Customer Experience & Digital Portfolio

Portfolio	Customer Experience & Digital
Ward(s) Affected:	All

Purpose

To provide a progress report on the Customer Experience & Digital Portfolio

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1. **Background**

1.1 The Customer Experience & Digital Corporate Portfolio covers the services and functions as set out below:

- Digital & ICT
- Communications and Marketing
- Contact Centre & Post Room

2. **Digital & ICT**

ICT

2.1 In January 2018 we signed off our Digital Strategy document: https://surreyheath.app.box.com/file/270157942799

2.2 During 2018 we have continued with several projects to support this strategy and put in the infrastructure and framework to enable new working facilities. Key aspects of our work involve reducing the reliance on Surrey Heath House and provision of simple access to any application or platform from any device, anywhere at any time.

Current Position

2.3 We have completed the procurement of a cloud telephony solution from 8x8 to replace the 10+ year old equipment that has become end of life. During 2018, a fully cloud-based solution was procured that supported the Digital Strategy to enable more agile working, with no reliance on Surrey Heath House. 8x8 went live in early February 2019 in the Contact Centre (including Revenues and Benefits and Camberley Theatre Box Office) providing cloud-based handling of the main incoming calls. This integrates seamlessly with a cloud-based back office solution for staff which allows calls to be answered from a mobile app or a softphone client. The migration of the back-office staff should be completed by April 2019. We have already begun to remove some desk telephones.

2.4 The 10+ year old switch infrastructure requires replacement. This has commenced and will continue for the next 9 months. The switch replacement will support the network to improve functionality and speeds by making use of new technology that the current switches are not capable of achieving. It will also support the telephony project to secure voice quality for the contact centre when there is high volume activity on the network.

2.5 As part of our Public Sector Network connection compliance, we had an independent accredited network security assessment completed in March 2018. This generated a remediation action plan for us to complete in order for our continuing compliance

certificate to be issued. The team spent the next 9 months working through the recommendations, and we were issued with our certificate in January 2019 .

2.6   The main file storage will reach end of life during 2019. A modern storage solution has been installed and the team are currently migrating some aspects of the old storage to the new device, whilst other aspects such as network shares are migrated to Box cloud document storage, and key virtual servers are moved to a hosted datacentre. This new on-premise storage is significantly smaller than our legacy appliance as we reduce the reliance on the council office and move the bulk of our storage requirements and server infrastructure to the cloud.

2.7   A cloud backup solution has been implemented to replace the backup tapes which are old technology and not reliable. The new solution has been in place since December and is much more efficient. Old tape drives and tapes can now be decommissioned.

2.8   We have partnered with Proact to provide a hybrid cloud server solution to host the virtual server network, and several key servers, including 9 servers to run the new Uniform platform, are now running in the cloud environment. This new cloud facility is operated on solid state / flash storage which improves the speed and performance of these servers. We are working with Proact to provide a comprehensive but pragmatic disaster recovery system for our core platforms.

2.9   A PC upgrade/replacement project is underway to replace Windows7 with Windows10. Windows7 will reach end of support 14/1/20.   At the same time, we will also roll out Office 2016. Windows 10 is a brand new operating system with all the latest features from Microsoft. Users will notice a big improvement in speed and performance when going about their daily work.

2.10   In March we are carrying out all staff training on Cyber Security provided by the Police and Crime Cyber Unit. The introduction of a virus, malware attacks and data encryption/ransom are significant risks to the corporate network, so it is imperative that staff are given the knowledge they require to reduce the risk. After initial staff training, we will be implementing a platform which will continue to focus all staff on cyber security awareness. Executives on CMT will be exposed to additional training to raise awareness from the top down. A small investment for a large reduction in risk. In conjunction with penetration testing (for PSN compliance), robust server patching regime, regular firewall appliance upgrades and maintenance and continued spreading of our risk across multiple secure cloud services, we are well ahead in preventing a cyber-attack. We have also deployed Cylance, an advanced AI based threat detection system to replace our old anti-virus software. Using our identity management platform, Okta, staff have very simple remote access to many of our systems, security being reinforced by advanced two factor authentication (2fa) systems.

