



PR.62 13/14
Policy & Resources Committee
Date 17 th April 2014

Subject: E-Accessibility Project

Report by:	(Lyn Marlow / Mike Sofianos)
Contact Officer:	(Lyn Marlow) (Team Manager Customer Strategy and Services) (x 684) (lyn.marlow@west-lindsey.gov.uk)
Purpose / Summary:	Provide committee with an update on the e-accessibility programme

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The committee are requested to note and comment upon:

- (i) The project governance arrangements that have been put in place to manage, control and report upon the progress of the E-accessibility project.
- (ii) The actual progress being made on the implementation of the E-accessibility Project.
- (iii) The planned programme of work for April 2014 - June 2014.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: N/A

There are no legal implications arising from this update report

Financial : FIN/89/14

Current budget for this project is £60k capital and £100k revenue. At this point in the project it has been highlighted that some of the estimated capital costs do not meet the capital definition and will therefore be treated as revenue. In addition as there has been no requirement to backfill for staff engaged on this project, an overall surplus is likely to be realised of £26k. As the project progresses this situation may change with further IT requirements, therefore, budgets and funding will be realigned as required and approved.

Staffing : N/A

There are no staffing matters arising from this update report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

The implementation of the eight key strategic objectives will significantly improve customer accessibility to council services from within their local communities. Customers will be provided with more choice on how they can access Council services through the use of new technology.

The implementation of mediated self-service stations across the District in places such as libraries, community halls and parish council offices will provide a more convenient and easier way for the elderly and disabled residents to access services of their choice. Young people will have the opportunity to learn computer skills that will assist with potential employment opportunities.

Risk Assessment : N/A

1. Project Resources not made available to deliver the project.

A project team has been assembled to ensure the successful delivery of the work streams set out in this report.

2. The Project may not be delivered in the prescribed time scales.

Project Governance arrangements are in place to ensure progress made with implementing the programme of work is kept on time and within allocated budgets.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

Potential reduction in carbon emissions where customers do not need to visit the Guildhall from rural villages to access Council services.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Customers First Strategy 2010 - 2015

Policy & Resources Committee
7th November 2013 - Report on "Customer Access Strategy Review"

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

No

Key Decision:

Yes

No

1. Background

- 1.1 The Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 7th November 2013 gave approval for the Council to implement eight strategic objectives for improving customer accessibility to council services.
- 1.2. This report provides committee with an update on progress being made.

2. Project Governance

- 2.1 Governance arrangements are in place with a Project Sponsor, Manager and Board to oversee delivery.
- 2.2 Interim Director Jeanette McGarry is the Project Sponsor responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of the project.
- 2.3 Project management support is secured till the end of April 2014 by appointing Mike Sofianos as Project Manager for 2 - 3 days per week.
- 2.4 The membership of the Project Board with governance arrangements is shown at Appendix A.

- 2.5. During February 2014 the Project was subject to an independent gateway review by Internal Audit. The review focused on the governance and project management arrangements for the Project and concluded that the Project was well managed and Governance arrangements were being maintained to a high standard.

3. Project Resources

- 3.1 Resources required are provided from several areas:
- 3.2 Firm step (software supplier) has allocated a Project Manager and Technical Officer to support the implementation of the new software with on-going support whilst using the software.
- 3.3 North Kesteven District Council have been providing a resource to support development and implementation of the forms where both local authorities will be using the same forms.
- 3.4 Internal resource support will be provided from a number of areas:
- (i) **The Services** - assist with design of new e-accessibility services of Achieve Forms, Services and Self, by attending workshops for business process, form design, signing off requirements and revised web content.
 - (ii) **The WEB Team** - support the design/implementation of revised and new forms, web functionality/navigation and development of the citizen account.
 - (iii) **ICT** - requirement to develop/implement integrations between forms with back office business systems.
 - (iv) **Customer Services** - development/implementation of Forms, Services and Self.
 - (v) **Business Improvement** - provide support for business process re-engineering and identification of potential efficiencies.
 - (vi) **Communications** - provide advice/support on communications.

4. Project Planning

- 4.1 We have put in place a detailed project plan that sets out project activities, resource requirements, timelines and milestones to manage and monitor delivery of the project.
- 4.2 Regular meetings of the Project Board and Project Team take place to review/monitor progress against the project plan.
- 4.3. Project risks and issues registers are regularly reviewed and updated and are held on Minerva.

5. Project Reporting - see Appendix A

6. Communications

- 6.1 There will be a need for continued internal and external communications and the project plan incorporates the communications required for:-
- (i) Internal - keeping members/staff informed on the progress.
 - (ii) External - promotion of the new forms when “live” on the web site.

7. Progress To Date

December 2013

- 7.1 During December 2013 we completed the procurement process for the new software.
- 7.2. The software package includes:
- (i) Achieve Forms - enables development and implementation of new flexible on-line forms.
 - (ii) Achieve Services - ability to capture customer contact in one place and improve visibility and management of customer enquiries between the “front office” customer services team and “back office” service departments.
 - (iii) Achieve Self - ability to implement a “Citizen Account” for customer to access their own personal records, eg look up their Council Tax account and balance.
- 7.3 The project governance arrangements and project plan were put in place.

January 2014

- 7.4 During January we established the programme office in the Humber Room and assembled the Project Team. Work concentrated on:
- (i) Establishing the governance arrangements and project reporting.
 - (ii) Prioritisation of new electronic forms for use on the WEB Site (see Appendix B).
 - (iii) Installation of the new software and technical testing.
 - (iv) Ensuring compliance to the Council’s Public Sector Network certification with particular regard to the flow of information and data in and out of the Council’s network and business systems.
- 7.5. We also commenced work on business process reviews and customer journey mapping for Building Control, Waste Services and Revenues.

