North Lanarkshire Council
Report

Transformation and Digitisation Committee

☒ approval ☒ noting   **Ref** KH/LB   **Date** 26/02/20

DigitalNL Customer Services Hub

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Executive Summary

In considering DigitalNL Programme updates at their previous meetings in September and November 2019, members are aware of an early deliverable in respect of a business model for front and back office processes. This report focusses on key front office functions and processes, particularly those surrounding the initial contact between customers and the Council for general enquiries and the processing of bookings, requests and applications.

Development of a digital first Customer Services Hub model is a key deliverable of work package 8.1 – Customer Services Hub.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

(1) Note progress made to date in developing a digital first Customer Services Hub model; and;
(2) Approve the development of the next steps outlined in paragraph 2.5 of the report.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority   All priorities

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

                       (19) Improve engagement with communities and develop their
                       capacity to help themselves

                       (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

                       (25) Ensure intelligent use of data and information to fully support
                       evidence based decision making and future planning

1. Background

1.1 Members are aware from previous reports that implementing DigitalNL will significantly change operational and customer-facing infrastructure, IT services and culture.

1.2 To this end, development of a digital first Customer Services Hub model is a key deliverable of work package 8.1 – Customer Services Hub.

1.3 An update on the development of the revised business model for both front and back office functions and processes was reported to the Transformation and Digitisation Committee on 4 September and 13 November.

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2. Report

2.1 Customer Services Hub Expectations

As outlined within the DigitalNL Business Case, and subsequent progress reports thereafter, the Council and its customers, service users, residents and businesses will benefit greatly from a digital first Customer Services Hub handling all initial customer contacts, irrespective of service area. In developing Customer Services Hub proposals and recognising future business demands and needs, scope exists for payments, appointment bookings, initial enquiries and service allocations to be handled consistently through online, web chat and phone channels.

To satisfy the early deliverable in respect of work package 8.1 - Customer Services Hub – the DigitalNL Delivery Board considered current customer engagement mechanisms, common complaints/"pain points" and opportunities available through the digitisation Programme, acknowledging progress achieved to date, and endorsing further development of the following five key design principles:

- **Create a fully functioning and successful pre front door –** We use a central and secure platform to facilitate community collaboration and engagement with community forums, the council and our partner organisations.
- **Intelligent Information and an improved website for customers –** Our website contains clear, up-to-date and relevant content, which is tailored as appropriate, and facilitates self-serve transactions being available on a range of devices (mobile, tablet and laptop).
- **Customers receive a higher quality service and feel empowered to be digital -** Digital channels are improved, e.g. web forms, with community support available for those who are less digitally confident.
- **Streamline existing enquiry handling channels –** Digitisation provides opportunity to gradually replace multiple office locations with town centre digital touch points and Community Campus initiatives, where such is considered appropriate by the Council.
- **Initial customer contact layer is highly skilled with expertise from all services -** Initial customer contact is managed through a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system by staff trained to cover all council services. Staff training will include the CRM system, customer care skills and service knowledge.

2.2 How will Customers Benefit from the Customer Services Hub?

- Customers can expect a high degree of first point resolution (either digitally or via the telephone).
- Customers will have access to self-serving digital channels for the majority of service requests and queries. Digital channels will be available 24/7.

- Automatic updates and an ability to log feedback and complaints via the Hub enables customers to remain informed regarding the status of their service requests, appointments and complaints.
- Central control of the Council's Website ensures content remains accurate and relevant, enabling customers to identify services available and (as appropriate) their eligibility for such.
- A single view of the customer through the CRM system enables services to maintain an awareness of all previous interactions, and in linking with the Business Intelligence Hub, facilitates targeted signposting of services and/or routes to information.

2.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Details of customer and employee engagement undertaken in developing this revised business model are outlined in the separate DigitalNL Communications and Engagement Plan report within this agenda.

2.4 Future Scope

To finalise the key deliverable in respect of the Customer Services Hub, the following activities need to be undertaken, and assessed, to fully define its scope and capabilities

- Vision and service offering
- Shape and size
- People requirements, including criteria for roles and training needs
- Performance metrics
- Technology enablers, i.e. digital platform (CRM), new website
- Processes and business requirements for accessing services
- Assessment of requirements for implementation

2.5 Next Steps

With engagement well underway, the DigitalNL team must now focus on finalising the overall design and proposed planning/implementation of the Customer Services Hub. To enable this to remain on track, the following activities are scheduled during January to March 2020:

- Implementation planning – develop release management principles outlining how service areas could effectively transition to a digital first Customer Services Hub model;
- As appropriate and subject to further elected member consideration of the design principles, agree a service release plan for 2020/21 and beyond.
- Develop a communications strategy to support the potential transition of staff to the Hub.

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.

4.   Implications

4.1   **Financial Impact**

The year one budget 2019/20 for this work package is £161,381. All costs are contained within the overall indicative five year investment (£28.8m) and in line with the Council's Financial Governance arrangements regular monitoring, control and reporting on revenue and capital is carried out.

Further information and costings in respect of the programme will be submitted to committee as projects progress.

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 early stakeholder engagement and consultation, as these are key to the successful implementation and delivery of the HR related aspects of this iterative transformation programme. With a view to taking this forward, detailed plans are presently being drafted in respect of the initial implementation releases and early programme deliverables.

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.

5.   Measures of success

5.1   Success will be evidenced through technology being efficiently and effectively deployed to support new digital service delivery models and solutions which are designed to meet the needs of 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.

6.   Supporting documents

6.1   There are no supporting documents with this report.

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