

Ward: All

## Digital Councils Programme – Update

### Report by the Director of Digital and Resources

#### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 On December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014, Joint Strategic Committee approved funding for the introduction of new cloud-based technology platforms to support the re-design and ‘digitisation’ of council services and ways of working over the next three years. The preceding assessment work done during Autumn 2014 established that new enterprise-grade cloud technologies were critical enablers for the delivery of ‘end-to-end’ digital customer self-service at the scale and pace required to modernise operations, improve the customer experience and drive out efficiencies.
- 1.2 The implementation phase of the digital councils programme started in January 2015 and comprises the following streams of work
- Moving to the Google Apps for Work productivity platform, including email and calendar for all staff (April 2015) and replacing Microsoft Office over time
  - Building a ‘Customer Interaction Platform’ (CIM), providing a ‘multi-channel’ contact centre and the ability to build end-to-end digital self service products (contact centre solutions and green bins products due end of April 2015)
  - Procuring a new single enterprise cloud-based telephony solution tightly integrated with the new platforms, available via smartphone app (May/June 2015)
  - Introducing smartphones to allow staff to better collaborate and be more mobile, work from home etc. (May/June 2015)
  - Conducting technical assessments of the network and wi-fi provision to ensure capacity for the new technologies (underway)
  - Updating or replacing the wi-fi service as necessary (April/May 2015)
  - Creating a ‘Bring Your Own Device’ strategy, allowing access to the new platforms from personal devices (completed)
  - Creating an “Adur & Worthing Digital Service” with the first step being the recruitment of a Head of Digital & Design, acting as an ‘agency’ within (April 2015)
- 1.3 Work has progressed very well so far with all work-streams currently on schedule. However with so many major and inter-dependent elements to the programme we do expect some date slippage, although none has yet been identified.

- 1.4 The Google for Work project team comprises a number of internal staff (who are learning important project delivery skills) as well as external professional support. The implementation is split into two phases. A soft launch will take place on March 3<sup>rd</sup> for 115 users (we were over-subscribed for volunteers) and a full implementation to all staff is currently planned for April 14<sup>th</sup> 2015. The soft launch will enable issues to be identified and remedied, and the communications and training offer further refined. Of the 115 soft launchers, 80 have come forward to become Google Champions who will receive training and be asked to communicate and train on the ground on an on-going basis, including floor-walking on switch-over day. The project team members are already using Google for Work successfully, experiencing benefits and identifying significant opportunities for increased productivity. Google for Work will provide important benefits beyond easier access to email and calendar from any device. It will provide a step change in the ability to collaborate on documents, instant chat, video hangouts and 'communities' for projects, sharing information with members and so on. The potential is huge and there will be a continued emphasis on ensuring staff are helped to maximise the benefits.
- 1.5 The Customer Interaction Management (CIM) platform is currently being built using two powerful platform technologies tightly integrated together to form a coherent CIM for both contact centre (with agents being able to work from anywhere, including from home or from community-based locations) and to support service (business process) delivery. The first "show and tell" session is scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup> where we will see the technology in "alpha" (first version). The CIM will enable the councils to interact with and support citizens via any channel, including Twitter, Facebook, phone, email etc. But crucially it will also provide the "low-code" platform which our own digital services team will be able to build digital products with. The first product, supporting the green bins service, has been designed with the AWCS service and the alpha version will be implemented by the end of April 2015. Customers will be asked to help us test and refine the product, ensuring we are meeting customer needs above all. The strategy will then be to digitise the remaining AWCS transactional services, enabling the retirement of our first legacy application, Lagan, producing a saving of £20k per year from 2016/17. The new green bin digital service is a much more streamlined process requiring far less administrator input, and demonstrates the efficiencies that the digital programme will deliver.
- 1.6 Information security is of paramount importance in the adoption of these new technologies and work is being done to develop a risk-based information security approach as part of the programme. The Google Apps for Work platform has been adopted by the Cabinet Office, whose security risk assessment approach we have adopted. With regard to the CIM, a security risk assessment will be undertaken, penetration testing ("white hat hacking") and a final review by a CLAS consultant.
- 1.7 Soft-market testing is almost complete for the telephony solution that will support the whole business, and allow the replacement of the several legacy phone systems the councils currently use. Agreement has been reached with the current supplier who will support migration to the new system free of charge when needed and without interruption to services.
- 1.8 Smartphone requirements have been finalised and we will be using a framework to procure a new mobile contract for roll-out of devices May/June.

1.9 A critical step to ensure the continued success of the programme will be to make a strong appointment to the Head of Design & Digital post. This role will be vital in bringing together resources to create a strong in-house Digital Service that is capable of building the momentum behind service re-design and digitisation. The pace and intensity of the programme is currently high and we believe should be maintained to ensure wide reaching transformation.

## **2.0 Legal**

2.1 Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the Local Authority to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the Local Authority.

2.2 Section 1 Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.

2.3 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

2.4 Section 3(1) Local Government Act 1999 contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

2.5 The Council must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the principles within it, including Principle 7: appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.

## **3.0 Financial implications**

3.1 The 2014/15 revenue budget for IT systems, support and software is £2.12m. There is also a capital budget of £345,000.

3.2 The digital project strategy to rationalise the amount spent on software by procuring generic platforms, which can be tailored to meet the Councils' needs means that the Councils are required to invest in the short term to save in the medium term. Direct annual revenue savings relating to the project are estimated at £233,000 and should start to crystallise from 2017/18 . There will also be indirect corporate savings related to improved productivity and the reduction in direct contact with customers due to easier access and reliable digital information and services.

3.3 A detailed analysis of the financial implications of the digital programme is contained in Section 5 of the report 'Investing in New Technology: The Springboard to Excellent Customer Experience and Business Efficiency.' This report was agreed by the Executive on 2nd December 2014 and included approval to release £623,900 funds from reserves to support the planned investment expenditure in 2014/15 and 2015/16 .This is to be split indicatively on a 40% Adur and 60% Worthing basis.

## **4.0 Recommendation**

4.1 Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- note the contents of the report;
- request an update in June 2015

### **Local Government Act 1972**

#### **Background Papers:**

Report to Joint Strategic Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014

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## **Schedule of Other Matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

1.1 This proposal is a key enabler for the Adaptive Councils priority in Catching the Wave

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

2.1 The actions being undertaken are detailed in the Joint Strategic Committee December 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 report on Digital Investment.

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

3.1 There are long term benefits anticipated through the adoption of these new technologies by increasing home working, more efficient mobile working, video meetings etc

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

4.1 Designing for accessibility is a key requirement for software applications

### **5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

5.1 None identified

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

6.1 None identified

### **7.0 Reputation**

7.1 The councils reputation is expected to be significantly enhanced through making the council more accessible online and improving responsiveness to customer enquiries

### **8.0 Consultations**

8.1 None

### **9.0 Risk Assessment**

9.1 Detailed in para 1.6 above

### **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

10.1 None identified

### **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

11.1 G-Cloud and other government procurement frameworks have been utilised to secure these technologies and services.

## **12.0 Partnership Working**

12.1 None at present