


Agenda Item No:	8	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny	
Date:	10 February 2020	
Report Title:	Progress in Delivering the Transformation and Communication Portfolio 2019-2020	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

This report sets out the Council's progress in delivering the Transformation and Communication portfolio.

2 Key issues

Particular successes are:

- 110 press releases published between 01 May 2019 and 29 February 2020.
- Increased popularity of the Council's Social Media Channels including 701 additional followers on Facebook and 238 on Twitter since April 2019
- Providing vital communications messages on key corporate projects including
 - Local plan
 - Business Plan and Budget
 - Annual Report
 - Elections – May 2019
 - Customer Service Centres relocation – March and Wisbech
 - Growing Fenland Masterplans
 - Garden Waste Subscriptions
 - Wisbech High Street project
 - My Fenland Project
- Supporting key corporate consultations including
 - Growing Fenland projects – March, Chatteris and Whittlesey resident surveys
 - I heart Wisbech – public engagement events
 - Gambling Act Policy Consultation
 - Cumulative Impact Assessment Policy Consultation
 - Parson Drove Neighbourhood Plan
 - Council Tax Reduction Scheme
 - Local Plan – Issues and Options document – 11 October to 21 November 2019
 - Draft Business Plan & Budget – 9 January to 3 February 2020

- Increased popularity of the Council's website with in excess of 678,000 hits between 01 March 2019 and 29 February 2020, representing an increase of 11% on the previous year.
- Identification of key Council for the Future projects which will transform the Council
- Commencement of the My Fenland Programme which is one of the key Council for the Future initiatives
- Delivery of a suite of ICT projects which are seeking to modernise service delivery across the Council.

3 Key Areas of Focus for 2020

- Transforming the FDC website to improve the look, content and number of transactions available for residents.
- Implementation of the My Fenland Programme including phase 1 and 2
- Upgrade to the Corporate Contact Centre telephony software to enable emails, telephone calls and web chat to be handled by Customer Service staff seamlessly.
- Implementing Pay point to enable customers to pay Council bills by card or cash from any Pay point facility across the district.

4 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Panel considers the progress made in delivering the Transformation and Communication Portfolio during 2019 - 2020.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Steve Tierney, Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Communication
Report Originator(s) And Contact Officer (s)	Peter Catchpole - Corporate Director Anna Goodall - Head of Governance, Legal and Customer Services Stephen Beacher - Head of ICT David Wright - Policy and Communications Manager
Background Paper(s)	

Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Progress against the Transformation & Communication Portfolio

**For performance from
1st April 2019 to 29th February 2020**

Portfolio Holders



**Councillor
Ian Benney**
Portfolio Holder for
Economic Growth



**Councillor
Susan Wallwork**
Portfolio Holder for
Communities



**Councillor
Mrs Jan French**
Deputy Leader of the
Council



**Councillor
Peter Murphy**
Portfolio Holder for
Environment



**Councillor
Chris Seaton**
Portfolio Holder for
Social Mobility &
Heritage



**Councillor Steve
Tierney**
Portfolio Holder for
Transformation &
Communication

Current Progress:

Press Releases / Media

We continue to use a clear and positive approach to all media and press releases to promote the good work of the Council.

Between 1 May 2019 and 29 February 2020 we have publicised over 110 Press Releases.

All press releases are published on both the front page and news and events sections of our FDC website. They are also published on our FDC social media accounts, Facebook and Twitter. In addition, all press releases are distributed to local news outlets, including where appropriate, radio and TV outlets.

These press releases include promoting the good work the Council delivers within the community, promoting FDC and partner initiatives and programmes, and also communicating information about the Council including consultations, events or good news stories.

Key press releases included:

- Council's new customer services centres to open next month
- Growing Fenland interim report consultation
- Council awarded over £600,000 of government migration funding
- Council seeks Closure Order to combat anti-social behaviour at Wisbech property
- Council leaders welcome multi-million pound investments in Fenland
- Fenland station improvements gain momentum
- Council backs national Empty Homes Week
- Record number of volunteers celebrate at Celebration Evening
- Fenland District Council up for national LGA award
- Share your views on ambitious plan for Fenland's future

In addition to publicising messages to the community, we also proactively manage all press enquiries from the local press, newspapers, radio and tv. To assist press enquiries we also compile member quotes, statements and briefing notes.

Social Media

We promote all Council news and services on our Social Media channels, Facebook and Twitter.

They are significantly increasing in popularity, with an additional 701 followers on Facebook (to 2,879) and 238 on Twitter (to 8,492) since April 2019.

