



Executive
10th April 2006

Report from the Head of IT

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

e-Government Programme 2006/7

Forward Plan Ref: F&CR-05/06-37

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises progress towards the 2005/6 e-Government targets and proposes the allocation of funding to finance the ongoing maintenance of e-Government projects completed in previous years and new high priority projects that have been identified for 2006/7.
- 1.2 The e-Government Programme has now been superseded by the Government's Transformation Government Strategy. The three key transformations outlined in the Strategy document are:
- a) Services enabled by IT must be **designed around the citizen or business**, not the provider, and provided through modern, co-ordinated delivery channels. This will improve the customer experience, achieve better policy outcomes, reduce paperwork burdens and improve efficiency by reducing duplication and routine processing. The Client Index System will provide the basic framework to build IT systems around the citizen.
 - b) Government must **move to a shared services culture** - in the front-office, in the back-office, in information and in infrastructure - and release efficiencies by standardisation, simplification and sharing. An example of this is the joint West London Alliance (WLA) work being carried out on Disaster Recovery / Business Continuity Planning.
 - c) There must be broadening and deepening of **government's professionalism in terms of the planning, delivery, management, skills and governance** of IT enabled change. This will result in more successful outcomes; fewer costly delivery failures. Brent is looking at the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) initiative.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Executive agrees to the proposed funding arrangements for 2006/7.
- 2.2 That the Director of Finance can authorise modifications to the programme during 2006/7, which can be accommodated within the overall e-Government budget.

3. Detail

2.3 Summary

The main sections of this report are as follows:

- e-Government and the Council's Corporate Strategy
- Annual ongoing maintenance costs for existing projects
- New projects proposed for funding in 2006/7
- Other aspects of e-Government such as social inclusion, council website etc

2.4 e-Government, the Corporate Strategy and Gershon Efficiency Review

Brent's e-Government strategy has been developed to support the five cross-cutting themes contained in the Council's Corporate Strategy. These themes correlate closely with the objectives of customer service, social inclusion, democracy, accountability and the seven shared priorities for local government.

In addition to improved services for Brent citizens & businesses, the use of new technologies will be central in helping Brent achieve the targets set out in the Gershon efficiency review: these include e-procurement; electronic document management; online payments; call-centres and the linking-up of back-office systems, all of which will now be part of mainstream public service management.

The Best Value Performance Indicator 157 (BVPI 157) e-Government target of providing 100% of public services electronically by December 2005 has been achieved. BVPI 157 contributes to the CPA ratings.

2.4.1 Supporting children and young people

- e-Government funding will enable the LEA to offer parents online admissions (e-Admissions). The system will be fully operational by September 2006 for 2007 entry and will reduce duplication and enable speedier responses to requests for information and data from members of the public and partners of the LEA.
- Frameworki provides the 'backbone' system for Social Services to meet wider e-Government requirements relating to Health & Social Care particularly the development of Electronic Social Care Record (ESCR), and local inter-agency information sharing such as Child Protection Register information as well as supplying data and information to other local and London wide systems.

2.4.2 Promoting quality of life and the green agenda

- A range of on-line 24/7 services such as the provision of service information, on-line applications, on-line payments and the booking of appointments have been developed to make it easier for customers to access services.
- The development of an interactive sports database and website has enabled the Council to promote and encourage the use of its sports facilities, local sports clubs and recreational facilities in parks.
- Brent has further developed its BRAIN community website and Healthy Living Zone to promote health awareness to the socially disadvantaged, who will be able to freely access this information at all Brent libraries.
- E-government funding has enabled the Education service to distribute an information pack, evaluation form and application form to newly qualified teachers on the Internet and on CD-ROM. Providing this information in electronic format has enabled the service to reach a greater number of prospective teachers, and more NQTs now show an interest in teaching in Brent.
- E-government funding provided the infrastructure for a Housing Repairs Contact Centre. With the improved management systems, incoming phone calls can be processed more efficiently with an emphasis also on improved customer response times and satisfaction.
- Extension of the Geographical Information System (GIS) to enable residents to access spatial information about the areas they live in e.g. view streetlights, trees, schools, housing estates, parks, etc.
- Provision of SMS to allow requests for Streetcare services via text messaging mobile phones.
- Development of online tracking of Planning applications, enabling customers to track the status of their applications/requests/objections.

