

To: POLICY AND RESOURCES (FINANCE & CUSTOMER SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject: ICT SERVICE BENCHMARKING OUTCOMES
From: HEAD OF E-GOVERNMENT & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT	
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## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the outcomes from the recent benchmarking exercise undertaken by E-Government & Service Development (EGASD) and also the results from the ICT User Satisfaction Survey undertaken in November 2011.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Society of IT Managers (SOCITM) provides an annual benchmarking exercise covering a range of Key Performance Indicators for the measurement of ICT Services. Both UK wide and Scotland only exercises are offered and significant numbers of authorities participate each year. The benchmarking exercise provides the means to analyse and demonstrate value for money through validated performance management information about the cost and quality of the ICT Service. The recent McClelland Review of ICT Infrastructure in the Public sector in Scotland described the SOCITM benchmarking service as:

*"An outstanding example of this [external comparison and benchmarking] comes from the Society of Information Technology Managers (SOCITM) which is adept at developing and conducting benchmarking exercises within the local authority sector within the UK. These have produced valuable information."*

- 2.2 The Scottish Government, which published its response to the McClelland review in September 2011, has indicated that outcomes from the 2011 SOCITM benchmarking exercise will be used to inform its future plans in relation to the implementation of the review.
- 2.3 The Council's ICT Service within E-Government & Service Development, together with schools ICT, have participated in SOCITM's Benchmarking Scotland 2011 exercise. The objective was to analyse the ICT Service in North Lanarkshire Council in terms of service costs and service performance, to compare with other councils and to present baseline evidence that can inform the Scottish Government's plans for the implementation of the McClelland review.
- 2.4 16 Scottish Local Authorities participated in the benchmark. There were 2 authorities of similar size to the Council and 5 of the Councils 8 Clyde Valley partners were amongst the 16 participants.
- 2.5 E-Government & Service Development and schools ICT also jointly participated in SOCITM's benchmarking "User Satisfaction with the ICT Service" exercise along with a group of 9 other Scottish Local Authorities. 756 Council employees took part in the survey which was carried out by an independent external agency.

### 3. Key outcomes of the benchmarking exercise

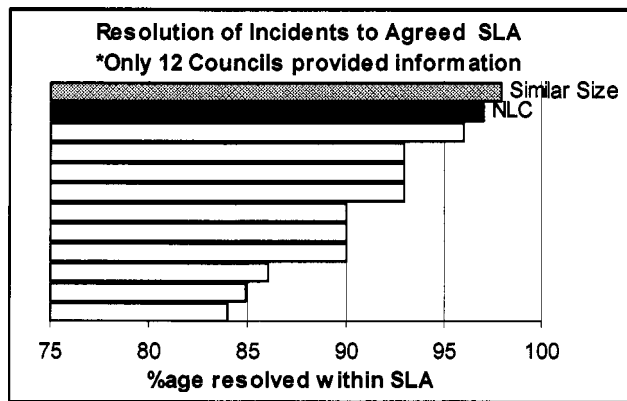
3.1 The benchmark focused particularly on the performance and level of resourcing of the ICT Service as well as the Council's overall investment in ICT. North Lanarkshire Council's ICT Service was evaluated as an indicator of good practice in 2 key areas:

- Resolution of incidents (faults) within agreed service levels; and
- Lowest support cost per workstation.

The above combination highlights the ICT Service's efficiency in terms of delivering low support costs while maintaining a high level of service in terms of delivery against agreed service levels. In terms of performance overall, the Council achieved above average scores in terms of both the quality, and the cost efficiency of the ICT Service.

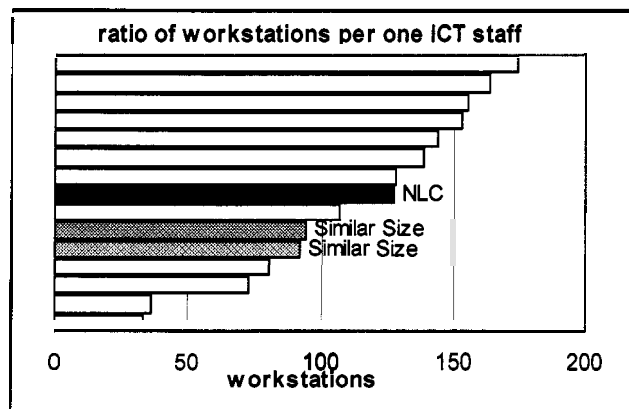
Further detail on these indicators is provided below:

3.2 **Resolution of incidents:** the Council is in the upper quartile and is recognised as an indicator of best practice.



