

**COUNCIL SEMINAR
19th October, 2016**

Present:- Councillor Alam (in the Chair); Councillors Albiston, Allcock, Bird, Cutts, Khan, McNeely, Mallinder, Russell, Sheppard, John Turner, Walsh and Williams.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jepson and Simpson.

YOUR DIGITAL COUNCIL

Councillor Alam, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Budgeting, welcomed Members to the seminar and introduced the following officers who would be giving the presentation:-

Luke Sayers, Assistant Director, Information and Digital Services

Richard Copley, Head of Digital Chance, Customer, Information and Digital Services

Elenore Fisher, Customer and Cultural Services Manager

Robert Savage, Senior Project Manager, Customer, Information and Digital Services

The Council had worked hard over the last 4 years on the Digital Strategy, which was the next phase of the Corporate Plan, on how to engage users and customers.

The presentation included:-

High Level Aims of the New Digital Council Strategy

- Digital Collaboration
- Digital Customer Service
- Digital Place
- Digital Workforce

Governance

- Ensuring the Strategy's success
- Measuring outcomes
- Budgets - £7M over 3 years

Closer Working with the NHS

- The boundary between Health and Social Care was blurring
- Refocussing care around the locality and around the individual
- Several integration projects underway
 - Adopting NHS numbers as a common identifier
 - Ensuring Social Care received timely electronic Assessment, Discharge and Withdrawal Notices from acute care
 - Ensuring clinicians in unscheduled care settings could access child protection information with social care professionals notified accordingly

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Adoption of the Rotherham Health Record in Social Care
Shared WiFi

Assistive technologies

- Data sharing and population segmentation

Your Account

- Launched December, 2013
- Available services to date included Council Tax, Benefits, Business Rates, Landlords, Library, Waste
- 43,000 registered users
- 101,770 log-ins during 2016 so far

Demand

- Increase in customers usage
- If new services introduced usage would be further increased
- Desire to work with Members and customers to ascertain which services should be included

The Future

- New supplier and project methodology – AGILE
- Real time data and reporting
- Better 'look and feel'
- Distinction between a resident and business
- Roadmap for new service take on was proportionate, achievable and would meet customer need
- Digital Strategy
- Mobile rendering
- Look and feel of Your Account

Cultural Change

- Risk Based Verification
- Assisted Digital
- Tell us Once

Broadband Availability and Digital Inclusion

Aim – Leaving No-one Behind

- Access to the internet was a powerful democratising force
- Of particular benefit to 'hard to reach' groups
- Whilst online self-service would be the best option for most groups/services, there would be individuals who needed assistance in transacting with the Council online
- The Council had a role in fostering digital inclusion

Office for National Statistics

- "Have you used the internet recently (within the last 3 months)?" – published 20th May, 2016
Brighton was No. 1 in the country
Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley 126th out of 128
10% lower than the national average

3 Initiatives aimed at improving access to Connectivity in Rotherham

- Superfast South Yorkshire – underway
- WiFi in Council/community buildings – complete
- Town Centre/Social Housing WiFi – to be determined

Public WiFi

- Pedestrianised areas
- Local businesses
- Social Housing
- RMBC free public WiFi – all Council Buildings

The Role of Libraries

- Currently free access to the internet for every customer in every library
- Provision of free WiFi in every library
- Provision of an ‘assisted digital’ offer in Library and Customer Service centres so that customers who needed help applying for services were supported
- Provision of help to use computers
- Provision of assistance technology for those customers who needed to use it
- Provision of basic ICT sessions to help people improve their digital skills

Discussion ensued with the following issues raised/highlighted:-

- The full plan would be developed over the coming weeks into a Policy and Strategy. Consideration would then be given as to how it was shared with Members
- Every IT project required a sponsor, removed from IT, Officer or Members dependent upon the size of the project, for its governance and oversight who could hold it to account
- The Strategy had been compiled in a “bottom up” approach with the co-production of the Directors and Business Units
- Importance of ensuring from the outset the purpose of the Strategy and what the desired outcomes would be to enable accountability
- Information governance had been a barrier in the past. There was to be a communications and marketing campaign, led by the NHS, shortly regarding health records and the giving of consent by patients and their families
- Governance and IT issues would be resolved before the system went live

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- It was a separate registration process for landlords onto Your Account
- Your Account was advertised but it was acknowledged that were members of the public not comfortable with using IT and required help and support. Discussions were taking place on how to engage that section of the community but also adding services that were of interest to members of the public i.e. waste collection
- There was experience of moving services on line and encouraging customers to access services in a different way which had resulted in financial efficiencies
- Discussions were taking place with suppliers with regard to replacement of the Council's current digital mapping system which would be out of contract next year
- Part of the work on Your Account would ascertain why members of the public in Rotherham did not access the internet e.g. cost of broadband, did not see how the internet could benefit them
- The provision of free WiFi in the Town Centre could be via the Council leasing the exclusive right to street furniture to a telecommunications company who then provided the WiFi. The information governance issues would be part of any tendering exercise

Councillor Allam thanked Members for their attendance and Luke, Richard, Rob and Elenore for their presentation.