



North Hertfordshire District Council

Implementing Electronic Government Statement 2

October 2002

Final Version

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1. Vision

The Council's vision for North Hertfordshire is to:

'Lead the community, together with our partners, in promoting the economic, social and environmental wellbeing, and enhancing the quality of life of North Hertfordshire's Communities'

This vision is supported by a number of priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Agenda and a set of key aims and objectives described in the previous IEG statement.

1.1 Headlines

Organisational Vision - It became apparent that the Council's 'Organisational Vision' Fundamental Service Review (FSR) needed to be more wide ranging if it was to encompass business process re-engineering and make the desired step-change in the way the Council delivers its services. It was therefore necessary to enhance this FSR and as a result it was re-positioned as the 'Access to Services' FSR. This enabled the Council to prioritise the provision of quality, accessible services to our citizens, directly address the aims and objectives of IEG1, and underpin this with both organisational change and with the production of an IT Service Improvement Plan – the main output of our IT FSR.

The 'Access to Services' FSR was initiated in January 2002 and has resulted in the production of a draft strategy which is currently under consultation. This strategy forms the main thrust of this IEG statement.

Community - It is the Council's intention to develop a robust and proactive Local Strategic Partnership. A launch event held in June 2002 drew over 150 people including: representatives from local schools and colleges; voluntary organisations; Parish Councils; the Police; Health Authority; County Council; and elected Members. The purpose of this event was to inform the community on the objectives for an LSP and determine the issues the partnership should tackle. The consultation highlighted the need for this partnership to work closely to avoid duplication of effort. It was also determined that initial development should be driven by the Council, meetings should be kept to a minimum and innovative use made of communications such as the Internet and email groups - vital to the parishes and remote areas of our rural communities.

Around 30 organisations have since volunteered to join a steering group, the first meeting of which is scheduled for November 2002. This will underline the relationship between the steering and core groups, agree Terms of Reference, and prioritise actions arising from the first consultation event.

Housing – A key strategic objective for the Council was to secure the transfer of its Housing stock to a registered social landlord. This was successfully achieved following a tenant's ballot and arrangements are now in place to create the new organisation. This will have a significant effect on the Council, reducing the total number of employees by a third and requiring us to re-assess our property requirements.

Political – In May 2002, the Council brought in changes to the decision making process with the introduction of a new Cabinet system. Most day to day decisions affecting the services, and the running of the Council, are now made by the Cabinet.

This is made up entirely of Councillors and works in the same way as the Cabinet in National Government with each member having a specialist area or 'portfolio'.

Partnership – The Council has various joint working arrangements in place and this is best illustrated by the partnership with Hertfordshire County Council in the 'One-Stop Shop with Many Doors' project. The Hertfordshire LGOL (Local Government Online) Partnership Statement and the Hertfordshire LGOL (Local Government Online) Bid Document are included as appendices.

The Council has invested heavily in developing a number of partnerships in order to promote the environmental, economic and social well being of the district.

In addition to the e government specific partnership, the Council, together with the County Council and others have developed:

- North Hertfordshire Highway Partnership
- The Health Improvement & Modernisation District Co-ordinating Group
- The North Herts and Stevenage Community Legal Service Partnership
- Hertfordshire Prosperity Forum and Hertfordshire Environmental Forum
- North Hertfordshire Community Safety Partnership
- North Hertfordshire Voluntary Sector Compact

The development of the North Hertfordshire Local Strategic Partnership during the autumn of 2002 will provide for the effective co-ordination and rationalisation of these partnership approaches. This in turn will focus on resolving complex cross-cutting issues and in doing so become increasingly reliant on the provision of 'seamless services' delivered electronically.

1.2 Implementation of e-Government

Here at NHDC we view e-Government as a tool to assist in the provision of quality, accessible and seamless services through a cost-effective and well-trained workforce. The key driver for this organisation is the 'Access to Services' Strategy which touches on every business area in the Council and incorporates a number of underpinning strategies. The strategy was the main output from the FSR and is designed to:

- Meet the objectives of IEG1
- Provide a better customer focus and integrated service
- Provide equality and uniformity of service regardless of the access channel
- Manage information as a resource

A great deal of investment is being made in the 'Consultation' element of this review. We intend to develop a better understanding of:

- The way we do business now
- The needs and wants of our customers in terms of service delivery
- What our customers want in relation to the changes in the nature of service delivery access channels

The production of a comprehensive 'A to Z of Services', which includes details of volumes of transactions, will help us to identify areas of business where electronic

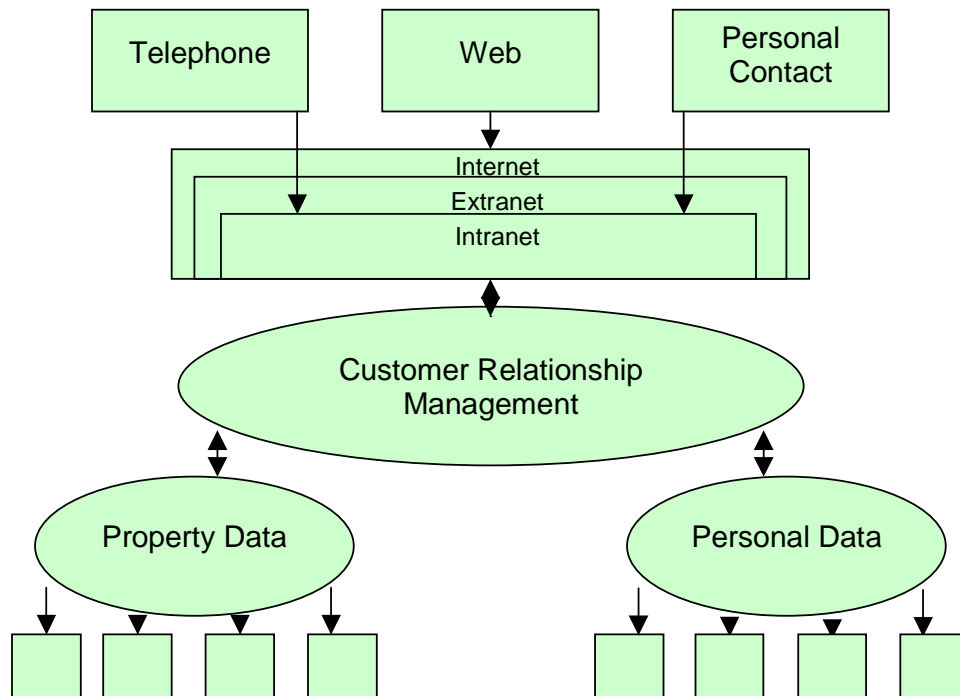
take-up is low. It will also help to inform us where areas of good practice exist which in turn will continue to inform the implementation of e-Government. The fact that we are able to combine this data with our 'Access to Services' Strategy, means that we can focus on areas of most benefit to the citizen at the same time as looking for the most effective way of actually delivering the service.

