

Decision Maker: ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 21 March 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: FIXMYSTREET PRO REPORTING SYSTEM REVIEW

Contact Officer: Jonathan Richards, Technical Support & Market Manager
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Chief Officer: Colin Brand

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

To provide background and information on the performance and use of the FixMyStreet Pro software within Environmental Services.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Environment and Community Services PDS Committee is requested to:

- i) **Consider the content in regard to the use of FixMyStreet Pro by Environmental Services.**
- ii) **Comment on outlined direction of travel and FMS Roadmap as outlined in paragraph 3.26**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: FixMyStreet Pro allows for the easy reporting and swift rectification of issues in street and green scenes to ensure the local environment is kept safe and clean so that vulnerable adults and children are not exposed to unnecessary hazards.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable Existing Policy
 2. Making Bromley Even Better 2021 to 2031 Priority: Resources and Efficiencies; Safe, Clean and Green.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable: No financial proposal
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable: Within existing contract and budget
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Technical Support Team
 4. Total current budget for this head: £140k
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None: No decision or change
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No decision required
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: None within this report
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All Bromley residents
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 FixMyStreet Pro (FMS) is Bromley Council's primary online reporting software for Environmental Services covering Street Scene and Greenspace: primarily highway faults; street lighting; street cleansing; blocked drains; grounds maintenance and trees. It is provided by software developer SocietyWorks Ltd (the commercial arm of technology charity mySociety). The software is well established in Bromley having launched as a two-way integration with Bromley's CONFIRM system in 2012.

Background

3.2 Throughout the 2000's there was a steady growth in online 3rd party reporting websites who took reports on behalf of customers and emailed them to publicly available customer contact email addresses for Local Authorities. This was both signaling a direction of travel with resident communication choices and creating a growth in back office administration to then manually log those emails into our systems.

3.3 In response Bromley sought engagement with one of these 3rd party systems to create an integrated solution. Following the scoping of the various options, FixMyStreet was the preferred choice for its ease of use, map based reporting, use via a web browser (not limited to a smart phone application), and a known and well-used site.

3.4 In May 2012 Bromley went live with the first two-way integration of FMS in the country, where reports logged on FMS would create an enquiry within the Environmental Services Asset and Enquiry Management System CONFIRM and statuses used in CONFIRM would push updates back to FMS. As FMS use grew, in 2014, a host of new statuses and workflows were developed and introduced into CONFIRM to better support the customer journey and returned information to FMS.

3.5 Since 2012 SocietyWorks have been developing the software, creating the FMS Pro version for Local Authorities and they now provide the software to a growing number of Councils across the country. Locally, Transport for London utilise FMS Pro for their online reporting and nationally, Highways England are working with SocietyWorks to cover their network. This has meant considerable development in the software since Bromley's original go-live, bringing a whole suite of new functionality as standard.

3.6 In 2019, as part of the CRM Dynamics replacement project, Bromley took a look at the software offerings both for the Contact Centre but also online reporting. With regard to the online reporting elements covered by FMS Pro there were no alternatives which offered a solution LBB wished to take up. The CRM Replacement Project concluded it was better to continue with FMS Pro with any CRM replacement working in conjunction with, or alongside FMS Pro.

3.7 Having previously been on a legacy agreement, in April 2020 LBB entered into a two-year contract for FMS Pro. The short contract length was due to the pending ICT changes associated with the CRM Replacement Project, allowing LBB an opportunity to review the situation from these changes before moving forward accordingly.

3.8 In 2021 Bromley developed and launched a further module in partnership with SocietyWorks called WasteWorks for the online reporting of missed collections for our Waste Services and to replace the interim reporting solution LBB had in place. The WasteWorks module has also been developed to provide a Direct Debit self-service option for our Green Garden Waste subscription service, a long-standing service ambition.

