

Ward: All

Digital Strategy & Programme Update

Report by the Director for Digital & Resources

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report to Committee provides an update on progress with the digital programme which was approved in December 2014. A wide range of highly innovative work has been undertaken at high pace since January 2015, and concrete change has been delivered, leading to annual savings of £200k from 2016/17, meeting the 2016/17 target set by Committee.
- 1.2 In the last 9 months, all staff and members have been migrated to Google for Work, and are now able to access their emails, calendar and documents from any device. We have introduced a ground-breaking Citizen Platform, and new waste and recycling digital services are currently rolling out. A better, cheaper enterprise and contact centre telephony system has been selected, and a mobile re-procurement has delivered staff productivity gains at lower cost too.
- 1.3 Adur and Worthing Councils are already recognised as among the national leaders for digital in local government as a result of this work, and were recently awarded the SOCITM Digital Innovation Award 2015. This paper outlines these achievements in more detail, recognises the scale of the challenge ahead, but explains why the technology choices we have made stand the Councils in very good stead.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In December 2014, Joint Strategic Committee approved funding for an ambitious digital programme to introduce a set of modern technologies to the organisation. This was described as an essential first step that would enable the transformation of our council services, fit for the digital age. The new technology platforms would provide the flexible building blocks for the rapid digital redesign and simplification of services and provide better tools for staff and members. The potential for these new platforms to be used by other agencies and communities in the future was also a key rationale for moving to “cloud” platforms. The wider role of digital in improving communication and creating more economic and social value with Adur & Worthing residents, communities and businesses is explored further in our “Councils as Platforms” strategy in Appendix A.

- 2.2 The programme of work proposed in December 2014 included the resolution of some key pressing issues such as basic IT service reliability, fixing the telephones, delivering smart-phones and using smarter procurement practices.
- 2.3 In January 2015, products and services were selected using the G-Cloud government procurement framework to meet the highly specialised and innovative direction of travel established in earlier discovery and blueprinting work. Programming and technical work began in two work-streams. In the “productivity” work-stream, Google for Work was selected as a replacement for Microsoft Outlook and this was successfully implemented for all staff and members in April 2015. In the “platform” work-stream, two products were selected, Salesforce and Matssoft to create the “Citizen Platform”. This followed extensive market-testing and interviews in November / December 2014 with a wide range of local government and private sector software suppliers to help design, test and confirm our specialist requirements.
- 2.4 Significant technical work was begun by Methods Digital, specialists in the application of “public cloud” technologies in the public sector. A full enterprise data architecture was created for the organisation and the two cloud products were joined seamlessly together - a highly innovative solution designed to keep ongoing revenue costs low and enable rapid digitisation work. The selected products provide powerful capabilities to do state-of-the-art multi-channel customer service (Salesforce) and end-to-end digital business process and customer self-service (Matssoft). Alongside this, the digital programme initiated procurements of a new enterprise and contact centre telephony system (which will form an integral part of the Citizen Platform) and smart-phones.
- 2.5 The aims of the first year of the programme were not only to establish the new platforms in the organisation but also to begin the process of digitisation of services using the new tools, to deliver tangible benefit. The strategic benefits of moving services onto the new platform would be to take the opportunity to rethink the service design for the digital age (simple, fast, user-friendly), de-commission out-of-date software (simplifying the IT estate and saving money) and drive out administrative inefficiencies.
- 2.6 Work began in the spring with Waste & Recycling to create a range of digital services. The first versions of these have all now been built and are currently being rolled out, including Street Scene, clinical waste, confidential waste, bulky waste, green sacks and green bins. Cashable efficiency savings have been successfully delivered from 2016/17 relating to switching off of old software (£44.9k per year) and making staff savings (£91.7k per year).
- 2.7 As waste and recycling goes live, the platform will be used to manage the end-to-end customer experience across the organisation, breaking down the information barriers between different teams and allowing deep, real-time data analysis to support service improvement. The full multi-channel contact centre will roll out in a Phase 2 programme, including the new telephony and call distribution functionality.

