

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 November 2024

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Information



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Agile Update

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report updates Members on progress towards the implementation of the Agile software system across built environment and public protection services. The report also responds to queries raised by Members regarding lessons learnt and how to ensure the software is fully embedded post 'go live'.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 The change in software system once embedded will ensure services can be delivered efficiently.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 A previous report was presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 4 April 2024. This reviewed a series of questions from Members relating to timescales, procurement, contracts and system functionality. The report is attached as Annexe 1 to this report.
- 3.2 The Agile project has been considered on a number of occasions by the Council's Audit Committee due to its assessment as a red risk on the strategic risk register.

4 Progress update

- 4.1 Since the last update to the O&S Committee, the Street Naming and Numbering module has gone live.
- 4.2 The Land Charges module has now gone live. This project has seen some delays due to workload pressures within the small Council team delivering this project. A

revised programme was agreed in the summer and has been adhered to. The Council team is continuing to deliver a very high level of business-as-usual service alongside Agile implementation and the need to manage the backlog that has inevitably arisen during this period. The project delivery has been closely managed, with weekly progress meetings involving the DPHEH and Agile's Head of Programme Management alongside regular project management activity.

- 4.3 Public Protection (PLACIS) – the programme remains on track for 'go live' in early 2025. Agile's work to map and migrate data is on track for early November. There are significant risks to business-as-usual performance in the teams moving to Agile, as the Super User role requires a number of configuration tasks to be delivered in tight timescales. These workload pressures are being closely monitored and senior officers in the relevant services are supporting staff.
- 4.4 Built Environment (APAS) outstanding matters – the table below outlines the key outstanding matters in the APAS modules. A number of these remain outstanding following go live in October 2023. The Council has a renewed commitment from Agile to resolution of these issues as below. However, it is anticipated that this will require management capacity to monitor and escalate, as well as officer resource to test solutions and implement the modules. There is now a timescale imperative for this work to be concluded, as the previous operating system will not be available after the end of March 2025.

Work area	Issue	Timescale for resolution
Land Terrier	Fixes on identified issues to allow module use. TMBC and Agile completing fixes and testing.	End of 2024
TPO	Fixes on identified issues to allow module use. TMBC and Agile completing fixes and testing.	End of 2024
Building Control	Minor issues relating to invoice reporting and data.	End of 2024
Pre-application (Planning)	Fixes on identified issues to allow module use. TMBC and Agile completing fixes and testing. Backlog of cases recorded outside system since October 2024 to be inputted by TMBC staff.	Module ready for use by end of 2024. Backlog uploaded asap and no later than end of 24/25 financial year.

UPRN/case history	Development work required by Agile to resolve issue, which is causing gaps in case histories when planning reports are run (currently being mitigated by referring to histories in previous operating system).	Development work before end of 2024. Upgrade to be implemented in January 2025 with testing to follow.
Security	Work required by TMBC services and IT Development team to ensure all security settings are correctly applied.	End of 2024
Documents	Testing work underway by both Agile and TMBC teams to establish cause of some documents not 'linking' to Agile case files. Focus for historic cases is on the documents required for the Planning Register.	By end of 24/25 financial year.

4.5 The delivery of the enhanced media screen and automated validator projects has continued. The media screen work will be concluded before the end of 2024, giving increased functionality to officers in the management of cases and review of documents. The automated validator project is currently scheduled to go live in January 2025.

5 Way forward

- 5.1 As section 5 outlines, there is still a significant amount of work to conclude in the current financial year to ensure Agile implementation is concluded ahead of access to the previous operating system, which in some areas is being used to supplement where functionality is not fully established, ceasing. There is also a need to ensure that Agile becomes fully embedded over time and maximises efficiency of service delivery.
- 5.2 Continued project and programme management activity – until implementation programme concludes in February 2025, the current regime of project and programme management will continue. This includes project stand-ups with all teams delivering the implementation, twice weekly programme catch-ups between the DPHEH (programme Senior Responsible Officer) and the Business Change Project Manager, regular programme review calls between DPHEH and senior Agile staff and monthly Project Board meetings to formally raise any key issues. In

addition, Management Team and senior Members are regularly briefed on the programme's progress.

- 5.3 To ensure that software development activity that has been deemed as deliverable post go live is delivered, post go live task lists are already in place for key Council staff and are agreed with Agile as they go onto this list. The review mechanisms for these tasks, both internally and with Agile, are to be agreed.
- 5.4 There are some functions that the Agile software does not provide for that were available in the previous system (albeit not any that are essential to delivery) or that have been identified as areas for improvement by TMBC teams. Where these are not able to be developed prior to go live, they are captured as enhancement proposals by Agile and considered as part of their 'roadmap' development. A list of proposed enhancements has been collated and will continue to be updated during the implementation phase. Following this, these will be monitored by IT Development.
- 5.5 In order to ensure that roles and responsibilities for ongoing management of the Agile software are clear, a roles and responsibilities document for Super Users is being developed. It is not considered that this approach has any specific HR implications, however being able to manage staff requirements and expectations is an important management tool.
- 5.6 Agile runs User Forums to gather feedback from customers utilising their modules. TMBC is receiving invitations to these and will seek to ensure that the correct service and IT staff attend these to develop knowledge and provide user feedback.
- 5.7 A Post Implementation Review of the APAS implementation is currently being concluded and a similar exercise will be carried out for the other implementations in the Agile programme. These will be reported to the Council's Audit Committee in due course.

6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 6.1 The implementation costs of Agile are detailed below.

Implementation delivery (including enhancement projects to deliver automation, redaction and document management)	£276,660
Project Management (in house until March 2025)	£272,000
TOTAL	£548,660

- 6.2 The ongoing annual cost for Agile is £48k per annum, met from the IT software revenue budget. This represents a saving on the previous software cost of £50k per annum

7 Risk Assessment

- 7.1 Implementation of the Agile software system remains a red risk on the strategic risk register. This risk is being reviewed in order to split it into 2 distinct areas – implementation and embedding. Whilst the first risk continues to reduce as further modules ‘go live’, currently the second risk remains high when considering level of confidence of users (both staff and end users) and driving efficiencies when compared to operational abilities under previous operating system. There are also outstanding risks around issues including GDPR and Agile’s operating model for BAU activity such as upgrades, as well as changes to their business model following their acquisition that are still to be resolved. These issues are being mitigated in a number of ways including utilising the Council’s remaining consultancy time with Agile to work through GDPR matters, a focused engagement between the IT team and Agile to ensure the approach to upgrades meets the Council’s requirements and ongoing engagement at a senior level, including a recent meeting between the Council’s Chief Executive and the Chief Executive Officer at Agile.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications from the content of this report

9 Cross Cutting Issues

9.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 9.1.1 Adaptation and resilience have not been considered.

- 9.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

9.2 Equalities and Diversity

- 9.2.1 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.

9.3 Other If Relevant

- Procurement
- Business Continuity / Resilience
- Data Protection

9.3.1 Full implementation of the Agile system will ensure that key services can continue to be delivered appropriately. Having a fully implemented and operational system mitigates data protection risks.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Agile report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee 4 April 2024