

## Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 July 2018

### Digital Transformation Update

#### Recommendation

The Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the content of this report.

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been written at the request of members, it focuses on the current state of play and the next steps for digitisation.
- 1.2 The Digital by Design programme supports the delivery of the transformation plan outlined in the One Organisational Plan (OOP). The programme focuses on four key themes; delivering the best possible digital customer experience, making better use of data to inform decisions, achieving operational efficiency by establishing a new way of working and embracing innovation and continuous improvement.
- 1.3 Our ambition is to enable and support the organisation to manage need and increase financial sustainability. This starts with understanding our customers' needs and providing information, advice and services in the most cost effective way available, online using self-service. By making our online digital self-service offer the best it can be, we anticipate that our digitally savvy customers will adopt this as their channel of choice in the same way they have adopted online banking and online shopping. Ease of use, convenience, speed and control of issues which are important to them are the key reason given by customers for move to online services. For the Council, any percentage move towards the greater use of online services by those who can will release resources that can be focused on our most vulnerable customers.
- 1.4 To achieve our ambition we also need to reduce our cost of delivery, as we digitally empower our customers we need to digitally enable our staff by streamlining service delivery and equipping our people with the tools and skills to work in a new and modern way. We will work to ensure we reimagine the

way we utilise existing technology, embrace new technology and align to our customers preferred channels of engagement.

## **2 Digital by Design Vision**

- 2.1 Our digital vision is *“to create the best possible digital experience that meets our customers’ expectations, engages, empowers and enables the full potential of Warwickshire County Council, its communities, people and partners.”* This vision is people centric, needs driven and outcomes focused. we are committed to taking advantage of the possibilities that existing and new technologies provide to deliver a better experience and outcome to all stakeholders.
- 2.2 Digital by Design is a people centric approach to delivering technology enabled change. It focuses on enabling and supporting people to transform business activities, processes, competencies and service models with the help of digital technologies delivered in a strategic and prioritised way. It prioritises our cultural and behavioural changes to ensure we can maximise the benefits by fully utilising and becoming proficient at using the enabling technology we implement. Our greatest challenge will be changing the culture and behaviour of our customers, staff, partners and other stakeholders.
- 2.3 Empowering our customers to have 24/7 access to council information and services, from anywhere, at any time using any device, not only allows them to find what they want at their convenience but also contributes to greater satisfaction with our services, the delivery of the best possible outcome for them and supports us to deliver the efficiencies we require.
- 2.4 Enabling our staff to deliver the best possible services by providing them with the appropriate tools, skills and capabilities to perform their jobs to the best of their ability. Automating mundane tasks, improving collaboration and communication, removing processes and procedures that do not add value, freeing up our staff to focus on assisting customers, monitoring and continuously improving the services we provide.
- 2.5 Creating a more capable organisation by making better use of the data that we hold to inform and evidence decisions, enable proactive actions and preventative interventions. Sharing and integrating services, when it is mutually beneficial and in the interest of the customer or other stakeholders.
- 2.6 The Customer Service Strategy, appendix 2, will be driven by the needs of our customers and aligned with the vision of our One Organisational Plan (OOP 2020) and new operating model. It defines the actions we will take to

deliver the best possible services to our customers within the context of our organisational challenges and the opportunities presented by new delivery options. The Digital by Design programme will enable and support the delivery of this strategy and One Organisational Plan.

Digital by Design is based on the following principles which reflect how we will deliver solutions:

- People focused, digital by design and technology enabled
- Easily accessible anytime, anywhere and on any device
- Based on customer need and improving the customer's experience
- Simple to use and remains in the context of the current customer journey
- Informed and evidenced by accurate and reliable data, information and insight
- Secure and ensures the customer maintains control over their data
- Design to ensure the whole customer journey is as digital as possible.
- Cost effective, ease to maintain and reliable.

2.7 We know that customers want to be able to access services in a way that is easy for them and at a time that suits. They want faster, quicker and better public services, Digital by Design is how we deliver this.

