

Support Services: - ICT/Admin/Customer Services Update

1. Staffing

- 1.1 All Staff are working from home with the exception of approximately 20 members of staff supporting services such as the contact centre and life-line, administrative requirements and ICT device repair from within those locations that remained open.

2. ICT

- 2.1 The service continues to support all iterative changes as the authority evolves its systems management process whilst supporting services to deal with the current situation. Software Systems and Hardware maintenance plans remain in place linked to out of hours and weekend working to compliment extended front-line working hours.
- 2.2 The Halton Cloud continues to support all 2600 desktop users with an average of 1500 concurrent users connected into services at anyone time, system uptime over this period has been excellent, whilst accommodating a considerable number of changes and adaptations to the requirements profile of our user base over this period of lockdown.
- 2.3 Skype for business remains the primary communications solution as this contains the authority's main telephony system that also runs our contact centre and many of the external services supported and hosted by Halton such as the Emergency Duty Teams for out of hours social care provision across Halton/St Helens and Knowsley.
- 2.4 Office 365 or M365 as it is now known is now in place and this will encompass the release of the Teams application, but given the complexities of any changes to the phone systems at such a key time together with the need to upgrade certain server-based hardware systems it was deemed an unnecessary risk to deploy at this stage. As such the wider deployment of Teams apart from those with a clear business requirement in line with an immediate COVID requirement will be on-hold until late August.
- 2.5 Teams within Schools: Teams is currently under trial within a primary school and will be released along with other variants of conferencing solutions once the trial and security configurations are completed over the next few weeks.
- 2.6 Laptop's for pupils all devices are now with the schools and children – in total 760 devices together with 140 Mobile Routers.
- 2.7 Social Care data matching is currently underway integrating Halton Social Care Data Sets with NHS Data Sets through a solution known as Graphnet. One of the Halton developers has now completed the 1st of personal data extracts from within the NHS systems literally a couple of days ago. We will be working on the reverse extracts from within our systems. Given the scale of the request this is a considerable piece of work and complex – In the main this will be utilised for Tracking and Tracing but will allow further benefits down the line, such as integration and the development of the One Halton Care Record.

- 2.8 Eclipse the new Social Care Application - training is now underway, with a go-live date for all Children's Teams by the end of August. This will comprise of one – one training, group training and Video training.
- 2.9 Social Care management reporting – local reporting solution under development in-house to cover all Care First and Eclipse management reporting requirements through the development of a dedicated data warehousing solution managed by SSIS and SSRS reporting. Project to be completed in line with the go live date for the Eclipse delivery within Children's.
- 2.10 Agresso developments are also underway with additional FMS and BACS service delivery options now in place with Mersey Travel and Sefton.
- 2.11 Following the delivery of the Phase 1 aspect of the ICT restructure in April the revision of the management structure within the ICT area of the department will take place on the 10th of June. The ICT service was currently managed through 3 Divisional Managers posts this will now reduce to Two posts:

The Two new Divisions will comprise of:

- Technology Services Division, Divisional Manager Pat Oliver
- Compliance and Data Management, Divisional Manager Jon Greenough

Sadly, as part of this process Peter Richmond has taken the decision to retire left the authority on the 10th of June.

3. Admin

- 3.1 Following the Phase 1 aspect of the management and departmental restructure I am pleased to announce Mike Horsley will remain as the Divisional Manager Administrative and Customer Support Services covering the areas of Central Admin, RMU, Print and Customer Services.
- 3.2 The service continues to support all teams with a mix of officers working from home and within the offices.
- 3.3 The Print Unit has now re- opened with staff operating on a rota basis (one member of staff in on each day). Entry to the premises is now strictly restricted to Print Unit and Design staff only. This is to support demand for signage that is being produced in advance of individual business units returning to some degree of physical presence on site.
- 3.4 The Records Management Facility is fully operational and supporting the authority and its clients.
- Incoming mail scanning (corporate)
 - Hybrid mail (corporate)
 - RMU Office now open at Picow Farm Road
 - Sefton contract services delivered throughout the lockdown
 - Cemeteries support
 - Open Spaces Service support
 - Courier service

Warehouse: RMU staff, observing social distancing, are continuing to work on warehouse tasks as required.

4. One Stop Shop's

- 4.1 All of the shop teams are working from home supporting the contact centre and many of the schemes in place to identify and support all Shielded and Vulnerable residents within the borough.
- 4.2 Reset plans are currently under development in terms of the reopening of the shop facilities within Runcorn and Widnes.
- 4.3 This will include the provision of Face to Face services – discussions are underway with property services to consider and deliver the most appropriate and safe solution for this.
- 4.4 Back office work will continue within the locations and from home utilising the current technologies and new ways of working.
- 4.5 Customer services and Admin management are part of the reset working group and will develop plans in line with colleagues from across the authority supporting the current situation and existing working practices and customer support solutions.

5. Contact Centre

- 5.1 Considerable efforts have been made by the Contact Centre and One Stop Shop Teams and management who have been at the fore front of unravelling and delivering many of the often complex and ill prepared Government Led Schemes aimed at supporting and identifying those within the Shielded and Vulnerable groups within the borough.
- 5.2 With extended opening hours for the support lines whilst maintaining existing services as many residents and businesses contacted the authority for a range of services. To offer some scale to the level of contact across this period the average cost of monthly outbound calls within the authority is approximately £5'000 this rose to over £15'000 per month over this period. To support the considerable efforts delivered across the whole of the authority.
- 5.3 Over 50% of the Contact Centre team are now working from home effectively and will continue to do so in line with the current restrictions and guidelines.