

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

08 January 2020

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 DIGITAL STRATEGY UPDATE

A report updating Members on the progress in delivering the digital strategy.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In July 2019, the Advisory Board recommended a digital strategy for Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council which was subsequently adopted by Full Council In October.

1.1.2 The key drivers for the strategy were recognised as:

- Increasing service demands;
- Diminishing resources;
- The green agenda;
- Evolution of customer expectations;
- Disconnected communities;
- Work life balance for staff;
- Loss of resilience in the local economy; and
- Changing technological landscape.

1.1.3 The mission of our digital strategy will be to deliver the priorities of the Council, through challenge, innovation and transformation underpinned by technology.

1.2 Website

1.2.1 One of the priority projects within the context of the digital strategy has been the delivery of a new website.

- 1.2.2 At the last meeting of the Advisory Board I updated Members as to progress from both the business/service” angle, and secondly from the IT design end.
- 1.2.3 An Officer group has been working to progress the design and specification work. A new Head of Communications, Jon Steel, joined the Council on 4 November and will assume some responsibilities going forward for the presentation of the information on the website to the public.
- 1.2.4 The timetable to deliver the website has been set as follows, broken down into:
- a “technical” component (to be led by IT Services) and
 - a “content/customer” component to be led by the Head of Communications and the Head of Customer Services.

Technical

Receive tenders for Content Management System (CMS) and award contract	Mid February 2020
Prepare platform for population of content (“empty shell”)	By: 1 April 2020
“Live” site as front end, linking to original site for content	1 April 2020
Creation of customer portal (My Account) on new CMS	By: 30 April 2020
Incorporation of Citizen Access (Revenues & Benefits) into My Account portal	By: 30 April 2020
Development of key priority areas (other than Citizen Access for Revenues and Benefits)	By: 31 July 2020
Development of TMBC app and “official” launch of website	By 30 September 2020
Development of other service areas for inclusion in portal subject to prioritisation	By: 31 March 2021

Content/Customer

Completion of review of existing web pages	By: January 2020
Consideration / assessment of templates for new website /look and feel	By: End March 2020
Home page and primary landing pages to be ready	Ideally by 1 April 2020
Transfer of content and links to old website where content not yet transferred	By: 31 March 2021
Proposals regarding roles and responsibilities/ resourcing for website content.	By: 30 September 2020

- 1.2.5 Members will note from the above that there will be a “transition” to the new website over a period of time. We anticipate that we should be progressed enough to officially launch the new site by the Autumn.

1.3 Business Process Mapping

- 1.3.1 In order to identify efficiencies and technological solutions in the light of the key drivers for the digital strategy set out in paragraph 1.1.2 above, we have been using the services of Smarter Digital Services to undertake business process mapping.
- 1.3.2 This process has progressed well and is beginning to flag up areas where efficiencies can be introduced into work flows, either through the employment of new technology or changes in working practices.
- 1.3.3 So far, around 11 distinct areas of the Council’s services have been mapped, but there is still a way to go to complete this piece of work. Staff have engaged really well with the process which is an encouraging sign.

1.4 Mobile Working

- 1.4.1 One of the technological solutions we had already identified, and for which Members approved funding, is Mobile Working.
- 1.4.2 The software, SmartMobile, has been purchased and is being used initially by the Food Safety team in their site inspection visits removing the need for paper records and the administrative burden of transferring data into back office systems. There is potential to use this software in other service areas and this is currently under consideration by the digital group.
- 1.4.3 Back-scanning of old paper records will need to be undertaken, providing a more secure and data protected environment.

1.5 Call Handling

- 1.5.1 In line with the ‘One Council’ principle in the digital strategy, we are also looking at the arrangements for call handling within the Council. This piece of work is at an early stage and we will keep Members apprised as this progresses.

1.6 Other Digital projects

- 1.6.1 A raft of digital projects in addition to those mentioned above are currently underway across the Council. Members will be updated on these as appropriate.
- 1.6.2 With the assistance of ‘Brexit’ grant funding, we have also been able to bring forward the programme for the provision of laptops for a good number of staff which allow flexible/remote working. This programme continues to roll out and in

due course all staff should have the ability to work remotely, which adds to our resilience as a Council from a business continuity point of view.

1.7 Legal Implications

1.7.1 None at this stage.

1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.8.1 No specific implications from this progress report. A budget for the website was approved by Full Council in October 2019, and revenue costs have been built into base budget through the preparation of Estimates.

1.9 Risk Assessment

1.9.1 The risk of not moving forward digital agenda is that the Council may not be providing services in the ways that our residents wish

1.10 Policy Considerations

- Customer Contact
- Communications
- Community
- Procurement

Background papers:

contact: Sharon Shelton

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance & Transformation