West Northamptonshire Council

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Modernising Systems Spotlight Review

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Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to present this report which details the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group from its Spotlight Review into Modernising Systems.

The Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, comprising myself, as Chair of the Task and Finish Group, together with all Councillors of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee was set up.

The purpose of this Scrutiny review was to provide scrutiny input into modernising systems. The key lines of enquiry were:

- To identify what good systems look like before any potential investments can be made.
- To consider both the capital and revenue expenditure for modernising systems
- To examine how transformation from services is joined up.
- To understand how the financial consequence for not modernising systems.
- To recognise the benefits associated with the impact of modernising systems - for example, freeing up staff time and there no longer being the need to chase up data if automated.

The Review was a focussed piece of work that linked to the Council's corporate priorities and examined a range of information over just three meetings. The Review took place between September 2022 and March 2023. It was a very interesting and informative Review; with clear evidence received that led to our conclusions and recommendations.

I thank the Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services and Officers for providing information to inform this Review.

Councillor Danielle Stone

Chair, Task and Finish Group – Modernising Systems

Acknowledgements to all those who took part in the Review: -

- Councillors Ian McCord, Andrew Grant, Sally Beardsworth, Paul Clark, Maggie Clubley, Rupert Frost, Keith Holland-Delamere, Mark Hughes, David James, Koullla Jolley, Colin Morgan, Ken Pritchard, Mohammed Aziz Rahman and Richard Solesbury-Timms who sat with me on this Review

- Councillor Mike Hallam, Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services, Sarah Reed, Executive Director – Corporate and Chris Wales, Chief Information Officer for providing data and materials to inform this Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1   Purpose

The purpose of the Spotlight Review was to provide scrutiny input into modernising systems.

The key lines of enquiry were:

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- To consider both the capital and revenue expenditure required for modernising systems.
- To examine how transformation from services is joined up.
- To understand the financial consequences of not modernising systems.
- To recognise the benefits realised by modernising systems - for example, freeing up staff time and there no longer being the need to chase up data if automated.

2   Context and Background

2.1   Following approval of its work programme, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Task and Finish Group to undertake a spotlight review – Modernising Systems. A Review commenced in September 2022 and concluded early in March 2023.

2.2   A Task and Finish Group was established comprising the whole Committee with Councillor Stone as the Chair.

Corporate Priorities

2.3   This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, in particular - Robust resource management but also it is acknowledged that systems underpin all of the council's key activities and priorities as an enabling function.

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

A significant amount of evidence was heard, details of which are contained in the report. After gathering evidence, the Task and Finish Group established that: -

After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:

Transformational Change

4.1   Although good progress has been made to date on bringing together the new Council and stabilising service delivery, the Task and Finish Group now feel that that the pace of transformational change should be augmented from a systems integration perspective. It is essential to review the Councils existing core

processes to maximise the potential of new systems and standardised core processes.

4.1   The Task and Finish Group acknowledges that there is a need to know and set out what good looks like before any potential investments can be made, along with the knowledge of what is both capital and revenue expenditure consequences. This includes consideration at a whole council level, taking into account the wider West Northants operating environment (e.g., work with health and the ICS) as well as what good looks like for all of our core services of People, Place and Corporate.

4.2   Consideration also needs to be given to how the council will enact the change as "one council" since the strategic drive for transformation is no longer fully governed centrally, and there is a need to know how transformation from services are joined up. It is acknowledged that transformation for modernising systems will be expensive and a phased approach will be needed.

4.3   There is a need for WNC to be an intelligent client when purchasing software from suppliers and their maximised implementation. There should be an industry standard software and internal business intelligence within the service area so that WNC becomes the intelligent customer. There is a need to recognise new development and there is a central architecture with the ability to add on as required.

4.4   The Task and Finish Group suggests there is a need to understand that processes should be mapped and this process map can be used to guide our engagement with any potential suppliers and optimise these processes.

4.5   The Task and Finish Group recognises that the Transformation Board oversees the key projects, and each directorate provides details of their top key projects to that board and each directorate has its own transformation programmes. It was felt that communication could, however, be improved so that there is more awareness of the progress with the key projects, in order for details to be made more accessible. There is a need for a standardised approach for staff using the systems, with Council wide design principles, in order to ensure a good user expertise.   This would eliminate duplication. There should be for collaborative working across all directorates with an organisational overview of Transformation.   A Member Steering Group could be set up with the key purpose of communicating transformation progress to Members and officers.

