Subject:	Customer Journey, Communication and RBWM App
Reason for briefing note:	To update Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Responsible Officer(s):	David MacFarlane, Transformation and Digital Service Lead
Senior leader sponsor:	Nikki Craig, Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT
Date:	7 November 2022

SUMMARY

This briefing note provides an update to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the item suggested by a resident for discussion in 2021 about the development of an RBWM app. It also seeks to inform how improved technologies are positively supporting the customer journey and will continue to be developed to support as communication tools.

The work detailed within the note being undertaken by the Digital Development team is different to the development of an RBWM app but will achieve the same results in the customer journey and experience.

1. **Digital Development at the Royal Borough**

1.1 In 2021, a suggestion topic was made by a resident to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel about whether RBWM could or should develop an RBWM app, the Panel asked that the then Head of Transformation look in to this further. Although it has been concluded not to develop a specific RBWM app, the work on the Council's website, both front and back end, will achieve the same results for the customer journey.

1.2 In August 2022, as part of the restructure following the departure of former Executive Director of Adults Health and Housing, the transformation teams in RBWM were realigned. Those working on community transformation were moved under the Executive Director of Place, Andrew Durrant, those responsible for the transformation in adult social care and with the adult social care system were moved under the Executive Director of People Services, Kevin McDaniel, and the teams responsible for corporate transformation, including digital, were moved under the Executive Director of Resources, Adele Taylor. In moving the Corporate Transformation team into the Resources directorate and under the Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT, benefits of alignment with other corporate teams of IT and projects can be maximised.

1.3 The Digital Development team are a core part of Corporate Transformation at the Royal Borough and consist of 4 FTE. They administer and support both the Content Management System (CMS) and Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) elements of the Royal Borough website and our customer interactions.

1.4 The CMS primarily contains web-content, whilst the CRM manages forms, transactions and communication between internal systems and services. Both

systems are built in open-source software Drupal, which is used by 31 other local authorities to complete similar tasks.

2. **CMS and CRM**

2.1 LocalGov Drupal is a publicly owned asset that was chosen to deliver a better digital experience for residents, improve service outcomes, and save money in comparison to other similar software solutions. Our Digital Development team join others across a wider community of local authority developers to create a shared pool of code, resources, research, and expertise. This allows them to apply features developed in other boroughs to our own systems, by offering the same in return. By working together in this way partnering local authorities can refine this asset and ensure multi-council access to excellent software, whilst keeping costs low.

Current Work

2.2 The team work support colleagues across the council in keeping their service's digital content up to date, as well as ensuring that customers can access the services they need via our website and associated forms. The team spend the significant majority of their time updating content, building, fixing and amending forms, and ensuring existing elements are working as they should. For example, the team was responsible for responding to Operation London Bridge and updating all the website content and interactions that were managed as part of that.

2.3 Additionally the team work on adding new features, ensuring that all content meets accessibility standards, and improving digital tools that help services to support customers. Examples include automating green waste, FOI and waiver, and taxi licence processes.

Future Work

2.4 Like any software, Drupal needs regularly updating to ensure that it is safe, secure, and so that we can make the most of newly developed features and tools. Therefore, the team are currently concluding an end-to-end review of all modules built in Drupal, to determine what work is needed over the next 12-18 months. The results of this review will help the team understand how resource can be best deployed to maximise the performance of our systems.

2.5 An area of particular focus is modifying our digital content and services so that they can be seamlessly accessed via smartphone. The recent resident survey has told us that local people increasingly want to access our services online and, on the go, making mobile compatibility of digital services a key priority. To date, the team have ensured that the website, webforms and customer account are all accessible via mobile devices. Further refinements to more complex areas, such as 'report it' maps and enhancements to the My RBWM account are proposed areas for further work. By delivering the recommendations of the end-to-end review and enhancing our smartphone capabilities, the team will deliver a safe, secure, and fluid digital experience for customers, however they choose to access Royal Borough services. This is different to the development of an app but will achieve the same results in the customer journey.

3. **Customer Journey**

3.1 Led by Louise Freeth, Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services, work is being scoped on improvements to the customer journey to include all services of the Council and all forms of customer service and customer interactions. This will involve working closely with the digital and IT teams in the same directorate as well as across the whole Council.