# IT Strategy and Architecture

## Content and Collaboration Strategy

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1 Executive Summary

Content and Collaboration encompasses those IT services we use to communicate, store, and share unstructured information with other members of staff and with external partners. These services may be developed and delivered by GBS, IKM, or BC Digital.

Content and Collaboration does not include email, messaging, or conferencing, which are all addressed within the Infrastructure (Platform and Network) Domain.

We need a Content and Collaboration Strategy to:

- Deliver the increased impact, effectiveness, and efficiencies envisaged by the Corporate Plan
- Support our key business strategies of Smarter Working and New Models
- Support our drive to grow partnership income
- Build a culture of sharing, collaboration, and networking
- Enhance our ability to form virtual teams
- Facilitate our becoming an entrepreneurial public service
- Reduce information overload and support EAM (Enterprise Attention Management)
- Improve our management of electronic records

This document sets out how Content and Collaboration tools will contribute to the delivery of the 2015 Corporate Plan and the success of the British Council beyond. It is aligned to IKM and BC Digital strategies, and key IKM stakeholders have been consulted and reviewed earlier drafts of this document.

Whilst this strategy addresses IT services and tools, and how we should best approach using them, realising the full benefit of their deployment is crucially dependent on accompanying business change to foster a more flexible, agile and collaborative culture.

This issue of the strategy focuses on Collaboration. More work is needed to flesh out the Content aspects, particularly those that relate to intranet/extranet, digital asset management, and social media content.
2 Document Structure

Section 3 **Business Context** outlines the key drivers for the strategy.

The Content and Collaboration Strategy itself is presented Section 4 **Strategic Response**.

The *IT Strategy 2015 and Beyond* identifies 6 key themes that influence our strategic thinking:

- Exceptional customer service
- Social British Council
- IT on demand
- More choice, more options
- Digital services anytime, anywhere
- Smarter working

and 5 key ways in which IT can contribute to our success, by supporting key business objectives:

- Revenue generation
- Managing cost
- International programme delivery
- Marketing and customer service
- Global presence.

These themes and contributions are mapped to specific elements of the Content and Collaboration Strategy in Section 4; this section also identifies which existing programmes (if any) are already delivering elements of the strategy.

Key to delivering the strategy will be the exploitation of the full range of capabilities available with the latest version of SharePoint to support our internal collaboration, intranet, and EDRM requirements; and the promotion of a core set of tools for external collaboration. Section 5 outlines an Implementation Approach to phased delivery.

Section 6 documents **Risks and Issues**.
3 Business Context

1. The Corporate Plan envisages an organisation that in 2015 will be very different in size and shape – more agile, more effective, and more efficient; delivering increased cultural impact despite reducing government grant, and delivering increased revenue from English & Exams and Programmes & Projects.

2. We want to become an entrepreneurial public service: flexible and agile, generating surplus, less risk averse in pursuing opportunities, investing in the products we need to develop, nurturing talent – and executing with passion.

3. To achieve this we need to be able to work together more effectively, both with colleagues inside the Council and partners outside. We need to reduce duplication and information overload, improve information retrieval to support better decision making, and make it easier to identify skills and expertise wherever they are within the Council.

4. Making it easier to identify collateral and expertise will also improve our ability to bid for, win and manage revenue generating projects. We need to make it easier and more attractive for others to partner with us by having an appropriate set of internal and external collaboration tools with which all staff are familiar.

5. The mechanisms to support collaboration have increased significantly in recent years, and encompass not only well established traditional approaches such as email and conferencing, but blogs, discussion groups, wikis, instant messaging, micro-blogging, social media, and a wide variety of shared workspaces. This very richness can lead to uncertainty about the most appropriate approach for a given situation.

6. This uncertainty is compounded by the profusion of tools available to support each of these mechanisms, many of them cloud based and available in consumer versions at little or no cost. Corporate data is increasingly leaking beyond the network in an unregulated fashion, raising governance and compliance issues and risking our capacity to effectively manage our own IP.