- 2.8 As part of the work to boost productivity, smart-phones were rolled out to staff in the summer and we have had extremely good feedback. The re-procurement of this better technology has also saved the councils £32k per year. Some feedback from users is given below:

“Great for taking photos when I am out on site and immediately being able to share them with colleagues. Before, I had a digital camera and had to make a special trip back to the office to download the photos. That wasted so much time.”

“Just makes life a lot easier when out at meetings – can check email between appointments, check calendar in meetings and even use the route planner to find out where I’m going”

“Using docs and sheets whilst out and about means I have the info I need at my fingertips – also saving printing costs. The Google map works great on the phone and I no longer need a separate Sat Nav”

- 2.9 Google Champions are continuing to support staff and members with using the new technologies and training has recently been undertaken on the use of Google docs which has delivered such benefits around easier collaboration and reducing the headaches of version control.
- 2.10 The enterprise telephony procurement has also been completed, with an award to a local company, Overline, who will provide an Avaya phone system in Spring 2016, replacing the several old and unreliable phones systems in use currently. The new phone system will be integrated into the Citizen Platform, delivering huge improvements to customer experience, far better reliability and generating powerful performance and insight data to help the Director for Customer Service diagnose and improve issues across the organisation. The cost is lower than the current system, saving the councils £32k per year.
- 2.11 In December 2014, Joint Strategic Committee approved funding for the digital programme of £623,900 and set a savings target of £200,000 per annum. In this report we confirm we have achieved the target for 2016/17 through the range of activities undertaken in the programme.
- 2.12 On top of this work, the digital programme has also progressed a number of other digital projects in the period and this illustrates the key benefit of the technologies we now have at our disposal. Our Citizen Platform allows the councils own digital team and other council teams, as we train others, to build digital applications on a single platform. Our use of external experts is now low and will come to an end in March 2016. The Citizen Platform does not require consultants or suppliers to build applications for us, and we no longer have to wait for suppliers to make changes as in the traditional IT model. Although investment was needed to create this strategy and establish the new technologies, Adur and Worthing now have a flexible low cost model going forward which is already paying back benefits to customers and the bottom line.

- 2.13 Because the platform is “low code”, we are able to skill up our current workforce to build digital services using “drag and drop” from the menu of capabilities we established in the technical work during the spring/summer 2015. As our AWCS service manager has said:

"Matsoft has allowed a fresh approach. Matsoft enables us to look at any digital process we've got – streamline it, change it, and improve the service to the public"

The Matsoft system enables us to stand up new services quite quickly – e.g. a colleague built a bus shelter cleaning system very quickly. So the benefit we get from this is that with a bit of tweaking in that process map we can do change very quickly. Whether it's waste collection, pest control, street cleansing, coast protection, etc – things happening very quickly in front of you with Matsoft.

Matsoft is good because we can tweak it as we want – contra the old days (SAP, etc) which was black-boxed."

- 2.14 A “complaints and compliments” product will be completed soon and a “new starters” HR app has removed 9 paper forms that managers used to have to fill in. We are already making progress with a bereavement services app and a service signposting product for Think Family workers. In some of these cases there will be cashable savings to book in 2017/18, but in others, new digital products will simply help relieve pressures on existing staff.
- 2.15 The next large design & digitisation project will be for Adur Housing services and we have already undertaken the research phase. All projects are assessed for their ability to improve the customer experience and drive out efficiencies, and projects are locked into the annual service planning process to ensure savings are realised. Work is underway to assess which service areas will enter the programme after housing.
- 2.16 With regard to ICT infrastructure (the many existing line of business applications), we have been working closely with the Head of Census ICT on future strategy. The Head of Census has recently helped us engage a consultancy, Eduserv, who are currently investigating the detailed business case for moving existing applications to the cloud - called “Infrastructure as a Service” - with the aim of improving resilience and delivering cost savings. Mid Sussex District Council plan to undertake the same exercise and the implications for the how the Census service might change will be assessed collaboratively with all partners.
- 2.16 Adur and Worthing’s Digital & Design team still have a journey in front of them to build skills and capacity around programme management, product management and data analysis in this new service design and technology environment. Nevertheless, much great work has been delivered so far.
- 2.17 The strategy Adur and Worthing Councils have adopted, and the technologies invested in have set us on a strong course to quickly help the councils gain relevance in this digital age, better meet the needs of customers through the work

led by the Director for Customer Service, and help the organisation deliver the necessary efficiencies to meet the financial challenge.

