Background

The **Dacorum Anywhere** programme of projects was, in part, initiated in response to the Public Sector Quarter (PSQ) which will see the authority moving into a smaller building, with decreased office provision, meaning desk and storage space will be of a premium. As part of the research around current office usage, it was recognised the use of space and working practices could be more efficient. The programme also seeks to ensure Dacorum is a modern, flexible organisation that is able to adapt to the changing needs of our customers. The programme includes the following projects:

1. Remote & Flexible Working

This project aims to prepare the organisation to be able to work flexibly, by enabling staff to work remotely from a variety of locations, including from home. This will create a modern working environment for staff, which will be smaller and more efficient through remote working and hot-desking, and will therefore be less costly and more efficient. For this to happen, we need to be sure we have the policies and practices in place to ensure staff are protected through robust HR and Health & Safety guidelines, service delivery is maintained, and that all ICT equipment necessary for flexible working is in place and is effective.

Key Findings to date:

- The revenues and benefits pilot involved 14 members of staff working from home almost 100% of their working week. Throughout the pilot the project team worked with those involved to develop HR guidelines, review H&S implications, test equipment (including IT, security and telephony systems), and monitor impacts on productivity. The learning is now integrated into the process for all services adopting flexible and remote working.

- During Revenues and Benefits pilot productivity measures have increased by 45% for home workers compared to 24% for office based workers (all staff have seen an increase in productivity due to additional improvement activities).

- H&S guidance and support has been reviewed to enable flexible and remote working. All staff are required to complete a H&S self-assessment, which is then passed to DBC's H&S Officer. When necessary a home visit is undertaken by the H&S Officer. Members of staff with special requirements regarding equipment are unlikely to be deemed suitable for remote working.

- Training for mangers has been provided to support managers to manage staff remotely, through outputs rather than time. This is particularly important, as managers should be aware of their staff outputs, as presence in the office does not necessarily ensure productivity or effectiveness. This training has been widened to include all staff working remotely, and also includes H&S aspects.

- 'Lync', an instant messaging and presence awareness application, is being used to enable managers to see when and how long staff are logged on dand available. It also allows easy and instant discussions amongst teams without recourse to emails or telephones. An on-going review of the impact of the project on productivity is in place, so that benefits can be identified, and risks regarding service delivery or decreased staff productivity are effectively managed.

2. Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRMS)

EDRMS offers considerable savings in paper handling and associated processes, and its corporate implementation across the Council is required to enable all staff access to key document information when they need it, whether they are in a customer facing service, a back office service area or working form a remote location. This project aims to manage the roll-out of document management, retention and records management corporately across the Council through structured phases.

3. Telephony – Remote Working Options

This project is separate from, but working alongside, the wider Telephony project. This project is looking specifically at what services need from the telephony system to enable their staff to work flexible and remotely, including improving teleconferencing facilities.

4. Office Decant

This project aims to facilitate the relocation from the main civic office to two separate town centre locations. The project aims to assemble the required properties from third parties and to achieve a successful move out from The Civic Office in Hemel Hempstead into 39 and 41 The Marlowes and The Court House. The moves are a temporary relocation to facilitate the sale of the Civic Office and the development of the PSQ building.

5. Data Centre Migration

This project covers the migration of the current Civic Offices ICT Server Room to a purpose built external hosting centre within the Bucks County Council estate. This facility will provide a long-term 'cloud' location for DBC systems and enable delivery of efficiencies while increasing electronic storage capacity and improving business continuity arrangements.

6. Desktop Refresh

The Desktop Refresh project is the roll-out of desktop PC's or laptops in replacement of out-dated NEC PC's. This project is separate to the Flexible & Remote Working project, which will provide laptops for all potential remote workers. However, the two projects are working closely together to ensure that any out-dated NEC's within a service that are due to be replaced are replaced with laptops should the role in question be a potentially remote working role. Typically, ICT will replace any NEC machines within a service area with laptops, and then any remaining desktop (Dell) PC's within the service that were not included in the refresh programme will be replaced with laptops through the Flexible Working project for any roles that can be carried out remotely.

7. Web Improvement Plan

The Customer and Web Access Strategy identified services would like to move towards web based transaction by providing e-Forms and online payments. It has also been identified that we need for us to upgrade/replace our current Content Management System (Immediacy) as it is no longer maintained or developed by the suppliers. This provides an opportunity to replace our current Web hardware with a more suitable, scalable and robust setup that will enable us to deliver service requirements and expectations from the Web.

8. Customer Access/ Channel Migration

This project aims to improve how customers access our services, by making improvements in service delivery and providing a greater variety of ways the Council can be contacted. A fit for purpose and functional website is key, and so this project will work closely with the Web Improvement project to ensure aspirations for improved access to services can be supported by the Councils website.