4.6   The Task and Finish Group is concerned that there is no central oversight Team but acknowledges that the Programme Management Office provides intelligence to the service areas. There is a need for all partners to come together, including the Children's Trust when investigating new systems, to promote a holistic view

leading to a better shared intelligence approach to enable the Council to make smarter decisions and support wider partnership working.

4.7   The Task and Finish Group supports the work that is undertaken by the Business Intelligence Team but felt there is the need for a more insight and an intelligence-based approach across the council, with strong data management, to enable the Council to develop systems to support the needs of residents and ensure better outcomes.

4.8   An innovation manager has joined ICT and will be looking externally for ideas of best practice. The Task and Finish Group welcomes this role and the proposal to work more with anchor organisations.

4.9   The Task and Finish Group highlights the need for Local Authorities to be able to generate their own income streams, and therefore WNC should have a business plan in respect of upskilling the workforce and it suggests whether this expertise could be offered out to other organisations for a fee, moving forwards. This is the point that the Task and Finish Group would like the service area to aim to achieve.

4.10   Investment is a top priority, together with a developed standards framework. The Task and Finish Group agrees that it should be aimed that spend on ICT should be best in class. Better systems will save time and increase efficiency. Any income generated or saved should be reinvested in ICT.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) - ICT systems

4.12   It is acknowledged that information regarding revenue and capital expenditure needs to be provided, in particular around expenditure on modernising systems. There is a need for more investment into ICT and it should be a higher priority.

4.13   The Task and Finish Group recognises the need for decent infrastructure to be in place with the correct digital functionality.

4.14   It is acknowledged that many systems had not yet been aggregated and there is a roadmap of changes being developed and this is why the Council is operating so many systems, with the four former predecessor Councils having operated duplicate services.

Architecture of System and Information Security and Organisational Risks

4.15   The Task and Finish Group expresses its concerns regarding the delayed implementation of the new telephony system and the timeframe and pace of this project. For future projects, there is a need for a central architectural team to partner with the detailed knowledge within the service areas acknowledging it is a finite resource, and an intelligence client service will be built that can advise on suppliers for software. The Task and Finish Group is keen to grow internal

expertise, bringing in apprenticeships, train, graduate programmes for example which is part of efficiency and sustainability.

4.16 The need for further key technical skills are being realised, including systems architecture, user experience and technical business analysis. The Task and Finish Group acknowledges that work is underway to address the gap in these technical skills to create an appropriate structure to oversee the aggregation and modernisation of the Council's systems. It is realised that it can be a timely approach to onboard new recruits into West Northants council.

4.17 It is felt that there is a need for an in-house approach of growing internal expertise to be adopted, bringing in for example: apprenticeships, training, and graduate programmes, which is part of efficiency and sustainability. The Task and Finish Group agreed that there is a need for Local Authorities to be able to generate their own income streams, therefore West Northamptonshire Council should have a business plan in respect of upskilling the workforce and whether this expertise could be offered out to other organisations for a fee.

4.18 There is a need for a more insight and an intelligence-based approach to enable the Council to develop systems to support the needs of residents and ensure better outcomes. There is a need to reduce the equalities gap and really understand the user experience

RECOMMENDATIONS

The above overall findings have formed the basis for the following recommendations:

The Modernising Systems Task and Finish Group recommends that:

5.1.1 The Council needs to increase its spend on ICT and give consideration to the appropriate percentage to be put into the budget annually; the cost of which would be found from the service areas.

5.1.2 The pace of transformational change in respect of digital and core systems is increased and existing processes are reviewed to maximise the potential of new systems. Cabinet is asked to review the timeline for development with a view to increasing the pace of change.

5.1.3 A Member Steering Group is set up with the key purpose of communicating transformation progress to both Members and Officers in order for details to be made more accessible.

5.1.4 A business plan in respect of skilling the workforce is devised, and consideration is given to whether this expertise could be offered out to other organisations for a fee, in the medium to longer term, as part of a monetising strategy. .

5.1.5 The work to build resilience within the DTI service, particularly around the recent recommendations from the Audit Committee are prioritised and accelerated.

5.1.6 Cabinet is advised that more clarity is needed regarding the term architecture and timeframes.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5.1.7 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report in six months' from when Cabinet responds to the recommendations, and then as part of the Committee's agreed monitoring schedule.

