

Agenda Item	5
Report No	RDB/08/23

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Redesign Board

Date: 31 May 2023

Report Title: My Council Programme Update

Report By: Interim Depute Chief Executive

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The aim of the My Council Programme is to review and create a joined-up customer contact experience at the Highland Council, including the opportunities to further utilise digital approaches to support improved outcomes for our citizens, our staff, and the Council. By developing self-service digital options for those who can use it, resources are released to better support customers who need it the most.
- 1.2 The focus of the programme is putting the citizen at the centre of customer engagement at the Highland Council, to improve our process and approach for all contact methods (digital, telephony, face to face) and to provide a seamless customer experience.
- 1.3 At the Redesign Board on 30 March 2023, four key areas of work were agreed to be the focus of the programme and delivering against the programme aims. This report provides an update on the work undertaken since the last Board to develop the deliverables for each of these areas of work and the approach to the programme overall. The report also seeks approval to draw down funds against the resources agreed for My Council project as part of the budget setting process in March.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Redesign Board are asked to:-
 - i) **Note** the update against the work of the My Council Programme;
 - ii) **Note** that a Programme approach will be taken to managing the projects contained within My Council; and
 - iii) **Agree** the proposal to draw down £0.150m from the £0.500m agreed at the Budget Council to support web development work on the My Council project as outlined at section 6 of the report.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource:** As part of the Budget setting meeting on 2 March 2023, the Council agreed to allocate £0.5m investment to take forward the My Council Programme. The proposed allocation of this would be subject to reports to the My Council and Redesign Boards.

The resource implications are set out in the report. Whilst an initial drawn down against the £0.5m allocation is proposed, it is anticipated that further resourcing requests will be made as the Programme develops.

This is a programme which impacts upon all services across the organisation and aims to fundamentally shift the approach to customer contact. All services are therefore involved in the development and implementation of the My Council programme and this in turn will have resource implications on services across the organisation.

- 3.2 **Legal:** There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island Impacts):** The focus on the customer and the differing needs of customers, is central to this project. Whilst digitisation is an important element of the project, an inclusive approach is one of the key principles and consideration of all Council customers and how they wish to contact the organisation. Engagement with our customers as part of this review will be critical to informing the direction of the project and will be a key consideration for the My Council Board and an Engagement and Communications sub-group has been established to progress this work.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever:** There are key opportunities to improve customer contact processes and as a result contribute to the Council's Net Zero targets.
- 3.5 **Risk:** Potential risks to the project are outlined within the Project Brief. All Redesign projects comply with Corporate and Transformation PMO standards in respect of proactive risk management and risks will be reviewed regularly by the Project Board.
- 3.6 **Gaelic:** There are no specific Gaelic implications arising from this report. The Council's Gaelic Language Plan is about to be refreshed in the light of the new National Gaelic Plan which may include a greater use of Gaelic when engaging with the public. All Redesign projects ensure the Council's bilingual policy is appropriately applied.

4 My Council Overview

- 4.1 The purpose of My Council is to review and create a joined-up customer contact experience at the Highland Council, including the opportunities to further utilise digital approaches to support improved outcomes for our citizens, our staff, and the Council. By developing self-service digital options for those who can use it, resources are released to better support customers who need it the most.
- 4.2 This project aims to put the citizen at the center of customer engagement at the Highland Council, to improve our process and approach for all contact methods (digital, telephony, face to face) and to provide a seamless customer experience.

- 4.3 The outcomes of this data-driven and customer focused project will drive cost-saving efficiencies (financial benefits); reduce failure demand (greater efficiency); and increase internal/external customer satisfaction (improvement).
- 4.4 Phase one of the project, which ended on 31 March 2023, focused on understanding, and identifying areas for improvement based on existing data, learning from best practice elsewhere, stakeholder engagement and considering requirements, particularly technological, that may be required to underpin improvements. This initial work supported prioritisation for the next phase which was agreed at the last Board meeting on 16 March 2023 and subsequently at the Redesign Board.
- 4.5 The four strands of the My Council project are:-
1. **Customer Contact Strategy** – setting out the Council’s proposed approach to Customer Contact in the future, the methods, approaches, and expectations internally and externally;
 2. **Data-led and Customer Informed (Business Intelligence)** – ensuring that our customer contact improvements are data-led and informed by customer feedback;
 3. **End to End Customer Journey** – ensuring the customer has sight of their requests throughout the contact process; and
 4. **Customer Contact Methods (Online: Website / CRM & Telephony)** – developing our contact offering to improving digital and self-service mechanisms and improving access to timely information through our web offering
- 4.6 As noted to the last Redesign Board, it is intended to progress the My Council work by taking a Programme Approach. The key objectives of the My Council initiative will require a number of interconnected projects and work packages to deliver its outcomes and objectives. In order to support its co-ordinated delivery, the work will be treated as a programme, adopting the guiding principles and core disciplines of a programme approach. It is not intended that an additional programme board will be required, and all reporting will continue to be to the My Council Board.

