

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Director Digital Futures  
to  
Audit Committee  
On  
29 March 2016

Agenda  
Item No.

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## The move from Care First to the Liquid Logic Case Management System in Social Care

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### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of Audit Committee on the nature and status of the project to fundamentally re-provide the Children & Adults Social Case Management systems. Care First will cease to be used in favour of the new Liquid Logic system.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Committee Members note the contents of this report. Namely, that the project to replace the ageing social care case management continues with 'go live' dates of October 2017 for Children's Services and January 2018 for Adults Services.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Department for People is in the process of a fundamental reposition of its case management system across both children's and adult services. The chosen case management system is provided by Liquid Logic (LL).

Phase 1 of the project will see the transfer of all current CareFirst case recording activity to LL but critically include the automation of 'end to end' financial processes which are currently undertaken manually.

Automation will take place through the integration of two products:

- The Liquid Logic case management system
- The Oxford Computer Consultants ContrOCC finance system

- 3.2 The Project commenced in Dec 2014 when the department began a comprehensive review of alternative products available, the construction of the detailed requirement specification, the decision to go to market and, ultimately the procurement process.

Once the chosen provider was identified the cost of the software and the team to drive delivery was calculated to be £2.2m.

The implementation phase began in March 2016.

3.3 A Project Team came into being to drive the project forward and a Board established

3.4 Overall, this is an ambitious project with Phase 1 not simply representing a like for like replacement of the existing CareFirst functionality but the introduction of 5 inter-related systems:

- Children's case management
- Adult's case management
- Early Help
- Integrated finance children
- Integrated finance adults

3.5 In October / November 2016 an internal audit was conducted by externally commissioned auditors from PWC entitled 'Project Implementation Health Check' and this assigned a rating of 'partial' in respect of the robustness of the project assurance citing the following areas as being in need of improvement:

- Routine and systematic reporting to the Board of Progress against the project plans needed to be more robust to prevent project drift. Things could occur which could impact the overall delivery date.
- Risks and issues were not discussed by the Board on a routine basis.
- Benefits realisation resulting from the Project was not owned, overtly tracked and delivery monitored by the Board.
- Migration and testing identified as being crucial to the success of the project so roles and responsibilities needed to be clearly defined.
- Given the magnitude of the project there would be a need to identify going forward the 'business readiness' to adapt to the changes that were coming including the readiness of the support functions put in place post 'go live'. Business readiness criteria would need to be defined and agreed.
- There was a recognition that there was a limited budget contingency, circa £30K unallocated against a budget of £2.2m.

The audit report was produced in October 2016 and steps taken to address the actions for improvement began.

3.6 In December 2016 the Project Team was reconfigured as follows:

- 1 x dedicated PM
- 1 x dedicated Adult configuration expert
- 1 x dedicated Children's configuration expert
- 1 x dedicated finance configuration expert
- 2 x trainers

The team continues to be supplemented by in-house resources via secondment.

3.7 In simplistic terms the process of switching from one system to another involves

- Configuring the new software
- Mapping the migrating data from the old system to the new
- Performing the migration routine
- Testing the new system, to ensure the data that has been migrated has come over, has been mapped and the correct field on the new system and that the new product works.

#### **4. Other Options**

4.1 The Department for People had no option other than to seek an alternate solution to the ageing Care First system. Not only was the existing system in the process of being phased out and unsupported by its manufacturer OLM (an organisation currently in the process of producing an alternate system which meets the current demands of social care departments) but the system had been widely criticised by Ofsted as being unfit for purpose as a case management tool particularly in respect of children's services.

#### **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

5.1 The need to replace the ageing Care First system was beyond doubt. The old Care First system lacked functionality, had no integration with the financial aspects of the department business, did not lend itself to the integrated health and social care agenda, had ceased to be supported by its manufacturer OLM and had been widely condemned by Ofsted.

5.2 Phase 1 will offer a modern robust solution to case recording and management and see the introduction of 'Early Help' a completely new solution designed to act as a general case management tool for children outside of Social Care. Early Help is an essential part of safeguarding children and young people within their family where preventative services can do more to reduce abuse and neglect than reactive services.

Phase 1 also see the integration of case and financial management and, through the establishment of a data warehouse as part of the solution provide automated and enhanced reporting functionality for statutory and other management reports.

5.3 Phase 2 which will follow on from phase 1 and for which funding is already identified in the council's capital programme, will see the introduction of portals.

Portals are designed to provide closer interaction between service users and service providers enabling a genuine two-way process, which is personalised, more effective, and timely and ultimately meets the needs of our service users.

Portals include:

- Market Place – Information about the local social care marketplace and gives individuals the ability to compare options, build shortlists and choose / pay for services in an intuitive manner.
- Advice and Information – gives individuals an indication of their likelihood of qualifying for assistance, in terms of both need and finance. It can send referrals directly to the case management systems

- Financial Assessments – provides individuals with the ability to assess their financial circumstances in line with charging policy
- Client Portal – individuals can have access to their assessments, reviews, personal budgets and any future care account details (planned for 2020). They can interact directly with the social workers using electronic mediums
- Provider Portal – gives providers an interface where they can review orders, submit actuals, share documents and information with Southend Borough Council

## **6. Corporate Implications**

### 6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

The project fundamentally underpins the council's published core aims and priorities

### 6.2 Financial Implications

Phase 1 of the project was estimated from the outset to cost £2.2m. Current plans suggest that this sum is required in full and delivery of phase 1 remains containable within this financial envelope.

Phase 2, which will follow phase 1, has been estimated to cost £560k and provision is approved within the 2017/18 capital programme.

### 6.3 Legal Implications

None.

### 6.4 People Implications

The introduction of the new system will see changes in the way staff are obliged to capture and record case data. Significant training will be required across both children's and adult's services. The engagement of dedicated trainers has been identified as managed within the project team's remit.

### 6.5 Property Implications

None

### 6.6 Consultation

Staff of the Department for People have been extensively involved in the identification and selection of the system and continue to be consulted across the implementation phases

### 6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Indirect implications

### 6.8 Risk Assessment

A risk and issues log is maintained by the Project Manager and discussed at each meeting of the Project Board

6.9 Value for Money

The solution was tendered and it should also be noted that the Liquid Logic product is becoming the product of choice for the majority of Local Authorities replacing their current case management systems

6.10 Community Safety Implications

The system will help to safeguard both vulnerable adults and children at risk

6.11 Environmental Impact

Not applicable

**7. Background Papers**

7.1 The PWC Audit published in Oct 2016

**8. Appendices**

8.1 There are no appendices associated with this report.