2.4.3 Regeneration, priority neighbourhoods, tackling crime and community safety

- A new Mentoring schemes area on the BRAIN community website has been created using BRAIN's link with related Organisations. A new portal area for all mentoring schemes in Brent (to include C&V Groups, behaviour improvement programmes, Guidance and Advice) has also been developed.
- A new "Children and Young People" portal has been developed on the Brent website. The portal includes discussion boards and information on Education & Health (including drugs).

2.4.4 Achieving service excellence

Many projects address the theme of 'achieving service excellence', including:

- The Customers Come First initiative places customer service at the centre of Brent's drive to improve its CPA status in 2006. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is an essential element of providing IT facilities to support the interaction between the Council and the public. Brent is building on its involvement in the CRM Pathfinder project, by further key participation in the CRM, Knowledge Management and LAWS (Local Authority Web Sites) national e-Government projects. Initial implementation of the CRM system has focused on the One Stop Shops (OSS) and Contact Centre but the new corporate Complaints module will potentially extend its use across the council and further integration between CRM, document management, online payments and electronic forms is planned. The new online authentication system which is under development will allow the public to access their own information on the CRM system in a secure manner over the Internet. The new Change of Address system will provide an improved service to the public and reduce internal administration. The planned Client/Business Index will radically improve the quality of person related information across all service areas.
- Members have been given laptops and printers, with secure remote access via ADSL broadband as part of the IT Facilities for Members project. Over 50% of Members have now been issued with the equipment and are using it to communicate with their constituents and carry out work-related research on the Internet.
- An interactive business information website where the focus is on helping the customer to understand Council requirements has also been developed by providing cross cutting information on regulatory services. The provision of information and electronic transactions will contribute towards meeting more than 50% of Environmental Services BVPI 157 targets and will demonstrate service improvements within the CPA framework.

2.5 Annual ongoing maintenance for completed projects

The 'Annual Maintenance' column shows potential ongoing commitment for 2006/7 – this currently amounts to £623,200.

There are likely to be further areas of ongoing commitment for future years (e.g. Government Connect) which have not yet been quantified.

SA	SU	Ref	Task	Annual Maintenance	Description
Central				65,000	
Democratic Services					
		1048	PSO R22 : Members remote IT facilities	65,000	Continued implementation and support of IT facilities and connections from home for all Members.
Finance and Corporate				331,200	
Brent Financial Services					
		1329	E-Auctions	12,000	To fund a series of electronic reverse auctions held over the web and hosted by a third party within a secure environment using proven methods with a full audit trail being available
Brent Revenue & Benefits Services					
		1283	PSO G15 : Mobile Office service to process CT & Housing claims remotely	6,000	Project to enable home working and working offsite; enable remote support and system admin support; assist Business Continuity; accommodate dedicated 3G/GPRS bearer service for improved performance and security and enable surgeries at OSS.
		1315	PSO R16 : Housing and Council Tax Benefit Enquiries	12,500	The SX3 integration module is essential for any back office integration for Revenue and Benefits online and Customer services. The project covers : - Developing integration between SX3 iWorld and CRM system - integration between CRM and new DIP Workflow system Cost includes the SX3 integration module as well as the development costs of the CRM system.
		1316	PSO G11 : E-Billing for Council Tax and Business Rates	6,000	To allow citizens to view account balances online for CTAX and NNDR and allow citizens to request that they receive their bill electronically. The project involves purchasing the following software : - SX3 I World - internet facility for Accounts enquiry and other HB and CTAX e-services - Academy - Ability for the customer to check their NNDR details.
Information Technology Unit					
		1215	Public Consultation on E-Government	10,000	Single year cost of the bi-annual Mori survey to investigate take-up and benefits for e-Government facilities in Brent.
		1273	CRM Manager Post	48,000	Corporate CRM Manager post
		1278	Public awareness & promotion of e-Government	10,000	Specific promotions and publicity will be organised to raise the current perception of e-government in order to ensure Brent's citizens are aware of improvement online systems.
		1313	NonStopGov	6,000	e-Forms and e-Payments engine - Ongoing maintenance & support.

