

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF: Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services

LEAD OFFICERS: Director of Digital and Business Change

DATE: 12 September 2019

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Digital and Customer Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: YES NO

SUBJECT: Replacement of the Councils Customer Contact Portal.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to provide an overview of the pre tender due diligence work currently being undertaken by the Digital and Business Change department in relation to the Councils Digital Customer Portal. The portal enables residents of the borough to access certain Council services via the website.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

Notes the initial progress being made for the replacement of the current Customer Contact Portal (CCP) in identifying the potential to make a strategic investment that ultimately will allow for a new Digital Customer Portal to be more than a replacement for the incumbent product and allow customers to interact with a variety of Council services with ease.

3. BACKGROUND

The current CCP solution acts as a customer portal to enable customers to access Council services through a series of online forms. These forms allow the customers to request services in the Council via electronic means including in some instances the ability to pay for these for waste management, street cleansing and registrars.

Currently the majority of these forms are dealt with manually which results in staff having to re-key these into line of business applications. The only forms which are integrated are associated with the Councils round management system which allows residents to see information in relation to bin collections at their property and allowing them to report the likes of missed bins and request bulky collections.

Customers in the borough currently access different Council services using multiple online accounts. Various services also only allow customers to pay for services via the telephone.

There are approximately 100 e-forms in use which are completed by residents and then either posted, emailed or handed in to the Council for manual processing.

The Councils website is the digital front door for customers engaging with the Council, they are then

re-directed through to the current CCP solution to access and transact with some services.

The department has recently replaced its current website in order to make life easier for customers as follows;

- Cleaner simpler modern layout – easier and quicker to search and navigate
- Easier to contact the council including improved on-line chat facilities
- Language translation facility
- Improved service information - 800 pages
- Enhanced on-line transactional facilities - improved signposting
- Improved system and content management
- Increased analytics to help improve service provision
- Improved customer feedback facility
- Optimised for Mobile devices

The current CCP solution used by the Council is going 'end of life' in October 2020 leaving the department with no option but to look to replace this due to security and support vulnerabilities. Rather than simply replacing the current solution like for like, a digital review was undertaken to investigate options and opportunities. The review highlighted opportunities to improve both customer experience and internal service effectiveness.

In order to investigate what solutions are available to us, the department has initiated soft market testing with suppliers. This will inform the decision making process in terms of the procurement and preferred type of solution being sourced. A total of 31 companies responded to the market testing with 9 companies being shortlisted to present to the Council regarding the solution that they are offering. To date 6 of these presentations have occurred with a further 3 planned over coming weeks.

Following the market testing exercise the department will begin a procurement exercise based on the findings discovered. Following this a further report will be made to the Executive Board to approve the addition of the project to the capital programme, award any resulting contract and also provide a full financial and benefits appraisal. As cost models by each supplier vary, as well as the breadth of their solutions, there is currently no financial information provided within the report.

The critical success factors for the project are currently defined as;

- Making it easy for the customer to engage with and transact with the Council.
- Improving the customer Journey, keeping processes simple.
- Allowing residents to have access via a single portal to enable them to report issues, track requests and pay for services.
- Enabling more Council services to be delivered digitally.
- Increasing the use of data to inform decisions in a timely manner.
- To reduce the number of line of business applications in use within the Council prioritising environments and highways.
- Reducing manual processes and interventions allowing resources to be freed up.
- Empowering service departments to make changes to their processes and forms by providing a software solution that allows them undertake changes with ease whilst within a defined set of standards.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

- The current CCP solution goes end of life in October 2020 leaving the Council no option but to replace.
- Customers currently have multiple accounts to access the large array of Council services.
- Not all services are available to customers digitally.

- The current system requires manual processing by Council officers at various stages.
- Customer data is disjointed being held in multiple systems.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The project will enable the Council to harness the opportunities that digital offers to drive improvement across services and customer experience. It will unlock further potential within our workforce by giving them the right tools, systems and skills to drive change. Decisions will be increasingly driven by high quality data.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this paper as the paper has been produced to provide an update to Executive Board on the pre tender due diligence work currently being undertaken on the CCP.

It should however be noted that due to the potential scope of this project, the capital budget required for the implementation of a new CCP system is likely to be significant. Once the procurement exercise has been undertaken a paper will be brought to the Executive Board for consideration and a request for approval to add the scheme to the capital programme with an indicative budget requirement.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Any resulting procurement process shall be in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procurement Procedure Rules.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This will have an effect on the resources within the department and also other departments within the Council. Further information will be provided in future reports once the system has been procured.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

Requirement gathering has been undertaken with key stakeholders in the Council. Further consultations will commence shortly once the full scope of the programme is known.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

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CONTACT OFFICER:	Peter Hughes
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DATE:	27/08/2019
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	None
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