West Northamptonshire Council

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of the Modernising Systems Task and Finish Group

1   Purposes and Rationale

1.1   The purpose of this Scrutiny Spotlight Review (the Review) was to provide scrutiny input into modernising systems.

The key lines of enquiry

- o   To identify what good systems look like before any potential investments can be made.
- o   To consider both the capital and revenue expenditure required for modernising systems.
- o   To examine how transformation from services is joined up.
- o   To understand the financial consequences of not modernising systems.
- o   To recognise the benefits realised by modernising systems – for example, freeing up staff time and there no longer being the need to chase up data if automated.

2   Context and Background

2.1   Following approval of its work programme, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Task and Finish Group to undertake the Review – Modernising Systems. A review commenced in September 2022 and concluded early in March 2023 over a series of three meetings.

2.2   A Task and Finish Group was established comprising the whole Committee with Councillor Stone as the Chair.

Corporate Priorities

2.3   This Review underpins all the Council's corporate priorities, in particular, it directly links to *Robust Resource Management*.

2.4   The Task and Finish Group agreed that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities:

Background data and evidence gathering – To appraise the Task and Finish Group of the elements of systems:

- ➢   System architecture

- Aggregation of systems from the four predecessor Councils: Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council and South Northants Council

- *Future Ways of Working* model

- Cyber security monitoring systems

- Resilience of the DTI services

- Transformational change

3   Methodology and Evidence Collection

3.1   For this Review, evidence was collected from the Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services and senior Officers of the Council from the Corporate Services directorate, which provide and oversee the key systems that underpin the council, led by DTI (Digital, Technology and Innovation division).

3.1.1   **Evidence**

Senior Officers of the Council provided a wealth of information to inform the evidence base of this spotlight Review.

Salient points:

'Complexity of the Landscape' - The inherited systems that underpin West Northants Council reflect different operating models. District and Borough council systems included joint arrangements with councils outside of West Northants, different platforms for service fulfilment and different levels of integration that previously connected the council's systems. In addition, West Northants Council is the lead provider of ICT and digital services to North Northamptonshire Council, Northamptonshire Children's Trust and to Northampton Partnership Homes and Northampton Leisure Trust.

'Systems Scope' - There has been a full audit of all systems that are utilised by West Northants Council and service and directorate roadmaps are being developed. In addition to this, the Council continues to be part of shared services arrangements with other councils – specifically with North Northants Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Milton Keynes council. This is governed by the Lead Authority Board. This arrangement includes payroll systems, Finance and HR systems (including ERP Gold) and other ancillary systems such as income management.

Disaggregation of services - As part of the setting up of both West and North Northamptonshire Councils there was an agreed disaggregation timetable for former county council services that were hosted by either of the two new unitaries

from Vesting Day. Each splitting service can have significant impact on underpinning systems, most notably a proposed disaggregation of DTI services themselves. Although this nominally allows each council to then shape their own services, it adds considerable cost, complexity, pressure and risk to the service.

West Northamptonshire Council's ICT systems - Across the Council there continue to be a wide range of systems and IT smaller system solutions in place. The priority roadmaps for systems transformation are under way and as contracts have come towards their end, priority integrations have taken place. Currently the Council is operating a total of approximately 800 systems, which includes various versions of systems inherited from the Council's predecessors.

Digital, Technological and Innovation (DTI) directorate Skills Analysis and the "Gartner" Model. After DTI services were aggregated into West Northants, work was done to review the skills and capability of the inherited functions. The 'Gartner' Model is an ICT industry measurement standard, reviewing the capability and the functions that a technology service will be able to perform in totality.

The Council's performance against this model was assessed by the Council's Head of Architecture, with each area of the Council's DTI service assessed in its capability and processes, and the quality of activities being undertaken and ranked against the model. This identified the need for further key technical skills, including systems architecture, user experience, cyber security and technical business analysis. Some of this is currently being addressed but more is required to support the changes required from aggregation of systems and driving greater productivity.

This also identified the importance of ensuring that the council has both a good overview of all systems and their opportunities for aggregation and reduction of duplication (**Architecture of Systems)**.

It also identified that there was always the need to ensure that sufficient effort and resources were available to ensure good Information Security across the organisation and its support for partners and shared systems.

Capital and revenue expenditure - There is a difference between capital expenditure and revenue expenditure in the context of Digital, Technological and Innovation (DTI); for example, engaging in transformation activity could be capitalised when the Council is investing in new processes, new systems, and new skills. In the long term the revenue expenditure element will increase, and the capital expenditure element will decrease as the Council shifts more emphasis towards "software-as-a-service" (SaaS) systems and services and less toward physical purchased infrastructure. There is also consideration for cloud-based services procurement and the issue of revenue requirements to pay for ongoing licensing.