At the present time we are still researching the likely take-up of electronically available services in North Herts. However, this will not prevent the transformation of our business processes to ensure they are electronically enabled and to make them available to our customers in that form. The need for an access channel strategy is recognised and forms part of our 'Access to Services' Strategy where we are developing projects across all access channels. We are also monitoring national trends around Digital TV and other technologies whilst addressing the demand for electronic services from our own rural areas.

Whilst there are some clear short-term actions we can take, the process of transforming the business is seen as a longer-term task. At the present time the Council's website has been through the first of a two-stage enhancement. A major part of our e-Government plan is to further enhance the website to provide a fully transactional capability which will also support our internal business via an Intranet capability.

It is anticipated that many internal procedures will be streamlined and replaced by electronic versions. This will also educate our staff in the real benefits of electronic service delivery and encourage more radical thinking when re-engineering customer facing processes.

The 'Access to Services' Strategy has led to the creation of three distinct streams of activity which form part of our e-Government Implementation plan. Each activity has also been assigned an indicative cost, an owner and an implementation date. The following diagram shows the model we are adopting.



1.2.1 Information Management

The Council has now agreed its Corporate Information Strategy which contains the following objectives:

- To treat information as a corporate resource and to use it in our day to day business and to inform our Service and Financial Planning
- To work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and other organisations
- To observe legislative implications such as Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Human Rights.
- To underpin the implementation of any e-Government solution with a robust, accurate and up to date data set. This includes the need to adopt common standards such as BS7666.
- To remove the process duplication involved in maintaining and updating multiple data sets, thus facilitating integrated processes such as change of address

Elements of Implementation

Strategy To provide a single framework for all the Council's information so that it can be easily identified, addressed and applied by all users.

Applications To procure knowledge and content management software and integrate this via the Herts e-Government Partnership and other organisations.

The Council's commitment to this element of the implementation is demonstrated by the initiatives that link into this process. These are summarised below:

- **Integrated Property Database** – This is being developed as a corporate tool for maintaining accurate address information and the first development phase is nearing completion. This will also facilitate the joining of the Planning, Building Control, Land Charges and Environmental Health departments to one address set through workflow management software. Through data cleansing and BS7666 formatting this address set will be developed to be a full corporate property database and therefore provide the foundation for the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.
- **BS7666** - This address-formatting standard has been adopted by the Council as the way forward in achieving high quality address information. The integrated property data is held in a BS7666 compliant database, and the tools have already been purchased to produce BS7666 data. Once the standard has been achieved, a corporate property database can be produced.
- **Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)** - The Council is committed to the creation of an LLPG, the minimum form this will take is in the provision of a corporate property database as described above. Once established the LLPG will be advantageous in enabling the connection of service delivery and information sharing with partners.
- **Socio-Economic Map** – This has been developed to provide an accurate profile of North Hertfordshire. It allows us to overlay various data sets such as deprivation indicators, crime statistics and health information, so that we can

target service delivery more critically. The following indicators are included: age; ethnicity; access to statutory and voluntary support services; location and character of residence and whether urban or rural; levels and types of crime; perception/fear of crime; earnings levels; nature of local business; benefit uptake; and levels of disability and/or poor health. The Socio-Economic map will assist the Council in targeting take-up of electronic services and getting in touch with hard to reach sections of the community.

- **Observatories** – Being developed to host and enable distribution of information from a single source, the observatories exist purely on the Internet, and are accessible by members of each of the contributing organisations. There are two levels of information, the Hertfordshire Observatory provides district and ward level information, this is linked to the East Of England Observatory (EE DA) providing the same information at a higher geographic level. The content of the Socio-Economic Map above provides the basis of the Council's contribution to the Observatories content.

1.2.2 Access Channels

Our current thinking is that services will be provided to citizens via three principle access channels:

- Telephone
- Internet
- Personal Contact (including traditional mail)

At the present time, all indications are that the preferred method of contact is via the telephone, with over 70% of interactions delivered that way. However, as explained above, it is intended that the same internal business processes support all three channels. In line with the previous IEG statement we have already carried out improvements to telephone access:

- Through the creation of a Telephone Action Group, the Council has evaluated its use of the telephone and its Customer Care Standards. This group will be used in an advisory capacity in the implementation of a new telephone system. The Council has seen an improvement in customer satisfaction in terms of Customer Care and this is supported by statistics from independent surveys.
- The Council carried out a series of 'Mystery Shopper' telephone surveys to evaluate our telephone response and level of customer care.
- We are able to use statistics from the Council's 'Call Logger' to analyse response times, numbers of calls and associated trends.
- Another initiative was the introduction of a Staff Information Directory which contains a variety of details about the staff and their jobs. Calls can be more effectively handled as the database enables searches on first-names, surname, job-titles and key words (or parts of these) and the user is presented with details of the relevant member of staff, their role and the section in which they work. This system also allows direct e-mail contact to the individual member of staff selected.

Elements of Implementation

Telephones	Upgrade to telephone system – to allow direction of queries via an enhanced switchboard and 'first-line' directorate operators who will have access to on-line
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	information enabling them to resolve a high percentage of initial queries.
Website	To ensure the Council's website is fully transactional and available in an enhanced form via an Intranet.
Personal Contact	To meet customer requirements in terms of face to face contact by undertaking a review of the Council's portfolio of property and by providing area office functions that are integrated with other agencies and creating or adapting civic space.

1.2.3 Integration

A major challenge facing the Council as it embarks on the implementation of e-Government is that of integration. This needs to be considered in the following areas:

- the provision of a seamless service to customers by integrating business processes at all levels
- the integration with current back-office and legacy systems
- the use of Information Management systems to underpin any solution
- the requirement to ensure we can work with the Herts County '*One-stop Shop with Many Doors*'
- the use of various access channels
- alignment to national standards and infrastructure such as The Government Gateway, UK Online, Broadband and the Interoperability Framework

Elements of Implementation

Integrated Services	An ultimate aim of both this Council and the Herts ' <i>One-stop Shop with Many Doors</i> ' project is to provide accessible and meaningful services to citizens that have been personalised to meet individual needs. In order for this to be achieved, an extensive business process analysis exercise needs to be undertaken and processes re-engineered. Where possible, services will be joined-up, including with other service providers.
Electronic Procurement	To achieve direct procurement and payment from pre-selected suppliers and to other payees.
Council Tax & Benefits	The implementation of a web-enabled version of the Revenues and Benefits application is nearing completion. This is already linked to document management and workflow which has facilitated a paper-free environment and effective use of workflow as a management tool. Additional investment in this business area will be aimed at electronic billing and greater use of electronic payment. The web interface will also allow customers to view their own accounts and track their own benefit claims.
Electronic Democracy	To provide Members' email addresses on-line and associated mobile technology to support their work in the community.

