

Time commenced – 18:03  
Time finished – 19:08

**Corporate Services Scrutiny Review Board**  
30 September 2021

Present: Councillors Naitta, Nawaz, Pandey and J Khan

In Attendance: Darren Allsobrook – Corporate Health and Safety Team Manager  
Lynda Innocent – Head of Financial Services Transformation  
Steve Caplan – Director of Property Services

**08/21 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received for Councillors T Pearce, Ingall and Cooper.

**09/21 Late items introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

**10/21 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**11/21 Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**12/21 Digital Transformation**

The Head of Financial Services Transformation presented the Board with an update on the Digital Transformation.

It was noted that the Digital by Default / Digital Citizen project continued to take the Council's Digital Services offer to citizens forward leading up to April 2020, delivering the anticipated improvements discussed at previous Scrutiny Committee meetings, together with a number of additional outcomes, including:

- Website Redesign and launch
- Councillor Account – proof of concept
- Integration of Revenues and Benefits services in MyAccount
- Revenues and Benefits electronic billing
- Flu vaccination booking
- Adult Social Care referrals
- Childrens Social Care referrals
- Upgrade of Committee Management
- Foster Carer recruitment
- Accessibility improvements

It was reported that during 2020 and 2021 the priority of the programme switched to rapid enablement of emerging citizen, business and community needs in response to Covid 19. It was noted that the foundations of the previously delivered capabilities dramatically increased the Council's ability to respond to urgent pandemic response needs. The Board noted that there were now 118,000 Registered "MyAccounts" and 98 new or amended Digital Services.

It was reported that with the Digital Workforce foundations already in place, the Council were quickly and decisively able to respond to the dramatic change in operations resulting from Covid, while still completing safe migration from old to supported technology including:

- Rapid enablement of Social Care and key workers immediately following lockdown
- Moving all Council Officers to remote working technology
- Restoration of democratic process through online and broadcast technology
- Deploy hybrid meeting tech to all meeting facilities
- Near 100% migration from legacy to skype telephony
- Moved all 3500 users in Council and Derby Homes from Windows 7 to Microsoft 365
- Rapid deployment of 2000 new mobile and agile devices (Laptops, Smart devices)
- Transferred and upgraded over 300 Business Applications
- Deployment of devices to schools and disadvantaged learners
- Enabled Council to continue to operate through lockdown and Covid
- Integration of collaboration technology with key partners in NHS, Council's and 3rd Sector
- Wide spread training and skills development
- Significant reduction in Council's Carbon footprint through reduced travel, commute and print
- Significantly accelerated the entire workforce to modern digital working

It was noted that despite the challenges of the pandemic, the transformation of Digital Connectivity has continued at pace and that the Council had:

- Delivered high resilience high performance local area network
- Enhanced resilient and performing wide area network
- Universal Wi-Fi to Council buildings
- Increased and Expanded Mobile Networks
- Shared Gov.Wi-fi across all public sector partners
- State of the art cyber defence improvements
- Supported expansion of City Fibre deployment across the city

The Board noted that going forward the Council was switching its strong foundation technologies and enabling approaches to digital enablement of the City Recovery programme, around new portfolios. It was noted that the Council would also be maintaining the compliance, sustainability and security of this technology, whilst making emerging tech available for Council, Partners and Community.

Councillors commented that they had received complaints from residents that phonelines for some Council departments were not being answered. The Director of Property Services informed the Board that they would check with the Director of Digital and Customer Services what the Council's response times were.

A councillor commented that 118,000 MyAccounts was a big increase. The Board noted that this increase had been driven by businesses and citizens using the MyAccounts to make the various Covid related grant claims. It was noted that phone lines were still open but that the Council was promoting digital transactions.

A councillor asked how many devices had been provided to local schools by the Council. The Head of Financial Services Transformation informed the Board that they would send them this information.

The Chair asked whether the Council was receiving an increased number of cyber-attacks. The Head of Financial Services Transformation confirmed that this figure was increasing and informed the Board that the Council was keeping its defences as strong as possible.

