

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 9 SEPTEMBER 2021

PORTFOLIO: LEADER/DEPUTY LEADER & IT, TOURISM, HOUSING AND PARKING

REPORT FROM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, TRANSFORMATION AND CUSTOMER

SUBJECT: 'CONNECT PROGRAMME' – INVEST TO SAVE BUSINESS CASES

1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 To note the pipeline of Connect Programme Invest to Save projects being bought forward, following the business analysis work undertaken by the Key Change Champions (KCCs) group.
- 1.2 To approve the govService Customer Experience Platform business case and drawdown of £201,200 from the Connect Transformation Reserve.

2 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Connect Programme is the Council's pathway to becoming a 21st Century council with members and staff as 21st Century Public Servants providing quality services to our residents and stakeholders through the implementation of digital solutions and cultural change
- 2.2 It was agreed by Full Council in February 2020 to create a Connect Transformation Reserve of £497,847 to fund Invest to Save projects identified through the work of the Connect Programme. Drawdowns from this reserve are subject to agreement of separate business cases for individual Invest to Save projects.
- 2.3 This report sets out the business case for the first Invest to Save project to be brought forward as part of the Connect Programme. The business case, set out in Appendix A is to provide a whole Council system solution to benefit both the organisation and customer experience through the full implementation of the govService Customer Experience Platform.
- 2.4 This report also sets out a pipeline of other proposed Invest to Save projects in respect of which it is intended that business cases will be brought to the Executive for consideration as part of the Connect Programme. The pipeline shown in paragraph 3.3 below details the anticipated date that business cases will be presented to the Executive.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

Background

- 3.1 Proposals for Invest to Save projects have been prepared in accordance with the Connect Programme internal governance as follows:
- Proposals are originally initiated by the Connect Programme's Key Change Champions (KCCs) a group of operational staff who have sector specialism in their relevant business area and who, therefore, are best placed to identify opportunities for improvement in service delivery. Working as a team, KCCs ensure a cross Council approach. Having identified the initiatives which could be deployed, the role of the KCCs was to prepare business cases for investment in these initiatives which would identify the benefits (cashable and non-cashable) of that investment.
 - These business cases are then considered by the Connect Check, Challenge and Probe (CCP) Group to ensure that the business case was robust and aligned to the Connect Programme's principles and that benefits to the Council and its customers are clearly outlined.
 - The CCP reviewed business cases are then presented to the Council's Leadership Team which agrees that they are capable of being presented to the Executive for formal approval and draw down of funds from the Connect Programme reserve.
- 3.2 The Connect Programme Manager has worked closely with the KCCs to develop emerging proposals and business cases, imparting project management expertise and templates to benefit future Council projects. In addition, a range of tools and central programme documentation are in place to enable tracking and monitoring of benefit realisation, as well as compliance with governance considerations. This provides a high level of assurance that the project will deliver the transformation it set out to do.

Pipeline

- 3.3 Table 1 below sets out the proposed pipeline of projects to be further developed as part of the Connect Programme.

Table 1 – Pipeline of Future Invest to Save Business Cases

No.	KCC Lead	Project Title	High Level Benefits	Executive Mtg Date
1	Ami Goulter	Sharepoint Migration & Go Live - Data availability 24/7. Able to set permissions and rules to allow for extra confidentiality and security	Improved data management, simplified business functions, regulatory compliance and data security, optimized	October 21

		of documentation and retention/disposal.	content delivery, unparalleled collaboration, increased productivity, centralised administration. Saves on duplication of costs by sharing files. Potential significant savings on storage.	
2	Darren McLoughlin	Assets and Leases System - Corporate record/system of the Council's held assets and leases and detailed review of leases	Improved customer service, joined up working in the authority giving efficiency and certainty over Councils owned assets.	October 21
3	Sonia Worthington	CMIS Upgrade – Introduction of MyCMIS app which will allow users to annotate documents on CMIS and navigate rapidly to individual document pages. Training to Democratic Services in all aspects of CMIS agenda builder and business manager to enable creation of document templates and distribution lists in CMIS. Agenda Packs would be generated for each meeting and automatically circulated to all those on distribution lists within CMIS; decisions can be tracked through CMIS business manager.	Added capacity as will achieve significant streamlining of processes. Greater accessibility to allow all users to review on mobiles laptops and other devices.	October 21

