

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND FINANCE CABINET MEMBER**

**PUBLIC SERVICES NETWORK CODE OF CONNECTION 2015/16**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To outline the background to the government's Public Services Network Code of Connection requirement.
- 1.2 To note the outcome for the council in respect of the 2015/16 recertification process.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Public Services Network (PSN) is a government programme to unify the provision of network infrastructure across the public sector into a n interconnected "network of networks".
- 2.2 PSN substantially reduces the cost of communication services across government enabling secure, joined-up and shared public services for the benefit of public sector organisations and citizens.
- 2.3 Each year North Lincolnshire Council submits a code of connection (CoCo) application to maintain PSN connectivity. This annual exercise commenced in 2009 at the inception of the national Government Connect infrastructure initiative. During 2011, this became known as "PSN".
- 2.4 Compliance is essential in order for services to share data and information with the government including Health information with the NHS and Local Taxation and benefits information with Department for Work and Pensions.
- 2.5 The re-certification process requires each authority to respond to a comprehensive and strict set of mandated controls, demonstrating how they meet each one or plan to do so. As in previous years, gaining compliance can require a series of resubmissions due to additional evidence being requested by the Information Assurance Assessor (IAA).
- 2.6 An essential element of the compliance process is a mandatory external IT health check covering IT infrastructure, security facilities and internal processes/configurations.

2.7 During 2015 our assessment focussed on the following areas:

- External penetration testing (from the internet to the NLC network)
- Internal testing (testing of all our internal servers)
- Standard hardware build (servers and desktops)
- Wifi (security)
- Remote access solutions (security)

2.8 Following the completion of the IT health check, a summary report was produced outlining and recommending corrective action required to conform to the latest PSN CoCo standards.

2.9 On 21 October 2015 we received official confirmation that our recertification submission had been successful at the first attempt. The new compliance certificate (Appendix 1) is valid until November 2016.

2.10 As in previous years, IT Services will continue to monitor and respond to any new requirements from PSN and actively engage in discussions regarding changes to the existing controls or additional measures.

2.11 The next external IT Health Check will take place in May 2016 in readiness for our CoCo application to be resubmitted in October 2016.

2.12 The PSN compliance process is being discussed as part of the shared ICT service planning with NELC. Currently the submission dates for NLC and NELC differ, but alignment will help reduce the work involved in achieving future CoCo compliance.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 No options to consider – report only for information.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 No options to analyse – report only for information.

### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 No additional resources were required to gain PSN compliance. All necessary system and infrastructure changes were carried out by existing IT Services resources during normal working hours, evenings and weekends.

### **6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

N/A

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

7.1 The PSN compliance process was monitored by the IT Strategy Board and the Information and IT Security Forum throughout 2015.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the successful PSN CoCo recertification for 2015/16 is noted.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**  
PSN Standards/Controls 2015/16



12<sub>month</sub>

# PSN connection compliance certificate

This is to certify that

**North Lincolnshire Council**

has had its compliance reviewed and has demonstrated that its infrastructure is sufficiently secure to connect to the PSN during the following period

**18 November 2015**

date issued

**18 November 2016**

expiry date

For and on behalf of the Public Services Network

Mark Smith  
PSN Head of Compliance

This Public Services Network (PSN) connection compliance certificate is issued following completion of the PSN compliance verification process. It shows that your organisation has successfully achieved PSN compliance by demonstrating to the PSN team that your infrastructure is sufficiently secure that your connection to the PSN would not present an unacceptable risk to the security of the network. Your certificate is valid until the expiry date shown above. It may be withdrawn at any time in accordance with the PSN Code of Connection (CoCo) if it is found that you no longer meet the agreed standards.