2.11   Uniform migration has been ongoing for several months. This affects Environmental Health, Licensing, Development Control, Land Charges, Trees, Enforcement, Private Sector Housing and Building Control. This is one of the biggest data migrations that Surrey Heath have undertaken.

2.12   Working with each of the service areas, we have now completed the training along with data mapping, configuration and test data migration. Go live is planned for early September 2019. This system has mobile apps to enable a more agile workforce, and improved self-service functionality for the public.

2.13   We are investigating infrastructure technology which will stream applications or Windows desktop environments to web browsers. Known as 'application virtualisation' this will represent a key investment for the authority and will provide a huge step forward in reducing the reliance we have on Surrey Heath House. Using this infrastructure, we can provide staff with remote access to legacy style applications via a web browser on any device from anywhere. These legacy style applications include Civica Financials, iWorld revs and bens, Uniform etc. We will also be able to supply a full Windows desktop environment to users that require it directly inside web browsers.

2.14   Further business areas have been provided with training and access to Box, our cloud content and collaboration platform with over 230 staff now using the system. Deployment of Box has been concurrent with decommissioning of the old OnBase document management system. OnBase content has been moved to Box and planning content has been migrated to the new Uniform document system. In conjunction with moving content we have re-engineered and outsourced some of the more complex workflow that OnBase used to handle. For example, bulk printing of council tax letters is now outsourced to a specialised firm AMM Printing. We have developed custom software to send the data files to AMM and the finished PDF letters are deposited directly back into our Box platform by AMM.

2.15   Our new service desk cloud platform is called Freshservice. This went live in March 2018. All staff have access to Freshservice to log support tickets from anywhere they have access to a web browser. ICT have handled over 5000 tickets on this platform, over double those handled on the old system in a similar timeframe. Freshservice means staff at remote locations (like Family Support team at Runnymede) and staff working at home have access to ICT support.

2.16   Core GIS infrastructure has been migrated from Amazon Web Services to the Proact Hybrid Cloud environment. Cadcorp GeognoSIS server and its associated web mapping product are now providing enhanced capability to the organisation. This will replace the old iShareGIS system this year and indeed some staff are already using the new system. The web mapping application is accessible from anywhere and some staff are using the mobile version on their phones whilst out on site. The new GIS infrastructure is providing mapping services to the new Uniform system. This year we will be implementing FME Server in our hybrid cloud environment. FME is an ETL tool (extract, transform, load) and we use it for a miriad of tasks from processing e-form data from our website and creating Lagan cases, to producing the mapping data for planning committees, monitoring car parking space availability and creating / publishing lists of vacant commercial premises for public consumption. Installation of the server version of this software will provide us with more robust services for data processing and publication.

2.17   The Adelante payments system has been migrated from on-premise to the cloud and we have developed custom software and processed in-house to process and move cash data files around and deliver to the payments system overnight.

2.18   We are refreshing a number of our Canon MFD's and upgrading our Uniflow software which will ensure we remain on a supported version. As part of the upgrade we are looking to integrate scanning directly to Box and printing directly from Chromebooks.

2.19   Due to the volume and pace of change of technology at Surrey Heath we have instigated a newsletter to upgrade our communications to staff. Using this we will try to keep staff abreast of not only what will be happening but why it's happening and how it aligns with our technology again.

Communications and Marketing

2.20 The Marketing and Communications team is responsible for all media and communication content across multiple customer facing channels. The objective is to improve and maintain the brand, image and reputation of the Council, communicate with residents, visitors and businesses and deliver sales and marketing for all revenue generating services provided by the Council and Camberley Theatre.

2.21 Following a restructure in 2018 to re-focus services and deliver projects as efficiently as possible the team is led by a Marketing Manager and has 6.2 permanent FTE staff. New recruits are bringing a broader, more diverse range of skills to the team; administration staff will also be shared across other teams in Corporate during peak times, reducing additional costs and allowing trained staff to work more flexibly.