7. Increasingly, staff want not only to bring their own devices (BYOD), but also to bring their own apps – to use tools to communicate and collaborate with work colleagues that are the same as (or at least equivalent in flexibility and richness to) those they use in their personal life.

8. We face an ever increasing volume of electronic records (documents, media, and other large files) which need to be stored, shared, searched, accessed and reused. We need a comprehensive ECM (Enterprise Content Management) approach to address the challenges that this brings. These challenges include storage capacity, retention control, common classification and multi-repository search and retrieval.

9. We still carry heavy paper dependencies, especially around case files, which limit our ability to generate business intelligence and to be agile in developing and delivering new services.
4 Strategic Response

Existing approaches to Collaboration and Content focus on Microsoft SharePoint, albeit primarily on an old version of the product. Given the tight integration with Microsoft Office is offered by the latest version, our investment in Microsoft infrastructure, our expertise in the use of Microsoft products, and our strategic partnership with Microsoft, this strategy proposes that further exploit the SharePoint platform.

The strategy therefore focuses on:

- Exploiting SharePoint
- Improving business effectiveness
- Improving Governance
- Improving IT effectiveness

We will continue to use other products to enhance and supplement SharePoint where appropriate, and will be open to alternative approaches should future technology alternatives offer a compelling business case.

4.1 Exploiting SharePoint

1. We will design and implement a robust infrastructure for SharePoint 2013 that is performant, scalable, resilient; and delivered as a fully managed service
   Related themes: IT on demand
   Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery
   Existing programmes: Technology Refresh

2. We will develop our intranet to better support the “One British Council” strategy, exploit the latest SharePoint capabilities (including enhanced integration with Exchange and Lync), and adopt Microsoft best practice guidance. We will create a social collaborative space where users will be able to interact with content, and target content at users based on their role, location, and preferences.
   Related themes: Customer service, Social British Council, Smarter working
   Supports: All key business objectives
   Existing programmes: None

3. We will implement a comprehensive ECM (Enterprise Content Management) solution concentrating on SharePoint as our platform of choice. We will expose EDRM (Electronic Document and Record Management) functionality through a SharePoint interface, and embed document and records management seamlessly within collaborative and personal working spaces.
   Related themes: Smarter Working
   Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery
   Existing programmes: MoDO

4. We will establish the use of SharePoint repositories to replace G: drives as the primary mechanism for storing, sharing and managing unstructured data internally.
   Related themes: Smarter working
Supports: Managing Cost  
Existing programmes: Technology Refresh

5. We will exploit the latest SharePoint capabilities to enhance our ability to identify and access expertise and skills that exist across the Council, using micro-blogging, communities and user profiles to quickly locate people with the relevant experience.

Related themes: Social British Council, Smarter working  
Supports: Revenue generation, Managing cost, Programme delivery  
Existing programmes: None

6. We will promote SharePoint as the development platform for business applications, where suitable, so that business tools can be successfully integrated into the overall offer.

Related themes: IT on demand, More choice  
Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery  
Existing programmes: None

7. We will develop and promote the App Store approach to make such tools and capabilities more readily available to staff.

Related themes: IT on demand; More choices, more options  
Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery  
Existing programmes: None

4.2 Improving Business Effectiveness

8. We will support the development of team, country and project sites using standardised templates, encouraging the use of tagging and metadata during content creation to make sure it can be easily found. By using collaborative tools effectively there will be a reduction in the reliance on e-mail, and improved communication between dispersed teams.

Related themes: Smarter working  
Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery, Global presence  
Existing programmes: None

9. We will provide collaboration spaces for projects to support a standard way of managing international programmes and to better support their global delivery teams, both for internal usage and options for external collaboration with partners.

Related themes: Customer service, Smarter working  
Supports: Programme delivery, Marketing and customer service  
Existing programmes: None

10. We will develop portals and personalised landing pages that provide customised access to the information and tools that individual members of staff need, including quick access to everyday tasks related to HR, Finance and travel.

Related themes: Smarter working  
Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery  
Existing programmes: None

11. We will use collaboration tools as an innovation platform throughout the Council, fostering better ways of identifying opportunities for innovation, gaining support for those which will deliver benefit, and developing solutions rapidly through virtual teams.