Our social media accounts are a useful platform to communicate key service information including latest news, promotions and events. We also publicise and monitor key community based information of partners and other local groups.

We promote a variety of news and are linked to the appropriate organisations that we can endorse (and who will endorse us.) A greater amount of customers contact us through these mechanisms to raise service requests – these require same day responses.

We currently add 25/30 tweets on our twitter page per week and 20/30 posts on our facebook page per week. There is a direct link on every page of our website to both our facebook and twitter accounts.

We monitor social media channels for emerging issues so we can be on the front foot and respond to inaccurate media reports.

We have also had a number of tweets recognised by Gov.uk (@GreatUKGovTweets) as some of the most engaging tweets every day based on retweets, likes and potential reach.

Communications Projects

The team supports all Council services with a wide range of internal and external communication projects. Support is tailored to the requirements of the project or service.

Some of the large projects we support will include developing communications plans, consultation and engagement plans, promotional design work (designing logo's, documents, leaflets, posters etc.) and printing materials. These projects can run over a longer period of time and will involve an extensive project plan.

Key communications projects include:

- Local Plan
- Business Plan and Budget

- Annual Report
- Elections – May 2019
- Customer Service Centres relocation – March and Wisbech
- Growing Fenland Masterplans
- Garden Waste Subscriptions
- Wisbech High Street project
- My Fenland Project

We also offer support for 'everyday' communications. These include projects that need external communications (a press release, web page and programme of social media posts), or marketing materials (design a logo, document, poster or leaflet).

These projects include:

- Community/Golden Age events
- Sports Development/Active Fenland programme
- Recycling projects/Getting it Sorted project
- Business events
- Street Pride events/celebration event
- Annual Four Seasons events
- Commercial Investment Strategy
- Hereward Community Rail Partnership Projects

Consultation

In line with our Corporate Consultation Strategy, we support teams to engage and consult with residents about Council services.

We offer advice in ensuring that all consultations are well planned and prepared

ensuring consistent communication messages.

Also, a consistent process allows the consultation to give clear results and therefore, help inform future decisions.

Teams are supported by the communications team with assistance by questionnaire development, design and printing of associated posters and surveys, and a communications plan to publicise the consultation.

Key consultations included:

- Growing Fenland projects – March, Chatteris and Whittlesey resident surveys
- I heart Wisbech – public engagement events
- Gambling Act Policy Consultation
- Cumulative Impact Assessment Policy Consultation
- Parson Drove Neighbourhood Plan
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme
- Local Plan – Issues and Options document – 11 October to 21 November 2019
- Draft Business Plan & Budget – 9 January to 3 February 2020

Policy

The Policy & Communications team continue to support the development of Corporate Policy. Over the past 12 months we have developed the Business Plan (and related consultation), Service Planning templates and the Annual Report for the organisation.

We now attend the Corporate Induction with CMT to present these important key documents and engage new starters about their role in the wider organisation.

In addition, we provide advice on corporate performance reporting and demographics to all teams across the organisation.

We also continue to lead in writing LGC and MJ award submissions and subsequent finalist presentations. We were a finalist in the MJ awards for the Controlling Migration fund last year and are a finalist in this year's LGC awards, with the winners due to be announced later this month.

Website

Current performance:

Our website continues to grow in popularity. Between 1 March 2019 and 29 February 2020 it received 678,000 hits and a total of nearly 3.2million page views. This is an increase of 11% (609,000 in 2018/19) and 10% (2.9million in 2018/19) respectively.

We continue to improve and increase our online form offer, which currently stands at 47. In 2019 nearly 9,700 forms were completed; 12% more than in 2016 and 1.5% more than 2018 (note: form statistics exclude the Garden Waste subscription form).

We continue to improve these forms to respond to customer feedback and service demand with Bulky Waste collections, Missed Bins and Street Light faults being recent areas of focus.

Future Focus:

We are currently working on a CFF project relating to the FDC website: **My Fenland Website.**

The project focusses on transforming the FDC website to improve the look, content and number of transactions available for residents. The aim is for our website to be an inviting and user friendly tool for our residents to both find Council information and self-serve.