SA	SU	Ref	Task	Annual Maintenance	Description
		1239	West London Alliance - Partnership Contribution	25,000	Contributions to WLA partnership
		1240	London Connects- Partnership Contribution	20,000	Contributions to London Connects partnership
		1242	ESD Toolkit Subscription Renewal	1,000	Online toolkit resource for capturing and reporting BVPI 157 status etc
		1331	Single Notification of Change of Address	2,000	Estimated software maintenance charges
		1337	Implementation of New Contact Centre System Infrastructure & installation in OSS	58,000	The new Contact Centre system is software-based and is essentially a suite of applications for contact handling, with interfaces which can link to our telephone, email, and web systems and also to other IT applications. The capital cost of £290,000 will be spread over 5 years.
		1312	Process Mapping	2,000	Annual licence maintenance for Process Navigator
		1225	IT Implementation & Operational Support	115,000	Provide adequate IT Unit resources for support of new systems (as in previous years)
		1343	Domino Utility Licences	3,700	Ongoing maintenance for Lotus Domino licences required for website authentication
Children & Families				13,000	
Children and Families Dept					
		1323	Bureau system for Student Support : Document Management (Phase 4)	10,000	Document management scanning and workflow for student support applications.
Teacher Recruitment					
		1251	TRS Software annual licence	3,000	Annual licence maintenance for TRS software. The TRS System tracks the career progression of NQTs through the induction year and beyond
Environment and Cultural				180,000	
Brent Library Service					
		1300	BRAIN business database	2,500	The main aim of this project is to enable all local businesses to promote themselves online, thereby allowing them to reach a wider audience
		1333	BRAIN – Maintenance of e-Gov Projects	8,000	Ongoing commitments for e-Government projects implemented in previous years
		1354	BRAIN – Community & Voluntary Group Starter Kit	6,000	Ongoing maintenance for on adding / updating content to the Toolkit.
		1355	BRAIN – Volunteering, Placements & Local Jobs	5,000	Ongoing maintenance for regular updating/editing of new mentoring, volunteering, and jobs pages
		1304	BRAIN Technical resource	48,500	Staffing for ongoing support and development of the BRAIN website.
Building Control Consultancy Services - BCCS					
		1294	Processing of planning and building applications	2,000	Ongoing maintenance for e-forms integration with Acolaid.
Environmental Services Directorate					
		1232	Maintenance of e-gov projects implemented in 2003/4 - 2005/6	35,000	Maintenance & licensing costs of existing e-gov projects, such interactive website, integrated business information for regulators, document management workflow and online payments.
		1336	ValueBill National Project	2,000	Ongoing maintenance for XML data exchange between property database and the Valuation Office Agency.

SA	SU	Ref	Task	Annual Maintenance	Description
		1339	PSO G7 Use of technology to integrate planning, regulation and licensing functions.	8,000	Ongoing maintenance for XML data exchange and integration between Planning and licensing.
		1340	PSO G5 Public access to Corporate Geographical Information System (GIS)	12,000	Ongoing maintenance & development of Internet GIS.
Planning Service					
		1024	Development of Online Planning Application	55,000	Ongoing requirement for scanning of plans.
Trading Standards					
		1335	PSO G6 sharing of Trading Standards data between councils for business planning	2,000	Ongoing maintenance for the sharing of data amongst Trading Standards
Housing and Community Care				34,000	
One Stop Shops					
		1237	Scanning documents at OSS reception	2,000	Ongoing maintenance for document scanning system in OSS receptions.
Brent Housing & Community Care					
		1083	New Care Mgt System - Phase 1	32,000	Leasing arrangements for the New Care Management System (ends in 2006/7)
				623,200	

2.6 New projects proposed for 2006/7

The following projects have been assigned a high priority by Service Areas and were agreed as the draft 2006/7 Programme by the e-Government Steering Group.

