North Lanarkshire Council
Report

Transformation and Digitisation Committee

☐approval ☒noting   **Ref**   KH/LJ/FM   **Date**   13/11/19

DigitalNL Communications and Engagement Activity

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Executive Summary

The DigitalNL Programme was approved by committee in March 2019 followed by the Communication and Engagement Plan in May 2015. Since that time planned engagement has taken place to ensure all changes implemented deliver efficiencies and improvements from the outset.

Redesigning the council's service delivery model is imperative to achieving these goals and this report outlines the work underway to transform the service provision for customers and employees within two distinct areas.

Implementing any form of change can lead to uncertainty and doubt. To avoid this situation and ensure all stakeholders – internal and external – are informed, involved and positive about the council's digital ambitions, substantial efforts have been made to introduce and maintain communication channels that are engaging, accessible and provide direct contact with key decision makers.

Internally, this is being achieved with employees through the use of a range of channels, including Yammer, and externally open forums such as the upcoming Tenant's Conferences will provide the council with the opportunity to meet customers and share the service benefits to be gained through the use of digital options.

Overall, this report provides committee with an over-arching view of the main communication and engagement activities that have taken place - and those planned - to support the ongoing service redesign process.

It also includes an update on additional communication projects that are central to the DigitalNL programme at this time.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Transformation and Digitisation Committee:

(1) Note the contents of this report
(2) Note that the detailed Communication and Engagement Plan for 2020 to the next meeting of the committee.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority   All priorities

Ambition statement   (18) Ensure our digital transformation is responsive to all people's needs and enable access to the services they need

(23) Build a workforce for the future capable of delivering on our priorities and shared ambition

(24) Review and design services around people, communities, and shared resources

1.   Background

1.1   At its meeting of 15 May 2019, the Transformation and Digitisation Committee considered progress on the DigitalNL work package activity for the first year of the programme. In addition, it considered the progress of communication and engagement activity underway and planned to support this programme in line with Programme of Work item PO69 – Digital Stakeholder and Communication Strategy.

1.2   Members will recall that the ambition for the council is to become a leading digital authority in Scotland, and to redesign service delivery to adapt to and mitigate against the impact of rising service demand and decreasing resources. Communications and engagement with employees, customers, businesses and residents needs to sit at the heart of stakeholder engagement.

1.3   The DigitalNL Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan was approved at the Transformation and Digitisation Committee on 15 May 2019 (see appendix 1) with progress on engagement activity reported to committee in September 2019.

2.   Report

2.1.   Following on from the update provided to members of the Transformation and Digitisation Committee in September 2019, communications and engagement activity has focussed on a number of key areas as detailed below:

Service Redesign - Sprints

2.2   As members are aware a service redesign roadmap was produced as part of the DigitalNL business case. Based on the customer service benefits and efficiencies which could be gained externally and internally, the phasing for the service redesign was prioritised accordingly. The services identified for the initial test of change redesign process are Waste Solutions and the People and Organisation Development (POD) Employee Service Centre.

2.3   Each service redesign follows a staged programme of change involving three 12-week "sprints" to ensure a planned and consistent approach is adopted. Over the course of the sprints, members of the Digital NL team work with service representatives to:

➢ Review current processes
➢ Identify new ways of working

> ➢ Design and introduce technology to deliver efficiencies and improve service provision

2.4 The first 12-week sprint within Waste Solutions commenced on 30 September 2019 with the Employee Service Centre sprint commencing on 7 October.

2.5 Across both areas, an extensive array of staff engagement sessions have and will continue to take place to:

> ➢ Ensure an accurate overview of existing working practices is captured
> ➢ Gain staff support and involvement in the service transformation planned

2.6 In recognising these 2 services represent our initial test of change, the team are actively looking to identify potential improvements to the sprint process, with various points identified and implemented. A full walk through of the revised sprint process is scheduled to take place on 6 November ahead of the next set of sprints that are due to commence in January 2020.