Key tasks include:

Stage 1 (within 12 months)

- Review all web content and remove outdated documents
- Develop and launch of the new 'Cruise' website theme
- Aligned with the My Fenland project, develop a programme of transformational processes and enable residents to self-serve via the website.
- Ensure FDC adhere to the new web accessibility guidelines.
- Develop a Corporate web strategy

Stage 2

- Ongoing development of content to improve accuracy and respond to customer feedback
- Redesign the FDC intranet to improve service for internal customers
- Incorporate all other service web sites into the FDC corporate site

ICT Projects

The ICT service is continually striving to modernise our services and to enable transformation of the way our services run. The work we have carried out since April 2019 will help to deliver a standardised environment in which converged services can evolve to meet our service needs in a cost-effective and business-enabling way.

The most recent ICT projects have included;

Windows 10

The migration of all desktop operating systems from a predominantly Windows 7 environment to Windows 10 has been the main project for the past year. Unlike previous versions of Windows, Microsoft has branded this latest version as a 'service' that will receive ongoing updates. This will remove the need for any future large scale operating system migrations.

Email Migration to Microsoft 365

All corporate email has been migrated to the Microsoft cloud to deliver a more efficient and cost-effective solution. Members have recently been supported in a move to a simpler 'token-less' form of authentication. This move to the cloud will ensure the latest version of Exchange is being used and that we are taking advantage of the latest software features.

Refresh Programme

We operate a continuous programme of hardware replacement throughout the year ensuring all components remain supported and fit for purpose. This year every member of staff has received a newer PC / laptop as part of the project to introduce Windows 10. Our network fabric also needs refreshing in a similar way to any other item of hardware to ensure reliability, availability and performance. Other areas included in this programme include our physically separated environment constructed for the safe testing of new applications / patched / upgrades and also our telephony systems. The reliability of these systems is crucial to the running of the authority. As part of this project the AV equipment in the Council Chamber was also replaced during April last year.

Business Application Upgrades

All business applications are upgraded / patched on a regular basis which is

timetabled to suit the service areas, suppliers and ICT. Each year a number of major upgrades are conducted which take a significant amount of planning and resources. ICT are continually involved in the replacement of business applications to improve the efficiency of service units and provide a better service to the citizens of Fenland. There is a continual stream of requests coming into the service for which we provide guidance, technical knowledge, and project management.

Security / Compliance

Over recent years, protecting the authority against the ever-increasing threat of cyber-crime and complying with current government legislation has become a much more time-consuming task. We aim to stay one step ahead in maintaining compliance with legislative requirements and ensure new threats are proactively managed to reduce the risk of the Council's service delivery being affected.

GDPR

In our continual effort to be meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) we have this year begun back-scanning paper documents within Planning and HR to enable the disposal of paper records and enable access to the information remotely. Testing is also underway on a specially designed software package to remove redundant electronic files.

WAN Migration

All communication links between our offices / business centres / one stop shops have this year been migrated to a new supplier. This has been completed as part of the EastNet partnership with other authorities / agencies mainly within Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. This project also covered the migration of all CCTV connectivity to the new location in Peterborough.

One Stop Shops

The one stop shops in March and Wisbech were this year moved into Fenland Hall and the Boathouse respectively. This entailed changes to the physical infrastructure, security configurations and moving PCs etc. At the same time, we introduced new payment machines in all four one stop shops to meet PCI compliance. Since this time, we have introduced the facility to take payments by credit card on each of these machines.

Data Storage

Replacement storage arrays have been procured and configured to hold the increasing amount of data used by the authority. All data has been successfully

migrated and a remote replica of this data has been created on another council-owned site.

WiFi Coverage

All council offices / one stop shops / business centres / leisure centres now benefit from full WiFi coverage. This was also procured as part of our involvement with the EastNet partnership.

Agile Working

As well as replacing PCs with laptops / tablets where required as part of the Windows 10 roll-out programme, we have also upgraded our remote working solution. This will enable staff to deliver services in the field and increase accessibility of services outside of the office.

Future Projects will include;

- **Upgrading the Contact Centre Management System** to enable emails, telephone calls and web chat to be handled through one portal.
- **Migration to Office365** to ensure the latest version of Office is being used and that we are taking advantage of the latest software features.
- **Introduce Video Conferencing** to reduce the need for travelling to meetings.
- **Review Security Practices** to ensure our systems are adequate to resist most malware / cyber-attacks.
- **Network Infrastructure Replacement** to ensure hardware is supportable and compatible with other systems.
- **Introduce SIP Trunking** to replace out-going technologies and provide revenue savings.
- **Upgrade Payment Systems** to provide customers with more places to make payments and ensure compliance of systems used.
- **Upgrade Business Applications** to benefit from latest features provided and maintain security and supportability.
- **Working towards GDPR Compliance** by continuing to manage electronic data and assist in digitising paper records.
- **Further Improve the Provision of Agile Working** by embracing new technologies

and practices.

