WALES AUDIT OFFICE

SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

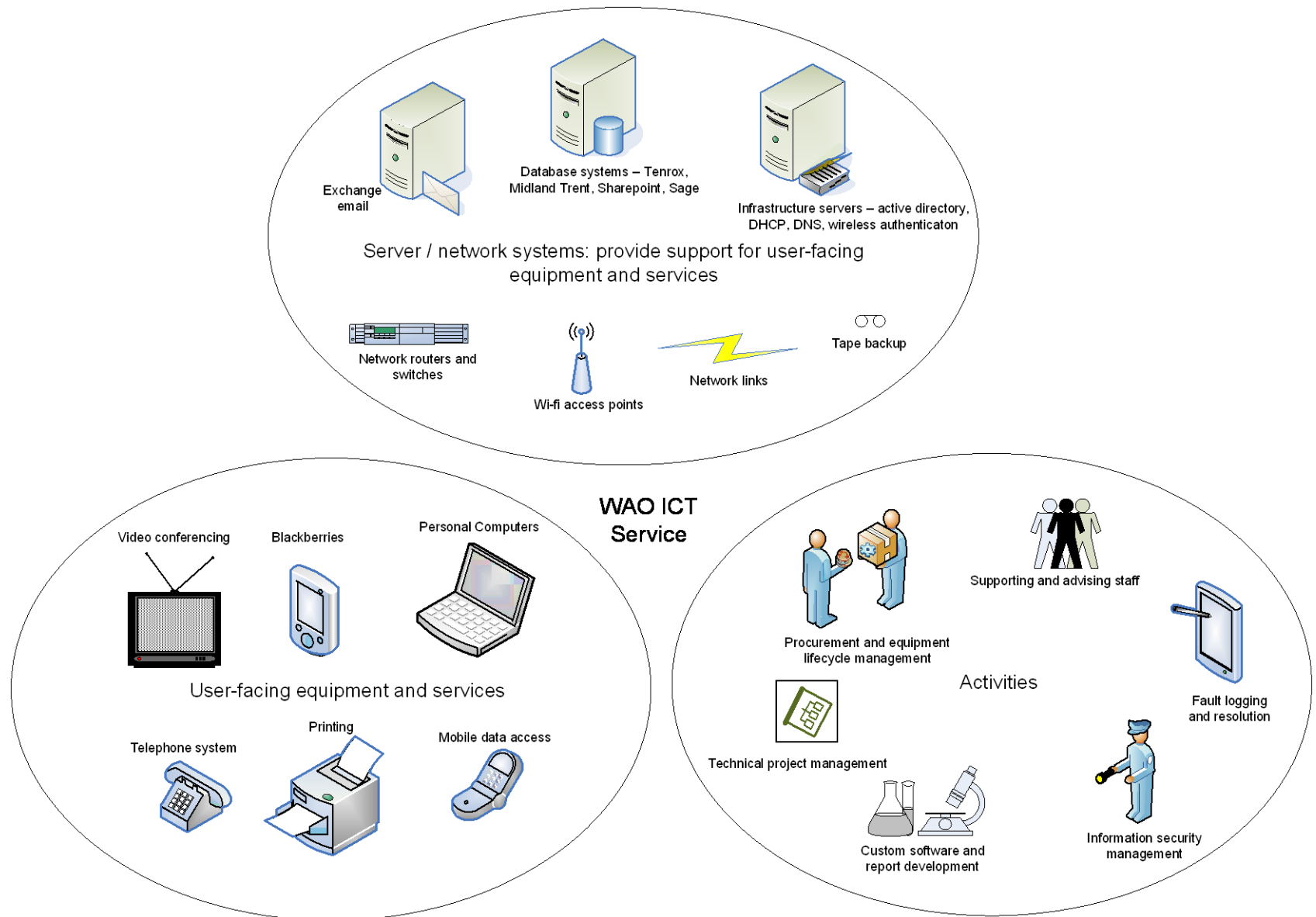March 2009

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WAO Strategy for ICT 2009-2012

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Summary

1 The ICT service provides WAO staff with the technology, facilities and support they need to carry out the organisation's business. Staff rely heavily on ICT services for their day to day activities, so it is important these are provided to a high standard.