- 3.4 During the process of identifying ideas and proposals for change improvement and transformation a tracker tool has been developed to capture the full proposed pipeline of ideas. The benefits realised will be monitored and recorded by the Connect Programme Manager.

- 3.5 Suggestions have been generated by officers across the Council and recorded on the tracker by the KCC service lead as outlined below. To date over forty proposals have been put forward, with four identified as potential business cases. The ideas generated are categorised as follows:
- ‘Super quick wins’ – generally in-service changes that can be completed easily and with no funding required.
 - ‘Quick wins’ – changes that can be made with an in-service budget, agreed by the relevant Assistant Director and then the Connect Programme Board.
 - Business case – Invest to Save projects that require funding.
- 3.6 As some Invest to Save projects require the same resources to take them forward, prioritisation has been given to those that have the greatest impact on efficiencies and the customer experience, and/or are mandatory in terms of having to undertake them.
- 3.7 The pipeline will be continually reviewed and updated with future anticipated dates as the Connect Programme progresses and any new ideas emerge.

The govService Customer Experience Platform Invest to Save Business Case

- 3.8 Any request for draw down of funds from the Connect Programme reserve must be supported by an Invest to Save business case. Appendix A comprises the Invest to Save business case for the govService Customer Experience Platform and members are invited to consider this business case as the first Connect Programme Invest to Save project.
- 3.9 The govService Customer Experience Platform (the “Platform”) is a Single Sign-On (SSO) portal whereby customers can access a range of Council services (for example booking bulky waste collections) on a 24/7 basis using a digital solution.
- 3.10 The most significant benefit of the Platform is the 24/7 access to services provided via the Platform. Instead of having to deal with the Council by telephone or in person during working hours, customers will be able to access those services at a time and place which is convenient to them.
- 3.11 A high-level timeline is included in the attached business case. The new Customer Portal will be implemented with relevant services, having been prioritised according to hard deadlines that must be met and those that deliver the greatest benefits.
- 3.12 The benefits of the Platform will enhance the customer experience across Council services, to include:
- Responding to the way our Customers want to access our services – enhanced self-serve access to relevant Council services;

- Increased customer satisfaction as processes become more accessible;
- Increased productivity as processes become more efficient and staff have access to better technology;
- Alignment to our Council priorities and commitment to implementing 21st Century digital technology, "By 2023 we will have made use of changing technology to become more efficient and ensure residents can contact us more easily and access more services online." ~ RDC Business Plan;
- Our paper usage is reduced, helping us meet our climate commitments;
- Better digital reputation for the Council;
- A groundwork for future digital growth is established;
- Give increased opportunity for customer experience feedback by capturing responses via a five-star rating system (like the Amazon shopping experience);
- Anticipated financial savings, as detailed in Section 6.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Alternative options in relation to the govService Customer Experience Platform are provided in Appendix A.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The high-level risks of the Connect Programme remain as set out in the Outline Business Case.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The total amount of funding being requested by this business case from the Connect Transformation Reserve is outlined below:

