

REPORT TO: Corporate Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 29 January 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: ICT & Support Services Service Update.

WARDS: Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To define the service delivery capability of the ICT & Support Services Divisions and specialist teams within. To update the board on three Key project areas, The Halton Cloud, The Agresso Financial Management Collaboration, and The Records Management Unit. To update the board in relation to the department's additional commercial development opportunities.
- 1.2 To summarise the presentation to be delivered to the board by the Operational Director ICT & Support Services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board supports the ongoing efforts of the department within the key project areas.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 As part of the presentation the Operational Director ICT & Support Services would like to take the opportunity to detail the makeup of the Support Services department in order to highlight the number of service delivery teams within the department and the breadth of services delivered through these teams.
- 3.2 To summarise the department has expanded its portfolio quite considerably over the last eight years from that of a single ICT Support Service focused upon the internal support of Halton based system users. Financial pressures placed upon the authority and the consolidation of services and staffing has brought with it new pressures as well as new and innovative opportunity.
- 3.3 ICT & Support Services is made up of 332 members of staff, 178 of whom are based within the 34 teams that make up the central Administrative Support Service. This service was developed and designed by the department to support the authority enabling an agile support solution that now cost effectively supports the needs of the business and its partner organisations through the efficient use generic administrative resource across the authority.
- 3.4 The Customer Services teams have now moved over to the department and 65 members of staff have now been linked to the Administrative Division. Plans are in place to link further process and efficiencies in service delivery through these teams. The wider administrative process and aspects of the front line ICT

support services for call handling and increased self-service opportunity will be reviewed in line with the new technology stack that is currently within the final implementation phase.

- 3.5 The Print Unit is now part of the Administrative Division allowing the centralisation of the service, releasing considerable savings and technology advantages, and making efficiencies as well as links to the use of MFD printing and the reduction in printed waste and the associated costs.
- 3.6 In order to support the consolidation of office space and the delivery of agile working, the delivery of the Records Management Unit has been huge success for the authority and should be recognised for the considerable efforts made in not only designing the solution but the considerable amount of work involved in reducing and organising the authority's paper mountain. As part of the presentation, the scale of the task will be discussed along with the successful development that is now in place delivering commercial opportunity as well as securing efficient services in the authority and its partners.
- 3.7 The ICT teams and the size of the department have reduced by over half over the last 10 years. Yet the efficiencies delivered through the effective use of technology and the dedication of those working within the many specialist areas have allowed the authority to change in line with its efficiency targets. The combination of innovative technology and the dedication of the staff has allowed the authority to not only offer leading edge services to its user base but expand upon these platforms, enabling innovative service solutions into its internal customer base as the authority consolidates and requires a greater reliance upon technology to operate. The department has also taken the opportunity to offer similar innovative platforms to external organisations raising levels of income and additional opportunity for growth.
- 3.8 Such opportunity has been enabled through the delivery of three key platform projects the Halton Cloud, The Records Management Unit and the Agresso Collaboration. The presentation will cover these projects in greater detail in order to enable a greater understanding of the scale of the deliveries and the opportunities ahead. It must be noted that the commitment shown by a small number of people within the associated teams has delivered the success. The Agresso team is made up of only 5 people now delivering services into thousands of users across multiple authorities (HBC, Sefton, Mersey Travel) and schools. The Halton Cloud was delivered through a small team of 6 people initially. The Records Management Unit is a small team of just 7 people.
- 3.9 The department's commercial opportunities continue to expand through the growth and development of our Schools clients, now linked to further offerings such as GDPR support on top of the traditional Technical and Networking support. The authority has always maintained and developed a strong system development resource. This resource is responsible for the development of hundreds of internally written and supported applications removing the need for expensive and often inferior support systems. Some of note that are currently in development or recently released are the transport co-ordination and route planning systems, the new in-house Cemeteries System that has now been sold externally to a commercial operator of crematoria, hundreds of interfaces

into external partners' systems and the continued development of the Halton CRM and Web based systems - all developed in-house.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All external ICT & Support Services contractual arrangements will continue to be scrutinised by the ICT Strategy Board, Corporate Management Team, monthly meetings with the Strategic Director Resources, monthly review with Financial Services and monthly meetings with the Portfolio Member for the ICT & Support Service.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The work programme will enhance partnership and collaborative targets as well as continue to support staff in delivering the service efficiently and in modern ways.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

As above

6.3 A Healthy Halton

As above

6.4 A Safer Halton

As above

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

As above

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The key risk of the project is ensuring that there is an effective balance between supporting evolving business needs and maintaining existing working practices within all teams. By implementing the correct technology, alignment with an effective training programme and project management, project analysis and reporting linked to an agreed communications strategy, this key risk will be mitigated.

7.2 The reliance upon key members of staff continues to be a risk as teams reduce in size and the workloads increase due to the appetite for technology to support wider efficiency needs.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no specific issues arising from this report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 None for the purposes of the Act