

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 7 OCTOBER 2020

PORTFOLIO: ENTERPRISE

REPORT FROM: STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT: COUNCIL PROJECTS PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT
OFFICE**

1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 To note the closure of the ICT Migration Project and update on the Connect Programme.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Programme Management Office has oversight of three projects that report to meetings of the Executive: the ICT Migration Project, the Connect Programme (both GOLD projects) and the Beagle Event project (a SILVER project).

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

ICT Migration Project Closing Report

- 3.1 The migration of the 'Academy' Revenues and Benefits System to Capita's externally hosted managed service has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Completion of this work is now planned for the end of October 2020. As the decision was made not to move the application to Rochford's Azure cloud a formal change control was undertaken and it was taken out of the ICT Migration Programme. The managed service project is being managed by the service area.
- 3.2 Until this work has been completed, Rochford will still need to use the Equinix Data Centre as the Academy system uses a number of servers which cannot be decommissioned until the work is complete.
- 3.3 The new Parking Gateway software was completed at the end of September 2020. There has been a delay due to Imperial,, the software provider,, having resource issues; these have now been resolved.
- 3.4 Microsoft 0365 staff and Member migration has been completed.

Lessons Learned

- 3.5 Prior to going out to tender a decision had been taken to put on hold a refresh of the server environment and to remove £300,000 from the IT budget, pending the IT Contract renewal (The Executive, 2 March 2016).

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- 3.6 The impact of this was not known until Eduserv (Now Jisc) undertook the discovery phase of the project which involved an examination of the Council's ICT systems in preparation for the migration. This work identified that our legacy systems were outdated and could not be transferred to the Azure Cloud and required significant modernisation.
- 3.7 Within the Executive report of 19 July 2016 Plan B (lift and shift to Eduserv datacentre) had been presented as an option; it was decided to invoke this option so time could be taken to understand what was needed for a successful migration. This incurred costs and delayed the programme; the only other alternative would have been to continue within Capita's data centre and extend the contract, but this would have incurred even higher costs.
- 3.8 At the time Capita were managing our systems and ICT estate. Rochford relied heavily on their knowledge and skills so when the TUPE transfer did not transpire, this had a significant impact and highlighted that the resource required to complete the project had been underestimated; an ambitious challenging timeline had also been set.
- 3.9 Historical contract monitoring led to an insufficient Exit plan handover to the new managed service provider.
- 3.10 Work has been completed on all legacy systems which are monitored to ensure they remain on the most up to date version, which is a requirement of the Azure Cloud Platform.
- 3.11 The ICT Team continues to work to improve Rochford's infrastructure. Having an in house team means Rochford has control of its systems and infrastructure. Outsourcing ICT at the time was the right decision but the contract did not allow for enough flexibility and was too long, restricting Rochford's ability to improve and modernise.
- 3.12 The ICT Team has increased over the course of the delivery of this project, increasing in resource, technical knowledge and contract management skills. It will be important to ensure that the team is able to continue to develop their skills in a world of fast moving technology so Rochford can move to a modern 21st Century Council with technology which supports the Council in delivering high quality services.
- 3.13 Contract Monitoring training was provided in 2018 and the next round of training due will seek to further improve contract monitoring across the Council.
- 3.14 The delivery of this contract coincided with the beginnings of the Project Management Office and the early project methodology has since been improved to be a more supportive function.
- 3.15 Using the identified issues above, Rochford has moved on its project management process by using external Project Managers where it's recognised the scope is beyond current skills and capacity, utilising Members

via working groups for GOLD projects and has also developed the Project Management Office to support Project Leads to scope and deliver their projects on time and to budget.

Connect Programme

- 3.16 At the Executive meeting (8 July), the programme timeline was realigned to take into consideration the impact of Covid-19.
- 3.17 In line with Phase 1 of the programme, the Transformation Programme Manager has been appointed and has drafted a programme plan which will be presented to the Leadership Team in early October.
- 3.18 The Leadership Team will be attending a workshop arranged by the East of England Consultant to develop a standardised methodology for business area analysis and to align outcomes to the Business Plan.
- 3.19 Planning has started for the Staff Development Programme which will equip staff with the skills they need to operate as '21st Century Public Servants' and serve the Council's residents in an agile and responsive way.

Beagle Project

- 3.20 The Executive agreed to grant up to £50,000 to RSPB for the installation of new infrastructure at Wallasea Island, which will commemorate the location of HMS Beagle as a coastguard watch vessel and to promote the island as a tourist destination. A separate report is due to come to this meeting (7 October 2020) of the Executive.
- 3.21 In addition, the Executive agreed to hold an event at the Freight House in Rochford which would be free to enter for members of the public – the "Discover 2020 – 200 years of HMS Beagle" (the "Beagle Event"). As agreed by Executive on 8 July, this will be reported to the Executive in December 2020.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The risks identified in PMO projects will be reviewed as they evolve. PMO will monitor the risks of each project individually for impact on its own project and all other PMO identified projects, as well as impacts on the Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The ICT Migration project is being carried out within previously agreed resources; however, the cost of retaining the Equinix Data Centre for a further six months to October 2020 to allow the migration of the Academy and Parking Gateway systems, which were outside the original scope of the project, is c£3,000. Delays to the Academy system migration will not incur

additional costs with Capita, as the new contract will only come into force once the migration is complete.

- 5.2 The Connect Programme will be delivered within the resources previously agreed by the Executive on 8 July.
- 5.3 For the Beagle Event, the finance aspects are contained within the separate report to this meeting of the Executive.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising out of the contents of this report.

7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Engagement with relevant Parish Councils has been a core component of the Beagle Event.

8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None arising from this report.

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: _____



Strategic Director

Background Papers: -

None.

For further information please contact Strategic Director

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