



ISLE *of*
WIGHT
COUNCIL

Digital Strategy Update

Elizabeth Goodwin, Chief Internal Auditor

Background

During 2020/21 Internal Audit reviewed the project to develop a new council website. This audit assessed the initiative against a range of objectives, focussed on ensuring that it was: correctly constituted, on track/well managed and that senior management were receiving regular, accurate reports on the project's progress.

The audit identified a number of issues, resulting in a limited assurance report. While progress with agreed actions is scheduled to be reviewed later in 2021/22, at the request of Audit Committee, a high-level assessment of progress to date is set out below.

For clarity, due to the limited time available to carry out fieldwork, this report does not provide an updated opinion on associated risk levels. This will be provided to a future meeting of the Audit Committee, subsequent to the completion of the planned follow-up review identified above.

Executive Summary

Overall Internal Audit's assessment of the current position, based on the limited work carried out, is positive. Most importantly key steps to get the initiative 'back on track' have been taken.

Project Management is now being led from the central Organisational Intelligence team, which is independent of the teams within ICT and Communications which are substantively responsible for delivering the project. Associated with this, a highly experienced member of this team is providing both project assurance and day-to-day support.

Key gaps in documentation and governance have also been addressed, most significantly a Project Initiation Document (PID) has been produced, corporate templates are being used for detailed planning/management and regular finance monitoring reports are being considered by the Project Board.

Detailed Findings

A detailed update for Audit Committee is provided below.

| Agreed Actions | Current Position |
|---|---|
| Exception 1: Scope, Planning and Progress | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agree and define objectives/success criteria, high level for the entire Project, detailed for phases one and two.2. Set out high level work necessary to meet objectives in phases, agree indicative timescales/milestones up to the new website being fully up and running.3. Agree high level prerequisites.4. Present a credible plan (based on above) with realistic funding/resourcing requirements to CMT for decision.5. Agree how cross-cutting elements, applicable across phases, for example legislative requirements, will be addressed. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1-4. CMT approved a Project Initiation Document (PID) on 17 August 2021. The PID sets out objectives/success criteria, planned work, milestones, prerequisites funding and resourcing up to 31 March 2022. Post March 2022 proposals are scheduled to be considered by CMT in late September 2021.5. Ownership for this action has been assigned to a senior officer, with a plan scheduled to be agreed by 30 September 2021. |

| Agreed Actions | Current Position |
|--|---|
| Exception 2: Resourcing | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that the Project is correctly resourced, to include sufficient resourcing on technical, nontechnical and project management/resourcing. 2. While funding for year two of the Project has now been approved by CMT further funding may be required in future. Resource requirements will be kept under review by Programme Board, with future bids for funding made as necessary. 3. Revisit where Project Management sits, to promote this being 'independent' of both technical and nontechnical teams. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roles and resource/funding requirements are specified in the PID identified above, covering up to 31 March 2022. There are vacancies within the Software Development team, which the council has been unable to recruit to. While options are evaluated officers have been reassigned to the project from within the wider team and this is being actively managed as a risk, by Project Board. 2. A business case is pending (scheduled for 17 September 2021), covering post-March 2022 requirements. 3. The Project Manager now sits within the Organisational Intelligence team. |
| Exception 3: Governance/Project Management | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilise corporate templates, for planning and reporting. 2. Ensure appropriate financial management is in place. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate templates have been populated and are now used for project management and are viewable by the Project team. 2. The budget accountant for Corporate Services is now a member of the Project Board, with monthly monitoring reports produced. |
| Exception 4: Accessibility | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan for accessibility, both through project and towards business-as-usual, to include third party apps. 2. Document plans on a fit-for-purpose roadmap, to include/reference wider digital content. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2. Ownership for this action has been assigned to a senior officer, with a plan scheduled to be agreed by 30 September 2021. |
| Exception 5: Publishing Legally Required Information | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out a review of legislation, to identify all of the information the council is required to publish. 2. Engage with services primarily responsible for the areas identified, to ensure that these are addressed holistically, as future phases of the website project progress. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2. Ownership for this action has been assigned to a senior officer, with a plan scheduled to be agreed by 30 September 2021. |
| Exception 6: Stakeholders/Engagement | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalise the draft Engagement Plan. 2. Schedule and complete consultation with external stakeholders, using this to inform future development. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been approved by the Project Board. This includes consultation with stakeholders. |