**Resolved to note the information provided within the presentation.**

## 13/21 Work of the Corporate Health and Safety Team have done for the Council, it's Services and assets during the pandemic.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team Manager presented the Board with an update on the work that the Corporate Health and Safety Team have done for the Council, it's Services and assets during the pandemic.

It was note that on 23rd March 2020, the Prime Minister announced the first national lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was reported that in response, the Council, led by the Director of Public Health, ensured a collaborative approach across the council. It was reported that the Corporate Health and Safety Team were at the centre of this collaboration with other colleagues and services across the council and moved to address the immediate, and long-term impacts on the services, assets, colleagues, and customers of the national lockdown.

The Board noted that one key role of the Corporate Health and Safety Team was acting as the Council's source of expertise in interpreting, National, Service Specific and Local guidance. It was reported that this had required the team to work at pace, not only due to the amount of guidance published, much of it changing daily, but addressing concerns and supporting services with clarification as at times there was confusion and contradiction between guidance for example Government and industry specific.

The Board noted that the key to managing COVID-19 from an employer's point of view had been to ensure that employers had COVID-19 secure workplaces

and to demonstrate controls for work activities through risk assessments. It was noted that the Council had over 160 published COVID risk assessments for specific services, in addition another 40 plus assessments reviewed each term for schools supported by the council. It was reported that specific templates had been developed by the team for schools and for colleagues who were identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, Clinically Vulnerable and other colleagues who were identified as high risk such as Expectant Mothers and Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic colleagues.

The Board noted that the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Team had made a positive and significant difference during the pandemic including:

- Services continue to operate in a safe way
- Due diligence in PPE supplies to colleagues
- Opening the city – Market Place offer
- Designated Care Setting – CQC approval
- Reopened Children Centres operating safely
- Specific schools support with risk assessments, return to educational trips
- Local democracy – COVID secure elections
- BAU – Policies updated – Fire, Electrical, Legionella, Gas and Construction design and management
- Colleagues continue to work at home in line with H&S standards

The Board noted the following areas of risk / concern for the Corporate Health and Safety Team:

- Complacency – COVID fatigue
- Eyes on COVID not other risks
- Much guidance removed now sits under H&S laws
- Further COVID outbreaks reintroduction of COVID measures
- Other non COVID related outbreaks
- Long-term impact of WFH
- Pressure on the CHST
- Regulatory Inspection – enforcement

It was noted that the Corporate Health and Safety Team were mitigating these risks / concerns through:

- On-going communication of changes in national guidance
- Compliance audits
- Enabling group to support safe future working
- Communication to staff to complete home-working risk assessments (KIT)
- Purchasing with Derby Homes – SHE software
- On-going safety alerts
- Return to BAU – no COVID related safety issues
- Delivery of training courses

A councillor commented that they had received reports of businesses in Derby not following Covid guidelines. The CHST Manager informed the board that the Environmental Health Team carried out checks on local businesses including in areas where there had been a spike in case numbers.

A councillor questioned whether there had been lessons learnt from Covid outbreaks within Council departments. It was noted that early outbreaks had been due to colleagues car sharing and not social distancing. It was reported that these had been added to risk assessments.

The Board thanks the Corporate Health and Safety Team for their work during the pandemic.

**Resolved:**

- 1. to note the work of the Corporate Health and Safety Team supporting the Council through the pandemic.**
- 2. to note the potential future challenges.**
- 3. To thank the Corporate Health and Safety Team for their work during the pandemic.**

## **14/21 Work Programme for 2021/22 Municipal Year**

The Board considered a report setting out the Work Programme for 2021/22 Municipal Year. It was agreed that the Board would conduct a Topic Review on Procurement during Covid-19 (breakdown of spending).

**Resolved:**

- 1. to note the information provided within the report.**
- 2. that the Board would conduct a Topic Review on Procurement during Covid-19 (breakdown of spending).**