

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Performance and Administration Committee
Date: 02 February 2017
Reporting officer: Darren Everden, Service Manager (IT)
Subject: IT Infrastructure Update

Purpose and summary of report:

Inform the Performance and Administration Committee on the progress of IT infrastructure projects arising from the IT Strategy (2015-2018).

Recommendations:

This report is for information purposes only.

1. Background

- 1.1. The IT Strategy (2015-2018) was agreed by the Performance and Administration committee in April 2015.
- 1.2. An enabler for improving service delivery was the provision of a solid infrastructure on which to build digital services.
- 1.3. The IT Services Department (Corporate Services) assist the Digital Team (Communities) with the technical element of the Council's digital presence including development of services, data extraction and system integration.

2. Key Work Streams

- 2.1. A number of important areas were scheduled for upgrades following the adoption of the IT Strategy in order to provide greater capacity and improved performance for Council systems. These were;
 - Storage Area Network
 - Virtual Server Infrastructure
 - Upgrade of major business applications (Uniform, Revs & Bens, Document Management and Financials) onto latest Microsoft server platform
 - Upgrade of Microsoft Exchange email system
 - Upgrade of the Citrix remote access system
 - Upgrade of Civic Centre WiFi network with higher capacity access points supporting the latest wireless standards (802.11ac)
 - Implement public sector WiFi roaming between different organisations with PSN Roam / Gov Roam

- Improve the Council's data backup and business continuity arrangements by implementing the Kent Connects Disaster Recovery and Backup as a Service project with Mid Kent Services.
- Deployment of iPad devices to Council Members and Management Team running the modern.gov committee management application
- Delivery of the technical aspects of the Council's new website and Firmstep Single Citizen Platform
- Installation of Live Chat on the website
- Development of interactive web forms for the website (Council Tax and Rent Balance look ups, Bulky Waste and Green Waste service request forms, and Pest Control booking forms).
- Migrate last legacy database system (Bank Reconciliation) to a modern platform

All of these items have been completed and are delivering the anticipated improvements.

2.2. Address data underpins a lot of what we do and we identified early on that improvements in the quality of what we hold and generate in this area will be useful for future projects when joining up data sets and automating processes. An improvement plan was drawn up which included;

- A complete review of the Uniform system and how it is used
- Appointment of a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) Officer to systematically clean and update the LLPG data to a standard where it can be used effectively
- Appointment of a Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) Officer to establish and implement consistent policies and procedures for new address data and compile a new Street Naming and Numbering Policy.

2.3. The Uniform system review has resulted in staff training within the relevant Departments which is now enabling the system to be used more effectively.

2.4. The LLPG Officer has improved the quality of approximately 85% of our address data to date. This is now enabling address data to be used for business process automation. For example, the process of setting up new property reference numbers between Uniform and the Document Management System used to be a manual process. This is now automated. The remaining 15% of unclean data represents the more complex cases which will take more time to resolve.

2.5. The SNN Officer has completely overhauled the way this service is run and implemented new processes and procedures which can be repeated in a consistent manner which helps maintain the standard of the LLPG. A new SNN policy was taken to Cabinet and approved on 5th September 2016.

2.6. The upgrade of the Network Infrastructure (core and edge network switches) will be completed in early 2017. The procurement has already taken place and the equipment delivered to site. Installation with the supplier is currently underway.

3. Future Projects

3.1. A number of future projects are either just starting or in the process of being planned. These include;

- Review of end user devices (Desktop PC's, Laptops, Thin Clients)

- Implement Virtual Desktop Infrastructure by scaling up the new Citrix remote access solution
- Telephony Infrastructure (Skype for Business being a serious contender)
- Wider adoption of cloud services (specifically Microsoft Office 365)
- New card payment system
- Digital awareness training for staff
- Document Management System improvements

4. Background Papers

4.1 None

IMPLICATIONS		APPENDIX 1	
Legal	None		
Finance and Value for Money	Costs and savings relating to specific IT Infrastructure initiatives have been the subject of separate reports to Cabinet.		
Risk Assessment	None		
Equality Impact Assessment	Screening for Equality Impacts		
	Question	Answer	Explanation
	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	
	c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		
<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>			
Corporate Business Plan	Strategic Objective - Sound and self-sufficient council - a well-run and innovative council supporting its staff to realise commercial opportunities whilst transforming its services to deliver at the best possible value for money.		
Crime and Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.		