The Council's Digital, Technological and Innovation Strategy - The aim is to establish West Northamptonshire Council as a leader among other Local Authorities in innovation; to harness imaginative ideas and new developments to deliver transformed public services; with a refined and redesigned offer to meet individual needs; and improve the speed and efficiency of delivery. This will involve collaborating and co-designing services, harnessing both internal expertise and partnering with communities, experts, volunteers, academics, and businesses to better use technology to improve outcomes.

"The West Way of Working" – This is a programme with elements of HR, DTI and Property.   As part of the council's approach to support all employees (Fieldworker, Fixed, Part Flexible and Flexible) and the resetting of our offices (Office Optimisation Strategy),   the Council has prioritised a hardware refresh to enable staff to work flexibly from any of the Council's office buildings and locations and from home. DTI has also focussed on resetting offices, including closing Lodge Road and migrating staff to the Abbey Centre and to other locality centres, focussing on the migration of staff, hardware and systems and the support to staff (commencing with Lodge Road) .One of the Council's key priorities from a DTI perspective is to merge the four existing networks from the legacy Councils into a single West Northamptonshire network. A capital bid is being prepared, alongside a shorter-term list of mitigations.

The Council has invested in architecture design and support to cover both people and processes, cyber security, supporting the move away from Citrix and investment in new laptops, a replacement IT help desk system, digital and televised meetings and support to the coroner's office, fibre between office locations at the Guildhall and the office at One Angel Square, along with the disconnecting of the data centre which supported the former shared service between Cherwell District Council and the legacy South Northamptonshire Council.

Current priorities for forthcoming DTI deliverables - A new system is being scoped for Northamptonshire Children's Trust, together with new systems for other services: registrars, revenues and benefits, legal and flexi routes.

Longer-term transformation roadmap for DTI - Future deliverables include rationalisation priorities, identifying efficiencies, for example automating back office processes and integrating existing systems, leading to a three year technology roadmap for each directorate and eventual target state planning, which envisions a 5-10 year horizon plan for an efficient, cost-optimised WNC technology estate.

The officer internal **Transformation Board** oversees the key projects, and each directorate provides details of their most significant projects and programmes to that Board. Each directorate also has its own transformation programmes and projects. There is a Digital, Technology and Innovation Strategy Board, that reports

into the overarching Transformation Board that guides the overarching transformation of DTI and enabling systems.

The Business Intelligence Team works across the Authority, produces quarterly performance reports and looks at the overarching business need together with local need. Local priorities can then be looked at from this overarching work. Strong foundations are part of the programme and helping ensure better outcomes are delivered across the Council.

Cyber Security monitoring systems - There is ongoing work around cyber security and progress was reviewed by a recent Internal Audit report. The new post of Head of Cyber Security has recently been recruited to and work continues reviewing internal and external control measures in response to the changing environment. There have been additional investments brought in to ensure the council is robust in its approach to managing current risks.

Resilience of the DTI Service - In bringing together the four legacy Councils, the inheritance of four sets of systems and ways of working had added additional complexity in light of the need to align and integrate core offices and systems. There is a lot of work being undertaken and progress was also recently reviewed by Internal Audit.

3.2 **Core Questions**

3.2.1   The Task and Finish Group devised a series of core questions that it put to the Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services (Copy at Appendix A) at its meeting on 2 March 2023.

3.2.2 **Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services**

The Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Services attended the meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 2 March 2023 and provided responses to the core questions. Core questions as at Appendix A.

Key points of evidence:

- There is a need to update current IT systems.
- Currently, a hardware refresh is being undertaken, which will be carried out every four years. It was noted that generally when purchasing new hardware, there are newer options available to purchase as the speed of change is very high
- It is good practice for an organisation to obtain data about its customers.
- The spend on IT has reduced to £7.6 million, due to several factors such as duplication of systems.   There were several historic income generation

targets, which were seen to be unrealistic, and these targets have been removed.

- Systems that can be integrated in line with the ongoing transformation of the Council to create smarter and more collaborative ways of working that users can access anywhere including: MS365 and the telephony system. The DTI service area is responsible for ensuring software systems are regularly updated and work is not duplicated.

- All desired IT Systems are not as yet in place as there are a number of legacy systems and associated issues to be worked through, such as storage and compatibility, hardware refresh and disaster recovery.

