

## **Brief For Headteacher Meetings 19,24, 25 June, 1 And 3 July**

### **1. ICT Solutions Update.**

- The Finance and ICT Services division of the Education dept. has been reorganised with three managers reporting to Paul Fisher, covering LEA Operations, Strategy and ICT Solutions.
- ICT Solutions has also recently been reorganised to reflect the nature of our work into technical and operational workstreams and to improve our customer relationship management.
- We have joined the IT Service Management forum to take advantage of best practice in service delivery.
- I am using some of these ideas in developing a revised management information system, centred around an incident logging module for the help desk, that will make us more responsive to user requests, remove duplication and replace numerous outdated, incompatible systems.

### **2. Making IT Work.**

- In response to criticisms levelled at us in an Ofsted report last year, we have formed a Project Called "Making IT Work".
- We identified a task to address every issue identified, appointed a task manager and regularly review progress against these tasks.
- For example, in response to comments about the need to improve communication across the county, we have accelerated implementation of the new RM Easymail system and all school staff now have access to a secure, web-based email system. Pupil emails accounts are also now available.

### **3. NGFL Next Phase "ICT IN SCHOOLS PROJECT".**

- The DfES Standards Fund grant document 601 issued in Nov 2002 gave new PC : Pupil targets that need to be achieved within the county and this project is the means by which these numbers will be achieved.
- It will probably take until Dec 04 to complete, as it involves site visits, network cabling, procurement, delivery and installation of over 4,000 new PCs to 460 sites.
- Some infrastructure upgrades will be required, servers will need installing in every school, training will need to be given and a secondary schools full network health check will be carried out prior to a final QA check of a sample of school installations.
- A project team has been formed, a plan produced and initial site visits have commenced. Based on information gained and lessons learned for NGfL Phase 5, we will be continually updating our "Tracker" database and making it available via the web so that schools can actually see the status of the project and how it will affect them.

### **4. Other Developments.**

- **Field Support Engineers** are technicians allocated to specific numbers of schools who pay for this service in addition to the normal ICT Solutions contract. Our decision to offer a half-day per fortnight service reflecting the

problems of this years' funding has proved so successful that we have had to employ additional engineers. Other models are in existence and one such is being trialled at Attleborough to see if it provides a better local service than ours.

- **Video Conferencing** is moving into the second phase where additional schools are being added to the trial to prove the benefits and shortcomings of using this emerging technology in an educational environment.
- **New Technology** - SPS. The service we offer to schools is based around the premise of a set of Standard products that have been proved to enable delivery of curriculum requirements. We are continually updating this list as technology and the business develops and are currently piloting a web content filtering product that can be used locally within schools as a potential new standard product.
- **Broadband Phase 2.** This will connect a further 153 sites to the BT managed service and my Project Manager is currently carrying out site surveys to determine the optimum way of delivering broadband to school sites.
- **Assess IT.** This is an additional module that can be purchased to complement the Phoenix school management system.
- **Secondary Schools ICT Forums.** These are held each term and are proving a valuable source of information from our customers. Many thanks to those who attend these and our annual conference in Norwich recently, which proved to be very successful and generated a huge amount of feedback about the services we provide.
- **Email, ISP and web sites.** As mentioned above, we administer email accounts for schools, we assist with development and support of school web sites in partnership with the advisory service and we monitor the performance of the BT managed Internet connection to ensure schools are able to receive the service they require.
- **Communication, downtime, resolution of user issues.** Although we have made great improvements in some areas over the last few months, and I am having statistical reports produced to back this up, I accept that I still need to improve communication with schools, particularly when advance notice of loss of the Internet service is concerned. We have tightened up our internal procedures to respond quickly to all complaints and my help desk is always looking to improve the response and resolution times for all user incidents. **We are here to help you**, so if you have any suggestions as to how I can improve the services that ICT Solutions delivers to schools, please let me know !

SW LEACH  
MANAGER ICT SOLUTIONS  
10 JUNE 2003