

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

October 2022

COUNCILLOR LUCY SHIRES - CABINET MEMBER FOR ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES

July 2022 – September 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Information Communications Technology

Paul Neale, who has worked in the Council for 27 years sadly passed away unexpectedly recently. He will be deeply missed by his Family, friends and colleagues.

Paul was a highly respected member of the infrastructure and his skills and expertise will be missed. His primary duties involved managing the cyber security systems and these tasks have had to be reallocated to other members of the team.

This will, inevitably, impact on progress in other areas until we are able to recruit a suitably experienced and capable individual. There is a significant risk that this will prove difficult and may well take an extended period.

The Public Sector Network conformance certificate has been received. This certifies the security and integrity of the Council's network and confirms it is suitable for use for the sharing of data with other Public sector organisations.

Work continues on the roll out Multi-Factor Authentication to improve security of access to the Council's infrastructure and data.

Provision of equipment and software to new starters and internal staff changing roles continues to demand considerable resources.

The replacement Multi-Function Device rollout, which sees a further reduction in the number of printers in use in the Council being supported, has commenced. When completed the number of MFD's used by the Council will have been reduced by approximately 40%.

Improved cloud to on-premise data backups implemented to ensure data availability and integrity.

Work has commenced to deploy customer satisfaction tools which will allow a consistent way to provide feed-back about our services across all of the

corporate contact systems (E-mail, web forms, telephony, web chat etc) operated by Customer Services.

Of the two FTE vacant senior web developer posts 1.4 remain to be filled. These vacancies remain unfilled and are still being advertised,

Training of the new developer has gone very well and he is proving to be a significant asset to the team

The update to the Cash receipting system has been further delayed after the 3rd party software failed testing again. A new version is being produced by the software developers and is expected imminently. The current version remains operational and customers have not experienced any difficulties as a result of the issues in implementing the new version.

The Civica Financials conversion project continues to progress with The Finance team IT and the Civica project team working effectively together. However, there remains a significant quantity of work to be undertaken to meet the expected go live in late November.

Recruitment has commenced to fill the vacant GIS role. The vacancy closes on the 24th September. To date we have not received any applications.

Work continues to support the ongoing enhancement of the Environmental Health management system "Assure".

Updates the Council customer contact management system "Workbench" to improve usability and visibility have been completed and published

Other forms development and improvement include:

- Contact Us
- Enquiry Management
- Request Assisted Waste Collections
- Notification of a Death updates
- Community connectors Let us know about social groups
- Azure learning

Significant Website updates:

- Sustainable Communities
- Chairman's charities
- Emergency Support Fund pages
- Recruitment Fair pages
- Equality Policy publication
- Coastal Management updates
- "Who does what" pages

The Council's website was updated to reflect the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II within 2 hours of the announcement of her death.

Harry Bartram successfully completed his apprenticeship.
Rob Holmes passed L5 Management qualification with Distinction.

Customer Services

The Customer Services team has been busy helping our residents apply for Discretionary Energy Payments and dealing with the annual canvass.

In August, all Customer Services managed access channels to the council have seen an increase in contact volumes. There was a significant increase in call volumes of 34% in comparison to the previous month (June). The increase in customer contact was due to annual canvass forms and leaflets posted out to all NNDC households regarding changes to residents bin collection days.

This resulted in over 5400 calls and overall 6675 customer contacts to Customer Services in August. A 21% contact increase from July.

With the high cost of energy we are assisting, our residents to apply for energy payments as well as issuing Food Bank vouchers where needed. This continues to be a vital lifeline for some of our residents.

Customer Services carried out recruitment successfully earlier in the year for 2FTE. This recruitment was to maintain a high service performance against an anticipated increase in customer contact as part of further delivering the 'one front door' concept, mainly the transition of Revenue Services calls going live on 1 September.

Unfortunately, the resource levels acquired have now reduced back to where they previously were as a result of some of our Customer Services advisors moving internally to other departments within the council. We are in the process of carrying out recruitment and hope to have our new team members in place very soon.

Despite planning, training and the development of our contact centre to cope with this increase in call volumes, losing resource so close to the handover date has resulted in a significant increase in customer wait time due to the increase in demand. Whilst we are putting in measures to keep this to a minimum, until recruitment has been completed and training delivered, we are likely to continue to see an increased customer wait time.

Whilst we have used historical data to estimate what resource level we will need deliver the 'one front door' concept, it has not been possible to foresee events that have impacted on achieving our service standards e.g. Covid recovery and the cost of living crisis.

Following the passing of Her Majesty The Queen, Customer Services advisors are supporting the arrangements made for residents to sign books of condolence at our Cromer and Fakenham offices.

Property Services

Cromer pier substructure works commence on 20/09/2022 and are expected to continue for until the summer of 2023

A tender for improvements to the Pier bar servery and WC's is currently being prepared and will be published this month. Works to commence in January 2023 for 6-week period.

The PC re-provision in Fakenham has been delayed following the unearthing of an undocumented UK Power Networks cable. All rogue buried services have now been identified and site works to recommence before the end of September.

A number of delays in the supply chain have also delayed the completion of the Stearman's yard public convenience re-provisioning by approximately 4 weeks. Temporary facilities were placed on site to cover the delay period. The works are now expected to be completed by the end of September.

The refurbishment of the public conveniences in New Road are completed and the toilets have been brought back into service.

The Vicarage Street, North Walsham PC replacement is currently out to tender with final returns by 26/09/2022.

Works to support the refurbishment of The Cedars and the wider HAZ project in North Walsham are ongoing.

Work continues on refurbishment and commissioning of additional temporary accommodation units.

The next Phase of the LED lighting improvement programme is in progress following supply chain delays. Completion of the middle tier of the Council offices is expected in November with the lower level works commencing shortly afterwards.

Coach bay lining works for the following car parks: Hornbeam Road, Station Approach, Cadogan Road and Runton Road. Have all been completed.

Property Services are supporting the "Tackling homes in disrepair" scheme. The pilot scheme has commenced and is progressing well. The pilot will run until end March 2023.

Current tenders:

Public Convenience re-provision at the Leas in Sheringham; Fakenham Connect Crinkle Crankle wall remedial/safety works and Morris Street car

park boundary wall, storm damage repair have all been awarded and works will commence in the near future.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Information Technology

Ongoing support for Operation London Bridge

Support Planning system updates with public notifications

General website content maintenance

Updating Assure API connections for reporting forms

Business rates change of address form

Azure investigation and further learning

Continue migration works for new finance system

Complete server anti malware upgrades

Complete MFD Rollout

Complete Council Offices and Fakenham network upgrade

Customer Services

Throughout September, the Benefits department will be sending energy grant letters to those in need and we expect continued contact from our most vulnerable residents regarding these.

With the change in 90% of all residents bin collection days from 5th September 2022, we expect to see an increase in customer contact regarding this as everyone gets use to their new day

Property Services

Resurfacing works to Mundesley Road car park commence 20th September

Works will Commence on:

Cornish Way Industrial Unit Roof

Fakenham Connect Roof Repairs

Play equipment repairs and maintenance programme.

Winter PC Repair and maintenance programme.

3 Meetings attended