

**Not for publication**

**ICT and Digital Improvement Programme Update**

<b>Meeting:</b>	Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum
<b>Date:</b>	30 June, 2022
<b>Cabinet portfolio:</b>	Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and Customers
<b>Directorate:</b>	Service Director, Digital, HR and Customer Services Head of Digital and Technology

**1.0 Reason for inclusion on the work programme**

- 1.1 The purpose of reviewing the topic is to receive an update on the progress made towards the delivery of the ICT Improvement Programme. The last update was brought to the Overview and Performance and Scrutiny Forum on 21 January 2021.
- 1.2 The objectives of the review are to:
  - To understand the current position of the project against the outcomes for the programme.
  - To be provided with the benefits tracker for the project.
  - To review the progress of expected and delivered savings within the programme.
  - To have an update on the impact of the response to the Coronavirus pandemic on the ICT implementation strategy timings.
  - To review the progress of uptake of online services to make savings and the efforts being made to encourage uptake.

**2.0 Summary**

- 2.1 Elected members approved the implementation of the ICT Improvement Programme in 2018. The programme aims to improve the technology that the Council uses to deliver its services and to subsequently redesign services, driving out efficiencies and strengthening resilience.

- 2.2 Good progress is being made to deliver the 4 key workstreams which were set out in the ICT Programme.
- 2.3 As the programme has been delivered during the Coronavirus Pandemic, we have also incorporated the delivery of Covid Business Grants and Energy Rebates into the scope of the programme delivery plan. In addition, we have included the development of a staff caution list within its scope, providing employees with greater visibility of the risks which may be faced when in the community
- 2.4 Implementation of projects have been managed in an agile way and the original planned timetables of activities have been adapted and re-prioritised, so that customer and employee benefits could be maximised during the pandemic.
- 2.5 The ICT Programme remains within budget and is achieving savings which are £85,000 ahead of target at the end of the 2021/2022 financial year.
- 2.6 The programme is now in its final year of delivery and is progressing well. Channel Shift from face to face and telephony channels to digital channels is being achieved, and usage of the Council's digital portal 'My Chesterfield' continues to increase. We continue to deliver generic marketing activity to encourage more customers to use digital access channels and during 2022 will move to targeted marketing activity, with the intention of driving digital take up within specific functions.

### **3.0 Report details**

- 3.1 The ICT Programme is made up of four workstreams which are:
  - a. People – focusing on insourcing ICT, increasing ICT skills and knowledge, creating a digital change team and redesigning sections of the organisation to deliver savings achieved through channel shift, automation, and new ways of working.
  - b. Digital – focusing on implementing the Salesforce Platform, implementing the 'My Chesterfield' digital portal, implementing e billing within Revenues and Benefits services and consolidating more of our services into the Customer Services function.
  - c. Applications – focusing on reviewing, replacing, or upgrading our ICT applications and implementing a systems integrations tool; and
  - d. Enabling technology – focusing on replacing ageing and unsupported ICT infrastructure, increasing ICT security, migrating ICT infrastructure to the

cloud, implementing Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Teams, implementing a single-sign-on solution and replacing our telephony infrastructure.

### **Current position**

- 3.2 Good progress has been made in delivering the ICT Improvement Programme in what have been very challenging circumstances during the Coronavirus Pandemic.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 of this report provides details of the individual projects which were incorporated into the programme at its outset and the progress that has been made to deliver them. In total 64 projects were targeted for delivery. A further three projects (Covid Business Grants, Energy Rebates and Staff Caution List) have been added to the programme scope. The colour of the bubble defines the status of the project.
- a. Blue – the project has been completed (46 projects)
  - b. Green – the project is in delivery, but is not yet complete (14 projects)
  - c. Amber – the project is planned and resourced to be delivered later this year (6 projects) and
  - d. Red – the project is still to be scheduled for delivery (1 project)

### **Balanced Scorecard**

- 3.4 Appendix 2 of this report details the progress which has been made to deliver the balanced scorecard for the ICT Improvement Programme.

### **Progress of Expected and Delivered Savings**

- 3.5 Table 1 below details the savings which have been achieved through the ICT Improvement Programme.

