

This is my first annual review as Chairman which gives me an opportunity to talk about where we have been as a partnership and how we will go forward.

2007/2008 has been a year of change. Over the year, administration of the partnership has transferred from South Tyneside to Gateshead, three partners' representatives have changed and a further three will be changing in the first months of 2008/2009.

The year saw TWICT secure its medium term finances, as a 5 year plan was agreed, alongside reduced contributions for full members.

Significant progress was made with most areas of the work programme, whilst a small number of initiatives stumbled due to factors outside our control. There is a review of the 2007/2008 work programme overleaf.

10 Partnership meetings were held, along with numerous meetings of our new sub groups, enabling heads of IT and middle managers to share good practice, explore joint working and mutual support, and keep track of developments in policy and technology. Through the Partnership meetings we have jointly considered a wide range of subjects, including:

- Regional Issues
 - Next Generation Broadband Access
 - North East Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy & Plan
 - Northern Internet Exchange (NIX)
- Local Government Policies / Strategies
 - Corporate Value for Money Indicators
 - Job evaluation / single status
- IT Strategy Development
 - Digital Inclusion & Digital Challenge
 - Equipment Disposal
 - IT Professionalism
 - Members' IT
 - Mobile computing
 - Print efficiencies
 - Web 2.0 / Social Networking Sites
 - Wireless Strategies
- Potential collaboration / shared services
 - Telecommunications Efficiency Savings
 - Centralised Transport System Procurement
 - HR Systems Specification of Requirements
 - Managed web and email filtering Service
 - Off Site Data (Tapes) Storage
 - Pro 5 Buying Consortium
 - Policies software
 - Shared System Hosting / Shared Data Centre

We already know of significant challenges that will face us in the coming year, including new representatives to settle in; a likely strategic partner for South Tyneside; a new regional efficiency and improvement regime; the conclusion of Job Evaluation / Single Status and continuing pressure to identify efficiencies - and we have already started the process of identifying and prioritising initiatives for 2008/2009.

Finally, I'd like to thank colleagues for their continued enthusiasm and support, in particular Steve Williams and Susan Winslow who have been great advocates of the partnership. I'd also like to thank colleagues in South Tyneside and Gateshead Finance and ICT services for helping with the smooth running of the partnership, Chris Foreman of Sunderland for supporting our website and Graham Jordan, our Partnership Analyst.

Roy Sheehan

Review of 2007/2008 Work Programme

Website refresh	Completed with colleagues from Sunderland ICT e-Neighbourhoods Team.
TWICT Stakeholder Briefing	Completed and circulated.
Training Marketplace	Other initiatives prioritised by Training Officers.
Telephony	Draft Specification of Requirements for an OGC Catalist mini competition and Good Practice guide completed.
Skills Sharing	Protocol developed and agreed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of District and Out of Hours Support removed from scope of project
Online recruitment Project Assurance	Background from 'Joined up Jobs' transferred to project.
New Sub Groups	Additional sub groups and associated online communities of interest / news facilities created for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer & Desktop Support Training Systems Services Networks, Telephony & Wireless
Kiosks	Overseeing of countywide content and navigation and facilitation of joined-up local dialogue. Work towards managing contraction of network.
Hardware Maintenance	Investigation of current situations and transfer of good practice completed.
Government Connect	Activities concentrated on GCSx connections and handled on a council-by-council basis by GC.
Formalise links with universities and industry	Subscribed to Codeworks Connect North East IT Managers Network through SOCITM NE at no cost to TWICT. Represented on Steering Group.
Every Child Matters	Data matching trial concluded.
DigiTV	Participation in National Steering Group and facilitation of joined-up local dialogue.
Digital Challenge	Project management of connectivity (handed over), SunTV and ICT@HOME as well as regional dissemination.
Contact Centre Business Continuity	Stalled due to other initiatives being prioritised by Gateshead Customer Services.
Collaboration Tools	Successfully promoted to SOCITM for consideration as a national initiative.
Business case for sharing data centres capacity	External consultancy study commissioned.
Awards	Entries submitted to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ShiNE (unsuccessful) Government Computing (pending) 4Ps (pending)
Ask-IT research project: public information and navigation through handheld devices for disabled people	Support, advice and council contact information given to Newcastle University Transport Operations Research Group as required.