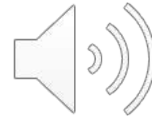# Looking Back, to Look Forward

How we are preparing for the future
And how change is shaping us in the present

Who am I?

- Joe McIntyre;
- Assistant Director (IT Operations);
- Strategic leader of the Support Group;
  - Nine teams, delivering a range of services from Architecture to Training;
  - 53 staff, based on three campuses;
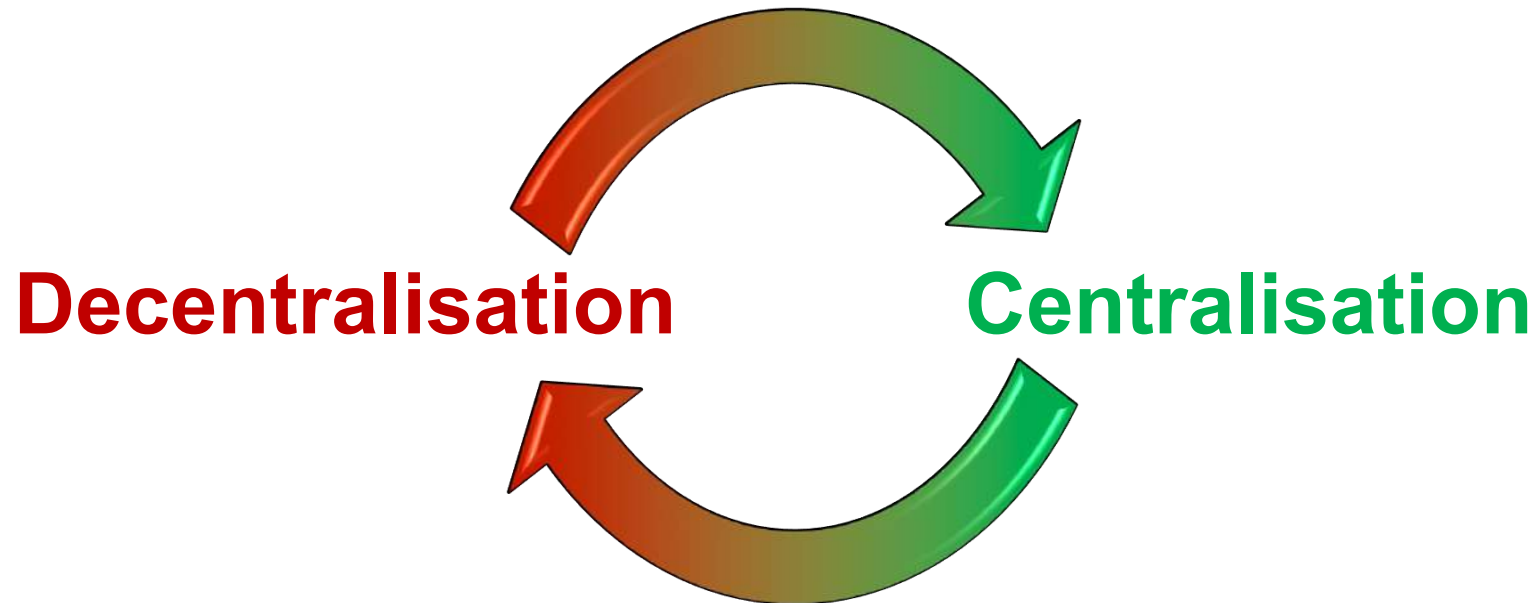- Worked for Anglia Ruskin University for 27 years;

Introducing our Support Group

Built it up or break it down, the Higher Education conundrum

Decentralisation   Centralisation

Decentralised support

The case **for** devolution

- Hierarchies can be flattened and service delivery "turns left";
- Decision are made closer to the customers, which makes for more personalised service;
- Proximity makes it is easier to quickly respond to changes in local circumstance;
- Individuals can specialise in their field and become the expert in a field of support;
- There is often a greater sense of local ownership;

The case **against** devolution

- Decision-making becomes operationally rather than strategically focused;
- The larger to organisation, the harder it is to ensure consistent quality and service;
- Economy of scale is lost as roles and functions are duplicated;
- Financial controls that promote a value-for-money philosophy becomes increasingly difficult as budgets are delegated;
- Single points of failure and inappropriate levels of control become increasingly common;

Centralised support

The case **for** centralising

- It makes the process of implementing common policies, procedures and practice across a whole organisation far simpler;
- Decisions on large scale issues are more quickly made and implemented;
- Significant efficiencies and savings can result from the economies of scale available through task sharing and purchasing;
- The customer experience becomes more uniform and easily measured;
- "Rogue" behaviours are deprecated;

The case **against** centralising

- Decision-making can be appear austere and bureaucratic, especially with respect to small issues;
- Large scale solutions can lack the flexibility necessary for individual customers – it's harder to be an exception;
- Loss of operational zeitgeist and local understanding;
- Reduces the sense of local ownership felt by customers;
- Can stifle local creativity and independence;

Scope

- Solutions supplier management and ongoing associated support;
- Commissioning, development and delivery of new software and application solutions in-house and by third parties;
- Student IT help and support;
- Installation and ongoing support of computer and multimedia teaching spaces;
- Corporate printing and copying services, including multifunction devices;
- Budgets to procure and maintain information-technology and multimedia licenses and solutions;

