| Report of: | Meeting | Date | Item no. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cllr Ballard, Chairman of the Digital Transformation task group and Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation | Cabinet | 14 February 2018 | 5 |

**Digital Transformation task group – final report**

1. **Purpose of report**

   **1.1** To report the work of the Digital Transformation task group to the Cabinet.

2. **Outcomes**

   **2.1** The effective implementation of the Modern.Gov committee minutes system.

   **2.2** Paperless meetings of the Council.

3. **Recommendations**

   **3.1** To note the task groups recommendations on how the Modern.Gov Committee Minutes System should be implemented, following the decision to purchase the  system in December 2017

   **3.2** The task group's recommendations for implementation are as follows:

   i. Implementation of paperless meetings should begin with one of the 14-Member committees.

   ii. The roll out should be to one committee at a time.

   iii. A programme for the roll-out of paperless meetings should be planned and delivered, with all meetings (Committee meetings, task group meetings, working group meetings and other meetings) being paperless by May 2019 at the latest.

iv.    Every councillor should be offered one-to-one or small group training at a level that is appropriate for them.

v.    The implementation of a new committee system and the move to paperless meetings should include <u>all</u> councillors unless there are specific medical conditions that prohibit that.

vi.    Regular, on-going support must be provided for councillors, perhaps to include regular iPad clinics before Full Council meetings.

vii.    Democratic Services officers will play a key role in implementation and on-going support for councillors.

viii.    All councillors should be issued with a device that is appropriate to the individual's needs – an iPad with 9.7 inch screen is a minimum requirement.

ix.    Individual devices should be easily identifiable.

x.    Devices to be used for agendas, committee papers, email, calendar, invitations, etc. – in fact, as much as possible, with appropriate guidance.

xi.    The policy for the retention of files and documents needs to recognise that councillors might need to access historical documents in meetings on occasion.

xii.    Confidential 'green paper' documents must be easy to access.

xiii.    Full consideration should be given, at a later stage in the implementation process, to the provision of data for devices.

xiv.    The wi-fi system in the council's committee rooms will need to be fit for purpose.

xv.    Charging points and chargers should be made available to Members, but not in the committee rooms.

## 4.    Background

**4.1**    A number of inefficiencies and difficulties have been encountered with the current committee minutes and agendas system. The Corporate Support team is heavily involved in the process and struggle with the high amount of administrative work generated by this process, alongside their other responsibilities. A number of technical problems have also been encountered with the current system. These include:

1) a malfunction in the mailing list, leading to committee notifications sent to persons who had not signed up for these notifications; and

2) difficulty uploading documents to the system, thought to be due in part to the way access permissions are set up.

The current process is also manual and not automated.

**4.2** The new specialist software will facilitate a change to a more streamlined agenda compilation and publication process, which will lead to time savings for officers. It will also enable the Democratic Services team to maximise the opportunity for improvement by introducing paperless working for Members, which in the long term will save on paper, printing and postage costs.

**4.3** The decision to purchase the Modern.Gov Committee Minutes System was taken in December 2017. In summary, the benefits will be threefold:

1) To make the agenda publication process more efficient and more resilient.

2) To improve the efficiency of the committee minutes and agendas process making it far less time consuming for council officers.

3) To enable paperless working to be introduced for Council meetings, saving time and money.

## 5. Key issues and conclusions

**5.1** Much of the evidence gathered by the task group came direct from the observation of meetings in other local authorities and discussions with councillors and officers who had experience of the implementation and use of an electronic committee minutes and agendas system.

**5.2** The implementation of such a system and the move to paperless meetings was seen as essential for Wyre and this was the primary focus of the task group's investigations.

**5.3** The task group concluded that the implementation of the new system should take place as soon as possible so that the benefits could be maximised. Implementation should take place on an incremental basis (probably committee by committee) and would require a comprehensive training and support system for all councillors, as reflected in the task group's recommendations.

| Financial and legal implications | |
|---|---|
| Finance | There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report which focuses solely on the implementation of a new committee minutes system, already purchased. It is acknowledged that there may be cost implications for the provision of devices and data during the roll out phase of the project, as set out in the Modern.Gov Portfolio Holder report approved in December 2017. This roll-out phase will be the subject of a further report in which the financial implications will be considered. |
| Legal | There are no legal implications arising from this report. |

## Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

| risks/implications | ✓ / x |
|---|---|
| community safety | x |
| equality and diversity | x |
| sustainability | x |
| health and safety | x |

| risks/implications | ✓ / x |
|---|---|
| asset management | x |
| climate change | x |
| data protection | x |

| report author | telephone no. | email | date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Peter Foulsham | 01253 887606 | Peter.foulsham@wyre.gov.uk | 23/01/2018 |