2.22 2018 Campaigns: To promote revenue generating services, provide information, improve the safety, health and wellbeing of residents and engage with residents the following campaigns and initiatives have been delivered over the past year;

- #TalkSurreyHeath - Any Questions?
- #Surrey Heath Steps Challenge
- #Half Term Activities in Surrey Heath
- #ParkSmart Campaign
- #GoTri and Sprint Triathlon at the Arena
- #Tikspac network launch and the #BeLikeKeith campaign
- Local Plan Consultation
- New Museum and Gallery opening
- Tennis in The Park launch
- Social Prescribing, Community Alarms, Community Transport, Meals at Home
- Frimley Lodge Park Green Flag, Walks for Health
- Community Fund Grant Awards
- Surrey Heath Sports Awards
- #OurDay;
- Apprentice Awards
- Off The Grid launch in The Square
- #12TreesofChristmas anti dog fouling campaign
- Frimley Lodge Park playground consultation.

2.23 Social Media: A hugely effective channel to develop SHBC brand, inform residents and manage reputation. Social media is increasingly the human face and voice of the Council as well as an increasingly popular channel for customer service. The team monitor feedback and reactions of residents on our channels as well as groups across the Borough (often out of hours) so any issues can be more immediately managed and dealt with. A good example of the impact and opportunity of social media was a post on the Frimley Lodge Park Facebook page about four designs for a new play area. The post reached more than 30,000 people and was converted into hundreds of votes, ensuring the final scheme is supported by residents.

2.24 Media Relations: SHBC has issued 93 press releases in the last year, averaging 8 each month. In addition the team managed (on average) 8 media enquiries per month, from print and online news outlets, TV, radio and trade publications.

2.25 Camberley Town Centre: To showcase Camberley to commercial and local audiences to attract and retain current businesses and customers. We continue to

share regeneration milestones and promote retail and leisure activities to drive footfall and increase dwell time. Highlights include;

- Award submissions' including shortlisting for REVO Regenerate Gold Award
- Reducing potential costs by £21K by creating artwork and films in-house and negotiating with local suppliers where needed
- Developing key relationships to enable more town centre collaborative working e.g; Be Enchanted campaign.
- Coverage achieved in The Economist, The Times, The Guardian, BBC News, The Sun, The Mirror and The Daily Mail as well as property trade press and regular coverage in local newspapers and on radio

2.26 Heathscene**:** Distributed three times a year across the Borough. It continues to be an excellent way to reach those in the community who are not online and has been improved with a more consistent editorial voice, more case studies, more up to date content and now strongly compliments digital and print campaigns; such as Be Enchanted and Summer in Camberley.

2.27 The rising costs of print and distribution in 18/19 have been offset by offering partners special rates for consistently advertising which has increase advertising income. HeathScene costs a total 20p per copy to produce and despatch. Some results to highlight;

- Council tax campaign adverts to encourage channel shift to e-billing and direct debit (DD) payments. Almost 50% increase in DD sign ups the week following Heathscene distribution in Nov 2018, providing savings to SHBC.
- A series of articles about the refreshed Community Services offer has raised profile with spikes in web visits and registrations for various income generating services eg Meals at Home (24% increase), Community Transport (50% increase), GPS, Community Alarms.

2.28 Website: Following the team restructure more robust processes are now in place to mitigate risk from out of date account permissions and spam account creation saving on average two full days of officer time per month. In addition to a 4% increase in traffic year on year (to more than 377,000 unique visits) Business Directory listings are now being billed, an income that will increase over time.

2.29 Business Breakfast: The Business Breakfast continues to attract businesses from across the Borough. Once again, two Business Breakfasts took place in 2018, seeing a 12% increase in business attendance with £3150 generated from exhibitors.