Planning Applications To provide an 'end-to-end' on-line planning service.

Personal/Property Database To create applications that can manage information and build relationships between different data sets.

Each business manager will form a business case relating to their own e-Government implementations with an 'invest to save' methodology being used. This will ensure we are able to meet the overall objective of providing cost-effective improvements to service delivery supported by overall savings in efficiency and resources. In addition to this, each business case will be considered, approved and monitored by the 'Access to Services' team and subject to a systematic review process.

2. Priority Outcomes and Services

The Council is committed to implementing electronic service delivery as an integral part of our vision *to improve the quality of life for everyone in North Hertfordshire*.

This vision is delivered by:

- Working closely with the communities to ensure that we are promoting our services in the ways that best meet the needs of our customers
- Continually ensuring that our services are accessible and available
- Using electronic means to make services more efficient
- Ensuring that the Best Value process is geared towards improving quality of life

The following shows a summary of the way we are using or plan to use e-Government to address strategic priorities.

Priority	Initiative
Customer Service	Information about all Council Services is now available on-line.
	Direct-dial facility on the switchboard to promote access to Council officers and speed up service delivery
	Consultation via the website about accessibility of Council Services
	It is now possible to pay Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates on-line. Plans are in place to expand this facility to a comprehensive range of Council payments by March 2003
	On-line facilities to request a Housing Benefits home visit or report a missed dustbin or abandoned vehicles or to book a swimming lesson etc.
Social Inclusion	We are in the process of transferring a number of databases onto the website. These include Community Information, Parish & Town Council data and Transport and Planning.
	Rural isolation is a major issue in North Herts and this is particularly evident in transport. We are in the process of updating the website to ensure maximum information about transport opportunities in the district.
	We are in the process of developing links from our website to the Peoples Network (in partnership with Hertfordshire Library Service) and the National Grid for Learning. In addition opportunities to integrate the website into other community based websites are being

Priority	Initiative
	pursued.
Democracy & Accountability	e-mail link to all District Councillors who wish to make use of the facility
	The process to report Complaints, Compliments and Comments on-line
	Council reports, minutes and agenda are available on-line
Improving the quality of life of young people & families at risk	24 hour telephone access to the authority
	Website updated information to meet the needs of young people
	Community safety information available electronically
	Guidance for Housing Benefits on-line
	On-line booking for leisure facilities and play-schemes
Improving the quality of life for older people	Remote monitoring alarm system for older people at risk
	Training in using the Internet
	Provision of Internet links in sheltered housing schemes
	Information available electronically on bus pass applications
	Direct dial for telephone access to the authority
	Booking Meals on Wheels
Promoting healthier communities	Book on-line for fitness sessions
	Health promotion information available via the website
	Information about recreational facilities
	Outdoor opportunities such as allotments available on-line
Creating safer and stronger communities	Website dedicated to Community Safety
	Details of CCTV in the District
	Priority issues in the Community Safety Strategy
	Details of the Local Strategic Partnership on-line
	Establishment of information sharing protocols between the Council and Hertfordshire Police
	Out of hours facilities available
Transforming our local environment	Abandoned cars notification on-line
	Planning information on-line
	Details of parks and street events on-line
	Community groups data
	Register to assist with community visioning
Promoting the economic vitality of locations	Parish Councils data on-line
	Tourism data via link sites
	Training links to promote the local economy

Priority	Initiative
	Promotion of local businesses via web links
	Business Directory that has been 'geo-coded' for ease of use
	Links via the website to demographic data
	Shopping facilities promoted via the website

3. Self Assessment and Local e-Organisation

Analysis of e-Government Preparedness - The Council used the PEG (Promoting Electronic Government) methodology to carry out a self-assessment exercise. The first stage involved a comprehensive assessment and was completed by over 230 staff, including managers and directors across the Council. This was followed with the 'Fast-track Questionnaire' which was completed by members of various groups including our Telephone Action Group, Customer Relations Officers and Performance Champions. The exercise analysed the individual's perception, in both their own business area and corporately in the following nine areas:

- Improving Customer Access
- Using Information in Service
- Service Processes
- Joining up
- Service Choices
- Business Processes
- Partnerships
- Resources
- Strategic Procurement

The results of the second stage have been recently collated and we are in the process of analysing them in more detail.

Analysis of the potential to integrate services - In addition to the two PEG assessments the IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency) was invited to test the potential for integrating public access countywide to deliver the concept of '*a one stop shop with many doors*'. The case builds on the work that the IDeA was involved in during 2001, which reviewed Hertfordshire councils' IEG statements and helped to shape a vision for collaboration on integration of access.

A report was issued that set out the IDeA's response in terms of the following objectives:

- identify practical proposals for configuring 'e' enabled integrated public access to services
- identify the benefits that should flow directly to the public
- identify the benefits that should flow to each of the councils involved
- identify the likely order of investment required from each of the councils
- set out the development programme that the councils would need to follow
- set out a proposed project management structure
- outline the principles of a possible partnership agreement

3.1 Theme 1: Transactions

The Council has developed a methodology for measuring progress towards 100% electronic enablement. This was viewed by District Audit who concurred that this method is both robust and accurate.

The process started by compiling a list of public facing services from each of the Council's five Directorates. This has been challenged and comparisons will now be made to the Electronic Service Delivery Toolkit as developed through PEG. Added to the list of services were additional columns to record the way we currently interact with our customers – telephone, email, letter or face-to-face. These columns were based on the definition for BVPI 157 (a Best Value Performance Indicator for electronic services). However, at this point in time we are still developing our methodology for 'Access to Community, Professional or Business Networks' or 'Procurement'.

Volumes of interactions have also been added and we are now able to highlight areas where improvements can be made and where development effort needs to be focused.

The following table is a snapshot of the 'A to Z' of services. It contains details of 222 service lines that are arranged directorate by directorate, but can also be grouped alphabetically or with reference to the transaction type. When recording the total number of transactions, we took into account all interactions relating to the service, regardless of the channel. This enabled us to illustrate which services generated the most enquiries (including repeat interactions from the same customers) and enables some interesting comparisons to be made. For example, the Right to Buy Service generates 28,000 interactions per year which far outweighs the actual number of properties sold.

Service	Contact	Directorate	Total Annual Transactions	Providing Information			
				T	L	EM	CS
Accommodation, Private Rented	Sue Byard	Housing	650	5%	0%	20%	75%
Aids and Adaptations, Undertaking	Susan McOwen	Housing	500	100%	0%	0%	0%
Aids and Adaptations, General Advice	Susan McOwen	Housing	2,000	10%	0%	0%	90%
Council Housing, Cash Incentive Scheme	Geoff Collins	Housing	140	50%	5%	20%	25%
Council Housing, Rent Payment, Cash	Bill Graves	Housing	140,000	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Council Housing, Repairs	Michael Clark	Housing	92,000	15%	n/a	25%	60%
Council Housing, Right to Buy	Karen Leigh	Housing	28,000	50%	0%	50%	0%

In terms of measuring BVPI 157, the Council's performance improved from 19% (at the end of 2001/2) to 34% (mid 2002) following the introduction of the enhanced website and is forecasted to achieve our desired 40% during this financial year. We are encouraging all members of the Council to become involved in the measurement of electronic compliance and will be running a series of workshops with designated 'Process Owners' to challenge their thinking and to stimulate activity around identifying areas of improvement.

During the workshops there will be increased e-Government awareness and a questionnaire will be completed about each process to back up our current measurement.

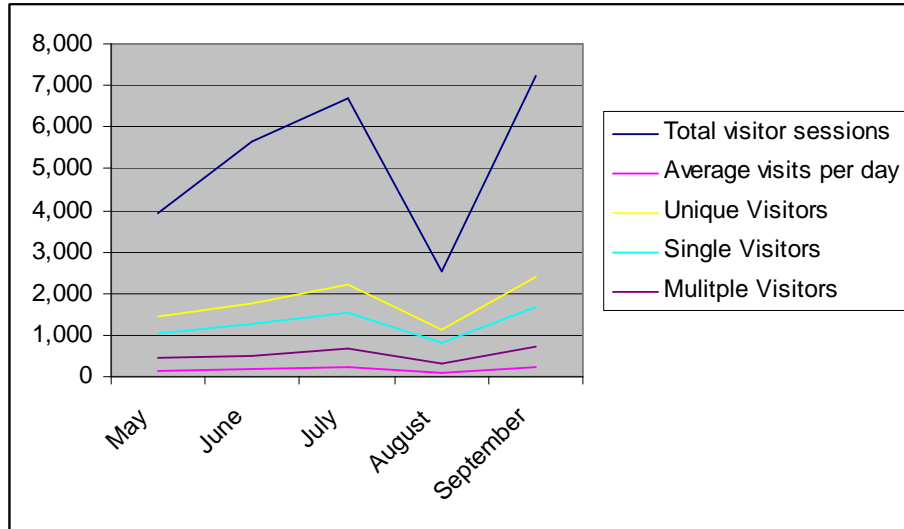
Interaction Type	2001/2	Actual	Forecast		
		2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	Dec 05
Providing Information					
Total types of interaction identified		179	187	196	205
% e-enabled		74%	90%	95%	100%
Collecting Revenue					
Total types of interaction identified		49	54	56	59
% e-enabled		31%	69%	96%	100%
Providing Benefits & Grants					
Total types of interaction identified		23	23	23	23
% e-enabled		13%	26%	54%	100%
Consultation					
Total types of interaction identified		113	118	124	130
% e-enabled		10%	10%	45%	100%
Regulation (issuing licences)					
Total types of interaction identified		69	69	72	72
% e-enabled		11%	20%	79%	100%
Applications for Services					
Total types of interaction identified		121	121	139	139
% e-enabled		12%	52%	87%	100%
Booking venues, resources & courses					
Total types of interaction identified		55	57	60	63
% e-enabled		10%	19%	90%	100%
Paying for goods & services INLCUDED IN COLLECTING REVENUE					
Providing access to community, professional or business networks NOT IDENTIFIED IN 2002/3					
Procurement NOT IDENTIFIED IN 2002/3					
Total					
Types of interaction identified		560	575	614	632
% e-enabled	19	34	54	88	100

3.2 Theme 2: Access Channels

Interim redesign of website – in December 2001, our new website was launched. It features: a comprehensive 'A to Z of Services' on which searches can be performed; e-mail contact for Council services; regularly updated news and events; Council job vacancies; and some replacement bill facilities. Customers are also able to register 'comments, compliments and complaints' on-line, along with requests for services. In addition to this, information on Councillors and committee meetings is provided along with a special section on business and the local economy.

Customer feedback on the website has been excellent and site usage has been maintained at a steady level since its introduction. We are able to use the feedback to inform us on future development needs and through the formation of an 'Internet Project Group' we are able to address the business needs across the Council.

Over the past few months site usage has been rising fairly steadily. Site visits have risen from 2,700 in February to 7217 visits in September. The graph overleaf illustrates this trend.



Site usage statistics together with information from feedback forms are helping to provide a picture of the most popular areas of the site. These are shown in the table below:

10 most frequently visited areas (Web Trends Report)	10 most popular areas (User feedback forms)
Job Vacancies	A-Z of Services
A-Z of Services	Information on North Herts
Council Information	Information on Council Services
News Releases	Leisure Information
Search Facility	Events Listings
Leisure Information	Job Vacancies
Events Listings	News Releases
Links section	On-line enquiries
Community Organisations Listing	Business and Local Economy
On-line enquiries	Comments, Compliments, Complaints

Requests for Services – several key services have been added to the website as follows:

- **On-line reception service** – This allows a customer to email a query, in a structured format, about any service. This is then dealt with by a member of staff in the appropriate service area, and the customer is given an immediate response. This very much reflects customers' current expectations on email usage and has proved a popular addition to the website.
- **Comments, Compliments and Complaints** – The Council now provides an on-line service that allows the customer to register either a comment, compliment or complaint. Again these are handled by specific personnel and the customer is given a reply within pre-determined timescales. Customers now make greater use of the on-line method than the traditional methods.
- **Planning** – Information is now available on the website and a variety of forms can be downloaded. We are in the process of moving to a database that will facilitate various searches such as application number and street name. This will be extended to allow searches for planning decisions.

The second phase will see Part 1 of the Planning Register on-line, with the addition of application forms and plans. The procurement of an additional module to the Planning and Environment system will allow for greater

integration on a corporate basis and the potential integration to the Planning Portal, a project which is being evaluated.

- **Community Consultation** – The website has been used for a range of consultations including: the re-development of Hitchin Town Centre; Baldock Visioning; and the Review of Children's Services. Consultations to take place over the next year include: a Poll on whether Kennedy Gardens in Letchworth should be renamed; and consultation on council priorities and budget setting.

We are also actively considering making our Citizens Panel available via the website, and included a question in the last Citizens Panel to find out whether Panel members would be interested in having the Panel questionnaire available electronically. The on-line Citizens' Panel is being looked at to help boost response rates, particularly among younger participants who may be more inclined to respond if offered the facility to do so electronically

- **Recruitment** – Applicants applying for positions within the Council are now able to make use of an on-line recruitment facility. All vacancies are advertised on-line and forms and application packs can be downloaded. During a recent recruitment drive, the website realised over 1400 hits and a high number of application forms were downloaded. This resulted in a reduction in postage and printing costs of around £30,000.
- **Bill payments available on the website** – By using Giro Bank's BillPay facility from a direct link on our website, customers are now able to make on-line payments in respect of both Council Tax and Business Rates.

