

AUDIT REPORT 09'022

ICT HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REGISTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A review by the External Auditor of Computer Services highlighted a need to examine the system for recording computer hardware and software. It was agreed that Internal Audit would undertake a review of these arrangements.

Computer hardware relates to all physical items of equipment e.g. personal computers (PCs) and printers while computer software is a general term that describes all computer programs or applications systems that underpin the delivery of most Council services. In 2009/10, ICT had a budget of approximately £350,000 for replacing PCs. Computer software is purchased as a number of right-to-use licenses for which the Council is required to maintain accurate records and have effective monitoring arrangements.

The audit involved a review of the systems and practices for recording all computer hardware and software purchased within the Authority. Testing was undertaken to ensure the accuracy of these records and a sample of computers were interrogated to determine whether the software residing on them was suitably licensed. The main findings from the audit review are as follows:-

- Although detailed records are currently kept for computer hardware and software, these are held in different formats and in a number of different databases. A review should be undertaken to determine the feasibility of establishing a unified inventory system applicable to all Council establishments.
- For those systems with concurrent licenses no regular monitoring is undertaken to ensure the number of users accessing a software application at any one time complies with the licensing agreement. Monitoring arrangements should be reviewed to ensure compliance with licensing agreements.
- Records maintained of all licensed software products purchased had not been systematically updated. Records should be kept up to date and regular checks undertaken within Departments to ensure compliance with licensing agreements.
- The acquisition of all computer hardware and software should only be undertaken by the ICT Section. ICT should then maintain contract details for all computer systems.
- Currently all hardware equipment surplus to requirements is passed to an independent charitable recycling company. There is no written contract with the recycling company and no quality checks are carried out by the Council to ensure data cleansing standards are being maintained.