- Cloud First is an important Strategy for the Council moving forward; it is imperative to put this model in place and then invest. It is key that it is implemented correctly. The journey to Cloud First has not as yet been fully reviewed. Expertise is difficult to find but it is key that Cloud experts are employed, along with Cyber expertise. The Head of Cyber Security is now in post.

- The Council will be moving away from the Citrix system, but it will not be a hurried process. It is important that it is a thorough and proper process. The data for Children's Services is now on Cloud First.

- No one Local Authority is known for its best practice IT. Expertise is available in establishments such as the University of Northampton.

- It is not best practice for departments to have individual IT models. At West Northants Council it is established that IT services is the central command, which will be good practice going forward. It is the responsibility of IT services to manage the architecture of IT systems.

- Our DTI services comprise of many long serving, experienced staff but there is also the need for new and different skills within the service area. The Service area will undertake a transformational review. There is a need to ensure the service area has the right skill set.

- Additional resources and capacity are now in place for cyber security and cyber security is an important issue and all need to be conscious of this. A briefing on cyber security for all Councillors is scheduled. Similar briefings will be scheduled for all staff.

- It was acknowledged that the ensuring resilience of system and their integrity was a key priority as it is with every other council and business and that it was important to be fully aware of external threats and learning from other businesses and councils.

- The Authority has statutory data retention periods and must have a Data Retention Policy in place. When legacy data is migrated, it can be cleansed. Legacy data will only be stored if it is relevant, useful and legal.

- An effective overarching architecture road map for IT systems will be established this year and look at the next five years. Work has been done to

look at the pathways for each area of business and their integration. The fully resourced plan is not yet done and the modelling of costing per stage needs to be done but it is likely that this will vary, year to year.

- Officers in IT services are looking actively at systems to ascertain how they can prevent duplication, such as online and audio platforms that are being used, but the experience of the end user is also taken into consideration.

- A Working Group to oversee and provide input into the implementation of an effective architecture roadmap for IT systems would be useful.

4	**Conclusions and Key Findings**

After all of the evidence was collated, the following conclusions were drawn:

Transformational Change

4.1 Although good progress has been made to date on bringing together the new Council and stabilising service delivery, the Task and Finish Group now feel that that the pace of transformational change should be augmented from a systems integration perspective. It is essential to review the Councils existing core processes to maximise the potential of new systems and standardised core processes.

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4.12 Consideration also needs to be given to how the council will enact the change as "one council" since the strategic drive for transformation is no longer fully governed centrally, and there is a need to know how transformation from services are joined up. It is acknowledged that transformation for modernising systems will be expensive and a phased approach will be needed.

4.13 There is a need for WNC to be an intelligent client when purchasing software from suppliers and their maximised implementation. There should be an industry standard software and internal business intelligence within the service area so that WNC becomes the intelligent customer. There is a need to recognise new development and there is a central architecture with the ability to add on as required.

4.14 The Task and Finish Group suggests there is a need to understand that processes should be mapped and this process map can be used to guide our engagement with any potential suppliers and optimise these processes.

4.15 The Task and Finish Group recognises that the Transformation Board oversees the key projects, and each directorate provides details of their top key projects to that board and each directorate has its own transformation programmes. It was felt that communication could, however, be improved so that there is more awareness of the progress with the key projects, in order for details to be made more accessible. There is a need for a standardised approach for staff using the systems, with Council wide design principles, in order to ensure a good user expertise. This would eliminate duplication. There should be for collaborative working across all directorates with an organisational overview of Transformation. A Member Steering Group could be set up with the key purpose of communicating transformation progress to Members and officers.

4.16 The Task and Finish Group is concerned that there is no central oversight Team but acknowledges that the Programme Management Office provides intelligence to the service areas. There is a need for all partners to come together, including the Children's Trust when investigating new systems, to promote a holistic view leading to a better shared intelligence approach to enable the Council to make smarter decisions and support wider partnership working.

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4.18 An innovation manager has joined ICT and will be looking externally for ideas of best practice. The Task and Finish Group welcomes this role and the proposal to work more with anchor organisations.

4.19 The Task and Finish Group highlights the need for Local Authorities to be able to generate their own income streams, and therefore WNC should have a business plan in respect of upskilling the workforce and it suggests whether this expertise could be offered out to other organisations for a fee, moving forwards. This is the point that the Task and Finish Group would like the service area to aim to achieve.

4.20 Investment is a top priority, together with a developed standards framework. The Task and Finish Group agrees that it should be aimed that spend on ICT should be best in class. Better systems will save time and increase efficiency. Any income generated or saved should be reinvested in ICT.

