

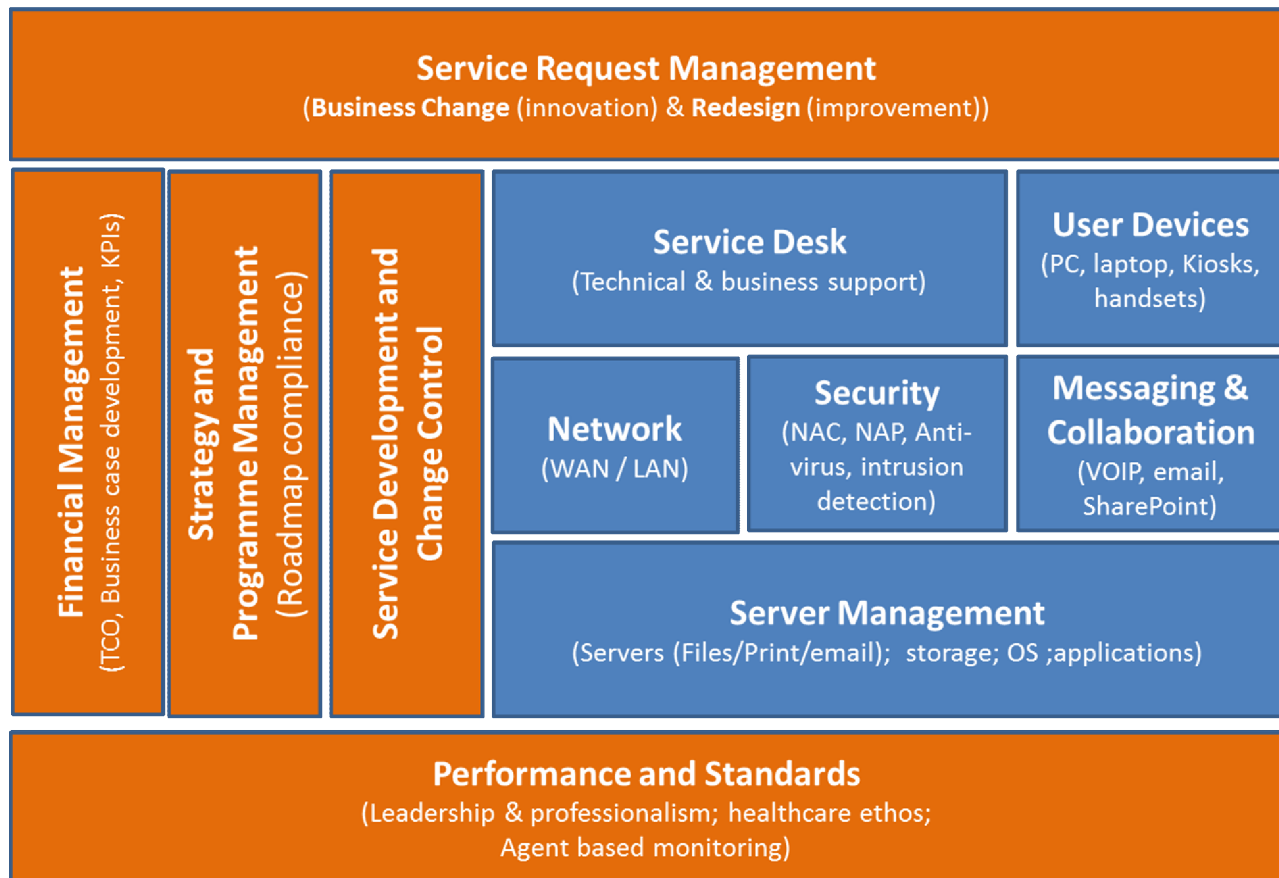
REGULAR REPORT:
SSA ICT DIRECTORATE
JANUARY 2011 TO APRIL 2011

Introduction

The Directorate continues to focus on improving the Information Security of the IT infrastructure supporting NHS users in Birmingham. The development of an even closer working relationship between the IT Directorate and colleagues from the Performance and Information Governance Teams continues. The “workgroup” approach now in place has further strengthened this principle with staff from the combined team working together in many areas.

The model below shows the governance and infrastructure functions now fully implemented within the IT Directorate.

- Governance function
- Infrastructure function



GOVERNANCE FUNCTIONS

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Directorate is forecast to break even at the end of the Financial Year just finished, the focus on cost management and reduction will be maintained for the new Financial Year.

The business case for the improvements in the information security infrastructure was approved and work is now progressing to implement the required improvements – items highlighted in the ICO audit are also covered by this work.

A member of the Project Management function resigned in March and finished 1st April 2011, a number (3) of Fixed Term roles finished at the end of March 2011 from the Service Desk Team. In total 8 staff are currently on Fixed Term contracts – 2 of which for the Trainers in Health Team will expire in 2012.

A framework agreement for the provision of IT staff from external agencies was approved and is now in place – this agreement is the result of a process undertaken by the Healthcare Purchasing Consortium.

PERFORMANCE & STANDARDS

An Operational Stability Plan was created in December with a new management approach for the Directorate including a daily operational review process. The operational review process is now entrenched in the daily working of the Directorate and has been expanded to include colleagues from other departments and organisations.

The Directorate Risks and Issues Log has been updated to include a link to the Board Assurance Framework – further work to improve the state of the Log is on-going.

A number of policies relating to Information Security were identified as missing and were completed in time for submission to the IG Toolkit for the end of March – these included the Network Security Policy and an Administrators Code of Conduct.