February 2014

- 7.6. During February 2014 Project Team members received training on the design and development of the new electronic forms.
- 7.7. The design and development of new forms commenced for:
- (i) Waste Services - missed bin collection
 - (ii) Waste Services - New, replacement, stolen bins

- (iii) Building Control - Demolition Notice
 - (iv) Building Control - Building Regularisation
 - (v) Revenues - Direct Debit
- 7.8. A review of the website also commenced looking at information, customer journeys and navigation for the following services:
- (i) Waste Services
 - (ii) Revenues and Benefits
 - (iii) Building Control
- 7.9. Work has started on the gathering of benchmarking data for all the above services to establish baseline data on contact volumes. This will provide valuable information when reviewing the success of the programme.

March 2014

- 7.10. During March 2014 work commenced on getting the data from the new electronic forms directly integrated into back office business systems and linked into the Council's payment portal where customers are required to pay a fee or charge for receiving a service.
- 7.11. The testing of the data integration was successful and our first form, for reporting missed bin collections, went live using the new software with full data integration into the back office business system Flare.
- 7.12. Work also commenced work on:
- (i) The configuration of the achieve services software which will allow customer first point of contact to be captured in one place and improve visibility and management of customer enquiries between the "front office" customer services team and "back office" service departments.
 - (ii) Planning for the development of the "citizen Account" which will provide the ability for customers, through a secure authenticated web portal, to have access their own personal records, eg look up their Council Tax account and balance.
 - (iii) Putting together baseline data from which progress can be monitored on how well the Council is doing with regard to Channel Shift, moving customers to more cost effective access channels specifically with the use of web based services.

8.0. Next Steps

- 8.1. Over the next three months April 2014 - June 2014 it is planned to:
- (i) Continue with the development and implementation of the new electronic forms and improved management processes for dealing with customer enquiries between the "front office" and "back office" services.

- (ii) Quantify and verify with Service Managers progress on channel shift and any efficiency savings that have been derived from the implementation of the new software.
- (iii) Make changes to the web site to improve customer navigation.
- (iv) Carry out soft market testing for the use of mobile applications which will allow customers to report service issues within the local community using smart phones and hand held devices.
- (v) Re-launch the Council's customer care standards
- (vi) Launch a pilot self-service location within the local community.

Report End

APPENDIX A

E-Accessibility Project - Governance Arrangements

Challenge and Improvement Committee

Leaders Panel

Portfolio Holder - Cllr Welburn

Corporate Management Team

Commercial Board

PROJECT BOARD

Senior User (s)	Executive	Senior Supplier (s)
Customer Services Lyn Marlow	Interim Director Jeanette McGarry	Firmstep (supplier) David Rees
Alan Robinson Revenues & Benefits		Alex Reeks Assistant Chief Executive
Michelle Carrington North Kesteven DC		Julie Heath Communications
Other Officers (as required)		Sarah Staff Finance
	Project Manager Mike Sofianos	
Project Assurance Mathew Waller – Internal Audit		Project Support Margaret Freeman

Project Board

The Board represents the interest of the business, user and supplier, and provides overall direction and management of the project. The Board has responsibility and authority for the project within its remit set by the CMT. The Board is also responsible for assurance that the project remains on course to deliver the desired outcome as defined in the business case.

Roles and Responsibilities

Executive This is the individual with ultimate accountability for the successful delivery of the project, will ensure that the project represents value for money and follows a cost-conscious approach whilst balancing the needs of the business, users and suppliers.

Senior User (s) Is accountable for ensuring that requirements are fully and accurately specified, making sure that what is delivered is fit for purpose and that the solution meets user's needs.

Senior Supplier (s) Ensures resources to provide design, development, facilitation, procurement and implementation is available.

Project Manager Daily management of the project, with prime responsibility for ensuring that the project delivers the required outcomes, to required standard of quality and within constraints of time and cost.

Project Assurance Ensures that the project meets its requirement, along with members of the Project Board.

Project Support The role of Project Support is to provide administration over project documentation and control, reviews, meetings, and communications.

Project Team

Project Manager (WLDC)	Mike Sofianos
Project Manager (Firmstep)	David Rees
Customer Services Manager	Lyn Marlow
Senior Customer Services Officer	Janine Nixon
Jeanette Anderson	ICT
Jackie McGeachie	Web Manager
Julie Heath	Communications
Darren Mellors	Business Process Re-design
Sarah Staff	Finance
Karey Barnshaw	North Kesteven DC
Other Officers (as required)	TBD

Project Reports

Project reports will consist of:

- (i) Project Manager Highlight Report
- (ii) Budget Report
- (iii) Resources
- (iv) Project Interdependencies
- (v) Risk Register
- (vi) Issues Log

West Lindsey District Council

**E-Accessibility Project
Priority Achieve Forms**

Apply For IT

Building Control

Demolition Notice application
Regularisation application

Revenues

Applying for an Exemption or Discount
Cancellation of Exemption or Discount
Direct Debits
Single occupancy

Waste Services

Apply for Bulky Waste Collection
Fly tipping
Missed bins
New and replacement bins

Licensing

Hackney Carriage licence application
Hackney Carriage licence renewal
Hackney Carriage licence medical form
DVLA driver consent form

Report IT

Revenues

Report a change of circumstances

Public Protection

Pest Control (partnership)