Table 1

	2019/20 £	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	2022/23 £
Target	227,000	231,537	592,423	825,023
Actual achieved	207,483	218,290	675,252	
(Above)/Below target	19,517	13,247	(82,829)	

- 3.6 The programme has achieved £82k above the forecast savings target to date. Savings are on track for ongoing delivery.
- 3.7 Appendix 3 of this report provides further information on the breakdown of savings and where they will be realised.

### **Update on the impact of response to the Coronavirus pandemic**

- 3.8 The ICT Improvement programme was implemented in 2018 and the ICT Service was insourced prior to the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic. Our recent sector led Peer Challenge team indicated that the decision to undertake this programme of work was farsighted and allowed Chesterfield Borough Council to respond swiftly and successfully to the pandemic.
- 3.9 Several projects were accelerated from their original timetable so that employees could continue to deliver services in a safe way. This included replacement of telephony, implementing Microsoft 365 and teams, implementing online democratic meetings and providing ICT hardware to the majority of the workforce.
- 3.10 In addition, customer welfare projects were accelerated. Covid Business Grants were incorporated into the programme, alongside the new energy rebate grant. This was successful and enabled the Council to pay over £50m in business grants and £5.6m in energy rebates to date.
- 3.11 All ICT Improvement projects were implemented in a collaborative way with service areas. However, the delivery of so many projects during the pandemic has meant that sometimes projects were implemented without having the full technology support in place to ensure that efficiencies were maximised. For example, training had to be delivered virtually, project scoping meetings were delivered whilst balancing Business as Usual delivery and customer engagement was limited to virtual 'show and tell' developments. This extended delivery dates for some projects, and in some instances, this has meant that further work has been required with services once projects have been launched to ensure that efficiencies were realised. The programme has successfully balanced project quality with speed of delivery to ensure that our residents, businesses and employees benefited from the technology improvements that were implemented.

### **Progress of uptake on online services**

- 3.12 Appendix 4 of this report provides a breakdown of the progress being made to increase online services.
- 3.13 There is a detailed marketing plan encouraging the use of the 'My Chesterfield' digital portal and this has been successful. In 2022, greater focus will be given to targeted marketing in specific functions.

## **4.0 Potential barriers**

- 4.1** Undergoing digital transformation is intensive, especially in the service areas being transformed. It has proven difficult in some service areas to balance the day-to-day business as usual activities alongside the demands of the Improvement Programme.
- 4.2 Recruitment of officers with the right skills to deliver the transformation has been challenging, both from a pay perspective and from an availability perspective. Our original recruitment approach bore dividends and we recruited a strong team, but turnover is now increasing, and we are losing skilled resources to the private sector, who are attracting our employees through higher salaries and remote working.
- 4.3** Internal training is underway within ICT, but this has been challenging to deliver alongside delivery of such high volumes of change activity. To ensure staff morale and to continue development of the team, regular Salesforce training sessions have been completed. Further skills training is planned for 2022.

## **5.0 Future plans and areas for further scrutiny involvement**

- 5.1 The remaining projects within the ICT Improvement Programme have been incorporated into the Council's Organisational Development Programme. This will ensure that resources are well understood in comparison to the whole organisational change activity which is underway.
- 5.2 Further work is required around retention and reward within ICT services. The service area is currently considering the implementation of career grade roles to ensure progression.

- 5.3 More work will be undertaken on customer engagement and take up of online services, following completion of the reshape of Customer Services.
- 5.4 During 2022, work will be undertaken to scope and draft the ICT Strategy for 2023 – 2027.
- 5.5 The programme team would welcome scrutiny members having oversight of the continued progress which is being made.

## **6.0 Implications for consideration**

- 6.1 The ICT Improvement Programme supports delivery of the 'Value for Money' priority of the Council Plan.
- 6.2 Savings have been realised through reductions in staff and through lower costs of goods and services. 15.85 FTE have left the organisation, enabled by ICT Improvement Programme activities. This reduction in headcount has been achieved through voluntary redundancy, voluntary early retirement and natural wastage.

## **Document information**

<b>Report author</b>
<i>Rachel O'Neil – Service Director – Digital, HR and Customer Services</i>
<b>Background documents</b>
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.
<b>Appendices to the report</b>
Appendix 1      Programme Summary
Appendix 2      Balanced Scorecard
Appendix 3      ICT Savings
Appendix 4      Channel Shift