### **3 Direction of Travel**

3.1 In the autumn of 2017 we began to review what we had achieved to date and the direction of travel of the programme. We refocused the programme, at that point called Digital First, renamed it Digital by Design and agreed to focus on the following:

- Governance – reviewing the governance, strengthening links to the business, confirming our digital principles and clarifying the digital enabling role in supporting the delivery of the OOP and the implementation of the new target operating model.
- Digital front door – making sure both our new intranet and proposed website delivered the best customer experience and supported the change in culture and behaviour.
- Digital platform – understanding and agreeing what the organisations digital needs are and making sure we have the right software products in place to deliver these. Creating efficiencies by reusing processes we have already built, reducing the need to buy bespoke products whilst enabling us to create a simple and easy to use digital experience for our customers.
- Tactical projects – making sure we prioritised working with those services where we could make the biggest impact on their customer experience whilst also delivering efficiencies.

## **4 Achievements to date**

### **4.1 Governance**

The new Digital by Design Programme Board has been in place since January 2018, it is chaired by David Carter, Joint Managing Director. To date the Board has endorsed the following:

1. Digital principles – these are attached at appendix 1 and set-out the principles by which we will develop digital solutions
2. Alignment of all other ICT and Digital boards and working groups to the Digital by Design Board and programme
3. The approach for development of the Digital by Design Strategic Delivery Framework
4. Establishment of a single programme of work will cover all the current ICT and Digital projects and programmes across the organisation
5. Establishment of a single governance model will be used for all ICT and Digital projects, programmes and associated procurement activities

The board has also initiated the following streams of work

1. Website – the improvement of the council current corporate web site approach to ensure that it matches our ambition and delivers the best customer experience possible (further details below)
2. Digital platform – the definition, development and implementation of the shared digital platform to deliver the majority of all council digital services to our customers
3. Tactical projects – the initial list of services to focus on for outline business cases, these are owned by each respective Head of Service

£2.5 million has been allocated by members through the budget to support the work of the Programme. Work is currently taking place to align this to the priorities of the programme and allocate resources as required.

### **4.2 Website**

4.2.1 Our website remains a SOCITM (Society of Information technology Management) 4 star website, this is the highest score possible and based on the ease of use and customer experience on our website. Some of the performance information we collate tells us that in 2017/18:

- We had 465,673 website users who viewed 1,631,262 pages
- We have 34,054 subscribers who have signed up to receive e-alerts
- We had 100,325 visits to the Warwickshire Directory

- We have 38 services with a digital offer with 397,065 digital transactions completed
- 91.5% of applications for secondary school admissions were completed online
- 96.4% of applications for primary school admissions were completed online
- 57.5% of library books renewals were made online
- Over 100,000 people were supported to get online in Warwickshire libraries

4.2.2 It is however built on old technology that limits the improvements we can make. The content has also been generated over many years and we are concerned that it no longer meets customers' expectations. We will over the next year be moving to new technology and in doing so understanding our customers' needs is critical. At a high level we know that when a customer visits any web page there are three things they are looking to successfully do:

- Search - Find what they are looking for
- Understand – understand what the information is telling them
- Transact – complete the task or transaction they came to do

In November 2017 we began work with a specialist digital user experience company, Fluent Interaction, to look more closely at:

- Our customers digital experience – what is the reality for customers using our website to find information and advice and to complete digital transactions
- How our new web pages should look and feel – this work is now beginning and will create a series of visual templates that we will use going forward.

4.2.3 The work on understanding our customers' digital experience is now complete. We looked at 18 tasks across our website working directly with customers to understand their experience. These were the main findings:

- People often do not think of going to the Warwickshire County Council website – people are looking for information or a service they do not care who owns or delivers it
- It is easy to get directly to the right pages through Google – the google search results for our information and services is good
- People get stuck in circles or lost – too much content and handoff to different pages and information does not work
- Content can be overwhelming, difficult to scan and hard to understand – content has not been written for the customers' needs
- Sometimes there is a desire to directly speak to a person