Table 2

Description	Cost
Digital Technical Officer Salary (24 months including oncosts)	£71,200
Project Management Costs: To provide support to the Project Lead for the CRM project. Block of 48 days to be used to support creation of detailed project plan, risk register and all associated project documents. This will keep the project on track and	£30,000

give confidence of delivery, monitor progress and realisation of benefits. Likely to be primarily used in Year 1 to maintain momentum project process securely in place before transfer in-house when the project lead and project team is ready and skilled to use the project tools	
Granicus (Systems provider) Success Bundles: Purchase of 3x Success Bundles to provide technical support which includes training and systems implementation throughout the term of the project.	£45,000
Communications: As well as internal resource we will use external support to promote the new Customer portal. Marketing and branding using a variety of communications channels.	£20,000
System Integration: Linking our current back office systems to the Customer Portal to automate workflow processes to improve efficiency where appropriate	£35,000
Total	£201,200

- 6.2 A total estimate of costs avoided through reduced officer time and system costs is shown below. A full breakdown of these costs is included within the business case attached as appendix 1.

Annual staff efficiency cost savings and annual software cost avoidance	£127,887
One off staff and software cost avoidance	£49,425

- 6.3 Overall, it can be seen that by proceeding with the project it is estimated that one-off costs of nearly £50,000 will be avoided, and that by the end of the 2-year project the equivalent of £128,000 of costs will be achievable per annum through a combination of officer time saved and system costs avoided. This is a conservative estimate as further efficiencies should be achievable in the long run. This should 'pay-back' the required investment of £201,200 in just over a year from the end of the project.
- 6.4 Although the officer time saved will not be a direct cashable saving to the authority it will release capacity for other work priorities. Over the longer-term staffing models can be reviewed to ensure resource is aligned to core work processes.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No legal implications.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct environmental implications of this Invest to Save project as it primarily shifts customer contact with the Council from in person/on the telephone to digital channel.

8.2 Moving to a digital platform will reduce the need to print which will reduce paper usage and reduce use of printer consumables.

9 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

LT Lead Officer Signature: _____



Assistant Director, Transformation and Customer

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Dawn Tribe - Assistant Director, Transformation and Customer or Luke Mackenzie - Digital Services Manager on:-

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Project Business Case – to support delivery of the Connect Cultural and Transformation Programme

Project Business Case Name: Phase 2: Resource required to maximise the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform.

Date of document: 06/08/2021

Proposed Start & End Dates of the Project: From 11/10/2021 to 11/10/2023

Project Lead – who will be the lead officer? Digital Services Manager.

Project Sponsor – Assistant Director with overall responsibility for the project: Dawn Tribe, Assistant Director, Transformation and Customer.

Does this Business Case impact across services or require cross-service working?

Phase 2 – across all services of the Council relevant to those that have existing or will develop automated form functionality. Conversations have already identified opportunities to achieve further efficiencies and savings through the full implementation of the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform. Therefore, the buy once and benefit many is applicable across Council services.

Background

In line with Rochford Council's commitment to delivering a digital first technology approach to provide the best customer experience, a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module has been purchased from the relevant service budget and ahead of the launch of the Connect Programme.

Phase 1 - Work with the Customer Services Team to create a Single Sign-On (SSO) portal and undertake the background technical configuration work to create a mechanism whereby customers can self-serve on a range of Council services.

To date, the Digital Services Manager has been able to drive forward Phase 1 of this project. However, progress has been slower than anticipated due to an increase in demand on the digital team. They have worked on completing the work to ensure that our website complies with the new accessibility regulations and the impact of Covid-19 has meant an increase in requirements for information to be available digitally. Phase 2 is subject to securing the necessary resources via the Connect Programme budget.

In order to maximise the potential benefits (please see Section 5) to both the customer and the Council, it is imperative that capacity within the Digital Team is temporarily increased with a specific technical skill set to be able to deliver Phase 2 of this project.

PURPOSE OF THIS BUSINESS CASE AND DECISION REQUIRED

As agreed by the Executive Committee, (meeting of 5th February 2020), Connect will deliver investment in new technologies and the skills of the workforce to improve the way the Council interacts with residents and its delivery of services. This will ensure that the Council's services continue to be relevant and represent value for money.