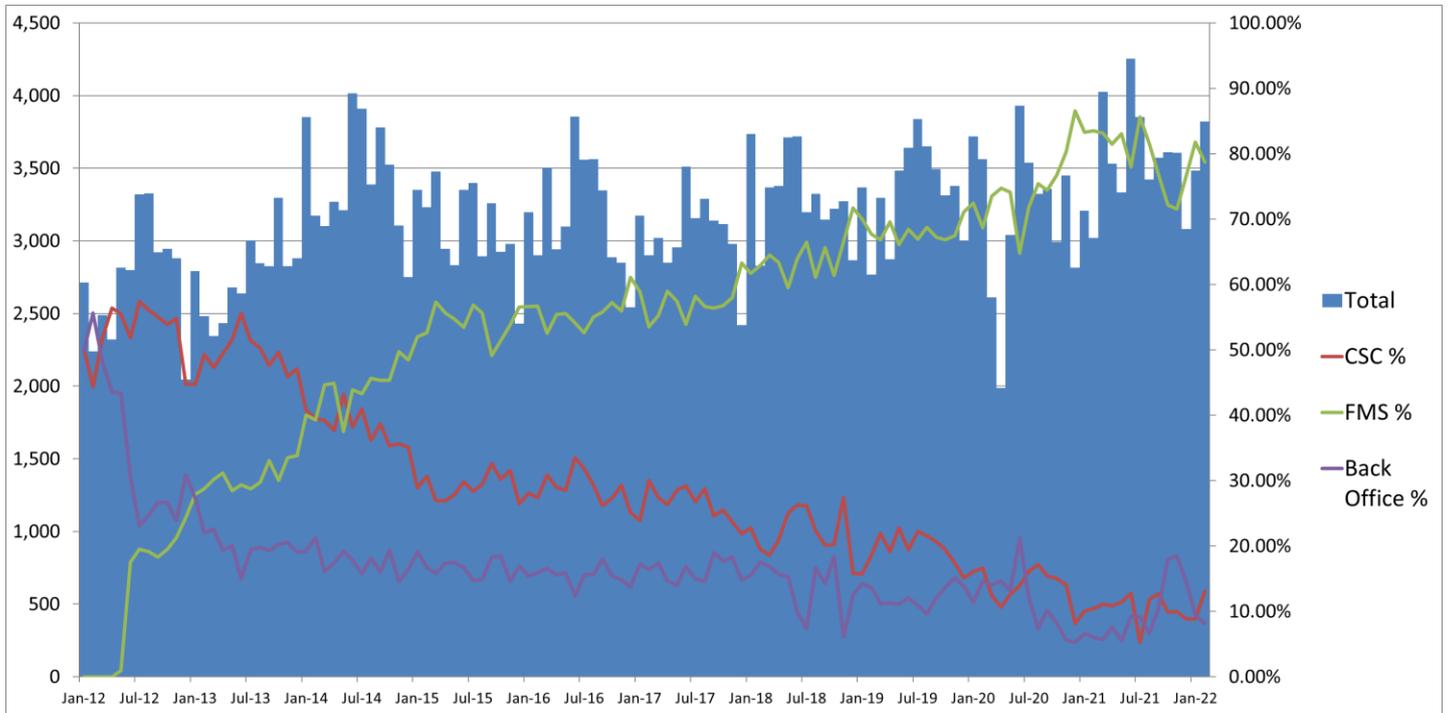
3.9 Also in 2021 the use of FMS Pro was extended within Bromley to include the Customer Contact Centre, taking advantage of the system's existing ability to be used by call centre agents. The use of FMS Pro replaced the CRM Dynamic 2012 system for call centre logging for

StreetScene & Greenspace issues and the WasteWorks module for call centre logging for Waste Services.

- 3.10 As part of that expanded use, works were undertaken to improve the mapping within FMS Pro, now using the OS Mastermap providing a level of detail including house numbers and other landmarks. Our Parks were added as searchable assets on FMS (including their AKAs) and our Parks & Greenspace areas were added as overlaid mapping layers. There was also an expansion of the categories that could be reported against for the public and Contact Centre.
- 3.11 With FMS Pro now operating alongside Jadu Continuum as part of the CRM Replacement, and the WasteWorks module providing the front-end reporting for Waste Services, a 12-month extension to the current contract is being undertaken with an intention to seek Member approval for a longer-term contract with SocietyWorks for FMS Pro which better aligns with the contract lengths for the services the system supports and allows for a medium-long term development roadmap to be taken forward.

Performance

- 3.12 SocietyWorks have provided the FMS software for Bromley since 2012. There is a well-established relationship with the provider, and the software and provider have both proven to be extremely reliable with no issues having presenting themselves during that period.
- 3.13 Bromley currently has the FixMyStreet Pro Avenue Plan, the costs under the current contract for the software and support are £35k per annum. There are no per user licensing costs with FMS Pro.
- 3.14 FMS Pro is a 24/7 online service, allowing customers the ability to report predominately highway and street cleansing issues to Bromley Council at any time. A two-way integration allows for the Line of Business system (CONFIRM) to provide updates back to the customer on the progress of their report.
- 3.15 The WasteWorks module is similarly a 24/7 online service, allowing a bin-collection look-up, and missed bin reporting. The module allowed for Self-Service and Direct Debit payments for the 40,000+ Green Garden Waste subscribers. The module integrated directly with our Waste contractor's Line of Business system (ECHO).
- 3.16 To date over 300,000 reports for Bromley have been logged via FMS Pro and WasteWorks, with over 6,000 submitted per month. FMS use within LBB has steady grown from just under 20% of Street Scene and Greenspace reports via this channel in June 2012 to upwards of 90% (80% directly logged by customer and since May 2021 10% via the Contact Centre logged on FMS) of reports received.