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) - ICT systems

4.12   It is acknowledged that information regarding revenue and capital expenditure needs to be provided, in particular around expenditure on modernising systems. There is a need for more investment into ICT and it should be a higher priority.

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4.14   It is acknowledged that many systems had not yet been aggregated and there is a roadmap of changes being developed and this is why the Council is operating so many systems, with the four former predecessor Councils having operated duplicate services.

Architecture of System and Information Security and Organisational Risks

4.15   The Task and Finish Group expresses its concerns regarding the delayed implementation of the new telephony system and the timeframe and pace of this project. For future projects, there is a need for a central architectural team to partner with the detailed knowledge within the service areas acknowledging it is a finite resource, and an intelligence client service will be built that can advise on suppliers for software. The Task and Finish Group is keen to grow internal expertise, bringing in apprenticeships, train, graduate programmes for example which is part of efficiency and sustainability.

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4.17   It is felt that there is a need for an in-house approach of growing internal expertise to be adopted, bringing in for example: apprenticeships, training, and graduate programmes, which is part of efficiency and sustainability. The Task and Finish Group agreed that there is a need for Local Authorities to be able to generate their own income streams, therefore West Northamptonshire Council should have a business plan in respect of upskilling the workforce and whether this expertise could be offered out to other organisations for a fee.

4.18   There is a need for a more insight and an intelligence-based approach to enable the Council to develop systems to support the needs of residents and ensure better outcomes. There is a need to reduce the equalities gap and really understand the user experience

5 Recommendations

5.1   The Modernising Systems Task and Finish Group recommends that:

5 .1.1 The Council needs to increase its spend on ICT and give consideration to the appropriate percentage to be put into the budget annually; the cost of which would be found from the service areas.

5.1.2   The pace of transformational change in respect of digital and core systems is increased and existing processes are reviewed to maximise the potential of new systems. Cabinet is asked to review the timeline for development with a view to increasing the pace of change.

5.1.3   A Member Steering Group is set up with the key purpose of communicating transformation progress to both Members and Officers in order for details to be made more accessible.

5.1.4   A business plan in respect of skilling the workforce is devised, and consideration is given to whether this expertise could be offered out to other organisations for a fee, in the medium to longer term, as part of a monetising strategy. .

5.1.5   The work to build resilience within the DTI service, particularly around the recent recommendations from the Audit Committee are prioritised and accelerated.

5.1.6   Cabinet is advised that more clarity is needed regarding the term architecture and timeframes.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5.1.7   Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report in six months' from when Cabinet responds to the recommendations, and then as part of the Committee's agreed monitoring schedule.

APPENDICES

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Modernising Systems Task and Finish Group

Core Questions to the Portfolio Holder for HR and Corporate Services

The purpose of this Scrutiny Spotlight Review is to provide scrutiny input into modernising the Council's systems.

Core Questions

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Task and Finish Group:

1. When do you anticipate that we will get an effective IT system in place that is satisfactory and user-friendly for officers and residents and what are the cost implications? What are the council's priorities for the next year ahead?

2. How can systems be integrated in line with the ongoing transformation of the council to create smarter and more collaborative ways of working that users can access anywhere? Who is responsible for ensuring software systems are regularly updated and work is not duplicated?

3. In terms of IT systems, how up to date are we with our systems with hardware capability, storage, speed, security, and compatibility? Do you believe the systems in place are good enough to become a high performing council?

4. Do we anticipate migrating to a cloud model or SAAS (Software as a Service) based provider to secure data and moving from capital to a revenue expenditure model? What would the timescale be for this and are officers trained in this area?

5. What are other authorities doing with best practice IT and how are they managing the revenue for this? Will we be able to have a single user service with joined up services? For example, if a resident were to change their address this information is updated on multiple systems rather than informing each service area?

6. Why has the budget for IT been reduced this year? Would you have any recommendations about where the council needs to direct future investment and improve productivity? Should we be considering the pay scale and grading for IT staff in order to retain expertise and specialist knowledge? What are the priorities?

7. How resilient and secure do you think the IT systems are? What does our IT architecture look like and what are we doing from a security perspective to protect from any potential cyber-attack? Do we have the intelligence and skills in-house in our IT department and what training measures will be in place to ensure we can thrive?

8. With the former legacy Councils how are data sources being used and how is legacy data being securely stored and used analytically to show trends? When are we going to have a data driven organisation using tools with data warehousing with sufficient metrics for analytics?