

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

19 May 2021

**Joint Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation
and Director of Central Services**

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 WEBSITE

Members are updated on the progress with the new website as we approach the launch date in June 2021.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Members are aware from previous reports to this Advisory Board that the Council is in the process of implementing a new Council website, and at the time of writing we are approaching the launch date of 29 June 2021.

1.1.2 The 'delivery' of the website is a corporate responsibility, and all Services are playing their part in getting it fit for purpose. However, key responsibilities are naturally falling with the IT Services team to deal with all technical components; and the Media/Customer Services team leading on content and customer interaction.

1.1.3 The project is being managed through an internal project board consisting of officers from various disciplines of council services, alongside representatives from the supplier. The board has been meeting monthly to monitor progress and sign off key decisions in respect of the project.

1.2 Progress

1.2.1 As previously advised, the implementation of the website infrastructure has been completed successfully in the Microsoft Azure cloud platform.

1.2.2 We are presently on track with the timescales and do not foresee any technical issues that will prevent us from achieving the 'go live date' of 29 June 2021.

1.2.3 In terms of the content side of the work, it is also on track for launch on 29 June 2021. During April, user testing and overall website security has been tested and no major vulnerabilities have been identified.

1.2.4 The majority of content on the existing site has been reviewed and migrated and will provide users with improved search functionality and easier navigation. The site is being designed with an emphasis on improving customer experiences through increased digital transactions via easy access to online forms which deliver more efficient back-office processes.

1.2.5 The main homepage will provide quick links to key services, such as waste, planning, council tax and parking plus promotion of strategic priorities, including economic development and environment.

1.3 Informal Demonstration for Members

1.3.1 We propose that Jon Steel, Head of Communications, hosts an on-line informal demo of the website for Members on 22 June ahead of the launch, alongside a demonstration of the new 'Customer Portal' by IT services.

1.3.2 If Members of the Advisory Board agree, an invite will be sent out shortly to all councillors to allow them to view the website ahead of the launch.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 Procurement was undertaken in accordance with procurement regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 The capital costs (including design, implementation and consultancy) of the project have been funded from the Transformation Reserve. Revenue costs are built into base budget.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 Development of a new Council website has been an objective for some years. The risk of not delivering the new website within the context of the council's digital agenda, is that the Council will fall short on providing services to its residents and businesses through secure and efficient industry-standard interaction channels.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.8 Policy Considerations

- Customer Contact
- Communications
- Community

- Procurement

1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 Members are requested to **NOTE**:

- the progress with the implementation of the new website; and
- that an informal on-line demonstration is to be offered to Members ahead of the launch date of 29 June 2021.

The Director of Finance & Transformation and Director of Central Services confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

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