

Information Technology & Digital Transformation Advisory Committee

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Information Technology and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee held on 17th November 2020.

Present:

Cllr. Forrest

Cllrs. Krause, Pickering.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Bell, Ovenden.

Also Present:

Customer Service & Digital Project Manager, IT Manager, Head of HR & Customer Services, Member Services Officer.

1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th August 2020

1.1 The Minutes of the Meeting of the IT & Digital Transformation Advisory Committee held on 11th August 2020 were approved and confirmed as a correct record.

2 Digital Project (Pentana) Update

2.1 The Customer Service & Digital Project Manager gave a detailed update on the Council's digital programme, explaining that each key project on Pentana was aligned to the Council's recovery and commercialisation plans.

2.2 There were 11 key projects; improving customer service, new planning system, revised garden waste system, lifeline procurement, lifeline application process, ANPR, virtual parking permits, garage commercialisation, contract management toolkit, corporate website and update system for procurement categories.

2.3 Alongside the key projects, other efforts continued including design of a sports pitch online booking system, work around risk assessments/homeworking, implementation of a pay plug-in tool, upgrades to the cemetery system, a separate Aspire website, and other internal website improvements.

Resolved:

That the update be received and noted.

3 Update on Website Analytics

- 3.1 The Customer Service & Digital Project Manager introduced this item. The new corporate website had been launched in August and there was a strong emphasis on analytics to monitor the usage and performance, in partnership with the Council's digital partner Visarc.
- 3.2 The website had experienced over 220000 views in September 2020, with 53000 new users. The bounce rate (where people left a webpage without taking an action, such as clicking on a link, filling out a form, or making a purchase) was 15.5% in August and September, compared to 27% over the last 2 months of the old website. Mobile devices were the preferred tool to access the website. The Customer Service & Digital Project Manager went onto explain that the team ensured the content was constantly evolving to fit with customers preferred options. In September 2020, Recycling and Planning topics remained the most popular areas of viewing, whilst Housing overtook Council Tax. There was increasing volume of traffic to Covid information pages, so a separate option for Covid was set onto the website's front page. Pages that were experiencing lower hits included leisure activities and 'Things to do in the local area', and the Committee agreed that this came as no surprise owing to the lockdown period throughout the pandemic.
- 3.3 In response to a question asking whether the search bar could remain at the top of the Home Page, the Customer Service & Digital Project Manager confirmed that the search bar was pinned, so would remain in view. He added that all services were available to view by clicking the menu button, but he would investigate whether any extra features pertaining to this could be built in.
- 3.4 The Chairman thanked the Customer Service & Digital Project Manager for the valuable update and it was agreed that a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

Resolved:

That the update be received and noted.

4 Report Tracker & Future Meetings

- 4.1 The Chairman noted the items already on the Tracker and made a couple of additional suggestions.
- 4.2 The topic of corporate security, in particular for Members, was an item he felt should be discussed. The IT Manager confirmed that a new system had been trialled within the IT Team, but there were concerns in regards to consistency. DUO remained the default system for corporate security. He added that the Council had recently been awarded the PSN Code of Compliance, which highlighted that ABC were up to date with their security measures and this was a mark of good practice. Several cyber-attacks had been made in recent

weeks, some of which were very complex. In response to a question asking whether the data protection banner on emails could be smaller, it was confirmed that this was a standard size. A further query asking whether incoming external emails could be coloured Red would be investigated further.

- 6.2 The Chairman's second topic for deliberation was around continuing digital meetings in the future, after lockdown measures were lifted completely, or in some part the option of a hybrid meeting. He had seen that East Sussex Council had comprehensively developed this idea. The Head of HR & Customer Services explained that this concept had previously been discussed at the Overview & Scrutiny IT Digital Transformation Task Group, and once their recommendations had been to the Cabinet, they would then be brought for discussion with this Committee.

Resolved:

That the Report Tracker & Future Meetings be received and noted.

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