The table below shows the forecasted development of electronically supported processes across the various access channels.

Public Interactions & Main e-access Channel take-up	Forecast (000s)			
	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Local Service Websites				
Volume of interactions	150	238	388	441
Telephone				
Volume of interactions	1050	1668	2717	3088
Face to Face				
Volume of interactions	270	429	699	794
Smart Cards				
Volume of interactions				
Other electronic				
Volume of interactions	30	48	78	88

At the present time the development of an 'Access Channel Policy' is in its infancy and will be aligned with the introduction of the second stage of our enhanced website. However, the growing trend in website interactions and the feedback from our customers through the Citizens Panel and District Wide Survey continues to educate our thinking. This is seen as a priority action over the next six months.

3.3 Theme 3: Enablers

The 'Access to Services Strategy' will require core 'e-enablers' to provide technological infrastructure needed for implementation. Many of these tools are actively under development by business units within NHDC but there is a need to set

out a planned approach to developing their use which directly contributes towards the achievement of the overall strategy. The e-enablers required for this are:

Document Image Processing - This is used extensively in Revenues and Benefits and is currently being looked at in other sections. As this type of solution is viewed as a core enabler, we are evaluating this on a corporate basis.

GIS (Geographic Information System) - The Council runs a corporate GIS system for the maintenance and development of mapped information. This is the backbone for the current information management structure and provides wide access to a range of information including: details of land use; address information; demographic information; boundary (actual and political); environmental (built environment and facilities); and a range of policy based reference information.

Knowledge Management - The shift to Knowledge Management requires the nurturing of the Council's 'Information Capital' - the sharing, co-ordinating and enhancement of the potentially limitless resources of information. This requires an equal divide between process change and technological implementation. The technologies for Knowledge Management exist and are under continual development. The technical software solution which the Council implements will be identified through consultation with information users under the Information Strategy.

National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) & National Land Information Service (NLIS) - Since January 2001 the Council has been working towards a Corporate Property Database, this currently takes the form of a property database within Plantech's Acolaid software - the backbone of the Planning Control, Development Control, Building Control and Land Charges Departments. The same system is under development in Environmental Health (due for completion in December 02).

Information management staff have been successfully recruited to develop this property database into a BS7666 compliant property gazetteer, and tools have already been purchased to support this work (BS7666 compliant Oracle database, InfoTech's Omnidata's address cleansing software, and Plantech's NLPG uploader toolkit).

At present we have not committed to the NLPG, but will be exploring this option in full once the data is of a sufficient standard. Full consideration, by the Council's Management Board, will be given to this matter in the next few weeks. This will be done in co-ordination with the other Hertfordshire Authorities through a sub-group of the Hertfordshire IT Managers group. This group is also considering the method by which the National Street Gazetteer data can be included in the Hertfordshire District's embryonic Local Land and Property Gazetteer. The combination of the above supports the ongoing e-Government work to develop countywide infrastructure for the 'One-stop Shop with Many Doors' and ensure that the implementation of this project is successful.

In addition to this, we have not yet moved to NLIS Stage 1 although this is being pursued. We already receive and send searches through the DX system. The Acolaid solution for moving to NLIS Stage 3 is still in development, however it is anticipated that early next year, a seamless transfer will be provided.

We have not as yet signed the NLIS agreement due to concerns over the licence and the differential pricing - concerns which are shared by a number of other Hertfordshire Authorities. Through the above sub-group these concerns are being addressed with the aim of finding a joint solution which can be applied on a countywide basis.

3.4 Theme 4: e-Business

Aligned Service and Financial Planning

In September 2001 the authority established an Officer Team to ensure that the Best Value Performance Plan for 2002/03 contained details of the Service & Financial Planning process and also included the developmental work towards producing a Community Strategy.

The Officer Team met on a monthly basis to ensure that the Best Value Performance Plan met the criteria required by the Audit Commission but was underpinned by the impact of the Service & Financial Planning process. This process included growth and savings options that were linked to both the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the authority. The relationship between the production of the Best Value Performance Plan and the Service & Financial Planning included examples of how the Vision and the Strategic Objectives both drove resource allocation and also outlined targets to measure the management of delivering these objectives.

Examples of these targets take the form of Promises to the Community that services will be delivered and integrating the Strategic Objectives into the Performance Management System within the authority.

The success in delivering the foundations of the Community Strategy are included in the Best Value Performance Plan and include the Visioning Exercises for Baldock and Hitchin and the establishing of a Local Strategic Partnership. During 2002/03 the authority plan to extend the Visioning process to the remaining parts of the District and to develop the Local Strategic Partnership to contribute to both the consultation and managing elements of the Community Strategy.

The authority plans to include a more integrated approach towards Service & Financial Planning and the development of the Community Strategy in the 2003/04 Best Value Performance Plan.

Joint Procurement

The Council has now set up joint procurement arrangements with Herts County Council for purchases such as PCs and Communication links. We also have a Procurement Working Group analysing the way we carry out procurement, with emphasis being placed on e-Procurement and the management of related financial transactions.

Intranet/Extranet

An element of the Hertfordshire LGOL is the provision of an Intranet capability for all partners. The Council views this as a major milestone in the implementation of e-Government, and as it is the first time an Intranet has been established, the main catalyst for cultural change. The ultimate aims are to provide a common approach to the exchange of information and to facilitate the use of portal technology. In time we intend to extend this to include our strategic partners.

Financials

The Council is currently re-engineering its financial processes with initiatives in Revenues and Benefits relating to the development of on-line payments. The integration element of our e-Government implementation plan will include the analysis of the relationship between web-enabled processes and the impact on our financial systems.

Human Resources and Payroll

The Council is developing a Human Resources Strategy that not only underpins our 'Access to Services' strategy but is tailored to meet the varying demands of its implementation. This strategy should be agreed in December. We are also analysing

the management of personal data through the enhancement of the Council's Payroll system and the integration of policy information.

Rationalise portfolio of assets

The re-assessment of our property requirements had already been identified as a priority for the Council and the Housing Stock Transfer has added an additional consideration. An 'Asset Management Team' has been created to critically review our portfolio and we are working jointly with Herts County Council with a shared objective. This will take into account recommendations from the 'Access to Services' strategy around our customers' requirements particularly in the case of regional offices.

In addition to this the Council has embarked upon an innovative project to assist us in resolving our property requirements in Letchworth (one of the areas main towns and the current location of the Council's main offices). This has taken the form of a design competition (an IPPR project in association with the Design Council, CABE, LSE Cities Programme, AJ and LGA). This will assist the Council in the aspect of rationalisation but also in providing civic space and office accommodation by re-developing an existing Council building.