2.7 In preparation for the work outlined, a series of engagement sessions were held with key stakeholders to drive awareness and understanding of the work planned. These included:

> ➢ Heads of Service
> ➢ Trade Unions
> ➢ HR Business Partners
> ➢ Training and Organisational Development (TOD)

2.8 To ensure all stakeholders involved in the process are aware of what is expected, an initial mobilisation meeting was held ahead of the first sprint getting underway. This event covered the approach for the sprints and an overview of the technologies that may support the change.

2.9 To date 16 staff workshops have been held across both areas and 30 sessions in total will be delivered by the end of December 2019.

2.10 To further explain the purpose of the service redesign sprints and highlight why they are necessary, a short video has been produced featuring staff discussing what is involved and benefits anticipated to be gained from engaging with this process and adopting digital ways of working. Members should note the video will be presented during this committee.

2.11 The video is available to employees via all internal communication channels. It has also formed part of the Chief Executive's recent One North Lanarkshire staff information sessions.

2.12 These half-day events have been taking place since September with a focus on ensuring staff understand the ambitions that are central to The Plan for North Lanarkshire and the associated programme of work. To date approximately 1,600 employees have attended these sessions.

Service Redesign - Revenue and Benefits Portal

2.13 Communications regarding the launch of the new Revenue and Benefits Portal have been ongoing, with the site currently expected to be available from the middle of November. In recent weeks, meetings have been held with Deaf Services Lanarkshire

and visually impaired colleagues to test and take on board suggestions regarding accessibility.

2.14   Once live, a short internal communications campaign will take place to encourage staff to register and use the Portal ahead of external promotion.

Stakeholder Engagement - Employees

2.15   Yammer continues to be an open platform for sharing information and this vehicle is being actively used to support internal communications across the organisation and share progress updates in line with the DigitalNL programme.

2.16   One of the key advantages being gained through Yammer, is the ability to provide staff with direct access to the Chief Executive and senior management team through live Q&A discussions.

2.17   To date, five online sessions have taken place to share information and address concerns. Employees can log on and join the conversation live or there is also the option to submit questions in advance.

2.18   The established team of Digital Transformers gather questions from within their service area and help staff, particularly those with limited or no access to a work PC, get involved.

2.19   In terms of current usage, 1,600 members of staff are registered with Yammer and activity on the site during October is up 30% on the previous month. Given the popularity and growing use of the platform, the council's Acceptable Use of ICT Policy and the online code of conduct has been circulated to all staff to reinforce the behaviours expected when using a work forum.

2.20   As a digital tool for communication and engagement, Yammer is providing many benefits.

2.21   To ensure the council continues to make the most of what it can provide, a questionnaire has been conducted to gain insight on how staff are using the platform and areas that can be improved to drive its effectiveness and ongoing use. Full analysis of the feedback is underway and will be shared with staff and managers in November.

2.22   To further support internal communications with staff, a new online newsletter dedicated to the DigitalNL programme is being produced.

2.23   Content will be created in collaboration with key stakeholders and will be circulated on a bi-monthly basis. Its purpose will be to regularly update staff on key areas of work and recent developments. The first edition will be shared in early December and will provide an overview of the goals achieved throughout 2019.

Stakeholder Engagement - Customers

Annual Tenants Conference

2.24   Representatives from the DigitalNL team will be attending the Annual Tenants Conference sessions that are scheduled to take place in Wishaw on 2 November and in Coatbridge on 16 November.

2.25   This will provide an opportunity to have conversations with citizens regarding the council's long-term digital ambitions and the work that is currently underway to digitisation frequently accessed services such as Waste, Council Tax and Benefits.

2.26   Along with sharing information and future plans, the sessions will provide an opportunity to gain feedback regarding digitisation and any associated concerns. This insight will help shape the style and content of communications as the service redesign progresses.

Other Communication and Engagement Developments

Website Redesign

2.27   Preparatory work for a fully redesigned North Lanarkshire Council website is underway. This will support the digitisation programme and provide customers with an easy to navigate web experience to access and manage the information that is important to them.