Aims

- Develop better understanding of student and staff business needs and priorities;

- Establish clear paths for technology leadership;

- Improve accountability for:
  - Professional standards;
  - Service quality;
  - Security;
  - Licensing;
  - Implementation of industry best-practice solutions;

- Create simplified and streamlined processes, based upon user need, that scale from individuals to the whole organisation;

Objectives

- More effectively manage third-party suppliers and ensure value for money from support contracts;

- Capture the efficiencies, benefits and savings that are a natural consequence of economies of scale;

- Reduce reliance on 'single points of failure' for critical services, operations and functions;

- Provide wider career opportunities and staff development for colleagues supporting information-technology across our University;

- Enhance the customer experience and improve satisfaction;

Change as a daily challenge

Planned change

- Deliberate, organised and diligently planned;
- Product of conscious reasoning and actions;
- Cascades downwards through an organisation;
- Triggered by strategic or well-recognised operational requirements;
- Assumes a smooth transition from current to desired state without significant disruption;
- Has well defined outcomes that can be used to measure the success of the change exercise;
- Suits large scale projects;

Emergent change

- Unpredictable or unanticipated;
- Triggered by immediate circumstance;
- Local and often small scale but can escalate if not addressed;
- Reactive and possibly ongoing;
- Requires innovation, agility and resilience;
- Wayfinding rather than clearly routed;
- Suits small, time-critical solutions in which quality is not primary driver;
- Often results in ad hoc solutions;

Customer Support Team

	Chelmsford	Cambridge	Peterborough
Assistant Director			
Senior Support Analysts			
Support Analysts			
Support Technicians			

One Team

- Mitel telephony status screens

- Video link between offices

- Bomgar

- Monthly team meetings

- Knowledge Transfer sessions
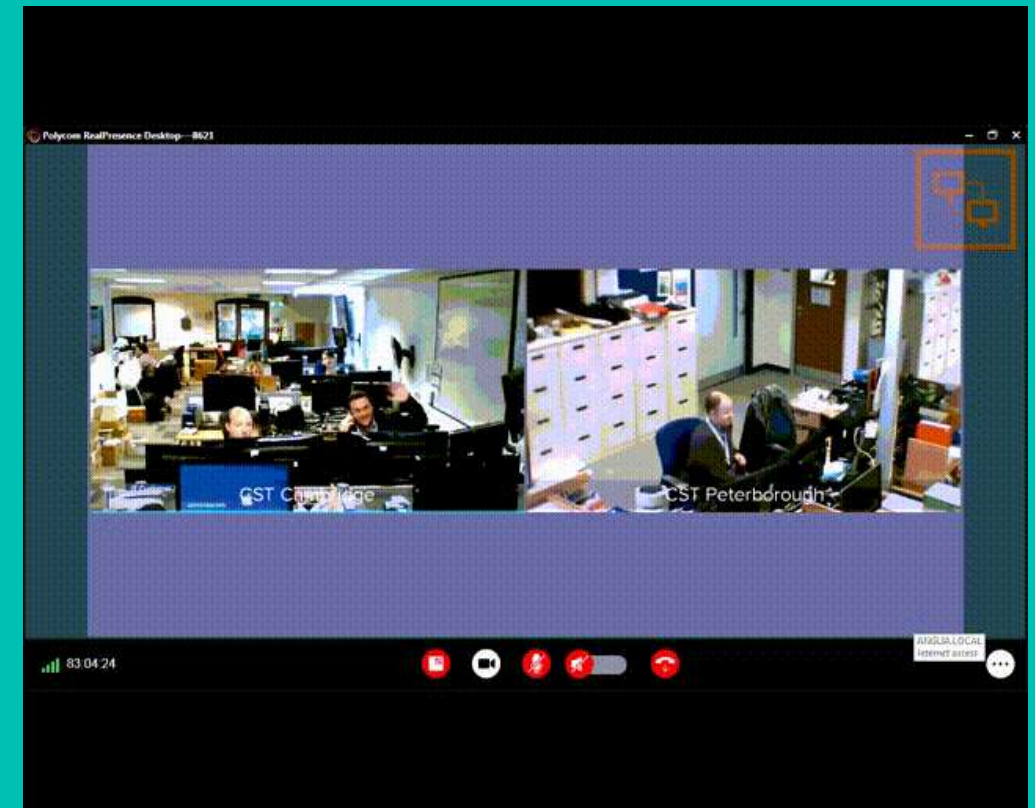
Challenge in Chelmsford

- Team currently all based together in the same office
- Located on the main campus
- Solely IT Services office

- Moving to a new building off the main campus
- Shared space with other departments
- Secondary central location

Solutions

- Hotdesking
- New hardware
- Customer Drop In Centre
- Adding both new offices to the video link
- Find My Technician

Finally…

- Your experiences?

Some non-sequitur final thoughts…

- Change is inevitable. Embrace it, go with the flow rather than swim against it;

- Communication is key to an excellent customer experience and, most of all, "it's good to talk";

- Everyone on a service desk should "walk a mile in someone else's shoes";

- Be recognised as part of your wider community, not just for your IT support;

- Cement relationships by being seen on campus – meet your customers in places other than your own space;

- Tea is a universal lubricant;

…And finally