

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

08 January 2014

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPDATE REPORT

An update report providing status on a number of work streams being carried out by the IT Services Department in support of the Councils Transformation Strategy.

1.1 QR Codes

1.1.1 Quick Response (QR) Codes are a 3D barcode used to provide easy access to web page addresses by scanning them with a smartphone.

1.1.2 To assist customers in finding the relevant information they need on the web in the easiest way possible, we are promoting their use on Council documents and publicity materials.

1.1.3 QR codes have already been used;

- In Here & Now to provide a link to our web home page
- On bin hangers to provide a link to our Christmas refuse round page
- On Planning Site Notices to provide a link to the relevant planning application details on our website

1.1.4 We are actively seeking additional uses of QR codes and are looking to modify further templates on the UNiform system.

1.1.5 We have made extensive use of Open Source software to provide this solution in the most flexible and cost effective way.

1.2 Resource Space

1.2.1 Resource Space is an online repository of documents which enable collaboration amongst users.

1.2.2 We have built the solution using Open Source software.

1.2.3 Resource Space is now being used to share documents for;

- Special Advisory Group
- Leisure Trust
- Audio \ Video Media store (for promotional videos and audio versions of Here & Now)
- Image Library (for re-use of pictures on the website)

1.3 My Account

1.3.1 Having established the basic functionality of the My Account section of the website, we have now entered into the sign up phase to encourage people to create an account.

1.3.2 We have emailed all the original subscribers to website update information and explained the benefits of My Account and asked if they would like to set up a user.

1.3.3 We have also emailed all users who have recently used an online form on our website and explained the benefits of My Account and asked if they would like to set up a user.

1.3.4 We currently have 2,908 accounts set up and are receiving responses to these emails at a rate of approximately 8 per day.

1.3.5 One of the initial uses of My Account will be to provide more detailed information on Council Tax accounts. This will include an electronic bill, balance details, instalment information, and quick links for payment and setting up direct debits. These functions are currently under development.

1.4 Online Forms

1.4.1 Using the eBase electronic forms package, we are developing forms for services which feature a greater level of integration with back office systems to enhance the experience for customer and to reduce the need of re-typing service requests by staff.

1.4.2 We have recently introduced;

- A Leisure Pass form which links to the Housing Benefits system for validation of discounts
- An abandoned vehicle reporting form which logs the case directly into the Lagan Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.
- A change of bin size form

- A replace and repair form for bins
- A Council Tax balance lookup form
- Pest control requests going direct to the new contractor

1.4.3 We are currently working with the Revenues and Benefits section to provide an online benefits application form.

1.5 Modern.Gov

1.5.1 The Modern.Gov committee meeting management system is now installed and is in the process of being tailored to our committee and meeting structure.

1.5.2 We are also undertaking a data transfer exercise to export the documents and details from the previous committee management system into Modern.Gov.

1.5.3 Management Team are currently trialling the use of tablet devices in order to access committee papers online at the meetings. These experiences will help develop the processes and training that members will receive in order to use the system effectively.

1.5.4 Election results will be published on the website via Modern.Gov.

1.6 Legal Implications

1.6.1 Nil.

1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.7.1 All of the projects detailed above contribute towards the councils transformation agenda and will assist in making the organisation more efficient.

1.7.2 Where possible Open Source solutions have been implemented to provide flexibility in provision of services and to help reduce the cost of implementation.

1.8 Risk Assessment

1.8.1 Nil.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Darren Everden
01732 876117

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive