

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 FEBRUARY 2017

REPORT OF THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

PROGRESS UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To give a progress update on the Digital Transformation Programme with a particular focus on those phases of work currently underway. These are:
- **Developing the “My Account” on line feature and enabling council tax and housing benefits to be self-served (Phase 1 & 2)**
 - **Geographic Information System (GIS) on-line mapping system which allows BCBC residents to identify the location of services in their area (Phase 1 & 2)**
 - **Redesign of the Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) Website (Phase 2)**
 - **Roll out of further self-serve solutions to common Human Resources related activity (Phase 2)**
 - **Preparation for online reporting of refuse and recycling matters with the commencement of the new refuse and recycling collection contract (Phase 2)**
- 1.2 This report also provides an overview of the overall aims of the Digital Transformation Strategy, including those projects already identified.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Council’s Corporate Plan includes the following priorities:

- Making Smarter Use of Resources
- Helping People to be more self-reliant

The Digital transformation programme supports both of these priorities through enabling residents to access services more directly (self-service) where they are willing and able to do so; and through releasing efficiency savings through automation.

3. Background

- 3.1 In January 2016 the Corporate Management Board (CMB) agreed an approach to digital transformation as part of the wider change programme. The Transformation Team carried out research into the experience of other authorities (both successful and less successful) and a high level review of the sorts of solutions that the market could provide. As a result of this work CMB adopted an approach that relies on internal and existing resources supplemented with specialist skills and expertise procured from external suppliers as needed.

- 3.2 In February 2016 a Business Case was submitted to the Programme Management Board (PMB) and the Corporate Management Board (CMB) to determine a Digital Transformation Strategy and to identify the key areas across the council for delivering efficiencies and on-line transactions.
- 3.3 In the business case (Appendix 1), a series of options for delivery of the on-line “My Account” function was presented. Option 4 was determined to be the best option and an external partner (Agilisys) was procured. Agilisys will develop, host and maintain a modular Self-Service Platform that would enable BCBC residents, staff and members to gain access to council services on all devices, “my account”, signposting and self-service tools.
- It enables customers to complete transactions digitally for a range of services including Council Tax, Benefits, Licensing, Waste etc. freeing up staff and resources. to deal with other issues. A budget of £2.5 million of Capital and Revenue funds was ring-fenced for the programme.
- 3.4 In May 2016, a public consultation reviewing Bridgend County Borough Council’s digital transformation of front-line services was undertaken over a five week period from 18 April 2016 and 23 June 2016. The paper detailing the analysis associated with the consultation can be found at Appendix 2 of this report. The consultation received 1,005 responses from a combination of the consultation survey and Citizens’ Panel.
- Table 1 illustrates the level of support amongst residents for the use of a range of online services Appendix 2 contains more detailed analysis of the consultation findings
- 3.5 In the ***Shaping Bridgend’s Future*** consultation report (Dec 2016) 44 per cent of respondents opposed the digitalisation of projects *where traditional methods of contact may be lost*. However, the approach being adopted by the digital transformation programme is to offer choice rather than replace traditional methods of accessing services completely.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 The first draft of the Digital Transformation Strategy (summarised in Appendix 3) was produced in November 2016. The strategy highlights the importance of understanding the needs and preferences of users in prioritising and implementing digital transformation. The strategy also emphasizes the importance of targeting efforts to support business priorities including, but not limited to delivering efficiency. Finally the strategy emphasizes the need for culture change within the organisation and the requirement to demonstrate visible leadership to the organisation in this change process.
- 4.2 Included in the strategy are a communications and engagement plan, delivery plan, governance model and change management approach.
- The roles within the programme governance can be summarised as follows:
- Members – inform and advocate
 - CMB/Senior Responsible Owner – Darren Mepham (CEO) - decision making

- PMB/CMB – inform and update
- Digital Transformation Programme Board (DTPB) – Plan, scope and deliver – agree go-live
- Senior Management Teams – review and resource
- Delivery Units – engagement and co-design
- Super User Groups – co-design and testing

4.3 Within the strategy a “Digital Roadmap” has been developed to highlight the work to be delivered within the programme. These have been determined as individual **Work Packages** and each have their own budget, set of milestones/deliverables, and business benefits. Each Work Package will be governed through the Digital Transformation Programme Board.