SA	SU	Ref	Task	Agreed Funding	Bid Description
Children & Families				37,000	
Children and Families Dept					
		1364	Document Management for Paying of Invoices	30,000	Document Management, Archiving and Workflow for the Education Finance section. This will focus on invoices and payments relating to the Capital Programme – repairs and refurbishment to schools - and will involve joint working of staff across the Asset Management Team and the Education Finance Team
		1373	eAdmissions : Additional Import Costs	2,000	Additional costs incurred during the weekly application import process in the eAdmissions system
		1374	eAdmissions : Ongoing Support Costs	5,000	Maintenance costs charged to each LA if future funding is not secured
Environment and Cultural				26,000	
Environmental Services Directorate					
		1365	National Coverage of the NLPG	23,000	The extract can be utilised as the backbone of an enlarged CRM and Client Index system allowing for out of Borough searches (with MSA caveats)
		1366	Royal Mail 'Click – Use' Licence for Postcodes	3,000	Payments to Royal Mail for using the Postcode for address searches
Housing and Community Care				22,865	
Housing Resource Centre					
		1333	Move on Process	4,000	This bid is for funds to improve the "Move on" process (from hostel accommodation to independent living) via the development of an electronic matching database and referral/incident management tool.
Private Housing Information Unit					
		1363	EDM System Links	6,000	Creation of automatic links between the two document management systems used by the Private Housing Information Unit so that the systems can exchange appropriate data.
		1370	Granttracker & GrantFinder Software	12,865	Granttracker is a software that will allow complete management of the Council grant system. Grantfinder is an existing software that allows on-line access to searching and sourcing external grants.
Finance and Corporate Services					
Information Technology Unit				115,000	
		1368	Process Mapping Resource	15,000	Corporate part-time resource to provide Process Mapping, Business Transformation and Efficiency Review support & consultancy to all Service Areas.
		1272	Client/Business Index System	100,000	Leasing Payment towards the Client Index System - 100K p.a. from 2006/7 for 5 years
				200,865	

2.7 **Management arrangements**

The e-Government Programme was successfully reviewed by PwC as part of the external audit programme during 2004/5.

2.7.1 Financial Controls

Arrangements have been made to use the Systems Development Fund to hold income and to make the allocated disbursements to Service Areas.

The current procedure is for Service Areas to pay invoices associated with their agreed projects and to send copies of these with overall internal invoice to the e-Government manager for approval. Payment will then be authorised from the Systems Development Fund directly to the appropriate Service Area or Service unit budget.

2.7.2 Governance

The e-Government Steering Group is composed of representatives from all service areas. It meets on a regular basis to monitor progress and agree funding allocation proposals.

The e-Government Programme Board meets as required to authorise funding proposals.

The Director of Finance can authorise additional funding within the limits of the overall programme.

2.8 **Website**

Brent is an acknowledged leader in terms of its website. It has retained its position in the Socitm Top 20 Local Authority websites for the 5th year running and its status as a 'Transactional' website for the 3rd year.

Additionally, the Brent website was recently one of the six best Local Authority websites in a SOCITM review of public and private sector websites.

The Council's website is a key element in the delivery of e-Government as it provides the main channel for self-service access to the Council. By providing an authoritative, single source of information the website allows internal staff to provide the right information first time, to reduce failures and minimise repeat contacts. Coupled with the public availability of up-to-date service information and online transactions the website plays a major role in improving customer satisfaction and reducing staff workloads.

Efficiency calculations show that use of the website saves the council over £2.3m per year in staff time that would be required to answer enquiries from the public.

2.9 Customer Service

e-Government is not primarily about technology - it is about using electronic facilities to assist organisational transformation to improve services to our customers.

