

NEW TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP REPORT - UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION	COSTINGS/LOGISTICS (From original report)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	UPDATE
<p>1. Two-way communication using social media (such as Facebook, Youtube and Twitter) should form an integral part of the wider corporate communication strategy; and the Council should review its current stance on allowing use of social media, filming or recording during meetings as part of any constitutional review.</p>	<p>The Council already has a Facebook page, and uses Twitter and Youtube to disseminate information and drive people towards the website. Social media is therefore already with our strategic communications mix, albeit in a relatively limited way.</p> <p>To date this has not encompassed a two way dialogue with customers, although there is work underway (for example in the town centres team in R&R) to explore how this sort of channel can be used to supplement other more traditional consultation methods with certain audiences.</p> <p>More general expansion of two-way use of these channels would involve further effort being put into monitoring responses, moderating the sites and responding to points made. There would be three broad ways to approach this; either reallocation of the existing limited resource in the central communications or Bromley Knowledge teams to pick this up within existing resources, provision of an extra specialist corporate resource to support all services (say 0.5fte at around £20k pa), or consideration of how far certain departments might wish to develop this resource and skills set themselves within existing staff for defined projects.</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>We continue to promote key messages through the Council’s Facebook site and Twitter feed which is automated through the council’s news feed. We respond to residents’ posts and tweets where relevant and signpost to online forms and online content where possible to encourage residents to access information on the web and report problems this way. Whilst exploiting social media, corporate communications continues to adopt a sustainable approach and be mindful of minimising risk to the council’s reputation.</p> <p>In addition we have established further social media accounts where there is a robust business case. An example is:</p>

	<p>As such, this is an issue where councillors would be asked to state where any extension from our current use of social media would sit in their overall resource prioritisation.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the growth of 'citizen journalism' and has permitted some limited recording of meetings such as presentations at the recent series of public meetings. Given the difficulty of restricting filming or recording since devices used to do this now tend to be very small and are therefore not necessarily easily detectable, many London Boroughs are now changing their constitutions to permit this to happen, on the proviso that it is not disruptive to the proceedings.</p>	<p>A very successful Facebook campaign ran over the summer of 2012, to promote free Youth Activities in our parks. The Facebook page got an average weekly reach of 36,767 views resulting in a significant increase in attendance at the events.</p> <p>A number of Twitter accounts have been set up to enable focused information feeds to be generated. These include Bromley Museum, Chislehurst Road Bridge and Bromley Snow (for real time winter weather reporting).</p> <p>The number of followers on the Council's Twitter accounts (as at January 2013) are as follows:-</p> <p>Bromley Council - 3559 Bromley Museum -648 Bromley Snow - 709 Chislehurst Road Bridge - 412 Bromley Parking- 267</p> <p>The actual reach is far greater</p>
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<p>2. Efficiencies and increased transparency should be pursued in looking at how we handle the FOI process, through:</p> <p>➤ Online publication of</p>	<p>Undertaking this process is currently not possible on an automated basis, which means that staff time will be required to upload the material mentioned; however, work will be undertaken to ascertain ways in which this could be achieved in the most efficient and cost-effective way.</p>	<p>Director of Resources</p>	<p>Where information can be proactively published (for example, budget books) officers responsible are encouraged to pursue this course of action. The</p>

<p>requests and answers, to reduce demand on officer time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Proactive publication of information which is the subject of frequent enquiries; and ➤ Submission through an online form into the back-office systems rather than through an email address. 	<p>There are a number of recurring themes relating to FOI requests (such as organisational structures, senior officer and councillor remuneration, and expenditure on areas such as civic hospitality) and discussions will be held with the relevant web editors once the new platform is established to encourage proactive publication of such material.</p> <p>Exploring more structured electronic channels for FOI enquiries has been flagged up as part of recommendation 6 below; however, whilst we may point enquirers towards these avenues, the Council cannot refuse to handle enquiries made by letter or email should they be presented to us in that form.</p>	<p>Council's FOI webpage now includes links to commonly requested information, recent enquiries and the A-Z search box.</p> <p>An e-form for channelling FOI inquiries direct from the website to the department responsible has been implemented enabling the resources needed for central coordination to be reduced.</p> <p>A more sophisticated integration of the e-form with other back-office systems and more comprehensive arrangements for posting FOI inquiries and answers to the website will require further investigation into (1) cost/budget for implementing such a link, (2) feasibility/benefit of doing so, (3) ability to automate, (4) any potential licensing arrangements that might be required, (5) a project manager/developer to automate the process.</p>