4.4 The associated Work Packages and milestones within the Digital Transformation Programme are as follows – Work Package 1 & 2 (below) are in full progress:

- **Work Package 1 - My Account**

MY account is an online feature that allows residents, staff and members to access council services such as – council tax, housing benefit, waste & recycling, report a problem and GIS (local information and signposting maps), however the programme is focusing initially on council tax and housing benefits. This is because these services represent high levels of transactions and therefore most readily and quickly address demand for on line services (as highlighted in the Digital Transformation Consultation Report) and can release financial savings. The release of financial savings is dependent on sufficient numbers of residents choosing to “channel shift” and so reducing demand on current back office resources. To date all infrastructure work is complete, testing on the data complete and we are in the final stages of delivery.

Milestones over the next three months:

- Research and Business mapping to determine My Account services across business areas
- User Engagement and feedback
-

- **Work Package 2 - BCBC website redesign**

The current BCBC website is not fit for purpose. The Society of Information Technology Managers (SOCITM) classifies all council websites and currently BCBC is judged to be performing at level 1 status (the lowest level of a possible 4). If the council wishes to promote self-service, the web site needs a fundamental redesign. This is both in terms of what the user experiences (including developing a version that will work on smart phones and tablets) but also in terms of how the website links to core IT systems that support transactions and service delivery.

Milestones over the next three months:

- Research across BCBC teams to determine new requirements for website
- Engagement with residents to determine User Needs
- Analysis of current infrastructure and functionality of existing website Report on recommendations for the new website
-

Other Work Packages in development but will be delivered during later phases are:

- **Work Package 3 – HR Self-Serve** – further development of the internal HR system

to ensure efficient on-line service

- **Work Package 4 - Waste and Recycling** – developing on-line support for residents to report problems or request services, via My Account and new website

- **Work Package 5 – Member Services** – providing a cross-section of market leading brands of tablets to pilot to determine the most suitable for purpose and assist with reducing paper use

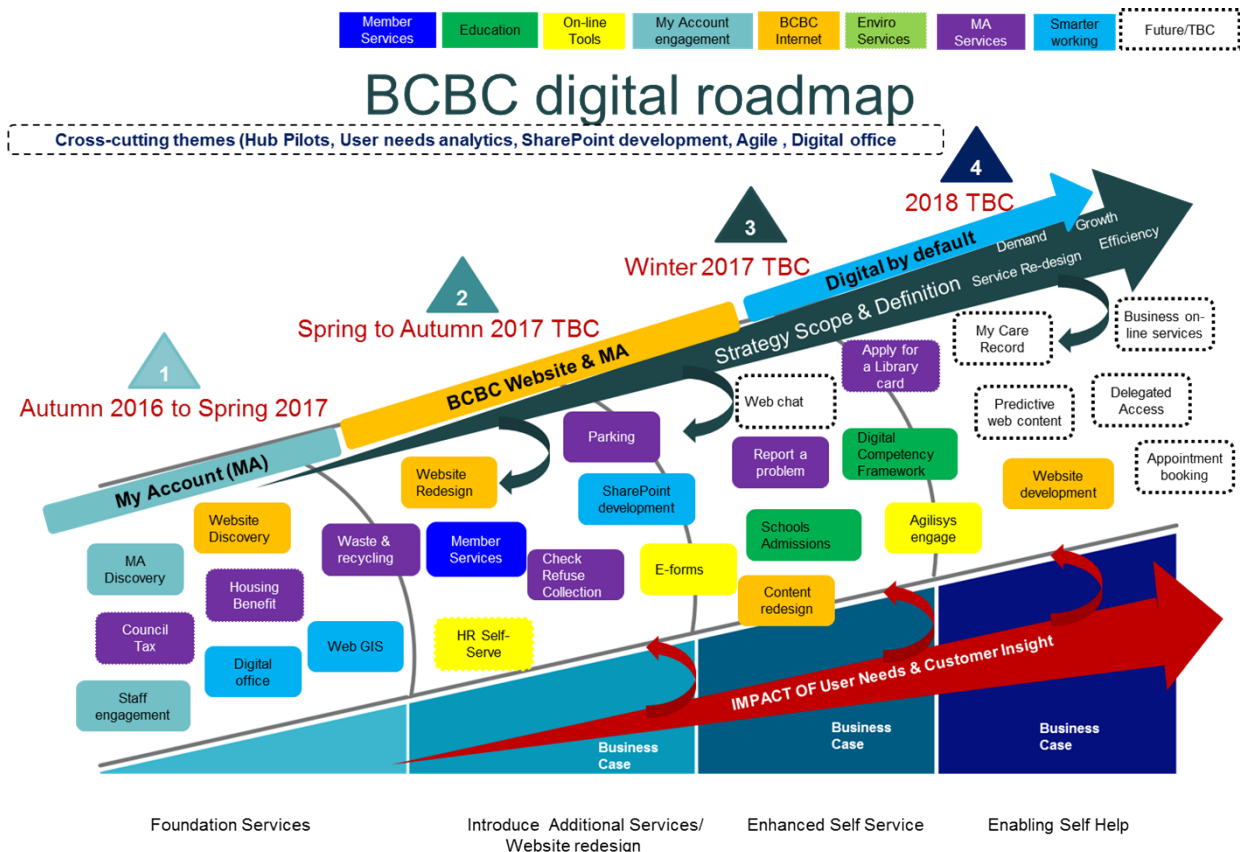
- **Work Package 6 – Smarter Working**
Geographic Information System (GIS), on-line map of facilities available across the borough – schools, libraries, local amenities etc.