3.0 Legal

- 3.1 Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 provides that the Council shall have the power to do anything (whether or not involving expenditure, borrowing, or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 3.2 Section 1 Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority with the power to do anything that individuals generally may do, providing no other legislation exists to prevent it. This provision confers power upon the Local Authority to do it in any way whatever, including power to do it anywhere in the UK or elsewhere, for a commercial purpose, or without charge, and for the benefit of the Authority, its area or persons resident, or not.
- 3.3 Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the local authority to enter into a contract for the provision or making available of assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the local authority.
- 3.4 In entering into contracts the Councils must comply with their own Contract Standing Orders at Part 4 of the Constitution. They must also comply with all procurement legislation including the Public Contracts Regulations 2006.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 The programme is still expected to spend within the budget allocated. This is regularly being reported to the Joint Strategic Committee as part of the Capital and Projects report.

Total 2 year programme	Approved budgets	Spend in 2014/15	Forecast spend in 2015/16	Total spend	Over (-) / under spend
	£	£	£	£	£
Main Programme	671,600	275,002	434,103	709,106	-37,506
Small Ad Hoc projects	13,000	14,337	0	14,337	-1,337
Microsoft Licences	137,990	0	109,383	109,383	28,607
Google Licences and implementation	146,010	45,177	54,626	99,803	46,207

Telephony	170,000	0	170,000	170,000	0
Total Revenue Spend/Forecast	1,138,600	334,516	768,112	1,102,628	35,972

4.2 Indicative savings of just over £200k associated with the Digital Programme have been identified as part of the 2016/17 budget round.

	2016/17		
	Adur	Worthing	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capacity created by the digital programme			
Business Support - AWCS admin efficiencies	13,240	19,860	33,100
Insurances and financial administration - Business Support to provide support to the insurance manager from capacity created by removal of AWCS admin duties	4,020	6,030	10,050
HR Restructure - Business Support to provide administration support from capacity created by removal of AWCS admin duties	8,252	12,378	20,630
AWCS restructure savings	11,170	16,750	27,920
Software savings			
Cancel Northgate contract - consolidation onto main corporate solution removes need for separate licence	0	16,750	16,750
Deletion of subscription to WSASP which funded Lagan	10,000	10,000	20,000
Deletion of Covalent licence	3,270	4,910	8,180

Procurement savings

Reprocurement of telephony solutions	25,600	38,400	64,000
Total savings released by programme to date	75,552	125,078	200,630
Target			200,000
Over / Under (-) target			630

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 That Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the progress that has been made with the digital programme and the savings realised for 2016/17.

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

None

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 The digital programme is a core plank of the Adaptive Councils priority in Catching the Wave.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 A number of "[Surfs up](#)" commitments are also delivered through the programme.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered and no issue identified

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Accessibility is an important part of user experience design, and this is a matter of continuous improvement and ongoing research & design with customers.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issue identified

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issue identified

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Providing modern, user-friendly digital services is very important to the reputation of the Councils in these digital times

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Staff affected have been closely involved in the design, testing and implementation of new digital services.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Security assessments have been undertaken by our Information Governance Officer and approved by the Senior Information Risk Officer (Director for Digital & Resources) and an independent security assessment was completed as part of the programme. Further work is being undertaken in liaison with a CLAS security consultant as part of ongoing accreditation work and this is expected to include "penetration testing" (ethical hacking testing) of the live platform environment.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issue identified

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 The Digital Programme has utilised the G-Cloud government procurement framework in a number of areas, saving cost and time, in line with central government policy.

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 Matter considered and no issue identified