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<p>3. Future demand for assistive technology should be carefully monitored and ways to meet local demand explored (with a view to establishing a council-led social enterprise to provide extended services if required).</p>	<p>There is no current proposal to establish a Council led social enterprise but instead actions could be taken to explore ways to stimulate the local market to provide a response service for self funders.</p> <p>This would not require any additional staff or financial resourcing.</p>	<p>Director, ECS</p>	<p>The use of Assistive Technology (AT) has recently been reviewed and as a result it was decided to appoint a temporary lead for the care management and assessment work to ensure that AT was focused on those individuals where a cashable saving would result as well as an improvement in their independence. This work has just started with the aim of reducing admissions to care homes and the need for domiciliary care following the model used in other Local Authorities.</p> <p>We will continue to keep the supply side under review as the business focus in the last 12 months has been on moving the Community Equipment Service to be a member of the London Consortium.</p> <p>Any further work in establishing a Council led social enterprise to provide</p>
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<p>4.The Council should focus on increasing the proportion of transactions conducted and handled online or through other automated means, to reduce costs and unnecessary customer contacts: especially in the following areas, which were likely to provide a good return on investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Street services fault reports ➤ Bulky waste collections ➤ Garden Waste collections ➤ Request to review/add road/area/salt bin to winter maintenance schedule ➤ Free School Meals/schools admissions ➤ Noise complaint & diary sheets ➤ Pest control request ➤ Parking - Permits & visitor permits 	<p>The costings and comments below also cover this recommendation from the Member working party.</p> <p>It is recommended that, as part of the Council's future channel shift strategy work, led by the Improvement and Efficiency Sub-Committee, these service areas are prioritised for detailed business case analysis and implementation where significant savings and efficiencies are indicated.</p>	<p>Director of Resources</p>	<p>Good progress has been made in developing transactional electronic forms, the following have now been deployed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Street and park fault reporting ➤ Missed bins ➤ Request recycling containers ➤ Request to review/add road/area/salt bin to winter maintenance schedule ➤ Free School Meals/schools admissions ➤ Noise complains ➤ Pest control request ➤ Parking - Permits & visitor permits ➤ Tip permits ➤ FOI and generic complaints ➤ Blue badge misuse ➤ Become a Friend – Snow, Parks etc ➤ Tree preservation order enquiry ➤ Report an empty property ➤ Request Fostering and adoption packs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tip permits ➤ Insulation/home improvements ➤ Building control inspection appointment booking ➤ FOI and generic complaints forms 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Book cycle training ➤ Garden Waste collections ➤ Parking – penalty charge enquiry forms <p>The following forms are in the process of being deployed :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report suspect rogue traders ➤ Illegal sales to young people ➤ C Tax – change of address ➤ C Tax – single person discount ➤ C Tax disabled person carers discount/exemption ➤ C Tax – disabled persons discount ➤ C Tax – direct debit application ➤ C Tax – person resident in hospital/care home discount ➤ C Tax – mental impairment discount application ➤ Parking general enquiries ➤ In year school admission forms ➤ Bulky waste collections <p>A “shopping basket” system is being added to the website by April 2013, and this will give further opportunities to integrate more online payments across the website. Discussions have also begun to expose an online booking diary on the web for self service of appointments for registrars and other services.</p>
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<p>5.The new website should develop a customer registration approach integrating with back office systems so local residents can use it to transact and track all their dealings with the council.</p>	<p>The recent web upgrade in April has put into place the framework to be able to deliver more integrated online services to customers. E-forms will, where practical, be integrated into CRM and a registration facility will be added to allow customers to track progress.</p> <p>Further developments incur two sets of costs:</p> <p>1) Staff time in the IT development team - a fixed term contract for a full time web developer would be in the region of £40k pa.). If we do not have an additional resource this will still happen but work will be slower taking on one integrated e-form at a time.</p> <p>2) further developments of the basic e-forms package purchased, along with the ability to develop mapping etc, would cost around £50k</p> <p>£240k was set aside in the original capital budget for web development. £142k was drawn down last year to facilitate the initial upgrade so £98k remains available if Members consider these developments to be a suitable priority</p> <p>Putting a fixed term developer in the in-house development team to work on web projects could greatly speed up delivery of channel shift from phones to web (an estimated 80p saving per transaction as the cost of a web visit is reckoned at 15p for Bromley compared to a phone visit at 95p), which might help to alleviate the impact of budget</p>	<p>Director of Resources</p>	<p>There is a basic customer registration system on main website. As at January 2013 there are 10,250 users registered. However registration only gives limited benefits for users and as a result repeat logins are minimal.</p> <p>Now that a broader suite of electronic forms have been developed there are more opportunities to develop a more useful registration approach. The Customer Focus Group have charged a working group to set out the vision and parameters for developing a single unified single registration system, that enables customers to interact and track their dealings with the Council and also enable the Council to segment and target customers for the purposes of pro-active communications, campaigns and updates.</p> <p>One major issue to tackle is</p>