5 My Council Update

- 5.1 The Programme is in the design and development stage, where consideration and construction of the vision, Target Operating Model, benefits, and risks will provide a framework for the projects.
- 5.2 The Target Operating Model (TOM) will essentially be the operational plan for the Council’s approach to Customer Contact and will support the Vision agreed at the last Board meeting and underpin the Customer Contact Strategy. It is intended that the next My Council Board Workshop in mid-June will focus on the TOM, to support the development of this approach.
- 5.3 Significant progress has been made within this reporting period to develop the design of the four projects since the Redesign Board Report 30/03/23. This has included meeting with stakeholders for all four projects to understand the three levels of work required: (A) strategic, (B) tactical, and (C) key priority actions (previously termed ‘quick-wins’). It has also been considering the interconnectedness and dependencies between the four different projects. This is outlined graphically in **Appendix 1**.

- 5.4 The initial stages of setting up the projects for delivering the key priority actions have begun, with a 'LEAN' approach being taken to the execution of most. Delivery of key priority actions will begin to take place in June 23.
- 5.5 A summary of the work against each strand is outlined below and the detailed update outlining project components and progress against each, can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- 5.6 **Project 1 – Customer Contact Strategy**
- Stakeholder scoping workshop was held to develop the strategic, tactical, and key priority actions products as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
 - Development of detailed workplans, resourcing requirements and baseline measurements are ongoing and have been sent to stakeholders for review.
 - Understanding connections with sub-group (engagement & comms) has commenced, with strategy direction identified as central steer.
 - Foundational data analysis for implementation of key priority actions has begun.
- 5.7 **Project 2 – Data-led and Customer Informed**
- Stakeholder scoping workshop was held to develop the strategic, tactical, and key priority actions as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
 - Development of detailed workplans, resourcing requirements and baseline measurements are ongoing.
 - Progressing the next stage of phase 1 data analysis has begun, in order to produce a matrix of known customer contact across the Council.
 - Identification by stakeholders that agreement of terminology is the central tenet of this project and has significant implications for the programme.
- 5.8 **Project 3 – End 2 End Customer Journey**
- Stakeholder scoping workshop held developing the strategic and tactical products as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
 - High-level document outlining LEAN – Problem Statement and Define Measure Analysis Improve and Control Steps Created.
 - Development of detailed workplans, resourcing requirements and baseline measurements are ongoing.
- 5.9 **Project 4 – Customer Contact Methods**
- A web focused stakeholder scoping workshop has been held to develop the strategic, tactical, and potential key priority action products as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
 - A telephony focused stakeholder scoping workshop has been held to develop the strategic, tactical, and key priority action products as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
 - Understanding telephony functionality possibilities in line with potential strategic direction has commenced.
 - A CRM focused stakeholder scoping workshop has been held to develop the strategic, tactical, and key priority action products as detailed in **Appendix 2**.
 - Development of detailed workplans, resourcing requirements and baseline measurements are ongoing.
 - As per programme update a request for resources to support Web & UX (user experience) is required, the Board should note that assessment of underpinning technology may also drive further request for funding to support this project.

5.10 Engagement and Communications Subgroup

As noted to the last Redesign Board, an Engagement and Communications sub-group has been established to support the work of the My Council Programme. The main focus for this group is to better understand current customer experience and customer satisfaction with a view to this supporting the approach to the My Council Programme. This will include engaging with the public to understand customer experience, perceptions and expectations of the Council's customer contact, in order to inform a baseline for improvement. Aims and objectives of the sub-group have been developed and agreed by the My Council Board. A stakeholder engagement matrix has been developed to ensure targeted engagement and key questions developed to ensure meaningful engagement in line with programme aims and objectives.

6 Resourcing

- 6.1 As part of the development stage, consideration has been given to what additional resource may be required to support the Programme. At present, project management resource has been identified within the Transformation Team. This is currently in place until 31 March 2024 therefore it is predicted that given the timescale for the My Council Programme, a future request will involve the extension of the Project Manager resource.
- 6.2 At this stage, much of the development work of the Programme is required to be delivered within existing resources, as it is dependent upon expert knowledge from key staff within the ICT team, Transformation Team, Customer Services Team, Housing Service, and other staff across the organisation. It should be noted however that as the projects develop, it is anticipated additional resources will be needed.
- 6.3 At this stage, one area which has been identified as requiring additional resource to progress the identified work strands is in relation to web development, particularly for Project 4 but also elements of projects 2 and 3. The current resource within the WebUX (Web User Experience) team is unable to absorb this level of additional work due the significant business as usual work programme and involvement in other strategic programmes. Developing the Council's online offering to customers is seen as pivotal within the My Council Programme and the additional resource is required to:-
1. carry out a full audit of the website content;
 2. catalogue of all processes that operate online under Pay / Report / Request;
 3. work with all Services on reviewing and improving website content ensuring a high quality and consistent customer experience;
 4. support the development of the strategic approach to the online service offering and how we tailor content to each customer through the use of customer accounts;
 5. evaluate current content management system and its ability to support future requirements for online services; and
 6. support the assessment and development of the approach to future resource requirements to support the online service offering and its alignment with other contact channels.

