

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 25 April 2017

Subject: Technology and Support Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Lion

Recommending:

That the report of the Technology and Support Services Portfolio Holder be noted.

Facilities

Three major facility contracts have recently been let, these cover for EFDC portfolio buildings the monitoring and maintenance of water services quality; passenger and goods lift maintenance and servicing; and the maintenance of heating and hot water installations at Sheltered Housing facilities.

We have been organising asbestos re-surveys for various properties, management records and register of information correlate and are up-to-date.

Security, Health and Safety works have been completed at Townmead depot, including the removal of some asbestos and the infilling of vulnerable window openings with brickwork.

Oakwood Hill depot Health and Safety works have been completed including demarcation line marking, the provision of speed control humps and additional warning signage.

Prior to the signing of the new Leisure Management Contract with Places for People, patch work repairs were carried out to the car park at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool and roofing maintenance works at Loughton Leisure Centre.

Technology

The rollout of Multi-Function Devices (MFD) to remote sites is now complete, this includes the office at The Broadway in Loughton. Usage of the MFDs to date is in line with expectations of 4.5 million printed sides and 10% colour usage. Regular monitoring and reporting of usage will commence shortly to identify and report any unexpected peaks in printing levels for action by directorates.

ICT have progressed the implementation of the new corporate Programme and Performance Management System as part of Transformation project. The prototype is now complete for a planned 'go live' in April. Once trials have proved successful, it is now proposed to roll this system out to include Internal Audit and Corporate Risks.

The prototype corporate Customer Relationship Management system developed for Customer Services is now largely complete and gives a basic recording of general enquiries, such as a number of recycling sacks issued. This information will give a better measure to the types of transactions that are taken and the trial stage will commence in Mid-April with Reception.

Information@Work (I@W), the Corporate Document Management System was successfully upgraded by ICT staff over the weekend of the 1 and 2 April. This essential work was done out of hours to minimise the disruption to staff and services.

Changes to our voice telephony services using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) project was successfully implemented with minimal disruption to residents and staff. The Council will benefit from this project financially, operationally and from a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery perspective. ICT is in the process of cancelling the legacy telephony provision, so that financial savings can be realised.

The Council has been engaged in a license review commissioned by Microsoft. The audit has concluded with Microsoft satisfied the Councils current licensing position.

A disaster recovery audit has taken place and ICT has fully co-operated with this assurance review attaining an overall assurance assessment of substantial.

The Geographical Information System (GIS) team who manage the mapping tools used for the Gazetteer, have now completed the Councils migration from MapInfo to the ESRI ArcGIS Platform. MapInfo and ArcGIS are GIS software solutions for editing, viewing, printing and sharing maps and from the 1 April all the Councils map editors have been using the ESRI ArcGIS solution for viewing, editing and sharing mapping data. The GIS team will now be concentrating on migration of any remaining back office systems and the creation of a user group to steer future developments of this solution.

The GIS team has now made a number of flights using the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) for Planning Enforcement, Housing and most recently a fly over of the development site at Langston Road for Public Relations. Further flights are taking place on a weekly basis as flight plans are completed.

Superfast Broadband High Speed Internet

Smart Places

Essex County Council (ECC) recently held a Smart Essex event at the BT Tower in Central London to launch their work on smart initiatives for Essex. Having engaged with ECC at an early stage on this Council's own smart place work, Members and Officers were invited to attend this event and present to the audience on one of the workshop topic areas.

Since that event, the Economic Development Team have delivered a very well received Smart Places Seminar at Epping Forest College, which drew together not just key Council Officers and Members but also representatives from ECC, Broxbourne and Harlow Councils, the West Essex Clinical Commission Group (CCG) and Princess Alexandra Hospital as well as a number of local private sector partners. The event was well attended and saw presentations from Virgin Media, Easel TV and ECC that explored the real opportunities for collaborative applications, initiatives and ongoing partnership working that are being opened up by this district's commitment to delivering greater levels of superfast broadband infrastructure. A commitment to reconvene the gathered partners in the near future to continue this work as a digital taskforce was made at the meeting and the Economic Development Team will be looking to explore a number of digital/smart place strands of work coming out of the seminar.

Broadband Rollout

The ongoing networks build of ultrafast rural broadband remains on track to complete before the end of the calendar year although the last two cabinet areas in Hastingwood/North

Weald and Ongar remain in the planning stage and the exact start dates for these areas cannot yet be confirmed.

The Council is exploring, with Superfast Essex, the potential for further funding to be made available, to be matched by Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), to be used to progressively fill in the areas of non-coverage and take our level of superfast broadband coverage closer to 100%. As reported to Cabinet on 9 March 2017 a letter of intent has been submitted to Superfast Essex and BDUK indicating that the Council will provisionally allocate an amount of up to £350,000 as a potential local contribution to a further rollout programme, with the exact amount to be confirmed once bids for the procurement have been received and the size and scope of the local investment can be more clearly defined.