3.5 Theme 5: Organisational Development

In order to meet the challenge of delivering the 'Access to Services' Strategy and the implementation of e-Government, the Council will engage in a change management process underpinned by the following:

Human Resources Strategy

It will be necessary for the Council's Human Resources strategy, currently under development, to reflect the new skills this strategy will require from a reduced workforce. In addition, this strategy will need to consider the change management implications in respect of personnel matters and methods for communicating effectively with staff and their representatives.

Communications Strategy

There will be a need to adequately communicate the 'Access to Services' Strategy and its implications for both staff and customers throughout the life of the project. To some extent this is incorporated in the draft strategic priorities for 2003/4 – 2005/6, but this will need to be reiterated and adapted for particular audiences. Both the Communications and Human Resources approaches will need to make adequate provision for staff involvement in the change process and to take on board feedback on the effect of its implementation.

e-Champions

In addition to these strategies, an internal network of e-champions will be formed, under the direction of the Council's officer e-champion, Gary Bell, who is the Assistant Director of Customer Services. He will also be responsible for the implementation of the 'Access to Services' Strategy including:

- Establishing implementation team
- Ensuring effective project management
- Business process analysis and improvement
- Access channel development

The Council's member e-champion is Cllr Tricia Gibbs who will be ensuring that key objectives are met and that performance standards are acceptable.

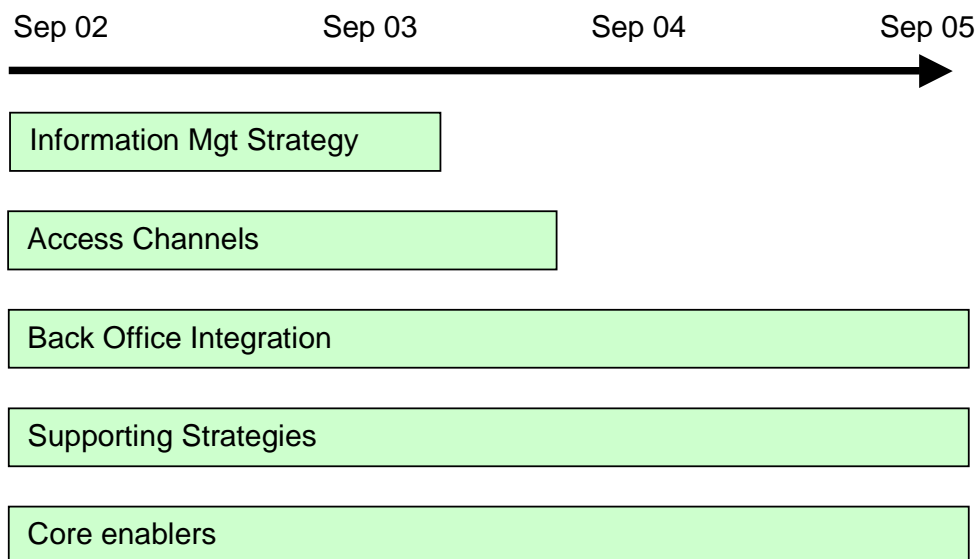
Council Support

This IEG Statement has been endorsed by the Council's Cabinet at its meeting on 19th November 2002.

4. Resources

Resources	Actuals	Forecast			
	(£'000s)	(£'000s)			
	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
IEG funds		200	200	n/k	n/k
Financial contributions from EU Funding		0	0	0	0
Financial contributions from other sources of Government Funding such as Invest to Save Budget		0	0	0	0
Financial contribution from public-private partnership		0	0	0	0
Financial contribution to or from other partnership projects - Hertfordshire LGOL Partnership		67	113	0	0
Resources being applied from internal revenue and capital budgets to improve the quality of services through e-enablement		150	716	185	n/k
Re-investment of savings produced from early e-government investment		0	0	0	0
Other resources		0	0	0	0
TOTAL		417	1029	185	n/k

The following diagram summarises the implementation phases that are described in detail in section 1.2 'Implementation of e-Government'.



The IEG grant in 2002/3 and 2003/4 is primarily being used to meet the Council's obligations under the Hertfordshire LGOL Partnership and to implement projects in phase 1 of the implementation:

- the second phase of the website development
- upgrade to telephone system and call handling capability
- integration of business processes

5. Risk Assessment

Risk	Internal / External	Impact	Probability	Mitigation
LGOL partnership fails to meet local objectives and/or provide expected business benefits.	E	High	Medium	Develop a clear understanding of the LGOL bid and the relationship between the proposed technical components and the business benefits we are seeking.
Forecasted funding is insufficient to meet project requirements.	I/E	Medium	Medium	Ensure that proposals from suppliers have clear cost structure and that an element for contingency is identified.
Project does not meet required timescales.	I	Medium	Medium	Develop robust and risk assessed project plan that receives high level sponsorship within the Council.
Electronic take-up fails to meet projections.	I	Medium	Medium	Use Communication Strategy to promote electronic services.
Services cannot be re-engineered to meet the needs of certain sections of the community.	I	Low	Medium	Ensure that electronic methods are used to complement and not replace existing channels.
An internal e-culture does not develop in line with external aspirations.	I	Medium	Low	Use HR strategy to promote cultural change along with internal working groups to champion electronic service delivery.
Insufficient investment in technological infrastructure.	I	High	Medium	Ensure the Service Improvement Plan (an output of the Council's IT FSR) addresses future infrastructure needs.
Skills and resource shortage.	I	High	Medium	Evaluate partnership arrangements with leading suppliers to fill potential skills gap.

Appendix 1 - Hertfordshire LGOL Partnership Statement

In 2001 we, the Hertfordshire local authorities, in our respective IEG statements, described the additional benefits we believed closer collaborative working amongst us all, would bring to citizens. Furthermore, we wrote about our strong commitment to the principle of joint working in order to derive economies of scale and to gain the advantages of shared knowledge and experience.

Much has happened during the last twelve months to make the idea of easier and faster access to public services in the county a reality. Following a series of conferences, a local e-forum was formed with membership reaching beyond local councils to include other public service providers in Health, the Police, NHS Direct, and the voluntary sector. A vision was agreed of how we all believe access to services should look in future based upon our collective knowledge of how our users really want to be able to interact with us. The term coined to describe this vision is *'the one stop shop with many doors'*.

With the help of the IDEA, a joint e-business plan was produced headlining common priorities and showing how we would, in partnership, achieve our aims. Our bid for LGOL funding was successful and valuable additional funding is now available to allow this innovative work to begin.

The detailed work outlined in the latest specifications (to be procured) describes the enabling technologies we will use to; create, support, and maintain a community portal; to share information and knowledge effectively amongst ourselves; and to build a common platform for the delivery of better services.