Related themes: Customer service, Social British Council, Smarter working
Supports: All key business objectives
Existing programmes: None

12. We will support document **scanning and workflow** technologies to move away from processes driven by paper documents and invest in business analysis to ensure return on investment.

*Related themes: Smarter working*

Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery

Existing programmes: MoDO

13. We will select, support, and promote a set of **core tools** for external collaboration that address the broad spectrum of requirements, including file sharing, team workspaces, and lightweight project management.

*Related themes: Customer service, IT on demand, More choices, Smarter working*

Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery, Marketing and customer service

Existing programmes: None

### 4.3 Improving Governance

14. We will provide **clear guidance** to users on the most appropriate tools to use for a variety of common situations, and advice on using the tools effectively.

*Related themes: IT on demand, More choices, Smarter working*

Supports: Programme delivery

Existing programmes: None

15. We will implement appropriate governance for information held in **shared repositories** and other collaboration tools in line with policy and legislation.

*Related themes: Smarter working*

Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery

Existing programmes: None

16. We will develop a governance framework for all **collaboration spaces** and appropriate guidance on archiving procedures for decommissioning sites and content.

*Related themes: Smarter working*

Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery

Existing programmes: None

17. We will develop a network of Content and Collaboration **champions** across the global network and SBUs to provide a focus for business change.

*Related themes: Customer service, Social British Council, Smarter working*

Support: Managing cost, Programme delivery, Marketing and customer service

Existing Programme: None

### 4.4 Improving IT Efficiency

18. We will prefer cloud based **SaaS** (Software as a Service) solutions to on premise or hosted solutions where these comply with policy and legislation, in line with government IT strategy and in order to benefit from improved scalability and reduced costs.

*Related themes: IT on demand*
19. We will move current on premise services to the cloud where equivalent function is available, provided the cloud based services comply with legislation and policy.
   Related themes: IT on demand
   Supports: Managing cost
   Existing programmes: None

20. We will review new technologies for collaboration at the earliest opportunity, to understand their functional capabilities and identify appropriate use cases.
    Related themes:
    Supports: All key business objectives
    Existing programmes: None

21. We will track the emerging discipline of EAM (Enterprise Attention Management), and trial and adopt the associated tools and techniques as they develop.
    Related themes: Smarter working
    Supports: Programme delivery, Marketing and customer service
    Existing programmes: None

22. We will deploy enterprise search to break down silo repositories and better integrate our data holdings.
    Related themes: Customer service, Smarter working
    Supports: Managing cost, Programme delivery, Marketing and customer service
    Existing programmes: None
5 Implementation Approach

Our approach to implementing the strategy will be to develop scalable core infrastructure, modular service offerings, appropriate governance, and a network of Content and Collaboration champions.

The following table shows the major work streams required to implement this strategy, their scope in terms of the strategic responses presented in section 4, and any related projects or programmes already in flight.

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<tr>
<th>Workstream</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Existing Programme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SharePoint 2013 Platform</td>
<td>Robust infrastructure (1)</td>
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<td>Replace G: drives (4)</td>
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<td>SharePoint 2013 Cloud</td>
<td>SaaS (18)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EAM (21)</td>
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6 Risks and Issues

1. There is a risk that implementing our Content and Collaboration Strategy is seen as no more than a technology project: without guidance on usage and best practice, staff will not exploit the tools and capabilities to their full extent, nor in a consistent manner.

2. There is a risk that implementing our Content and Collaboration Strategy is seen as no more than an IT project: we need a strong focus on the business change aspects of the strategy, which is even more about the way we work than it is about the tools we use.

3. There is a risk that promotion of SharePoint as our core platform for Content and Collaboration is seen as a centrally driven, one size fits all approach that is not responsive to local business needs.

4. There is a risk that programmes and projects with a dependency on SharePoint implement their own point solutions, wasting time, money, and effort.

5. There is a risk that operational issues with the current SharePoint implementation adversely impact staff perception of the service, and have a negative impact on pilots and early implementation.