CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

25 September 2019

COUNCILLOR: SARAH BÜTIKOFER - CABINET MEMBER FOR IT

1   Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Following the IT outage in early June a full incident debrief and root cause analysis has been led by the Council's Resilience Manager, Alison Sayer.

The root cause has been confirmed as damage to IT hardware which supported the data storage arrangements for the Council. This is almost certainly attributed to the type of air cooling system installed in the Council's data centre some years ago which has not prevented airborne salt entering the data centre and damaging the equipment.

This equipment was chosen because of its reduced environmental impact as compared to a traditional. The Council is engaged with the suppliers to see it the system can be enhanced to ensure the quality of the air in the data centre.

Currently the data centre environment is being controlled by the remaining traditional systems.

Following the conclusion of the discussions with suppliers the most appropriate solution will be determined and implemented on a sustainable basis.

Other IT improvements are included in the attached Action Plan which also covers wider business learning from the outage which will improve the overall resilience of the Council.

Planning System Upgrade. The full system data export from the current system(Acolaid) and import into the test environment of the new system (Uniform) has been successfully completed and is now being tested by the service.

The customer self-service portal for Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits (Open Portal) is now live. A communications and awareness campaign will now be undertaken to promote uptake of the facility.

The upgrade to the telephone payments system to allow it to accept payments 24/7, for all Council activities is in final test. Go-live is

planned for early October.

Significant IT work has been undertaken to allow some processing of revenues activities by an external agency to allow realigning of the service resources with changing workloads.

The recently deployed Members support system, Modern Gov continues to be developed by integrating the data within it with that stored in the Elections IT system to improve accuracy and reduce double keying of information.

The firewalls which protect the Council's network from unauthorised access and cyber attack have been upgraded to ensure continued effectiveness.

A Customer satisfaction survey and reporting system to inform requirements for the replacement Revenues and Benefits system has been developed and will go live on the 1st October. Following this it will be modified to provide ongoing feedback from customers of all of the Council's service areas. This will be linked to the Councils management information system to provide comprehensive and detailed analysis of satisfaction levels.

A proof of concept consultation and engagement website has been developed for Planning agents and developers:

http://umbraco8.north-norfolk.gov.uk

(please be aware this is available on our network only, not available externally)

This will be further developed to provide a generic online customer/special interest groups engagement and consultation facility.

2   Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Progress the IT actions included in the action plan to address the learning from the IT outage in early June.

Complete the planned upgrade of the data storage systems to deliver near real time replication of data between the Cromer and Fakenham data centres.

This will enhance the Councils ability to work from Fakenham in the event of IT issues at Cromer.

Continue preparations for the go-live of the upgraded Planning IT system.

Complete the upgrade to the WiFi arrangements at Cromer and Fakenham to deliver higher capacity more reliable WiFi connections

Deployment of a Council Wide workflow system to ensure customer issues are managed through to a conclusion wherever they are received in the Council.

3   Meetings attended

Digital Norfolk - Technical Group (NCI Project) Project meeting regarding a potential County Wide Digital Identity Verification Project.

Norfolk IT Managers Group. – Collaboration and networking group for Norfolk IT managers.