- **Work Package 7 – Change Management** – Across all Work Packages
Change management activities are being planned at present and involve a series of Awareness sessions to inform internal and external users of the Digital Transformation Strategy and the Work Packages within it.

- **Work Package 8 – Digital Education**
Digital Champions have been identified across Bridgend schools to scope and plan the work needed to provide digital education. This is a relatively new piece of work which will be brought into the Digital Transformation Programme once scoped and defined and signed off by the relevant parties.

- **Adult Social Care**
Although included in the Digital Transformation Strategy, is not covered in current programme activity as it is a pan-Wales initiative and WCCIS is currently the on-line cross-Wales interaction site for Adult Social Care digital working. Once activity has identified on-line engagement and working practice, there will be an opportunity to develop a Work Package to meet the needs of Adult Social care digital working for BCBC moving forward.

4.5 The Digital Roadmap below illustrates the Phase by Phase activity of the programme



5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 There are no immediate effects, but as future Work Packages are fully scoped and better understood, we will re-assess any impact on Policy Framework and Procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 An initial EIA has been undertaken which indicates the impact on any users of the new council services such as My Account and the new website. The EIA will be kept under review as the programme is developed and rolled out and further research has been undertaken. Research for the new website requirements, is currently underway with BCBC residents and staff.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The MTFs includes budget reductions totaling £360,000 across Council tax and housing benefit services which will be enabled through widespread take up of Phase 1. There will inevitably be further efficiency savings which can be delivered through online service offerings, but these cannot be quantified at this stage.

7.2 In May 2016 Council approved the inclusion of a budget of £2.5 million in the capital programme to cover the costs associated with the digital transformation programme. At that time the actual costs of implementation were unknown, so the

funding was included to cover all potential capital costs, subject to revision once the tender process was completed. This funding was met from an earmarked reserve established for that purpose. Following the progress outlined in the report, it is now envisaged that a large majority of future costs will be revenue rather than capital and consequently the funding in the capital programme will be reduced and used to fund revenue commitments instead. The overall level of funding for the programme will not change.

8. Recommendation

8.1 To note and comment on the contents of this report.

Darren Mepham
Chief Executive Officer
Jan 2017

Contact Officer: Caron Cant
Digital Transformation Lead

Telephone: (01656) 643643

E-mail: caron.cant@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Background documents

None