically. A user friendly website providing bilingual advice and information so that we help people to help themselves where possible will be a clear indication of this.

As well as helping our citizens to be well informed, more independent and self caring, we will be better at providing information for health and social care practitioners, ensuring effective interfaces and better integrated care co-ordination and information sharing. This will reduce duplication and minimise bureaucracy so as to reduce multiple professional client assessments and visits and better, informed decision making. Of course, we will also work to ensure limited funds are maximised.