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	<p>cuts in departments if they can run more of their customer contact through the web where practical to do so. The aim is to give front line services the opportunity to deliver services more cheaply corporately and thereby mitigate the impact of further spending cuts to come. Already customer service posts are being taken as savings across CYP, ACS and ENV departments.</p> <p>This would tie into the Council's broader aim of reducing avoidable contact as far as possible, not only by aiming for 'right first time' services in the first instance to minimise follow-ups or complaints, but also by re-engineering processes for greater efficiency when customers do need to contact us by streamlining and automating where feasible. This would potentially result not only in savings on frontline costs, but also in back-office staffing and processes.</p>		<p>the numerous satellite websites the council run that already have their own bespoke registration systems (planning , MyLife, Library etc) that would need to be unified. It is planned to develop "open authentication" sign in (allowing users to sign in with their Facebook, or Gmail logins etc) this would encourage more logins and reduce customer confusion.</p> <p>Unifying and opening out the many online and back office systems could be costly, but could impact significantly in reducing avoidable contact through self service and pre-emptive electronic communication.</p>
<p>6.Using new technology in a more consistent corporate way to enable savings and service enhancement through increased flexible and mobile working, for example by</p>	<p>A project will shortly commence to identify all of the licensing costs associated with back office systems and a review of the functionality of those systems to ascertain whether they can be rationalised into a smaller number.</p> <p>Given the current financial climate Chief Officers might be asked to give consideration as to the</p>	<p>Chief Executive/ Director of Resources</p>	<p>Directors are leading discussions with senior managers about seeking and exploring any avenues for enhancing mobile and flexible working, ensuring that the necessary technology to facilitate this is in place. We</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better integration of back office systems to increase the effective process of information sharing and availability electronically as well as saving on maintenance and support ➤ A corporate approach to investment to combat the current fragmented/silo approaches between services ➤ Reinforcing the creation of electronic records at the start of any process, rather than scanning later ➤ Exploring the possibility of setting up a centralised scanning service to accelerate a change to primarily electronic storage methods 	<p>centralisation of technical refreshes of PCs and laptops so that staff are allocated the correct tools for their work rather than it being dependant on their service budget. It will also greatly facilitate the reallocation of equipment between departments – which is currently very silo based. Consolidating ICT investment would not necessarily entail additional resources, but would mean that all ICT related budgets, which would need to be moved from service departments to corporate ICT.</p> <p>Implementing electronic records from the outset of any case would probably need to be combined with scanning of existing, and for some service areas, recently closed case documentation to fully realise operational benefits. Resource implications across the board are impossible to estimate at this point but would most likely require a major investment. The costs would include specific technologies related to individual departmental systems, licences, others et up costs and document scanning.</p> <p>Recent work in Housing has estimated costs of around £100K and for Children’s Social Care costs were estimated at c£150K for current cases alone. Extending the work to include all files currently held by teams would increase the cost to £330K. Backscanning archived files as well would add a further £314K.</p>		<p>have been successful in a number of areas.</p>
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	<p>Some teams already have scanning facilities, and the recent introduction of multi-functional printer/scanners across all offices provides the facility for small scale scanning to be done. Centralised scanning at point of entry should be considered as part of a wider review of the post room. Consideration of this is at a fairly early stage and involves exploring detailed technical indexing/integration issues as well as legal considerations in respect of document editing/amendment, audit trails and secure destruction. It should be noted that the increased use of scanning/electronic storage is not cost-free – it would dramatically increase the requirement for hard storage – 3tb “cheap” hard disc is £7,500 and also backup costs will increase – every additional terabyte is £12,288 per annum. The issues which will need to be resolved are those around who funds this and how (for example should there be corporate recharges for digital storage space costs, to encourage business-based assessment of material to be retained) and whether this will be an integral part of the wider office accommodation strategy work.</p>		