STRATEGY & PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The current programme of work for the Directorate is very much focussed on the response to the SUI and ICO audit with a team of Technical Architects supporting SSA IT staff and developing capabilities within the infrastructure and teams. Areas currently being worked on include:

- A document management system (SharePoint) that will support improved collaboration for staff and document control to avoid duplication.
- Upgrades to the infrastructure that staff use to access all IT systems – this will speed up the logon/log-off process for users.
- Remedial work on all desktop computers to create a single standard platform that can be centrally managed, is fully up to date with patches and has improved security systems in place.

Work completed includes:

- An audit tool that records changes made to key information assets including files, folders and permissions.
- Development of missing IT policies and procedures and improvements to existing documents.
- Amendments to the telephone system to ensure that the Trust was avoiding call charges where possible.

The LAN Refresh project is a key development for BCHC as part of their move to a new telephone system - a number of key sites require upgrades to the network infrastructure to support the Voice Over IP Telephone system that BCHC have procured.

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT & CHANGE CONTROL

A review of the Change Control Board will complete shortly – the scope of the review was expanded to cover the implementation of day-to-day changes and how this key activity could be improved. A new change management system is now in place to ensure greater visibility outside IT, to align the activity closer to best practice and help ensure that changes to the infrastructure take place in safe and controlled fashion with no unintended consequences impacting users. The Trainers in Health team continue to expand use of the system across the country and are planning the way forward for the end of central funding by the Department of Health – a number of existing customers have already committed to the service after March 2012.

The Directorate supported the deployment of the new Child Health System configuring the network to connect to the new system, updating desktops and printers and building a new server to provide information reporting. The Directorate has also undertaken further work on the Digital Pen project enabling BCHC users to make use of new technology to deliver services.

SERVICE REQUEST MANAGEMENT

Service Requests include the provision of a new network connection for Mayfield Special Needs School which is very close to completion. We have also undertaken the migration of Dental staff to BCHC from Sandwell & Dudley and Walsall Trusts. A number of sites have been upgraded to incorporate UPS devices to protect IT equipment from electrical power surges and to allow for the graceful shutdown of equipment in the event of a power failure.

Each of the teams developed a strategy for their area which is part of the overall IT strategy for the infrastructure and applications supported by the Directorate.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNCTIONS

SERVICE DESK

The Service Desk changed direction during the reporting period to have a much greater focus on call response times and abandoned calls. New systems and processes are in place to support the change in direction. The call volumes for the reporting period continue to show a decrease from the same time last year.

January 2011 = 3688 (24% decrease)
January 2010 = 4825

February 2011 = 3577 (18% decrease)
February 2010 = 4369

March 2011 = 3956 (12% decrease)
March 2010 = 4491

April 2011 = 3194 (15% decrease)
April 2010 = 3714

USER DEVICES

The devices team are working with 2 Technical Architects to deploy a number of new systems and upgrade existing technical infrastructure to meet the actions set out by the ICO audit. These include upgrading all desktop computers to a common standard and deploying tools that will allow for much greater control of the desktop estate. These tools will also provide up-to-date and accurate data on desktop devices and the software running on the devices. Over 90% of the desktops have been upgraded to the required standard and work continues to update the remaining computers. Work is well underway to upgrade the Active Directory system that controls user access to the IT infrastructure. This includes a complete overhaul of the policies implemented within Active Directory, with a reduction of 95% to the number of policies that desktops make use of; this will decrease the time taken to logon or log off computers.

All internal phone calls using the Amilan telephone system have been routed to always connect internally thereby avoiding significant call charges.

NETWORK

There have been a number of issues relating to the 2Mb sites on the network, causing operational issues for users at these sites – these issues were resolved by Virgin Media and N3 BT. Connecting for Health and N3 BT have put in place increased capacity for the Internet Gateway that provides access to the Internet for all NHS users and further increases and enhanced services are planned for the near future. A network capacity review is underway and a number of circuits have been ordered to improve operational services for users at those sites.

SECURITY

No major anti-virus out breaks took place in the reporting period – continual monitoring of virus threats is carried and reported on a daily basis. Over the 4 month period the average daily infection rate for all users continues to run at around 9 reported per day. Improvements to the infrastructure security systems include adopting a new anti-virus product for the desktop and utilising a different product to protect the servers, this is industry best practice as part of a layered defence to threats. Other systems which will be deployed over the next few months include e-mail encryption, e-mail

filtering, internet filtering and network access control. This will mean that all e-mails can be encrypted whether they are sent to NHS users or not, all e-mail will be monitored for unwanted SPAM and security threats, internet browsing will be controlled, access to inappropriate material blocked and acceptable use policies implemented automatically. The network access control will block any unauthorised devices from connecting to the network.

MESSAGING & COLLABORATION

E-mail services have operated normally during the reporting period.

SERVER MANAGEMENT

There was an issue with the Citrix platform which meant that users were unable to access systems for one day. A root cause analysis regarding the problem was performed and a learning and development exercise undertaken for all involved. A large number (14) of new servers have been built and installed as part of the upgrade to the IT infrastructure and to improve local services – a number of old servers will be de-commissioned (this be complete very shortly). All these new servers have been built to current industry standards and will provide improved stability and functionality for the infrastructure.

Backup tape encryption, which is a key requirement of the ICO audit, is well underway (25% of the servers done) and 2 obsolete backup devices have been removed. Work has continued to migrate user and shared data from old storage devices to the NetApp data storage device – this work is 70% complete.