



TO: Chair and Members of the Finance & Facilities Committee

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health / CEO

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2018 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKPLAN

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Finance & Facilities Committee receive Report No. 018-18FFC re: “2018 Information Technology Workplan” for information.

Key Points

- Effective November 2017, MLHU engaged an external managed information technology (IT) services provider, Stronghold Services Corporation, to augment the Health Unit’s IT resources and to perform IT management and strategic oversight.
- Stronghold has completed the discovery phase of the IT environment/relationship, and is now working on integration, planning, and execution of a comprehensive IT strategy.
- During the discovery phase, the general condition of the IT environment was evaluated and found to be fair, but with room for improvement.
- Stronghold has built an IT Workplan ([Appendix A](#)) that addresses Five Pillars of Information Technology, which will be reported on and used as a baseline to improve services throughout the duration of the contract.

Background

In November 2017, MLHU engaged an external managed IT services provider, Stronghold Services Corporation, to augment the Health Unit’s IT resources and to perform IT management and oversight of strategic initiatives. The initial goal of the request for proposals was to deliver IT management to in-house CUPE staff, manage technical escalations for the team, and lead service and project management. With the departure of MLHU in-house staff in December 2017, the contract was also extended to include system administration. This added workflow and management of servers and IT infrastructure to the Stronghold team’s contract.

Stronghold has completed the discovery phase with respect to the Health Unit’s IT environment/relationship, and is working on integration, planning, and execution of strategy. Based on this initial phase, Stronghold has developed a 2018 IT Workplan ([Appendix A](#)). Various initiatives have been planned and implemented to improve service delivery and manage MLHU’s short- and longer-term IT strategy.

IT Team Structure

While the Director, Corporate Services is responsible for IT, general oversight of the IT strategy is the responsibility of a senior management member of the Stronghold team, who performs the role of virtual Chief Information Officer (VCIO), but is also on site as required. Management of the IT Department’s service delivery and of MLHU’s staff is handled by an on-site Stronghold representative, who acts in the capacity of an IT manager. The Stronghold team is responsible for system administration, acts as an on-call escalation resource, and provides any assistance the MLHU staff requires.

As part of the Stronghold integration, the internal IT team has been restructured, but the number of roles will remain at three, per a Memorandum of Understanding in place with CUPE. Two of those positions are End User Support Analysts and one is a Desktop Applications Analyst. The latter position is currently vacant and applications are being reviewed.

Status of IT Environment

Stronghold began discovery of the MLHU environment in November 2017. The environment's general condition was evaluated and was found to be fair, but with definite room for improvement. Some infrastructure has been identified as due for replacement and the overall strategic delivery of services is dated. There have been significant advances in technology that have not been implemented or evaluated for the environment.

Some examples include:

1. Wide Area Network – dated, with room for improvement
2. Server Infrastructure – server consolidation and strategic direction need to be applied
3. Endpoints (desktops/laptops) – physical inventory needs improvement; desktop replacement was strong but lacked a strategic plan
4. Server Environment – physical location is not ideal, connectivity needs improvement
5. Technical Knowledge – opportunities identified throughout the organization to enhance technical knowledge
6. Documentation – technical documentation and “big picture” need improvement
7. Strategic Plan – a new vision of service and delivery needs to be built and executed

Stronghold has an extensive toolset and uses many enterprise-level applications to deliver services. Antivirus software and a Monitoring and Remote Management application have been installed and are in use. In-house staff members have been trained and encouraged to integrate service requests and technical tasks into a professional services automation tool and an online documentation repository to store knowledge and service history. Stronghold has also implemented a customized MLHU application for service requests, which has been installed across the environment.

Next Steps

Stronghold has built an IT Workplan ([Appendix A](#)) that addresses the following Five Pillars of Information Technology, which will be reported on and used as a baseline to improve services throughout the duration of the contract.

1. Business Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity
2. IT Infrastructure
3. IT Applications
4. Telecommunications
5. IT Organization

MLHU requires strong IT leadership, a strong pool of technical talent, and a management team dedicated to delivering and improving on the current environment. The first year of service has seen many projects and improvements identified, which will be implemented per the timelines identified in ([Appendix B](#)). IT changes constantly across the industry, and a flexible, knowledgeable team is required for success.

This report prepared by the Information Technology Team, Healthy Organization Division, and by Stronghold Services Corporation.



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