2.28   As part of this work, an evaluation of the council's existing website took place in September, 2019 to gain a better understanding of the usability and customer experience it provides.

2.29   To gain this insight, a series of stakeholder workshops were held with members of the Tenants Association and the Citizen's Panel. Additional feedback was also gathered via an online survey that was shared with the public using the council's social media channels and registered customer database.

2.30   Following on from this initial evaluation effort, work is underway on a new 'Tone of Voice' document that will be made available to all website contributors to ensure that the standard of content is consistent across all pages. This document is expected to be complete by early November 2019.

2.31   Heads of Service have been involved in this process to identify web content publishers within their area. The 'Tone of Voice' document and additional familiarisation training will be provided to all involved to help streamline the information that will be available and support the migration of web-based content.

Digital Transformers

2.32   The council's team of 32 Digital Transformers are instrumental to the successful cascade of information and staff engagement across all service areas during each stage of the service release plan.

2.33   To ensure everyone is fully aware of the work underway and the role that they will be expected to play, a Digital Transformer team event is planned to take place on 11 December.

2.34   During this session, various activities and interactive presentations will take place to provide an overview of the work plan, allocate responsibilities and tasks. This session will reinforce the importance of the Digital Transformer role and maintain the enthusiasm of all involved.

<u>Communications Award</u>

2.35 Communications activity to support the DigitalNL programme was shortlisted in the 'Internal Communications Campaign' category in the 2019 Chartered Institute of Public Relations annual awards, which were held in October.

2.36 This recognition is a positive accolade to the work that has been delivered during the early stages of the programme. The style and channels of communication will continue to develop and evolve to ensure the council's digital transformation journey is understood, inclusive and positively supported.

Next Steps

• Finalise the employee information pack and share with staff to raise awareness of the service sprint sessions
• Complete the 12-week sprints within Waste Solutions and the Employee Service Centre
• Develop communications to support the launch of the new Revenue and Benefits Portal
• Create new monthly DigitalNL internal e-newsletter to raise awareness of the main activities/advancements taking place within the programme
• Prepare and disseminate website redesign communication update
• Plan and run team event with Digital Transformers
• Prepare the communications and engagement plan for the first three to six months of 2020

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3. **Equality and Diversity**

3.1 **Fairer Scotland Duty**

There are no requirements for an assessment under the Fairer Scotland duty arising from this report, however, members should be assured that The Fairer Scotland assessment process will be undertaken as appropriate when designing services for customers, businesses and residents.

3.2 **Equality Impact Assessment**

Specific equality impact assessments will be undertaken by council services as appropriate when developing the phased implementation programme.

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4. **Implications**

4.1 **Financial Impact**

The year one budget for the service design and communications elements have been agreed and built into the council's overall budget monitoring processes and controls.

Further information and costings in respect of the programme will be submitted to committee as projects progress, with the full financial impact duly considered within the council's future short and longer-term financial planning assumptions.

4.2 **HR/Policy/Legislative Impact**

There will be changes to some employee roles as a result of the DigitalNL programme.

The DigitalNL team continues to collaborate with the People and Organisational Development (POD) Team regarding stakeholder engagement and consultation, as this is key to the successful implementation and delivery of the HR related aspects of this iterative transformation programme.

4.3 **Environmental Impact**

Environmental impacts will be identified as appropriate when designing services for customers, businesses and residents.

4.4 **Risk Impact**

Effective identification and management of risk is considered critical to the success of this programme. A comprehensive risk assessment and Risk and Issue Log (RAIDE) is being managed and monitored throughout the programme with high level risks and all programme level issues being reported to the SRO and Delivery Board on a monthly basis.

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5. Measures of success

5.1 Success will be evidenced through processes being efficiently and effectively designed to support new digital service delivery models and solutions which are designed to meet the needs of staff, customers, businesses and communities.