3.17 Over the last 9 months, within the WasteWorks module, via the ability for the service to continually adjust the customer response templates, the service has been able to amend wording and add further information to drive down the volume number of avoidable contacts stemming from follow-up questions or unclear messaging. While Direct Debits now form a quarter of all new GGW transactions which will reduce the back office time and resource come subscription renewals.

3.18 FMS Pro reports are heavily monitored and while 90% of reports are processed and resolved without further comment, approximately 10% do receive follow-up comments. These are captured as part of daily monitoring and circulated for Officers to respond and address.

3.19 FMS Pro is a reporting system for the public facing services within Environmental Services and it links into the Environmental Back Office System of CONFIRM where those services are managed. Where those issues are being managed within CONFIRM, workflows and integration has been designed to facilitate progress updates back to the customer. However, due to it's ease of use, FMS Pro at times receives reports of issues which are for other service areas operating outside of FMS and the CONFIRM system.

3.20 Where an issue is being dealt with by other departments who have other back office systems and processes and do not utilise CONFIRM or FMS, there is reduced scope for providing information back to FMS. Current procedure is to refer the issue to the relevant department while advising the customer of that referral and signposting the customer to the appropriate channel for future reporting of this issue.

3.21 FMS is primarily a communication channel for reporting issues to LBB, and for providing updates back to the customer. However, FMS is not designed nor intended to be a project-management tool used to monitor the progress of schemes or work schedules; while we look to facilitate updates on short-term works (street cleansing, highways minor works) where works or a project has a longer timeframe, and/or is subject to changing priority and budget pressures we do not look to hold open and manage on FMS but rather seek to close the report, communicating back to the customer to advise that the issue has been added to an ongoing works schedule. Where further comments are left on such reports, officers seek to provide further information if available.

- 3.22 Bromley do not utilise FMS for the discussion of Policy or as a general question and answer forum. While Officers will seek to address and respond to certain follow-up comments, any more detailed requests or enquiries into policy and background will be managed as appropriate through alternative channels such as email.
- 3.23 FMS Pro is used by a large number of LBB Officers and our Contractor Officers and Environmental Services have undertaken significant training to look to provide a consistent approach across the services and team. Training and support is ongoing and where errors or incorrect updates are applied we seek to use those as training opportunities for staff and teams.

Development

- 3.24 Bromley has been a key development partner with SocietyWorks, most recently in 2021 to develop and implement the WasteWorks module, the online reporting service for Waste Services. As a key development partner Bromley has enjoyed the benefits of these developments, both in helping set the scope and implementing them at reduced rates, which has offered Bromley real value for money over the system. Bromley was even shortlisted as a finalist at the Local Government Chronicle Awards for the successful partnership with SocietyWorks in terms of our customer experience.
- 3.25 SocietyWorks continues to develop the core software, with their development Roadmap incorporating suggestions and priorities from their Local Authority users. Internally within LBB there is also a number of development opportunities within the integration workflow and FMS Pro functionality to further take advantage of the software including the further use of GIS mapping layers to inform customer reporting and automatically steer integration workflows.

FMS Pro LBB Roadmap

- 3.26 A summary of the key aspects LBB is looking to take forward to improve the use of FMS Pro for both residents and officers:
- LBB FMS integration sub-category re-coding to unlock system standard functionality such as much greater control over permissions and workflows at the sub-category level
 - Use of FMS Pro for Out of Hours call centre to remove the need for manual input of reports and ensure any complex issues are in system ready for the In-Hours teams to take forward.
 - Improved signposting and sub-category steer text to help inform customer reporting selection and reduce the likelihood of them reporting against the wrong category.
 - Inclusion of Roadworks data into mapping to highlight known LBB and utility works
 - Temporarily exposing 'storm event' special reporting to better capture and direct the spike in reporting which typically follow such events.
 - Additional mapping layers to inform customers of assets and responsibilities including 'invisible layers' which while not visually displayed can steer integration/signposting. Examples would be Boundary Agreements with neighbouring boroughs, and areas maintained by Housing Associations.
 - Improved redirection options within FMS Pro for services outside of its remit to the correct channels elsewhere on the LBB website at point of submission rather than an internal referral post-submission. For example: Parking Services, so that vehicles are reported through Parking's channels where their Enforcement Officers can respond promptly.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

FixMyStreet Pro provides a platform for issues within the public street and green scenes to be reported to and rectified swiftly by Bromley, to ensure the local environment is kept safe and clean so that vulnerable adults and children are not exposed to unnecessary hazards and that everyone can achieve a good quality of life in their local area.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The continued use of FMS Pro aligns with the Council desires to improve and enhance the customer journey and a key Council ambition 'to manage our resources well, individually and collectively, providing efficient and effective services and excellent value for money for Bromley's residents.'

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial, Personnel, Legal, Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]