MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE LONDON BOROUGHS OF BRENT, LEWISHAM AND SOUTHWARK
Held as an online meeting on Wednesday 14 October at 6.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Bonavia (Chair – London Borough of Lewisham) and Councillors Slater (London Borough of Lewisham), McLennan and Stephens (London Borough of Brent), Lury and MacDonald (London Borough of Southwark).

Also Present: Councillor Paschoud (London Borough of Lewisham).

1. **Appointment of Chair**

   RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 10 of the Joint Committee's Terms of Reference, Councillor Bonavia (as representative of the hosting Authority – London Borough of Lewisham) be appointed as Chair for the duration of the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members**

   Apologies for absence were received from Councillor De Ryk (London Borough of Lewisham) with Councillor Slater attending as a substitute.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

   There were no declarations of interest from Members.

4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

   RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Joint Committee of the London Boroughs of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark held on Wednesday 8 July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

5. **Provision for Public Participation**

   No deputations or request to speak were submitted by members of the public.

6. **Update report to the ICT Shared Services for the London Boroughs of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark**

   Fabio Negro (Managing Director of Shared Service) introduced the report to the Joint Committee updating Members on Key Performance areas in relation to the Shared ICT Service.

   Members noted the summary of Key Performance management indicators for the service across all three Councils, which had been included within Appendix A of the update report. In terms of detailed service performance, the Joint Committee were advised that since the last meeting in July 2020:

- There had been 36,658 tickets logged in relation to the shared service between 1 July and 30 September 2020 with a detailed breakdown across the Shared Service provided in section 3.8 of the report.
- The shared service had been operating a programme (Call Biltz) to reduce the number of open tickets. At the height of the COVID-19 crisis the shared services queue had over 4,500 open tickets, this has now reduced to 2,100 as of 30th September. Whilst impacting on compliance with the SLA's (given the focus in seeking to resolve older calls and those out of SLA) it was anticipated this would improve performance levels moving forward as calls were closed off. The number of Priority 1 (P1) incidents had continued to reduce each period. Shared ICT Service (SICTS) had invested considerable time in improving the reliability of the infrastructure and produced an investment plan to continue to remove the legacy infrastructure and replace it with a fit for purpose environment. There had been six P1 incidents recorded during the quarter of which one had been resolved within the SLA (there were also 2 non-SICTS related P1s). This was a significant decrease over the period since the Committee last met, with further details included in Appendix A of the report.
- Following the Joint Committees request for further detail as to the categorisation of P2 and P3 calls, the Shared Service had participated in three one-day workshops to develop a PowerBI dashboard. This had been designed to provide greater insight into performance and the way calls were being divided with the knowledge gained allowing the Shared Service to identify and categorise key areas of focus as detailed in 3.14 – 3.15 of the report.

Fabio Negro went on to update the Committee on how the Shared Service had continued to respond to and manage service demands throughout the Coronavirus pandemic:

- Although the majority of staff continued to work from home, the service had been operating on a business as usual approach.
- The Out of Hours support telephone service, introduced in March 2020, had proved successful with the contract being extended until the end of March 2021.
- The Shared Service had continued to maintain the telephone support line (introduced at the start of the pandemic) for user queries with a commitment to continue this through to the end of 2020 when the position would be subject to further review, given any possible need to extend.
- Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) had been the preferred method of communication across all three boroughs since the pandemic and staff working from home (WFH) with use continuing to grow as a critical component in collaboration. The three councils continued to operate public meetings online without any significant issues reported. The Shared Service continued to support these requirements and work closely with providers to ensure maximum product value was gained.

Moving on through the report, the Committee noted:

- The update provided in relation to Cyber Security, as set out in section 3.31 – 3.38 of the report. Whilst no serious cyber security issues had been

experienced the Committee were aware of the serious incident which had affected the London Borough of Hackney. An assurance was provided for members on the continued work being undertaken across the service with a third party recommended by the National Cyber Security Centre to proactively monitor the environment across the Shared Service. Members were also advised of the ongoing work being undertaken to harden the infrastructure and to update security controls working with a strategic partner to improve vulnerability management. Other than false positives, the threat protection partner raised no incidents this period as noted in 3.32 of the report

- The update provided in relation to progress on the Continued Service Improvement Plan, as detailed in 3.39 – 3.40 of the report.