## List of appendices

Appendix A   Digital Transformation Task Group – final report

arm/ex/cab/cr/18/2402pf3

# Digital Transformation Task Group

# - Final Report -

## Chairman:
Councillor Howard Ballard

## Task Group Members:

Councillor Ian Amos
Councillor Rita Amos
Councillor Emma Ellison
Councillor Rob Fail
Councillor John Hodgkinson
Councillor John Ibison
Councillor Lees
Councillor Orme
Councillor Patsy Ormrod
Councillor Shaun Turner
Councillor Lynn Walmsley

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Chairman: Councillor John Ibison**

## Contents

**Aims of the Review**

1. To consider the progress that the council has already made around digital transformation

2. To consider the costs and benefits of paper-free meetings

3. To consider whether some or all of the council's meetings could become paper-free

4. To review steps in digital transformation that have been successfully taken by other local authorities

5. To identify relevant training and development requirements for councillors and officers

6. To identify and quantify potential cost savings to contribute to the council's efficiency programme

(See scoping document, Appendix 1)

## Recommendations

The task group is aware that the decision has already been taken to purchase the Modern.Gov Committee Minutes system, the decision by the Resources Portfolio Holder having been published on Thursday 21 December 2017. Consequently, the task group's recommendations focus on how the system should be implemented, with particular reference to paperless meetings, to maximise the benefits to councillors and the council.

Councillors have observed two different committee management systems, including Modern.Gov, being used 'live' in committee meetings in three different local authorities and have spoken in depth with councillors who have already seen the implementation of new systems in their authorities. It is on this basis that the task group makes the following recommendations regarding the implementation of a new committee management system in Wyre:

1. Implementation should begin with one of the 14-Member committees.

2. The roll out should be to one committee at a time.

3. A programme for the roll-out of paperless meetings should be planned and delivered, with all meetings (Committee meetings, task group meetings, working group meetings and other meetings) being paperless by May 2019 at the latest

4. Every councillor should be offered one-to-one or small group training at a level that is appropriate for them.

5. The implementation of a new committee system and the move to paperless meetings should include all councillors unless there are specific medical conditions that prohibit that.

6. Regular, on-going support must be provided for councillors, perhaps to include regular iPad clinics before Full Council meetings.

7. Democratic Services Officers will play a key role in implementation and on-going support for councillors

8. All councillors should be issued with a device that is appropriate to the individual's needs – an iPad with 9.7 inch screen is a minimum requirement.

9. Individual devices should be easily identifiable.

10. Devices to be used for agendas, committee papers, email, calendar, invitations, etc. – in fact, as much as possible, with appropriate guidance.

11. The policy for the retention of files and documents needs to recognise that councillors might need to access historical documents in meetings on occasions.

12. Confidential 'green paper' documents must be easy to access.

13. Full consideration should be given, at a later stage in the implementation process, to the provision of data for devices.

14. The wi-fi system in the council's committee rooms will need to be fit for purpose.

15. Charging points and chargers should be made available to members, but not in the committee rooms.

**Summary of evidence provided by Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation**

Introduction

Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation, referred to a report on digital transformation that had previously been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 31 July 2017.

A new committee minutes system was being considered at the time that Ms Hesketh gave evidence to the task group; we now know that the Resources Portfolio Holder, on 21 December 2017, published his decision to purchase the Modern.gov system.

Marianne Hesketh's evidence was as follows:

The council has already made good progress in many aspects of digital transformation. The council's website has been improved significantly, for which it had achieved external recognition. The Citizen Access Portal is also being developed.

A new committee minutes system will streamline the committee agenda and minutes compilation and publication processes, leading to savings in printing, postage and staff time. A number of other local authorities in Lancashire and nationally have already implemented a committee minutes system, some of them many years ago.

Ms Hesketh suggested that the task group might be able to make some proposals about how the council's website could be further improved but councillors agreed not to widen the scope of the review. The topic of website improvement could be the subject of a separate scrutiny review in the future.

Councillors made a number of points that they suggested could to be considered during the course of the review, including:

o It was important to purchase appropriate devices as the experience from Lancashire County Council was that their smartphones were not always reliable.
o The IT department should contribute their expert advice about appropriate devices.
o Adequate wi-fi capacity must be made available.
o Any recommendations from the task group will have to comply with data protection legislation.
o The task group needs to look at how other local authorities have implemented similar committee management systems; post implementation reports should be considered by the task group, if available.
o Members of the task group should speak with colleagues from other councils to get their opinions about the process of implementation.