2 The key elements of the service are:

   i. **User-facing equipment and services** which staff use directly. Examples include laptops, corporate applications, Blackberries, printers and telephones;

   ii. **Server and network systems** which, though hidden from staff, are crucial to the function of the user-facing systems above;

   iii. **Activities** which ensure systems are secured and maintained effectively, that staff can access help and support easily, and that new, or changed systems are implemented as well-controlled projects.

3 These principles guide ICT staff in providing the elements above:

   i. **Safe and secure working.** Proper consideration will be given to staff safety and information security in all activities, since these are of crucial importance to the organisation;

   ii. **Efficiency and value for money.** The ICT team will monitor developments in the technology marketplace, buying competitively and putting new products into service quickly where these can benefit the business, or produce efficiency gains;

   iii. **Customer focus.** Everything the ICT team does will be guided by a focus on internal customers and their needs, working to ensure that they are satisfied;

   iv. **Supporting corporate objectives.** WAO's corporate priorities change over time, as the needs of its clients and stakeholders change. The ICT service will play its part in helping the business as a whole to meet these objectives wherever possible

Server / network systems: provide support for user-facing equipment and services

Exchange email

Database systems – Tenrox, Midland Trent, Sharepoint, Sage

Infrastructure servers – active directory, DHCP, DNS, wireless authenticaton

Network routers and switches

Wi-fi access points

Network links

Tape backup

WAO ICT Service

User-facing equipment and services

Video conferencing

Blackberries

Personal Computers

Telephone system

Printing

Mobile data access

Activities

Procurement and equipment lifecycle management

Supporting and advising staff

Fault logging and resolution

Technical project management

Custom software and report development

Information security management

Safe and secure working

4 The ICT service will support the organisation in maintaining proper security arrangements for staff and the information they handle. This means, for example:

    i. using technological measures such as encryption, to protect information whilst it is stored and transferred;

    ii. monitoring use of ICT systems to ensure compliance with the organisation's policies, and with the Law, and investigating any suspected breaches that may occur;

    iii. developing guidance and delivering training for staff, so that they are able to work securely in their day to day activities;

    iv. maintaining and testing disaster recovery procedures, guarding information against the risk of loss through e.g. fire or theft of equipment.

5 All work will be carried out with proper regard for the safety of staff. Electrical or heavy lifting hazards are particularly relevant to the work concerned.

6 The ICT service will support WAO staff needing particular equipment to help them work safely, doing whatever is reasonable to provide e.g. large monitors, lighter laptops and so forth.

Efficiency and value for money

7 The ICT team will monitor developments in the technology marketplace, buying competitively and putting new products into service quickly where these can benefit the business, or produce efficiency gains.

8 Past examples of innovations have included:

    i. the rollout of home broadband and mobile data access, enabling staff to communicate and work effectively with their laptop, wherever they need to do so;

    ii. implementing in-house corporate systems for payroll (Midland) and project accounting (Tenrox), achieving savings against the cost of the outsourced arrangements replaced;

    iii. implementing Windows Vista, which significantly reduces the work needed to support each new PC hardware variant. As a result, WAO can regard laptops as commodity purchases, driving harder bargains to achieve better value for money.

    iv. upgrade to high definition video conferencing. This made the experience more immersive and compelling for staff, and helped them to consider video conferencing as a first, rather than last resort. In this way, the cost, environmental and personal safety impact of travel was reduced.

v. reducing the environmental impact of running server systems through virtualisation technology. WAO has achieved significant reductions in power consumption, thereby reducing both electricity bills and carbon dioxide emissions.

Customer focus

9 The ICT service exists to provide WAO staff with the tools and support needed to deliver business objectives efficiently. Everything the team does, therefore, will be guided by a focus on internal customers and their needs, working to ensure that they are satisfied;

10 The ICT team will monitor customer satisfaction periodically, and will work to address promptly any issues raised as a result.

Supporting corporate objectives

11 WAO's corporate priorities change over time, as the needs of its clients and stakeholders change. The ICT service will play its part in helping the business as a whole to meet these objectives wherever possible. For example:

i. **Economic climate.** The ICT team will use the increasingly competitive climate to WAO's advantage by driving harder bargains with suppliers, thereby achieving better value for money;

ii. **Climate change.** The ICT team will pursue measures which improve energy efficiency by reducing the carbon footprint of the service overall. For example, virtualisation will reduce the electricity consumption of WAO's server estate, whilst improved video conferencing will limit carbon emissions by reducing the need for travel.