This project complements and develops the e-business models each of us describes in our individual statement. Many of the 'building blocks' we plan to introduce as part of our own individual 'e-model' will be made possible through the successful implementation of the two-year portal project.

When assessing and understanding the statements of the Hertfordshire County Council and ten district and borough councils, it is important to understand the impact that this joint project will have on progress towards 2005 targets. The detailed plan is included as an Appendix as well as being cross-referenced as appropriate in each of our IEG2 statements.

Appendix 2 - Hertfordshire LGOL Bid Document

Name of Partnership

Hertfordshire Implementing Electronic Government Action Group

Members of the Partnership

Eleven principal local authorities in the county, including the county council and ten District and borough councils. The Health Authority, NHS Direct, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Patients Advocacy Liaison Service (PALS), Police Authority, Herts Constabulary, Voluntary sector.

Lead Partner Details

Lead contact:

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Group IS Manager

Community Information

Hertfordshire County Council

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Hertford

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Goals of the partnership

- To ensure that over 1 million citizens benefit from integrated e-government services
- To establish seamless/integrated access to all partner services via a comprehensive, user-friendly community portal
- To provide personalised access to information held within the various partner organisations
- To develop common information structures supporting interoperability
- To rationalise internal processes across the eleven principal local authorities producing major savings in the longer term

Brief description of the partnership

The partnership is made up of the County Council, the ten district and borough councils in Hertfordshire, the Hertfordshire Health Authority, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire NHS Direct, the eight Hertfordshire Primary Care Trusts, the Patients Advocacy Liaison Service, the Hertfordshire Police Authority, Herts Constabulary.

In addition, there are close links with the Voluntary sector in recognition of the important role played by voluntary organisations in information provision and community development.

The partnership action group aims to use ICT to build a network of service provision across the county making it easier for citizens to find information and use services. Furthermore, the aim is to develop personalised access so services are more relevant and useful and citizens do not waste time unnecessarily searching for the information they need in their daily lives.

Description of the partnership

The process that led the Herts local authorities to produce IEG statements during 2001 resulted in a high level commitment by the Chief Executives group to adopt a

joint approach to developing e-Government solutions. The advantages would be: getting there faster together, sharing expertise, reducing risk by working collectively and realising economies of scale. The IDeA was then commissioned to analyse each IEG statement and to draw up a way forward based on the common aims identified in each statement.

Armed with a single and overarching vision for e-Government in the county, each authority invested the responsibility in senior managers to make recommendations based on business need and to develop practical solutions and projects that would take forward the joint vision. Representatives from the Health sector will attend meetings with Local Government senior managers in future.

The partnership submitted a number of innovative joint bids during the latter part of 2001. A feature of each bid is a consistent strategic vision. These included:

- A Round 4 Invest to Save bid demonstrating how the local authorities could achieve economies of scale through a joint approach to modernising government and revolutionising access to services
- A “Pathfinder” bid focused on supporting e-democracy and a community portal
- A PFI expression of interest to create vibrant and exciting e-centres offering electronic access to a wide range of services as well as e-learning in libraries and other community outlets

During November 2001, a strategic conference was held designed to establish links with the Health Authority, NHS Direct, the Police and the voluntary sector and to widen the local authority e-agenda to include integrating access to the services of these key public sector agencies. The conference succeeded in gaining commitment from Health, NHS Direct and the Police. Having considered how to improve access by the public to all of the services, a commonly accepted picture of what future public access should be like emerged.

‘A one stop shop with many doors’

This vision translates the Government's view of joined-up services into practical reality in Hertfordshire. A follow-up conference was held in early January, to capitalise on the positive commitment expressed earlier and to demonstrate how portal technologies would enable the partners to develop the “one stop shop with many doors”.

Details of the bodies which are party to the partnership and their respective contribution

Each of the eleven local authorities has developed particular expertise in the following areas:

- Broxbourne – Next Steps Centre (all age learning centre)
- Dacorum – Information Kiosks
- East Herts – Rural Enterprise (SPIC)
- Herts County Council – Transactional website and Customer Service Centre, Document, Knowledge and Content Management, e-learning, e-govt strategies
- Hertsmere – Worknet (community enterprise and e-learning)
- North Herts – 24-hour emergency services
- St. Albans – Tourism kiosks
- Stevenage – Neighbourhood Committees

- Three Rivers – Customer Service Centre and e-Pathfinder web toolkit
- Watford – Westfield (one stop) Information Centre
- Welwyn Hatfield – Inward Investment

Project introduction

The challenge for the Hertfordshire partnership is to achieve the effective delivery of electronic services by 2005. Our public-facing web services must be backed up by the automation, re-alignment and re-engineering of the internal systems within the partner organisations so that all transactions can be truly seamless. The Hertfordshire partnership's strategic vision for providing services for its communities is to adopt a portal-based solution incorporating organisational knowledge management to be implemented across all of the local authorities in the partnership.

We want to transform the public's experience of interacting with our services by providing 24/7 electronic access to local services and information. In turn, access should be integrated with our partners to ensure we satisfy the breadth of our citizens' requirements. This will be achieved by the use of common systems, protocols and infrastructure among the partner organisations. In addition, we will employ the standards set out in the e-government interoperability framework (e-gif). Working together and sharing expertise to reduce costs and to minimise risks accords with the Best Value approach to service delivery followed in each authority.

Transforming and improving interaction with the public in the areas of consultation and democracy is another key priority. For example, automating the committee paper process and incorporating the knowledge contained in these papers in a shared knowledge base will simplify public access to and involvement in the democratic process.

The Modernising Government agenda is driving us to examine our collective working practices and determine how they can be improved. To achieve this in a cost efficient manner it is imperative that we form partnerships with other key organisations, both public and private. In the electronic environment we will need to standardise on software, systems and infrastructure throughout Hertfordshire. This will enable economies of scale and help to reduce the cost of change by reducing duplication and integration costs.

Project details

We propose that all eleven local authorities will use the same organisational knowledge management software.

Using the same software, we then propose establishing an integrated, intelligent extranet enabling all public enquiries/requests for services to be routed to the relevant organisations. The part the public sees – the public Internet view of the extranet, will be an interactive, personalised, community portal.

Citizens want to have relevant information presented to them rather than having to navigate many websites to find information or access a service. They may be unaware (and probably disinterested) which organisation does what – they just want the information or service. Whichever route they choose to enter the one stop shop, they can request information, book an appointment, pay a bill, read council reports and papers on issues affecting them and then register their opinions and lobby their elected members. This will be possible across the partner organisations.

The partner organisations will be able to push relevant information back to citizens based on their interests improving the timeliness and relevance of services.