**Summary of evidence provided by Roy Saunders, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager**

It is timely to introduce a new system as there is a legal requirement to publish committee agendas, which is done via the council's website, and the system currently used is proving increasingly unreliable. The status quo is not acceptable.

A new system will be very helpful in the preparation of meeting agendas and reports; it will be more efficient, making savings in time and money, and provide some additional functionality which will facilitate a move to paperless meetings.

Many other local authorities have already implemented similar systems and Wyre will benefit from the experience of others. As a member of the Lancashire Democratic Services Managers Forum and the Association of Democratic Services Officers, Mr Saunders consulted with many colleagues across Lancashire and beyond, and this information helped to develop the business case for Wyre to purchase an appropriate system. He also researched information provided by a number of other councils and visited Burnley and Blackpool Councils to see their systems being used at a committee meeting. Relevant assessments and comparisons have been completed.

A procurement process is currently underway. Modern.Gov is the market leader, with approximately 280 other local authorities and similar organisations nationwide using it, including seven of the other eleven councils in Lancashire. The procurement process would be completed in December with a purchase scheduled to take place in January 2018.

An intensive period of preparation and training will be required, with Democratic Services Officers taking a leading role. It is intended that paperless meetings will be piloted from May 2018, possibly by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or the Audit Committee. All being well, paperless meetings will be the norm in all council meetings from May 2019.

The experience of councillors at Burnley is that they are very comfortable using the new system, despite some understandable initial anxieties.

It is acknowledged that any new system would have to provide for visually impaired councillors and this requirement will be included in the supplier's specification.

## Summary of evidence provided by Claire Dubelbeis, Transformation Officer

Claire Dubelbeis gave a practical demonstration of the Modern.Gov system. Within the demonstration she made the following points:

- Councillors will be provided with full functionality.
- Access to green paper documents will also be available.
- It has not been decided yet whether the devices to be purchased would be iPads or similar devices.
- Every councillor will have their own device.
- Cash savings will help to offset the cost of the devices.
- Further discussion will be needed about the devices being used for personal use, but it appeared to be a sensible option.
- Lots of the practical details are still to be worked out.

In answer to questions from councillors, Claire Dubelbeis added the following:

- It will be possible to bookmark pages that have been individually highlighted, enabling the user to flick from note to note as required.
- The wi-fi infrastructure will be reviewed but it is anticipated that councillors will have already downloaded any relevant documents to their device in advance of a meeting in order to read them; the drain on local wi-fi will therefore not be excessive.
- Documents will normally be kept on the device for three months. It will be possible to save documents to the device for the longer-term. In the light of comments from councillors this issue needs to be reviewed further.
- Facilitating ready access to archived documents needs to be costed. If it is not possible to do, a system similar to the current one whereby councillors make a request to a Democratic Services Officer for a specific archived document will need to be adopted.
- A stylus can be used for ease of use.
- Access to film or video, as used sometimes by the Planning Committee, requires further investigation.

Task group members commented that, from the presentation given, the proposed system appears to be very easy to use, and is likely to make for much more effective meetings.

## Visit to Chorley Council

Councillors Ballard, Ibison and Orme attended the meeting of the Executive Cabinet at Chorley Council on Thursday 16 November 2017.  Chorley Council uses the Modern.gov committee minutes system, as it has done for many years.

Key points in relation to the implementation and use of Modern.Gov by councillors at Chorley Council:

- Councillors were not forced to use Modern.Gov, they were encouraged; they were introduced to it in groups of about ten at a time
- Identify some key people
- Political Group Champions were identified and each committee had an identified Super-User for advice and support
- There was lots of training from the start – councillors were "spoon-fed"
- Every councillor received one-to-one training at a level that reflected personal requirements
- Democratic Services, alongside IT, play a major role in training and ongoing support
- A manual was written in 'Idiot's Guide' style
- Devices are for council business, not party business
- iPad clinics are run before meetings of the Full Council
- Devices are efficient for the running of meetings – they are not intended to store all historical documents which must be made available elsewhere
- Several different devices were trialled but iPads were preferred
- Some devices have separate key-pads – matter of personal preference
- Need to identify individual devices easily – different coloured covers being used
- Devices are all the same and can be managed remotely
- Individual retention policies can be set up
- Agenda papers were withdrawn only after members had had their iPads for two months
- Most have used it very easily, a few have had more problems
- Frequent changes to passwords have been frustrating, though essential for security reasons
- Finger-print recognition is desirable
- Different passwords for different things – could they be coordinated?
- The iPad is used for everything needed by councillors, including Twitter, Facebook, calendar, presentations, notifications, crime maps by ward and e-learning (currently being developed)
- The Outlook calendar is used widely and frequently
- The iPad cannot be used for personal matters, including emails
- It has proven difficult for Chairs of meetings to do without a paper copy of the agenda so they still receive one (not posted out)
- Some councillors still use pen and paper in a minimal way - it is not banned
- Two councillors still receive paper copies for medical reasons, but they are not posted out (2 out of 47 is seen as a good percentage)