5.2 Specific measures of success will be identified and evidenced as The Plan for North Lanarkshire and all Programmes of Work (including DigitalNL) progress. However, better connected communities and businesses, improved customer experiences, and availability of multi-skilled, agile and flexible staff are key to demonstrating this programme's success

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6. Supporting documents

6.1 Appendix 1 – Communications Plan

Katina M Russell

Head of Business Solutions

Appendix 1 – Approved Communication and Engagement Plan to December 2019.

Integration/Transformation Approach: Based on phase one covering *People and Organisation Development, Waste Services and Fleet Operations and quick wins from Health & Social Care*

Consultation/Communication to support change (May-June 2019)	Design Stage (July-September 2019)	Delivery (October-December 2019)
NLC Employees - Work in collaboration with our Employee Relations/TOD team to establish consultation/communication approaches to inform and support staff through the changes. Trade Unions will be made aware of the impact on job roles and will be part of the consultation process. - Circulate Service Release Road Map of the transformation programme and timeline associated with service level changes. A Q&A to address concerns, provide points of contact and share training opportunities to gain new skills will support this. - Digital Skills Week – 'Shaping the Future' Lack of digital skills was the main concern raised in every service readiness session. A wider training needs analysis will also be developed to support ongoing learning.	- Communications and engagement centred on getting staff involved during the design stage of the service changes through workshops and online feedback sessions. Getting this right from the outset will drive engagement and desire to switch to online channels. Outputs and progress regularly shared through internal channels. - Designing and using new systems will require new skills. Internal campaign based around 'Train for Change' launched to ensure staff are ready to work in a different way. - 'What I learned' comments developed and shared via platforms such as Yammer to encourage others to find out more and take part in similar training. - Face-to-face sessions hosted by officers from Corporate Management Team to reinforce	- 'Go Live' information shared with staff. This will be in video format and feature staff across POD, H&S Care & Waste Management to summarise what has happened and share the benefits being achieved. Create positivity and enthusiasm for next stage. - Internal communication channels to share ongoing results – what is working, what we have learned and what we will do differently.

- Digital Transformer Notice and short videos shared to explain more about the role. Eleven Transformers represent the services involved in phase one and will help provide information and deliver necessary training. - Release animated videos highlighting cyber security. Learning area identified in Digital Skills Survey and will support roll out of mobile devices and manage security risks.	the importance of getting involved during this initial phase and answer/address questions and concerns. - Yammer Q&A session to reach broader staff base. Opportunity for informal discussion about the wider transformation programme along with answering questions on the current/next stage. This will encourage use of our digital communications platform. Digital Transformers will be present at key locations to encourage and help staff take part. All issues/responses will be collated and made available internally.	
Digital Transformers - Assist production of relevant internal communication from the beginning. - Organise and deliver events during Digital Skills Week. - Test team for O365 – trained to use MS products and become ambassadors for adopting the system across our service areas.	- Encourage people to get involved in the design stage and help shape the style of communications produced to ensure we share a true reflection of feedback and work going on. - Their O365 skills and awareness used to help colleagues understand the products that will improve the way we work, Teams, SharePoint, Staff Hub etc.	- As part of the delivery phase, Transformers (from each service area affected e.g. POD, Waste Management, H&S Care) will produce a round-up of the changes so far and the benefits becoming visible. Style can vary from blog post, video update, picture-led. Shared at the end of the year to celebrate the successes.

Customers		
	- Information stage for service users. What, why and when digital options are being introduced and how they can access them. Messages shared via existing external media channels. - Content will focus on the digital infrastructure being put in place across NL to allow superfast connectivity - along with the skills development support and access to devices that is available to enable digital transactions.	- 'Get online' style campaign launched to support the switch to digital services. - Share the vision of a modern NL and the work planned to achieve this ambition. - Messages shared highlighting the efficiencies/benefits being gained through digitisation and the investment being placed back in the areas that need it most

Monitoring/Evaluation

This communications plan will evolve, adapt and incorporate new methods and approaches to reach and engage our audience groups and deliver on the programme goals.

User feedback and uptake levels will be monitored via online systems and data analytics to ensure we produce communications that support everyone through our digital transformation.