

## Overview Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 1 April 2021

7.30 pm

### Present:

Cllr Jordan Meade (Chair)  
Cllr Steve Thompson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Conrad Broadley  
Leslie Hills  
Emma Morley  
Elizabeth Mulheran  
Christina Rolles  
Peter Scollard  
Gurjit Bains

Darren Everden	Assistant Director (IT & Transformation)
Michelle Batstone	Corporate Change Manager
Chris Wakeford	Committee Services Manager
Clive Boorman	Technical Services Support Officer

### 32. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Alan Ridgers; Cllr Gurjit Bains attended as his substitute.

### 33. Minutes

The Chair advised the Committee that the Maritime Strategy Review would have been on tonight's agenda but because the Council has now enter the pre-election period (purdah) ahead of the local elections on 6 May it was agreed with the Leader of the Council that it would be best that the review be brought back to the Committee after the elections.

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 11 February 2021 were signed by the Chair.

### 34. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were made.

### 35. Response to Member Survey - December 2020

The Assistant Director (IT & Transformation) and Corporate Change Manager provided the Overview Scrutiny Committee with the findings from the recent Member Survey, specifically in relation to technology and future Member requirements, for consideration.

The Corporate Change Manager explained that there were a number of areas of concern/consideration raised by Members through the survey that covered the following areas:

- The rollout of Microsoft 365 and associated training for Members to support them in the use of the new software.
- Improvements to hardware provided to Members – consideration of changes to the actual devices used by Members along with additional hardware, such as monitors, to support Members in their activities.
- E-mails – concerns regarding the reliability of the e-mail server and the potential for re-directing e-mails if possible.
- Additional training for Members to support the use of virtual meetings to engage with constituents.
- Training for Members on the safe use of social media. This would include exploring options with Members to enable them to undertake surveys with their constituents through social media and other mechanisms as required.
- Consideration of a specific case management system to enable Members to manage their constituency casework.
- Undertaking a review of the council's website to ensure it is user friendly and easy to navigate.

The Corporate Change Manager highlighted Appendix 2 to the Committee which provides a detailed response from officers regarding each of the areas raised, along with identification of specific actions where necessary.

The Assistant Director (IT & Transformation) and Corporate Change Manager fielded questions from the Committee and highlighted the following:

- A more developed Social Media training, that includes how to use social media professionally whilst representing the Council, will be provided to Members in due course.
- The general rollout of Microsoft 365 will begin in June 2021. Members will receive a handover session and tailored one to one training. This will be followed by additional training once Members have had the ability to use the system and provide feedback.
- Casework software for Members will be explored once the rollout of Microsoft 365 is complete.
- An assessment will be made on the suitability and financial impact of alternative hardware for Members (e.g. Surface Pro, Laptop etc). A range of sample devices will be made available for Members to try so they can decide their personal preference. The results can then be built into future provision. This review will be actioned as soon as practicable.
- Microsoft 365 and Outlook will be completely cloud based. As well as accessing emails on tablets / smart phones, Members will have the ability to access the Outlook webmail component from any device.
- For issues with iPads / emails etc it is more straightforward to have the iPad returned to the Civic Centre to resolve the matter promptly.
- Members could use their own devices, rather than Council devices, for Microsoft 365. This would speed up the rollout to Members. The Assistant Director (IT & Transformation) agreed to look into this matter.
- Microsoft 365 is safe as long as we satisfy the requirement of password protection.

- The Council has recently ordered a new cloud based telephone system called RingCentral which should be in place soon.

Members highlighted the following areas for consideration:

- iPad keyboards are too small.
- The Council should look at Member IT provision at other authorities (e.g. KCC issue Members with a laptop and iPhone).  
The Assistant Director (IT & Transformation) agreed to look into this matter.
- The Mod.gov system has not worked well for some Members during the pandemic (e.g. difficulty accessing Part B etc). Microsoft SharePoint might be a better option for sharing documents.  
The Assistant Director (IT & Transformation) advised the Committee that SharePoint is something that could be considered in the future but there is a lot of work that would be needed to be completed to get it up and running. Once Microsoft 365 has been rolled out; other projects can be considered.

The Corporate Change Manager thanked the Committee for their feedback and explained that she would speak to the Leader and Chief Executive to map out the actions in Appendix 2 before taking a report to Cabinet.

**Resolved** that the Committee noted the report and the feedback Members had provided.

### **Close of meeting**

The meeting ended at 8.21 pm

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