ICT Services

January 2016

Version 1.0

Datacentre Strategy

Related Strategies

Device Strategy

Application Strategy

Digital Strategy

Information Strategy

Business Intelligence Strategy

Key Drivers:

- Reliability
- Availability
- Accessibility
- Responsiveness
- Cost Reduction
- Resilience
- Security
- Partnership working

Heartbeat Services

Datacentre services are at the heart of everything we do. With a basic need to store and manipulate data, servers and storage provide the foundation to support the working of everything else. If these elements of IT stop working so does the Council. These services are mission critical.

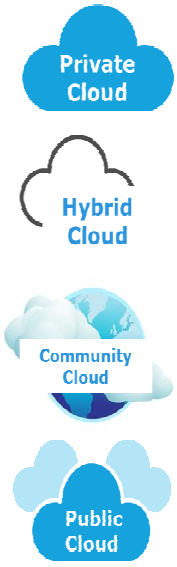
There is an expectation of high levels of availability, ready access to applications, space to store information, inherent cyber-security precautions and recovery, if data gets lost. The inability to provide these key services efficiently and reliably directly impacts back-office and frontline services alike, with staff and partners dependent on electronic access to vital information such as casework, financial records or council papers.

Provisioning a secure and resilient core infrastructure is essential to retaining PSN compliance, maintaining our contractual support obligations and meeting the data sharing protocol requirements of our partners and other third parties in order that business information can be accessed more flexibly and shared securely.

This strategy is about provisioning the right environment to host these foundation services in the most flexible and efficient way to meet the expectations of services and the future needs of the Council.

Cloud is inevitable; Embrace it

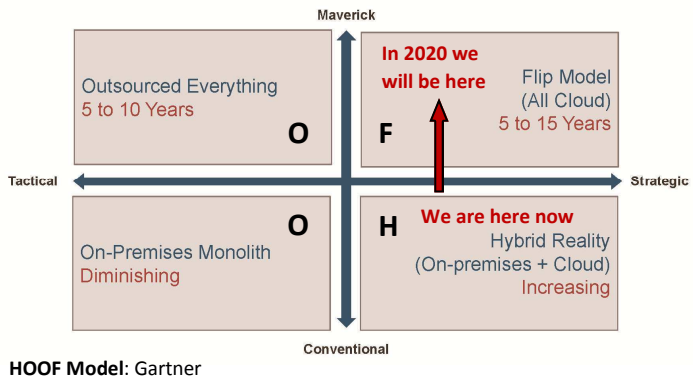
Datacentre services can be provided on premise (our servers) or in the cloud (a third party organisations' servers) or by a combination of the two. Providing the fundamental demands of availability, reliability and security are met, the objective of this strategy is to achieve maximum responsiveness and flexibility in the supply of these foundation services at minimum cost to the Council.



Our datacentre strategy is Cloud First with provision for legacy systems to be hosted on premise as an exception. Our approach is to virtualise completely (servers, applications, desktops, storage) seeking to retire elements that cannot be delivered virtually. This demands a different focus, less about hands on keeping the engine running, more about orchestrating infrastructure performance, using automation and intelligence tools to enable a fast response, acting as a cloud provider.

Cloud First

Applications need servers and data needs storage, the Datacentre Strategy seeks to provide the right space to fulfil each department's needs. Cloud is a game changer for applications. There are new vendors on the market, new platforms available and sales are increasingly targeted directly at users, not IT. This shifting landscape creates new challenges. No technology component exists in isolation. It is vital that decisions around connected technology elements are made in an informed and joined up way so that the environment (architecture) in which they operate remains optimal and stable.



HOOF Model: Gartner

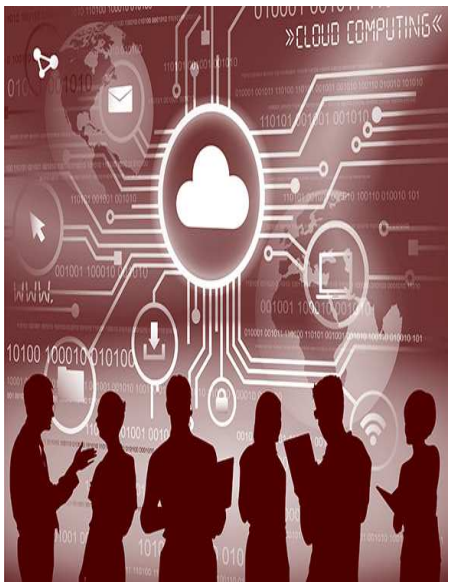
Gartner's HOOF Model helps inform strategy by illustrating the perspective around application hosting; helping to clarify the current position and give context to the corporate direction of travel.

Most organisations, ours included, currently operate in the Hybrid Reality quadrant; moving away from on premise infrastructure to either an entirely outsourced or an all cloud model over a period of time. Outsourced doesn't necessarily resolve problems and can create new ones, so the strategic direction of travel for ESCC is towards the all cloud quadrant.

Currently, we cannot source all the services wanted from the Cloud. Service offerings need to be matured before a complete shift is possible. During 2016, in alignment with the Application Strategy, the datacentre environment will be prepared for a phased migration to cloud facilities over subsequent years.

Similarly, virtualisation technology is a game-changer for data storage. Previously, Council information resided in a Storage Area Network (referred to as the SAN). Traditionally this was a physical piece of equipment, our recent investment in replacing this ageing solution has enabled virtual SAN technology to be implemented. This allows us to be much more adaptive to service demands.

This capability is a strong foundation for both the Digital and the Business Intelligence Strategy.



The Road to 2020

Our immediate focus will be to embed and exploit the recent investment made in virtualisation technologies; working alongside services to hone their application needs and agree a phased migration plan into the *cloud*. This capability will give services a more transparent view of their technology usage and costs, enabling them to be more informed when making strategic commissioning decisions.

Effort will be focused on implementing automation and intelligence tools to enable us to orchestrate infrastructure services rather than necessarily running them. This will involve redesign of our current skillset. Convergence of our architecture with Surrey County Council's, will also allow us to pursue an alternative self sufficient approach to disaster recovery (DR), replacing the current trailer that connects to St. Mary's when the contract expires in 2017.