- **Ensure Compliance** through certification with PSN and PCI DSS.
- **Improve User Education** through online study material in cyber security and information management.
- **Upgrade / Replace Audio-Visual Equipment** at the Boathouse and South Fens Business Centre.
- **Further Enhance Digital Channels** allowing customers to self-serve and access services 24 x 7.

Future Corporate Focus:

Council for the Future (CFF) Projects

As part of a new project based approach, and to ensure we are improving services to our residents, a number of CFF projects have been developed.

These transformational projects fit with the Council's medium term financial plan, and where possible ideally save money or generate income.

These include:

- My Fenland Project - transforming the delivery of our services to our customers.
- My Fenland Website - transforming the FDC website
- Planning – Local Plan
- Active Fenland – Fit and Fed project
- Environmental projects – Trade Waste Income
- Environmental Enforcement – Tidy Fenland project
- Increasing recycling / reducing contamination
- Tackling Street Drinking – Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement
- CCTV – Commercialisation of service
- Private Sector Housing Enforcement
- Empty Homes – Bringing back into use
- Local Transport improvements
- Culture Strategy
- Commercial Investment Strategy opportunities

Each CFF project will involve a new way of thinking, or a new process to overcome an existing problem. Projects should ideally save money or generate income, and create

better outcomes for local people, or deliver beneficial outcomes for residents or the Council as a whole.

Projects will identify what is the problem or outcome to be achieved, a description of the change or process to deliver the outcome and a description of how success will be measured.

My Fenland Project

This is one of the key Corporate CFF projects. The project focusses on transforming the way the Council delivers aspects of our services to our customers, ensuring we are putting the customer journey first and providing the most cost effective customer experience.

Description of problem to be solved or outcome to be achieved:

The Council's dedicated Customer Service team has been in place since 2004 and has faced a lot of changes to the scope and the nature of the services it provides.

Many council teams also deal directly with customers. We need to review everything in regards to these teams.

We have started with these teams:

- Customer Services (Shops and OSS)
- Environment Support Team
- Business Premises Admin Support Team
- Admin Support Team in Engineers and Assets
- Print and Post Team

This is what we found:

- We do a lot manual processing and sometimes duplicate jobs.
- Customers don't always quickly understand what to do.
- There is limited staff cover in some teams.
- In addition to this, we could improve access to customer services.
- There are approximately 15 different IT systems in operation and we can better access how we are currently utilising technology to serve our customers better.
- Customers at our One Stop Shops are taken through a manual process in person; they are helped through an online form in person, not shown how to do it on a computer. This requires too much knowledge by Council Officers and takes too much time.
- The Business Reception staff at the Boathouse currently greet customers when they come into reception, and then direct them back outside the building and round the corner to go into the One Stop Shop. This is both counter-productive

as these staff may be able to help the customer with a simpler query, but more importantly customers don't like it.

- Our One Stop Shop staff currently have a proportion of unproductive time waiting for customers, with limited scope to undertake extra work during this time; meanwhile other 'back office' teams who also deliver direct services to the public (missed bins, trade waste, cemetery enquiries etc.) are currently carrying vacancies, experiencing capacity issues.

It is proposed that the various teams will all be consolidated into one customer team and all customer service activities will be moved (in a managed and controlled way) in to this one team to process.

Each activity will be assessed and mapped to identify how it can be streamlined, how technology can be utilised to improve the process for both staff and our customers, and to ensure the process is delivered right first time for the customer, and all avoidable steps are eliminated for the customer.

This project will provide a better outcome for our staff with improved internal processes, and by creating one customer team we are ensuring that we are putting our residents first with the best possible customer experience.

Description of the change/process/path to deliver the outcome:

A project team with staff from across the Council has been set up to develop a project plan, including how service transformation will be delivered in a managed way and who will be involved with each stage. This will explore our current processes, if they can be streamlined and how technology can be utilised to improve the process for both staff and customers.

The delivery stage of the My Fenland project has now begun with the appointment of temporary project posts, including; the Implementation Manager, Business Improvement Officers and Web Administrator.

The first key milestone for My Fenland will be as early as possible in Summer 2020 when the My Fenland Team will commence working together. Phase 1 will consolidate all the customer services teams; comprising of

- Customer Services (Customer Service Centres, CSC and Contact Centre, CC)
- Communities, Environment and Leisure Support Team
- Business Premises Admin Support Team
- Business Premises reception
- Admin Support Team in Engineers and Assets

Into one 'My Fenland' customer team and all customer service activities will be incorporated in this move. This is an important step and will help staff to identify as part of 'My Fenland' and become one cohesive customer focussed team. This move

will further build in resilience, eliminating single points of failure as well as building on the Council's 'One Team' culture.