6.4 It is therefore proposed to appoint 2 dedicated Web UX officers for a period of 18 months to support this work. The planned approach is for experienced resources from the existing Web & UX (x1 HC9 & x1 HC7) team to work full time on the Programme for a period of 18 months. The Board is asked to support a request to allocated £150k from the £500k available for this Programme and this funding will act as backfill for those posts to ensure that already pressured BAU resources are not further diminished.

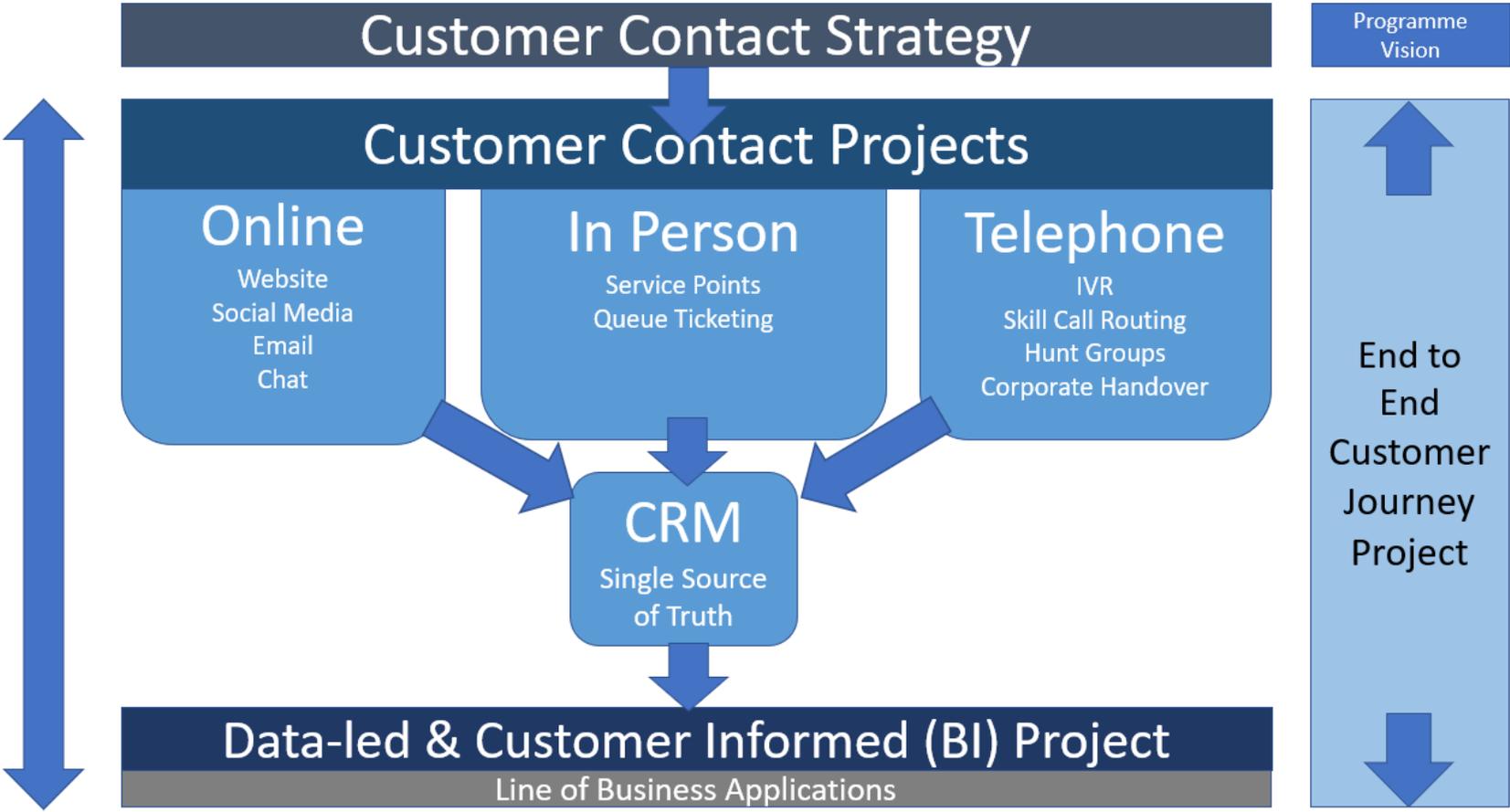
Designation: Interim Depute Chief Executive