There is an exciting opportunity to provide a whole Council system solution to benefit both the organisation and customer experience through the full implementation of the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform. Full benefits of this project can be found in Section 5.



Accordingly, this business case outlines the resources needed and the approach to implement Phase 2 of the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform. A temporary resource with specific technical skills is needed to be able to do this.

A new temporary Digital Technical Officer (DTO) role is critical in assisting with the delivery of key project milestones and the successful full implementation of the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform. The requirement will be for 24 months at a cost of £71,200, which includes 30% oncosts. Scoping out the impact and benefits from the full implementation of this new system across all Council services will form part of the DTO role within Phase 2.

Only by securing this additional resource will the full customer benefits of the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform be achieved, as well as maximising efficiencies across relevant Council services when relocated to the refurbished Freight House.

Further details relating to this requested expenditure is provided in Section 5.3. If this business case is not approved, then Phase 2 of the project will not be implemented.

1. Outputs and Outcomes:

- To fully implement the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform and move our customer contact to digital channels of communication in line with the 'Connect' Cultural and Transformation Programme.
- To reduce current email, telephone and face to face queries via Customer Services and other relevant Council services.

This will:

- Provide each customer with their own Single Sign-On and online portal to track and view submitted service requests/queries/communications to the Council.
- Achieve a channel shift, by reducing the number of telephone queries to the Customer Services Team and subsequent service areas across the Council by increasing online customer self-serve through the full launch of the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform.
- Allow 24hour access to services e.g., bulky waste collections and other transactional services are currently only available during office hours on weekdays.
- Allow greater assistance by Customer Services to aid the customer and easily view submitted service requests/queries/communications to the Council increasing first call resolution.
- Give more opportunity for customer experience feedback by capturing responses via a five-star rating system (like the Amazon shopping experience).
- Improve the opportunity to move to digital first technology.
- Enable customers to pay for transactional services online (e.g., bulky waste collections) and make calendar bookings that will improve efficiency and the customer experience.
- Reduce processing costs and reduce manual intervention by Council officers when carrying out transactional processes, which will release capacity.
- Reduce paper usage and other stationary consumables.

2. Business Drivers – meeting the requirements of our Business Plan 2020-2023

Rochford Business Plan Outcomes 2020-2023

2.1 Being Financially Sustainable ✓



Priority: We will improve our efficiency through modernising services and changing the way we work to meet residents' needs.

Outcome: By 2023 we will have made use of changing technology to become more efficient and ensure residents can contact us more easily and access more services online.

How: By allowing residents to access the existing nine to five services and new services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

2.2 Being Financially Sustainable ✓

Priority: Despite continued budget constraints, we will manage our resources effectively to ensure we can continue to fund high quality services.

Outcome: By 2023 we will have provided best value for money for residents by delivering the services that matter most and making decisions to prioritise our limited resources.

How: By providing a more cost-effective approach for the Council by bringing more key services online, enabling residents to self-serve and freeing up valuable officer time.

2.3 Maximise Our Assets ✓

Priority: We will be more environmentally conscious and strive to eliminate our carbon footprint.

Outcome: By 2023 we will have protected the district for future generations by recycling and green policies aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

How: By switching from paper-based forms (that need to be printed, posted, and returned) to online forms, thus reducing the cost of consumables, such as paper, postage, and printer ink.

Specific Connect Outcomes

- Enhanced customer experience. ✓
- Maximise IT and technology benefits. ✓
- Deliver accessible high-quality services and customer experience for everyone – efficient, professional, adds value and meets changing individual needs – new ways of working for staff, members, and customers. ✓
- Increased efficiencies (reduced resources – time/money). ✓
- Staff are developed, trained and supported to provide the best customer experience. ✓

3. Which of the Council's values are supported by this Business Case

- Customer focused ✓
- Proactive ✓
- Maximise potential ✓
- Innovative ✓

4. Success Measures:

- 4.1 Services across the Council will have automated functionality within the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform, with the ability for both the customer (and the Customer Services



Team as required) to book calendar slots and pay for services (as appropriate). Progress will be captured within the system, so the customer and Customer Services Team are able to see both historic requests, as well as the status of any open queries.