- Plenty of chargers are available, but not in the committee rooms
- Councillors need to be well organised to ensure their devices are sufficiently charged at meetings
- Data needs to be available for councillors without broadband at home
- Wi-fi at the Town Hall is provided by Cisco Meraki, a cloud-based solution
- Wi-fi infrastructure needs to be adequate
- A fortnightly electronic magazine is sent out to councillors and includes any information that councillors need to be updated about regarding Modern.Gov or the iPads
- Most iPads being used are now five years old.  Only problems with them have been caused by being dropped.
- Discussion about the replacement of devices is currently under way.  The devices still work perfectly but functionality improves year on year
- The implementation and use of the system has clearly been cost-effective

The final comment made by Councillor Jean Molyneaux, who was the Chair of the Member Support Working Group when iPads were rolled out in Chorley, and participated in the initial trial, was "Get it sooner rather than later.  Get on with it.  Do it.  With hindsight we took too long talking about it".

## Visit to Blackpool Council

Councillors Fail, Ibison and Lees attended the meeting of the Planning Committee at Blackpool Council on Tuesday 21 November 2017. Blackpool Council uses the Modern.gov committee minutes system.

Key points in relation to the implementation and use of Modern.gov by individual councillors at Blackpool Council, including many personal comments:

**Q1 How do you find the system and how easy have you found it to use?**
- Good. Easy to use. Convenient.
- Saves time and paper.
- Easy to read through and follow.
- Works well.
- Great for on the move. Great for agendas. Cannot live without!

**Q2 Pitfalls we should be looking out for?**
- Some technical blips, not specific to modern.gov. No other problems.
- IT here to help.
- Updating of password - needs specific attention.
- Ongoing training and briefings with updates.

**Q3 How much training offered during implementation?**
- Basic training provided, then on-going learning though use.
- Lots of on-going advice has been provided.
- Someone present before each Full Council meeting to help.
- Need one-to-one.

**Q4 Problems encountered particularly regarding paperless meetings?**
- Knowing how to print from iPad.
- Updating and changing password
- One councillor was visually impaired and had problems reading the iPad.

**Q5 How many times have you had problems when everyone else's seem to be working?**
- Councillors had different experiences – most rarely had problems.

**Q6 How good has battery usage been?**
- Charging is available in group rooms.
- Battery will probably last all day.
- Very good. Charger supplied.

**Q7 How much ongoing support offered?**
- Have support from IT and Democratic Services.
- A lot, either by phone or by arranging an appointment.
- Good support team (IT) need to know 1 to 1 support is there if needed.
- Drop in sessions or by request and phone help.

**Q8 Use device for anything else?**
- Virtually everything required is on iPad.
- Great for emails, diary. Couldn't manage without it.
- Calendar very useful. Great for receiving invitations. Emails. Everything you would do on a PC.

**Q9 Other things we should be aware of if we implement similar system?**
- Essential to set up a comprehensive training programme and to pilot the system with smaller, specific group[s of councillors.
- Helpline and make sure people feel comfortable when asking for help not feel stupid. Have lots of ongoing support available as people become more competent and adventurous on their devices.

## Visit to Fylde Council

Councillors Ballard, Fail, Orme and Walmsley attended the meeting of the Member Development Steering Group at Fylde Council on Friday 1 December 2017. Fylde Council uses the CMIS committee minutes system.