2.30 The Business Awards continue to be successful. 2018 saw a 16% increase in applications for Awards and the introduction of The Business Star of the Year Award – which was decided by more than 700 public votes.

Contact Centre and Post Room services

2.31 The Contact Centre and Post Room remain the first points of contact for all Surrey Heath residents, businesses and visitors. It shares its location on the ground floor of Surrey Heath House with the Job Centre Plus, to provide more joined up and cost effective public services.

2.32   Currently the Contact Centre is staffed by a Customer Relations Manager, a Team Leader and 8.4 FTE customer service advisors, a mixture of permanent and fixed term staff.

2.33   In 2017/18 the Contact Centre handled an average of 4200 telephone enquiries and 190 face to face interviews each month. Additionally over 700 emails were answered and 370 web enquires were handled monthly.

2.34   Of all the enquiries handled, 85% were dealt with at the first point of contact. This means that the customer is not referred on to other departments across the Council, enabling staff in the service areas to concentrate on more detailed/complex areas of their business and providing a quick and efficient service to our customers. 100% of customers rated the service they received from the Contact Centre as being either good or excellent.

2.35   Since the last report to this committee, the Contact Centre has continued to extend the scope and level of complexity of work that it delivers. Administrative support is now offered to services including Noise Pollution, Corporate Enforcement, Trees and Building Control.

2.36   Following a Wider Management Team meeting when the work of the Contact Centre was highlighted, additional areas of work are now undertaken including some personal checks on behalf of Transformation and scanning of consultation documents on behalf of Planning Policy. This workload and approach is a foundation for a greater administrative support to services going forward.

2.37   The most notable enhancement to the Contact Centre is that Customer Service Advisors now manage the Housing Duty Desk following new homelessness legislation introduced in April 2018. For the service area the changes were significant, impacting greatly on staff resource. As the Contact Centre already handled Housing telephone calls this was the perfect opportunity for the Contact Centre to further assist the Housing service to incorporate the Housing Face to Face Duty Desk.

2.38   The Contact Centre now manage Housing Applications, undertake document checks, scanning and makes appointments for Homelessness cases. Feedback from the service area has been very positive and has been of great assistance to them. Between April and December 2018 there were 1634 customers seen at the Housing Duty Desk.

2.39   A trial has been underway within the Contact Centre to improve the way Councillor email enquiries are managed. Historically Councillors may have emailed officers directly with enquiries which, on occasions, could be subject to delays in response if officers were not immediately available. Such enquiries are now managed through the Contact Centre. Identification of duplicate enquiries and early resolutions are frequently achieved at this first point of entry. This speeds the response to the Councillor and saves officer time in the service areas. Where an enquiry has to be sent through to a specific officer, the enquiry is tracked and monitored for adherence to service standards and reported on accordingly. It is proposed to extend the trial to more Members with the anticipation of rolling it out to all Councillors from May 2019.

2.40   A new telephony system, '8 x 8' was introduced to the Contact Centre in February 2019. The functionality is similar to the previous telephony system with the potential to extend the flexibility of the options available to customer service advisors and

improved statistical reporting. It will also support the planned roll out of new '8x8' telephony across the Council during 2019.

2.41   The Post Room is staffed by a part time Team Leader and 3 FTE post room assistants.

- A total of 115,151 letters were sent during 2018 at a cost of £51,410
- 5297 cheques processed to a value of £1,872,826.
- 3035 transactions took place via the Kiosk amounting to £412,877
- The Post Room also prepare and scan all Revenues and Benefits post, a total of 71,822 documents.

2.42   The Post Room team have been keen to expand the variety of work undertaken and now scan items for Housing. A key benefit being that original documents are scanned at point of entry to the Council and returned to the customer without ever leaving the Post Room.

2.43   They also manage the Revenues and Benefits e-mails from the generic in-box, responding to emails where possible or re-indexing for the service area team. AN average of 650 e-mails are handles each month.

Annexes:	Annex A: ICT Glossary & Newsletter
Background Papers:	None
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