DIGITAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5 September 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Digital Services Committee held at Guildhall, EC2 on Thursday, 5 September 2024 at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:
Deputy Dawn Wright (Chair)
Eamonn Mullally (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Randall Anderson
Ian Bishop-Laggett
Deputy Timothy Butcher

Officers:

Caroline Al-Beyerty	-	The Chamberlain
Zakki Ghauri	-	Chamberlain's Department
Sam Collins	-	Chamberlain's Department
Simon Gray	-	Chamberlain's Department
Shoid Islam	-	Chamberlain's Department
Samantha Kay	-	Chamberlain's Department
Charlotte Rendle	-	Chamberlain's Department
Dawn Polain	-	Chamberlain's Department
Ricardo Fajardo	-	Chamberlain's Department
Gary Brailsford-Hart	-	City of London Police
Jonathan Chapman	-	City of London Police
Melissa Richardson	-	Town Clerk's Department
Mark Gettleson	-	Town Clerk's Department
Kate Doidge	-	Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**
   Apologies were received from Caroline Haines and Deputy James Thomson.

   Caroline Haines and James Tumbridge observed the meeting virtually.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
   There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

   RESOLVED - That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 24th July 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **DATA LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT UPDATE**
   The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning an update to the Data Lighthouse Project and the proof-of-concept exercise.

The Committee noted that the Head of Campaigns and Community Engagement was a new role, to create a universal model for engagement, and had expanded into areas such as marketing. This could include messages from Members to effectively reach constituents digitally, and thus was linked with the creation of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) within the Data Lighthouse Project.

The proof-of-concept exercise had been well received and would be expanded across the organisation, starting with a pilot exercise within one department. Pre-existing data held by different departments could be exported and absorbed into the new CRM system. The access controls to the system would be explored at the implementation stage of the project, acknowledging that it could contain sensitive data sets and had to adhere to the UK Data Protection Act.

It explained that activities, ranging from City Banquets to volunteer events, were being organised across different platforms. The aspiration was to create a single system which managed all individual customer experiences, which provided insight into how customers were engaging, mapping out customer journeys, and using data to identify where the City Corporation's priorities lay with its customer engagement. The creation of a single system linked with a strand of the DITS Strategy for technology convergence, as well as being more data driven.

The business case and financial implications were in development. It was noted that there would be a level of spend with the acquisition of the software. Much of current spend was on the manual effort to gather data, and much of the direct cost savings would be on the spend for consultants or temporary staff to gather data for consultations or engagement exercises.

Members of the Committee requested that climate implications and the security implications be better articulated when reporting back on the progress of the project, noting that all software would have a carbon footprint, and access restrictions formed part of the requirements from regulations such as GDPR.

It was queried what the relationship would be between the Strategic Engagement and Events Management (SEEMS) database and the CRM. It was explained that the proof-of-concept had a one-way connection between SEEMS and CRM, but the benefits of a two-way connection could be explored. It was further explained that it was wished for all systems used at the City Corporation be interconnected, such as with the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) programme. It could further relate to the City Corporation's responsibility to engage with its citizens with regards to elections and determine whether a relationship had been established with a business who may be eligible to vote.

RESOLVED – That the report be received, and its contents noted.

5. **ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP) PROGRAMME UPDATE**
The Committee received a joint report of the Chief People Officer and the Chamberlain, concerning an update in the advancements of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Programme.

Relating to Members queries in interfacing with other platforms, the Committee heard that there had been engagement with SAP to ensure that the technology platforms could work together. This had not yet reached the configuration stage, as the core platform needed to be running before interfacing could be implemented.

On the recruitment for the HR programme roles, interviews were being conducted, and there were continuing conversations to backfilling roles and additional recruitment as necessary to ensure the delivery of business-as-usual responsibilities.

RESOLVED – That the report be received, and its contents noted.

6. **DIGITAL, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICE (DITS) - SERVICE DELIVERY SUMMARY**
The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning the service delivery summary for the Digital, Information and Technology Service (DITS).

RESOLVED – That the report be received, and its contents noted.

7. **CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION APP**
The Committee received a verbal report of the Chamberlain, concerning a City of London Corporation App. The Committee heard that there had been an investigation in the number of applications ('apps') representing the Corporation, following which it had been discovered that there were eight apps commissioned by different areas of the organisation. Many of these had not been updated or were not currently supported. One strand of the DITS Strategy was technology convergence, and thus officers aimed to create a single app for all stakeholders. Further work would be carried out and reported back to the Committee.

It was suggested that, at the highest level, there needed to be clear leadership using purchase control for matters such as apps. The Committee heard that there was an internal technology category board, which has sign off for any technology spend decisions, such as requests for websites. It was further noted that the piecemeal nature of the apps linked with the silos at the Corporation, emphasising the need to set collective parameters and principles for technology.

Officers confirmed the aspiration that the Communications and Engagement team would control the app, whilst DITS ran the associated technology. A communications strategy was in development, to ensure that content was co-ordinated, and noted the benefits of sharing information across the organisation.

A security concern was raised for those apps which were still active but not maintained. Officers considered it a priority to contact developers to update or remove those apps.

RESOLVED – That the verbal report be received.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
There were no items of urgent business.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
RESOLVED - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED - That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

12. **HR, PAYROLL, AND FINANCE SOLUTION: ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP)**
The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project.

13. **DATA PROTECTION - 2023 ANNUAL REPORT**
The Committee received a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive, concerning the annual report in respect of corporate and departmental compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

14. **DIGITAL, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICE (DITS) - RISK UPDATE**
The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain, concerning an update on the risks faced by the Digital, Information and Technology Service (DITS).

15. **CYBER SECURITY UPDATE**
NOTE – During this item, the Committee agreed that, under Standing Order No.40, the meeting be extended in order to conclude its business.

The Committee received a report of the Chief Information Security Officer, concerning an update on cyber security.

16. **VETTING POLICY**
The Committee heard a verbal report, concerning an update on the vetting policy at the City of London Police.

17. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN**
    The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk, concerning details of decisions taken under urgency between Committee meetings.

18. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
    There were no non-public questions.

19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
    There were no other non-public items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 4.15 pm

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Chairman

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