<p>7. The Council should maintain pressure on the Mayor of London to ensure that the proposed London-wide WIFI coverage is extended throughout the Borough;</p>	<p>The Council is participating in the discussions around London-wide wi-fi provision, and is emphasising the importance of extending these facilities beyond inner-London Boroughs.</p> <p>The Local Development Framework is currently being drawn together for wider consultation. Given</p>	<p>Chief Executive/ Director of Resources/ Chief Planner</p>	<p>In line with other boroughs we are working with the Mayor of London and GLA to achieve this objective.</p>

<p>and Planning should asked to consider a supportive attitude towards enabling the introduction and extension of such a network through, for example, incorporating this within future Local Development Framework policies.</p>	<p>the importance of developments such as wi-fi not only for wider public access to technology and digital inclusion, but also in terms of future economic wellbeing and business development, the Working Group is keen that the Chief Planner includes these issues within the forthcoming consultation on the Local Development Framework.</p>		
<p>8.The new IT strategy should encompass a defined open source strategy, aiming over time to increase the proportion of services supported by more affordable non-proprietary systems, with consequent savings on on-going licensing costs</p>	<p>This will be encompassed in the new IT strategy that is schedule to be delivered by Autumn 2011. Members will be consulted and input sought prior to the final version being issued for approval</p>	<p>Director of Resources</p>	<p>ICT are currently researching the open source/open Standards market and looking at options around the support of the open source environment, which will then be incorporated into the ICT & Telephony Strategy.</p>
<p>9.Further work should be undertaken to examine how councillors can use new technology more effectively to achieve economies and efficiency as part of a wider assessment of member</p>	<p>Experience has shown from the issue of mobile phones to all but one new councillor receiving councillor support on telephony that this is a practical way of providing such access in most cases. As this shows an on-going saving compared with provision of landlines, it would be sensible to encourage a switch by as many councillors as possible.</p>	<p>Director of Resources</p>	<p>The Constitution Improvement Working Group (CIWG) considered Councillors IT and related issues in 2012 and made a number of recommendations that were accepted by full Council on 12th November 2012. The</p>

<p>support; examples being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ encouraging a move from Council-financed fixed line phones and broadband across to mobile phones and use of councillor's own broadband ➤ trailing hand held/tablet devices as an alternative to hard-copy deliveries, and ➤ extending the use of teamsites (similar to that used to support this review) to make background portfolio information available on an ongoing basis to councillors rather providing this only in 'for information' agenda reports ➤ enhanced presentation facilities to support public access to Council meetings, such as better hearing loop provision in Civic Centre rooms, audio-visual equipment in the 	<p>The recent availability of tablet PCs and e-readers presents the potential to look at the business case for moving across to their use by councillors at meetings, rather than focussing on the provision and despatch of hard copy agendas. Hard copy provision currently costs £27k pa (£15k on production, of which around 50% is currently focussed on direct provision to councillors, and £12k to undertake a weekly despatch, which is focussed on agenda papers). However, savings are not likely to be proportionate if only a certain number of councillors switch to this provision.</p> <p>Councillors already have a general teamsite, and there is potential for developing an area for use by each portfolio to focus on provision of background information on a continuous basis, with suitable alerts on updates. Councillors could then request items to go on an agenda where there was a subject or issue they felt a councillor steer should be provided on, rather than by putting all the information on agendas as 'information only' items. Presentation equipment in Civic Centre meeting rooms is quite basic; this not only restricts the potential for clear information to be provided at councillor meetings for their use and that of the public, but also the potential of some of our rooms to be hired out to external organisations for meetings and conferences</p>		<p>CIWG proposed that the New Technology WG should carry out further work into the more effective use of new technology for Members.</p> <p>The CIWG supported initiatives such as providing Councillors with mobile phones rather than landlines, purchasing tablet computers and phasing out printed agenda papers, portfolio teamsites, enhanced presentation facilities in the committee rooms and wider use of skype and teleconferencing.</p> <p>Fixed projectors and screens have recently been installed in the Council Chamber and committee rooms along with enhanced audio equipment enabling better use of overflow rooms.</p>
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Council Chamber and at least one other Committee room	Councillors appeared to wish to review ways in which their support could be adapted to achieve savings whilst not in any way being detrimental to the democratic process, and these points could all be considered by whatever working group they set up to explore options further.		
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