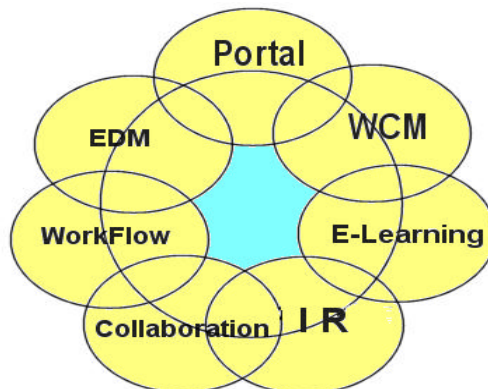
Staff would also benefit by using one point of access to information held within the various authorities. For example, a staff member from the county council's Children Schools and Families child protection unit has different information requirements from

a staff member in a district council's housing benefit department. At present, some partners do not have intranets and those that do have no facility to personalise access so that staff can see the information most appropriate to them, saving time and money.

Project priorities

- A true community portal allowing personalised or group interaction with the public (e.g. voting, consultation, service provision)
- An extranet providing personalised portals for partners (e.g. Districts and Boroughs, Health Authority) with decision support software and workflow
- An intranet for each partner organisation providing a personalised service, where staff automatically receive information that is relevant to them and all information and applications required for their job is connected to one interface.
- Partnership working with district councils and other government bodies and agencies within Hertfordshire will allow the development of an integrated, cost effective and efficient service
- A single personalised point of access to information held within the partner organisations
- Organisational knowledge management - transforming data into useful information
- The ability to organise, access, and manage electronic documents/content, securely
- Collaborative tools enabling discussion forums, shared workspaces and e-decision making
- E-learning for the public and effective training of staff within the organisation
- The capture of information on forms, whether electronic or paper, with automatic indexing for easy retrieval
- Records management to ensure information is kept safely for legal requirements
- Full compliance with e-government standards for interoperability; enabling the partners to fulfil their IEG statement commitments

Building blocks – the elements outlined in the diagram below would be delivered through the proposed solution.



Project deliverables

2002/3

- Personalised/group interaction with public (e.g. voting, consultations, services)
- Intranets, where individuals automatically receive information that is relevant to them and all information and applications required by them is supplied by a single interface
- Transforming data into usable information and knowledge giving public access to a wider, more varied range of information using paper systems
- An Enterprise Information Management system (EIM) with the ability to hold the full range of partner information
- Puts in place the underlying systems to allow business process re-engineering of our services to realise efficiencies
- Information accessible by WAP devices, PDA's, and digital TV (iDTV service already in place provided by the county council and ntl)
- Supports legislative requirements - Freedom of Information and Data Protection

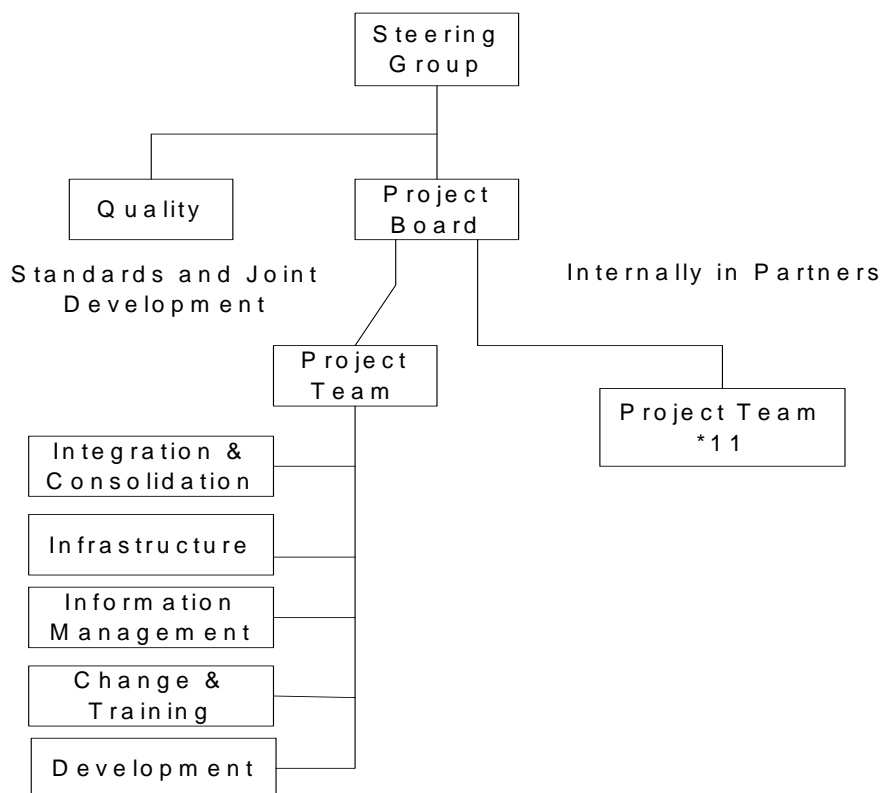
2003/4

- A community portal to enable the public and enquiry staff in call centres and one stop shops via internet forms, to access and request a wide range of services (i.e. forms filled out online and automatically routed to the staff concerned, for further processing, also would enable electronic confirmation to be automatically sent)
- An extranet, between partners, enabling all public enquiries/requests for services to be routed to the relevant organisations
- Improved customer service (ability for citizens and staff to get the right information in the right time, at the right cost)
- Greater consistency, continuity and productivity in management and administration

Project management - The project will be managed according to PRINCE 2 methodologies.

A project steering group will be established comprising the Chief Executives of the partner organisations. A project board will consist of senior managers from the partner organisations and be led by a project director from HCC. There will be a number of project teams drawn from across the partners and for each of the functional areas –

- Integration and consolidation
- Infrastructure
- Information Management
- Change and Training
- Quality (we would invite an independent assessment of the progress of the project at all stages)



Project costs (2003/4, 2004/5)

The indicative cost of establishing the entire portal-based solution appears below. The costs are based on the eleven local authorities deploying an appropriate software package. We are confident that we would achieve 80% of the functionality of the software in Year 1 without incurring major costs on upgrading infrastructure. We can, therefore, achieve the Year 1 and some Year 2 deliverables if we were to receive less than the total amount we are asking for below.

The total cost incurred over the two financial years 2002/3 and 2003/4 would be:

	£ Million
Information systems and software	1.70
Infrastructure	1.00
Project management	0.50
Integration and consolidation of legacy systems	1.00
Forms management, data acquisition, data input etc.	0.25
Total	4.45

Other sources of funding

The principal additional source of funding for this project will come from the IEG allocations the eleven local authorities will receive during 2002/3 and during 2003/4 (providing targets are met). Each local authority has agreed in principle to earmark a percentage of its allocation over the two years to fund "joining up" projects that result in real service improvements for citizens of Hertfordshire.