In addition to staff management and office moves, Phase 1 will also focus on identifying and implementing the technology needed to improve the service the Council is able to provide to its customers and to make those services more efficient particularly for high demand services. They have been prioritised due to the benefits that they will bring to this transformation programme. Once implemented, each new process will release capacity.

During the summer we will introduce PayPoint / Post Office Pay facilities across the district. This will be a substantial improvement for our customers as it will significantly increase the number of venues customers will be able to pay a council bill by cash or card, as any Paypoint facility can be utilised, therefore increasing accessibility in a rural area. The implementation of Paypoint will be a major catalyst for meaningful changes as customers will no longer need to come into a Council building to pay a bill by cash or card and therefore customer footfall is anticipated to reduce further, releasing staff capacity.

Phase 2 will include the ability to adapt to changes to customer behaviours that might result from the benefits to customers of Paypoint for cash or card transactions.

We are also seeking to implement a link between the Bartec 'In Cab' software, which is in the refuse Lorries and ensures the refuse teams know which bins to collect and which households require assisted collections, and the Council website.

The potential introduction of the integration between Bartec and the website will enable customers to self-serve, via our website. We will use this initially to focus on activities like reporting a missed bin, ordering a new or replacement bin, which are high demand service requests. Again, we know that our current processes are not as efficient as they could be, being labour intensive. This introduction will ultimately reduce the number of calls to the contact centre and face-to-face visits, as customers will also be able to self-serve updates to their request, effectively managing their expectations and further freeing up existing resources.

An upgrade to our contact centre telephony software will enable us to route all customer contacts including calls, emails and web chat via one central 'My Fenland' team, better supporting customers to utilise the website as well as enabling more effective tracking and monitoring of customer transactions in a more efficient way. This will facilitate enhanced performance monitoring, in turn delivering a better experience at the point of access. The upgrade will also introduce a light touch Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) software, which will enable greater consistency, transparency and a reduction of the customer having to repeat information on multiple occasions. This will provide us with data about how and why customers contact us to help forecast future demand, project future staffing levels and manage website developments proactively.

The introduction of further links between the website and back office systems will be further considered to allow customers to self-serve in relation to services such as

licensing, building on the successful launch of this service by Private Sector Housing for the Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's).

The implementation of the above technology will result in a stepped change regarding how the majority of our customers access services as well as the response they receive, which will free up staff capacity in preparation for Phase 2 of the My Fenland Programme.

Phase 2 of the 'My Fenland' Programme will concentrate on customer interactions and activities, and all opportunities for customers to access services how, where and when they chose across different service teams, looking at opportunities for streamlining.

The programme will seek to realise the benefits of the technology implemented during phase 1 as this will undoubtedly release staff capacity as customers migrate towards the website, where appropriate.

As a result of the investment in technology and anticipated further changes in customer behaviour, we will be in a position to undertake an analysis of the assets and resources required to deliver the future functions of the service. A further review of how the OSS and CSC's are utilised will also take place to ensure opening hours reflect customer demand.

Description of how success will be identified:

There will be numerous benefits associated with the delivery of this transformation project. These include:

- Our online processes and transactions will increase and 'personal' customer contacts will decrease.
- Customer satisfaction surveys will increase with customers experiencing the right first time service and an improved customer experience
- Smarter ways of working, streamlined processes and a more consolidated customer service
- Integrating a range of services in to the integrated Customer team, as a single point of contact and delivery. Better resilience for all teams, a more joined-up approach across the organisation and therefore a more consistent and effective customer service
- Improving service, which will allow a rationalisation of 'customer facing' staff structures.
- The opportunity to explore and introduce new technology to streamline and

facilitate the customer journey (where appropriate).

Key PIs:

Key PI	Description	Baseline	Target 19/20	Cumulative Performance	Variance (RAG)
PRC5	Number of visits to our website	607,378	620,000	620,934	
CS1	Contact Centre calls answered within 20 seconds (%)		Year to date target 45%	64.74%	
CS2	Contact Centre Calls handled		Year to date target 75%	92.49%	
CS3	Customer queries resolved at the first point of contact		Year to date target 85%	95.05%	
CS4	Customers satisfied with our service		Year to date target 90%	95%	