Key points in relation to the implementation and use of CMIS by councillors at Fylde Council:

- o Councillors have, on the whole, found CMIS very easy to use with very little initial training.
- o It was estimated that councillors only received 15-20 minutes training to begin with.
- o A consultant was used for the initial training but not for the implementation.
- o CMIS was rolled out one committee at a time.
- o The Member Development Steering Group played a key role in implementation.
- o Democratic Services Officers have undertaken a training and support role which has been crucial to successful implementation.
- o Monthly CMIS update/briefing sessions are held.
- o Some members had entrenched views about technology but many have been very easily converted.
- o Some senior members are still using paper, but that was not a problem.
- o Approximately 52% currently use devices.
- o Councillors have helped each other, with some encouraging and influencing others.
- o A 'buddy' system was worth considering.
- o It was very easy to navigate from page to page and item to item on an agenda.
- o There were some initial problems with implementation in the Planning Committee because of the complexity of agendas, but this has now been overcome.
- o Councillors had a choice of opting in to get £300 towards their own device. Those who chose not to opt in still receive paper agendas.
- o Members could choose their own device, with no consistency. With experience, Fylde members would now recommend a more consistent approach.
- o A larger iPad (or similar device) is essential.
- o Charging points are available but some members do still forget to come to meetings with devices properly charged.
- o Councillors have their own (wide variety of) chargers.
- o CMIS will allow councillors to select which committees they subscribe to.
- o Older minutes and reports are not available directly on devices but can be downloaded. CMIS stores agendas for six months on a rolling programme.
- o Confidential items are sent separately in pdf format.
- o Separate systems are used for email and calendars, outside CMIS.
- o Devices are limited to reading agenda papers and the resource library.
- o Wi-fi provision needs to be adequate.

- o It is intended that Fylde's security will be strengthened significantly by 2019 when elections take place.
- o Devices cannot be disabled remotely if lost.

**Councillors' attendances**

There were four meetings of the task group and three visits to other Local Authorities.

| Name | Meetings attended (maximum 4) | Visits attended (maximum 3) |
|---|---|---|
| Councillor I Amos | 3 | |
| Councillor R Amos | 4 | |
| Councillor Ballard | 3 | 2 |
| Councillor Ellison | 3 | |
| Councillor Fail | 4 | 2 |
| Councillor Hodgkinson | 4 | |
| Councillor Ibison | 2 | 2 |
| Councillor Lees | 1 | 1 |
| Councillor Orme | 4 | 2 |
| Councillor Ormrod | 4 | |
| Councillor S Turner | 1 | |
| Councillor Walmsley | 3 | 1 |

## List of Appendices

APPENDIX 1 Digital Transformation Task Group – Scoping Document

8 January 2018

**Digital Transformation Task Group**

**Scoping Document**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Review Topic** | Digital transformation |
| **Chairman** | Councillor Howard Ballard |
| **Group Membership** | Councillors Ian Amos, Rita Amos, Emma Ellison, Rob Fail, John Hodgkinson, John Ibison, Terry Lees, Phil Orme, Patsy Ormrod, S Turner (Vice Chairman) and Walmsley |
| **Officer Support** | Peter Foulsham, Scrutiny Officer |
| **Purpose of the Review** | To consider the options for the council to move to more digital processes and towards a paper-free organisation |
| **Role of Overview and Scrutiny in this Review (mark all that apply)** | Holding Executive to account – decisions ☐<br><br>Existing budget and policy framework ☐<br><br>Contribution to policy development ☒<br><br>Holding Executive to account – performance ☐<br><br>Community champion ☐<br><br>Statutory duties / compliance with codes of practice ☒ |
| **Aims of Review** | o To consider the progress that the council has already made around digital transformation<br>o To consider the costs and benefits of paper-free meetings<br>o To consider whether some or all of the council's meetings could become paper-free<br>o To review steps in digital transformation that have been successfully taken by other local authorities<br>o To identify relevant training and development requirements for councillors and officers<br>o To identify and quantify potential cost savings to contribute to the council's efficiency programme<br><br>Throughout the review the task group should continue to be aware of other progress that the council makes and the relevant data protection requirements. |

| Methodology | Inviting witnesses to task group meetings<br>Internet research<br>Visit to a council that has already implemented paper-free meetings |
|---|---|
| Scope of Review | All types of council meetings. |
| Potential Witnesses | Resources Portfolio Holder<br>Service Director Performance and Innovation<br>IT Systems/Software Manager<br>Head of Contact Centre<br>Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager<br>Transformation Officer<br>Chairman of the Councillor Development Group |
| Documents to be considered | Digital Transformation Strategy - #DigitalWyre |
| Risks | None identified |
| Level of Publicity | Low |
| Indicators of a Successful Review | |
| Intended Outcomes | Reduced paper and printing costs<br>More efficient ways of working |
| Approximate Timeframe | Two months |
| Projected Start Date | 20 September 2017 |

arm/ex/cab/cr/18/1402pf3 Appendix A