The CRM and Client/Business Index systems are key elements in our e-Government strategy. They provide software tools to improve the quality of front line customer service and the infrastructure for consistent and accurate information about all the people who interact with the Council. Future developments will concentrate on linkages with back office systems and supporting transactional services to the public.

2.10 Social Inclusion

It is essential that the drive towards e-Government does not disenfranchise those sectors of the community that do not have ready access to the Internet.

Brent Council's e-Government strategy is particularly concerned with addressing the issues of social inclusion in the Information Society, and making ICT accessible to all members of its diverse community.

Current developments include:

- Internet access from all libraries. All of Brent's twelve libraries have Internet access, delivered over broadband, with one terminal in each library having adaptive technology to meet the needs of disabled people. Plans to provide wireless hotspots in all libraries are in progress.
- The Brent Tours are specifically organised to reach out to members of the community who would not normally have access to the Internet. The Tours have led to a high take-up of the Internet Taster sessions organised by Brent Libraries.
- The Digi-TV project will provide key council information via cable and satellite TV for those who do not have Internet access via PCs.

3 Financial Implications

The 2006/7 budget contains £820,000 revenue provision for e-Government.

This report recommends the allocation of e-government funding totalling £623,200 for annual maintenance of e-Government Projects. The report also recommends funding of £200,865 to prioritised projects as detailed in Section 3.4. The potential over-programming of £4,065 will be met from underspend from the 2005/6 programme.

Use will be made of leasing arrangements or capitalisation in accordance with the internal prudential borrowing framework to spread the cost of capital items over 3-5 years, where this proves necessary.

- 3.1 The table below summarises the overall central funding allocations since the e-Government Programme started in 2002/3.

Year	Brent Revenue (£'000s)	ODPM Grant (£'000s)
2002/3	-	200
2003/4	800	200
2004/5	1,100	350
2005/6	900	150
2006/7	820	-
Totals	3,600	900

- 3.2 Please note that the funding for future years will be used for ongoing maintenance of completed projects and on supporting new corporate initiatives e.g. the Corporate Client Index project which was agreed by the Executive in March 2006.
- 3.3 The Transformational Government agenda will also undoubtedly require further funding to support the strategy in terms of extra funding and resources to ensure that the council's technical infrastructure can both enable and support more efficient customer oriented service provision in the future years.

4 Legal Implications

Expenditure incurred on the projects must be expenditure for capital purposes if it is to be eligible to be covered by capital grants. Expenditure for capital purposes is defined in section 16 of the Local Government Act 2003 and in Regulations.

Regulation 7 designates expenditure on acquisition or preparation of a computer program, including the acquisition of a right to use the program, as expenditure for capital purposes.

Some of the projects may have particular legal implications which will need to be addressed as they are progressed, for example, issues arising under the Data Protection Act where the project would involve processing of personal data.

5 Diversity Implications

The e-Government team has undertaken an Initial Equality Impact Assessment, and has found no adverse impact resulting from the implementation of the e-Government Programme.

The equality impact of individual projects within the programme is being assessed, where necessary, by the officers responsible within the Service Areas concerned so as to ensure that any potential adverse implication is addressed during implementation. (e.g. a Full Equality Impact assessment was completed for the Framework-1 implementation in Social Services, which was an e-Government project).

6 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

It is recognised that the large number of E-Government projects will place major demands on both Service Areas and the IT Unit particularly in terms of project management, system implementation, data coordination and ongoing IT Support.

Provision was made in the e-Government programme in 2005/6 to supplement IT Unit staff resources to deal specifically with e-Government related activities and it is proposed to continue this in 2006/7.

Background Information

Details of Documents (these are available from www.brent.gov.uk/egov)

e-Government Programme 2005/6 – April 2005

Brent IEG5 Statement – December 2005

Brent e-Government Strategy – January 2001

Brent IT Strategy – February 2002

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers can find them on the Council's website at www.brent.gov.uk/egov or they can contact:

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