- 4.2 The govService Digital Customer Experience Platform connects to current Council systems, so that information and communication flows accurately between them to achieve increased efficiencies.
- 4.3 The amount of non-online customer contact is reduced, to be measured through the new telephony system.
- 4.4 Specific targets will be set should approval be given for this business case to enable benefits to be monitored as part of the project management process.

5. Benefits and Costs

5.1. Benefits – *non-financial*

- A holistic approach to digital change that will not only benefit the whole organisation through more efficient working, but also significantly improve the customer experience.
- Enhanced customer experience through improved digital access to request services and check on the status of any queries.
- A more efficient way of working, initially for Customer Services and then other services as the govService Digital Customer Experience Platform is rolled out across the Council in Phase 2 .
- Fewer customer telephone calls, reduced face-to-face contacts, more joined up communication between services.

5.2. Benefits –*financial*

- An estimate of costs avoided through reduced officer time and system costs is set out below, broken down in to one-off and annual amounts (Tables 1 and 2).

5.3. Costs –*financial*

- An estimate of the resources required to deliver this project are set out below (Table 3)

5.4. Overall, it can be seen that by proceeding with the project is it estimated that one-off costs of nearly £50,000 will be avoided, and that by the end of the 2-year project the equivalent of £128,000 of costs will be achievable per annum through a combination of officer time saved and system costs avoided. This is a conservative estimate as further efficiencies should be achievable in the long run. This should 'pay-back' the required investment of £201,200 in just over a year from the end of the project.

5.5. Although the officer time saved will not be a direct cashable saving to the authority it will release capacity for other work priorities. That said, the ability to absorb increased digital demand without incurring further costs is achievable and over the longer-term, staffing models can be reviewed to ensure resource is aligned to core work processes.

5.6. It is important to note that at its core, this project is not about 'saving money' as this project's primary objectives are:

- Delivering the Council's commitment to implement digital first technology to enhance the customer experience.
- Meeting customer expectations of faster, quicker, and better public services – for example the use of the webchat has risen by over 100% since the start of the pandemic.
- Delivering what the customer needs, when the customer needs it, via the convenience of 24 x 7 access to information and services.
- Reducing void times and avoidable contact.
- Freeing-up frontline staff to concentrate on other work.

THE EXECUTIVE - 9 September 2021



Table 1: Annual Costs Avoided

Service area	Officer Hours saved per annum	Equivalent Staff cost saved p.a. (based on average £20ph)	Ongoing Systems Costs saved p.a.	TOTAL annual costs saved	Notes
Environmental Health	590	£11,800		£11,800	
Risk Management	160	£3,200		£3,200	
Housing	1540	£30,800		£30,800	
Revenue and Benefits	1188	£23,760		£23,760	
*Customer Services		£8,044		£8,044	Based on 50% channel shift of Bulky Waste enquires from telephone to online
HR	312	£6,240		£6,240	Based on two hour saving per officer per annum from increased efficiencies
Housing			£2,000	£2,000	Annual software costs avoided
Licensing			£16,100	£16,100	Annual software costs avoided
Revenue and Benefits			£25,943	£25,943	Annual software costs avoided
TOTAL	3,790	£83,844	£44,043	£127,887	

*Customer Services cost avoidance is based on the Socitim face to face vs digital costs.