Note: Only 12 of the 16 Councils have measurable service level agreements in place and were able to provide the necessary information for this comparison.

3.3 **Support cost per workstation:** an indicator of an efficient ICT Service is the number of workstations per ICT employee which gives an overall general picture of the ICT staffing level. There is a marked difference in this area between smaller and larger authorities with larger Councils needing more ICT staff to support their operations due to the size of the ICT estate. The Council's ratio of 1:127 is the highest amongst larger Councils and is significantly more than those of similar size authorities as shown in the following graph:



- 3.4 In terms of overall expenditure on ICT, the Council spends 1.64% of its revenue budget on ICT, compared to 2.81% and 4.14% in the two similar size authorities.
- 3.5 The detailed benchmarking exercise covers a total of 9 KPIs and other measures, and the full data can be provided if required.

#### **4. Key outcomes of the user satisfaction survey**

- 4.1 The User Satisfaction survey enables us to: understand the users' level of satisfaction with the ICT service; to establish what is important to users in terms of the service; and to identify areas that need to improve.
- 4.2 Satisfaction levels are rated on the scale 1-7 (low to high). The Council's overall rating is 5.25, the same as the median amongst participating Councils. SOCITM indicated that a median of 5.25 out of 7 is reflective of continuing improvement in user satisfaction levels relative to previous years.
- 4.3 The Council's ICT users, having been presented with a list of 20 importance measures, highlighted the following key areas as being most important to them:
- fit for purpose ICT hardware and office software;
  - highly skilled ICT staff;
  - fit for purpose business systems; and
  - accurate diagnosis of faults by ICT support staff.
- 4.4 Out of the 20 listed satisfaction measures, the top 5 areas that Council ICT users were most satisfied with are outlined below, although it should be noted that the service's satisfaction measures for 18 out of the 20 listed were above the average for other Councils:
- the ease by which users are able to contact ICT staff – demonstrating the effectiveness of the ICT Service Desk, ICT strategy groups and ICT governance arrangements;
  - the speed of response of ICT staff to requests for assistance - which is a reflection of the high score mentioned above in terms of resolution of incidents within service level agreements;
  - the competence and skill level of ICT staff;
  - the fitness for purpose of business systems - confirming the adequacy of the Council's key operational ICT applications; and
  - the customer service skills of ICT staff - which is indicative of a good working relationship between the Council staff and their ICT colleagues.
- 4.5 The 5 areas that Council users were least satisfied with are:
- overall ICT skill levels of users;
  - the long lead times for delivery of new equipment and systems;
  - the political and senior management commitment to ICT;
  - shortage of resource planning for new systems and developments; and
  - fitness for purpose of the ICT hardware provided.

It is worth noting however that in 4 out of these 5 areas the Council scores were above the average for other Councils.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Overall, the outcomes of the benchmark and the satisfaction survey indicate that the Council's ICT service is efficient, effective and delivers a high level of customer satisfaction to the Council's front line services.
- 5.2 There is scope for improvement in a number of areas however, including: investment in ICT; the speed of delivery of new systems and services; and the skill levels of users of ICT.
- 5.3 The outcomes from this exercise will be used to inform future plans and EGASD will continue to work with Services through the Customer Service Development Working group and through the Services' ICT strategy groups and schools ICT committee to analyse the outcomes in depth and to prepare a prioritised improvement plan.
- 5.4 EGASD will continue to participate in future benchmarking and user satisfaction surveys to ensure that ongoing continuous improvement can be demonstrated.

## 6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that committee:
  - Notes the results and conclusion from the recent SOCITM benchmarking exercise and ICT user satisfaction survey.



**Head of E-Government & Service Development**

*For further information please contact Irene McKelvey, on tel. ext. 2532*