- People do discover useful information and links to other sites – once a customer finds the information they are looking for it is a good experience
- Needing to login/register is a major barrier
- Not catering for a variety of abilities – the current design does not always make it easy for people with disabilities to use
- Some tasks feel too long to complete – there are things in the process of completing a task that make no sense to a customer and are not needed to complete the task in hand
- Form filling is often confusing and slow – forms have not been designed well enough for customers to use and loading is at times slow
- Poor performance hinders success – a bad experience is not going to encourage a customer to complete a task or to come back again

4.2.4 One of the tasks we asked customers to complete was ‘I would like to report a pothole’ here are some of their quotes as they completed the task:

*‘I don’t want to enter my email address because I don’t just give it out willy nilly just anywhere’*

*‘Oh blimey, I might not bother! It’s getting a bit complicated isn’t it? I’m doing my civic duty’*

*‘I’ve found the spot, I want to know where I now say – that’s it there. I can’t see that’*

4.2.5 In total we had 242 issues identified, of these all quick and medium term improvements will be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> July with the more complex issues being addressed through the implementation of the new technology.

4.2.6 In relation to potholes we have completely changed the reporting process, removing the need to log-in and reducing the number of clicks to get to the actual reporting stage from the home page from 5 to 2.

4.2.7 The work has also started on how our new website will look and feel, this includes two different areas of work:

- Content map
- Design and feel

4.2.8 Content map – Our existing website has evolved over a considerable period of time, we have over 1200 web pages with 1000’s of links off to documents and external sites. The user research has told us that a lot of what we currently have customers do not need, national research says that up to 85% of website content can be removed without having a negative impact on

customer journeys. This means that we do not plan to lift both the architecture and content of our old site to our new site but to really focus on what the key information, advice and services are that customers want and to build our new site using this intelligence. We have been working with a specialist content strategist on this and the work has almost been completed. It will tell us how we need to organise our site and what needs to be where, in simple terms it creates a visual that would look very much like a family tree starting at our home page and taking customers through to the information, advice and services they want.

4.2.9 Design and feel – this focuses on what the implementation of our content map will look like, it's the design and feel of our webpages. We continue to work with Fluent Interaction on this. This work will be completed by the end of the summer and will involve working closely with key stakeholders internally but also with our customers. By the end of this work we will have agreed a manual which will include all the visual elements we will be using on our website, templates for how this will be implemented and guidance that clearly says which layout and designs should be used for the different kinds of customer journeys. These will then become the way all our web pages, information, advice and services will be presented to customers.

4.2.10 Customers – in all of this work we remain very clearly focused on our customers, we will be user testing and making sure the decisions we make deliver the best possible experience to them.

### 4.3 Digital platform

4.3.1 Alongside the work to improve the way our website and digital services look and feel to customers there is a technology work stream which is identifying what the functions are we need to create the best digital experience and what products we will use to do this. This will create the technological platform that we will use to:

- Present our website content
- Manage our customer contacts
- Deliver digital services

4.3.2 This will enable us to have single software solutions across the authority providing consistency and efficiencies but also the ability to re-use functionality across a range of diverse services. In turn this will help us reduce the number of software products we have whilst focusing on delivering the best quality customer experience possible.

## 4.4 Tactical projects

4.4.1 We have delivered a number of high level outline business cases for services where the opportunity for improving the digital experience is high. These have included:

- Applying for waste permits
- Reporting a pothole
- Applying for a skip licence
- Applying for a school place
- Applying for school transport

4.4.2 The outline business cases have reinforced the need for us to develop universal 'report it', 'apply for it' and 'pay for it' solutions but also to be clear about the tangible benefits of digitising services. The delivery of solutions is reliant on us having the digital platform in place which will determine how we make each of these solutions work and will allow us to benefit from the ability to not only re-use components but also to present these to customers through our newly designed website.

## 5 Continuous development of digital services

5.1 All of this work focuses on us continuing to support and deliver the best digital services we can. Much of this report is about the infrastructure we are putting in place to take this forward, the principles we will use in developing digital services and the focus we very much have on our customers.

### Background papers

1. Digital by Design Principles
2. Customer Service Strategy

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