Date: 18 May 2023

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My Council Programme Overview

My Council Programme



My Council Programme Project Components

Components	Current Status	Previous Status	Scope:
Project 1: Customer Contact Strategy Strategic level product (A)	G		Project 1 will deliver the production of THC Customer Contact Strategy
Project 1: Customer Contact Strategy Tactical level product (B)	G		Project 1 will deliver: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer Charter/Agreement 2. Establish & publish Customer Service Standards for each Service
Project 1: Customer Contact Strategy Key Priority action products (C)	G		Project 1 will deliver: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and implement internal behaviour changes 2. Review and produce revised 'Unacceptable Actions policy
Project 2: Data-led & Customer Informed Strategic level products (A)	G		Project 2 will deliver a strategic cohesive and enhanced view of the customer
Project 2: Data-led & Customer Informed Tactical level products (B)	G		Project 2 will deliver: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify who the customers are (Assigning Unique Identifiers) 2. Establish basic customer data information categories 3. Establish data principles used across the Council 4. Establish reporting classification 5. Establish Service specific core datasets (moving on from Phase 1 data, link in with Corp Perf BPs)
Project 2: Data-led & Customer Informed Key priority action products (C)	G		Project 2 will deliver: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish Service specific data owners 2. Phase 1 data – create matrix heat map of the current customer contact 3. Review links to Business Intelligence strategies & others 4. Establish data terminology definitions 5. Review best practice (internal & external)

<p>Project 3: End 2 End Customer Journey</p> <p>Strategic level products (A)</p>	G		<p>Project 3 will deliver:</p> <p>A strategic end to end review of the customer journey through Housing processes across all channels – online, telephone and in person with the aim of providing an improved customer journey and producing a replicable exemplar template for conducting reviews across all high-level services</p>
<p>Project 3: End 2 End Customer Journey:</p> <p>Tactical products (B)</p>	G		<p>Project 3 will deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer journey through the Housing Repairs processes across all channels – online, telephone and in person
<p>Project 3: End 2 End Customer Journey</p> <p>Key priority action products (C)</p>	G		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The focus of this project is primarily around the strategic and tactical work
<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods</p> <p>Strategic level products (A)</p>	G		<p>Project 4 will deliver:</p> <p>A strategic review of customer contact channels - ensuring a consistent approach for the customer, whatever mechanism they come through; online, in person or by telephone.</p> <p>Includes the resources aligned to supporting the respective contact channels, the associated business processes, and the underpinning technology focusing on the three areas set out below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Online 2. Telephony 3. CRM (Customer Relationship Management) <p>This includes provisioning of new telephony solutions for both the specific needs of the Contact Centre & the wider corporate telephony requirements. A holistic review of the Council's online offering to customers including current web content, underpinning technology and resourcing for the web going forward as well as how our CRM application and approach to customer relationship management supports the implementation of the customer contact strategy.</p>
<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods (Online)</p> <p>Tactical level products (B)</p>	G		<p>Project 4 (Online) will deliver:</p> <p>Undertake tactical improvements to optimise self-serve, starting with the website:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WebUx / Programme referral process & define Programme referral acceptance criteria 2. WebUx / Service request prioritisation 3. Web Content Audit 4. Catalogue of all processes that operate online under Pay / Report / Request

<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods (Online)</p> <p>Key priority action products (C)</p>	<p>G</p>		<p>Project 4 (Online) will deliver the implementation of priority actions to support customer contact on the Website:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address, implement & test user feedback lowest rated information pages 2. Review Format of the 'Contact Us' page & test re-formatting 3. Audit of web content by age with findings published to Service owners to action as required 4. Review and prioritisation of the top 10 customer information categories searched
<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods (Telephony)</p> <p>Tactical level products (B)</p>	<p>G</p>		<p>Project 4 will deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address identified opportunities to improve customer payments by telephone
<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods (Telephony)</p> <p>Key priority action products (C)</p>	<p>G</p>		<p>Project 4 will deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment of existing customer journey through Service Centre IVR & call routing, internal hunt groups to identify opportunities for short term improvement 2. Comparison of top 10 customer contact data across calls, service point and web to identify tactical improvements to the customer experience
<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods (CRM)</p> <p>Tactical level products (B)</p>	<p>G</p>		<p>Project 4 will deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of customer interaction categories 2. Scope and define public services and products
<p>Project 4: Customer Contact Methods (CRM)</p> <p>Key priority action products (C)</p>	<p>G</p>		<p>Project 4 will deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address, implement & test user feedback lowest rated website forms 2. Comparison of top 10 customer contact data across calls, service points and web to identify tactical improvements to the customer experience