Table 2: One Off Costs Avoided

Service area	One-Off Officer Hours saved	One-Off Staff cost saved (based on average £20ph)	One-Off Systems Costs saved	TOTAL One-Off costs saved	Notes
Licensing	577	£11,550		£11,550	One-off piece of work required to implement new system
Housing			£16,875	£16,875	One-Off System Investment costs
Revenue and Benefits			£21,000	£21,000	One-Off System Investment costs
TOTAL	577	£11,550	£37,875	£49,425	



Table 3: Resource Costs

Description	Cost
<p>DTO Salary (24 months including oncosts)</p> <p>In order to deliver Phase 2 of this project, a temporary resource is needed to provide capacity within the Digital Services Team to maximise the system, which requires a specific technical skill set that is currently not available in-house. This resource will also be supported by Granicus (systems provider) who as part of the success bundle will provide training.</p> <p>The required skill set is reflected within the Job Description of the Digital Technical Officer (DTO) role, which has been job evaluated at the pay of scale 6.</p>	£71,200
<p>Project Management Support: To provide support to the Project Lead for the CRM project. Block of 48 days to be used to support creation of detailed project plan, risk register and all associated project documents. This will keep the project on track and give confidence of delivery, monitor progress and realisation of benefits. Likely to be primarily used in Year 1 to maintain momentum project process securely in place before transfer in-house when the project lead and project team is ready and skilled to use the project tools.</p>	£30,000
<p>Granicus (Systems provider) Success Bundles: Purchase of 3x Success Bundles to provide technical support which includes training and systems implementation throughout the term of the project.</p>	£45,000
<p>Communications: As well as internal resource we will use external support to promote the new Customer portal. Marketing and branding using a variety of communications channels.</p>	£20,000
<p>System Integration: Linking our current back office systems to the Customer Portal to automate workflow processes to improve efficiency where appropriate.</p>	£35,000
Total	£201,200

6. Delivery Approach – proposal to delivery

- In-house – The Project Lead will be the Digital Services Manager, key project support will be from Customer Services Manager who will work with key officers from each service area.
- Working with commercial/external providers -software provider (Granicus) along with corporate software providers.
- Collaboration/Sharing with other Councils - there is an opportunity to use expertise from other Local Authorities who have already implemented the system conversations are already happening with Brentwood Council who have implemented GovService.
- Additional resources - additional temporary DTO resource
- Members will be part of the Communications process and advised at an early stage of key milestones and have the opportunity to attend promotional, training events.
- Other - Connect Programme Management will be required to both support the Project Manager in developing the required documentation should this business case be approved, and in monitoring the project plan and deliverables to ensure the full benefits are realised.



7. Anticipated High-level Timeline:

October 11, 2021 — October 29, 2021: Service Designer / Module Training

Digital Technical Officer (DTO) will undertake this period of time to familiarise themselves with all of the various govService modules that we have invested in.

November 1, 2021 — October 6, 2023: Customer Services

Throughout their tenure, our DTO will work continually with the Customer Services team to turn our existing processes into true end-to-end digital services and bring new services online (e.g., customers will be able to report issues around grass verges and play spaces).

November 1, 2021 — January 28, 2021: Licensing

40 new digital processes brought online. Each process will have the ability to take payment, seamlessly replicating and improving our existing offering from central government.

January 4, 2022 — May 27, 2022: Revenue and Benefits

50 new digital processes brought online. Each process will replace and improve upon our existing paper-based Revenue and Benefits forms.

May 30, 2022 — September 30, 2022: Environmental Health

90 (working) day project sprint to bring online a suite of new digital processes that will integrate with our back-office system, Idox Uniform.

October 3, 2022 — February 3, 2023: Housing

A suite of new digital processes that will automatically sync with Locata (our back-office housing system) will be brought online.

February 6, 2023 — June 9, 2023: Human Resources

30 paper-based administration processes that span multiple departments will be digitized and fed into a dashboard for our HR Team.

June 12, 2023 — October 6, 2023: Risk Management

DTO will redesign, digitize and streamline close to 100 of our existing internal risk/insurance data capture documents. Reminder actions, SLA timers, clear deadlines, tracking and escalation routes will be pre-built into the new processes to ensure that the administration of data capture across all service areas is automated.