- The update on the audit results relating to the Shared Service and key actions, as detailed in 3.41 - 3.43 of the report. Members noted the progress made in addressing the findings in the report and high-level update provided, which had also been subject to review under each Council's Audit Committee arrangements

- The update on the Target Operating Model (TOM) as detailed in sections 3.50 -3.58 of the report. Members noted that the draft new organisational structure had been reviewed by partners and was due to be presented to the Management Board for final approval.

- That discussion had continued with Lewisham Homes (LH) around the provision of IT services. A potential model proposal (detailed in section 3.60 of the report) had been shared with their Board and the next stage, was for Lewisham Council and SICTS to create a report that would be taken to the Joint Management Board. Any agreement would also require approval from Lewisham Council

- The update on progress with the Technology Road Map, as detailed within section 3.44 – 3.49 of the report. Members noted the development of a 3-5 year plan with checkpoints having been built in to review any emerging technology and each Council's needs continuing to be assessed. The Road Map would also be an integral part of the future development of the TOM as a means of highlighting need for resources to deliver technology changes and ensure best value from investments made in infrastructure, with a partner engaged to provide quality assurance in relation to the strategic options. The Road Map included the Southwark infrastructure migration to the SICTS data centre, which would further allow for Council's to share technology and resources.

- The project and procurement updates detailed in section 3.63 – 3.76 of the report, along with the update on current financial performance of the Shared Service, as detailed in section 4 of the report. Whilst a small underspend of £10.5k was currently projected additional funding contributions had been required from all three Council's to assist the service in responding to the Covid pandemic, with a detailed breakdown provided in section 4.6 and Appendix A of the report.

Following on from the Service Performance update provided the Committee discussed the following points:

- In relation to Cyber-Security and the recent attack on Hackney Council, Fabio Negro advised that whilst the investigations were still to be concluded, a significant amount of shared learning had been obtained. Whilst not complacent and recognising the ongoing work to improve and harden the infrastructure, the Committee were advised of the additional layers of protection and security in place across all 3 boroughs, working with a third party partner, to provide additional assurance which was designed to address the concerns raised and help prevent a similar type of cyber-attack across the Shared Service.

  In order to minimise the risk of attacks, the Shared Service were also continuing work on the TOM aligned with the technology road map and other local authorities in order to share knowledge and focus on technical control, recognising the significant costs and disruption that could arise from any cyber security breach and attack.

- In terms of the percentage of email received, across the three boroughs Members were advised that 82% had been classified as spam, with 4-5% of these deemed as malicious. As part of the wider cyber security features introduced, an industry standard filter was now being applied to determine whether the recipient received the email. Recognising the increased sophistication of cyber-attacks, Members were also advised of the ongoing work being undertaken through the Technology Road Map to ensure the necessary cycles of system refresh or "evergreening" were being undertaken, which included a focus on the move towards cloud-based platforms.

- In terms of remote meeting technology, Members were assured of the continued support being provided by the Shared Service in relation to virtual meeting platforms in order to ensure that staff and each authority were able to continue operating effectively.

  Comments were also made in relation to the change in working patterns and culture needing to be supported through the increased focus on technology in response to the Covid pandemic. It was noted that the three councils within the Shared Service had continued to approach the Covid-19 situation with a similar strategy requiring support to be provided to enable key workers and frontline staff to continue operating as required and to support the rest of the workforce in being able to work from home, where possible. This had increased the focus on the support being provided by the Shared Service with a focus on remote system access alongside the necessary interconnectivity and equipment. It was anticipated these expectations and requirements on the Shared Service would continue to grow as each authority moved into their recovery phases, given the cultural shift towards remote working as the service moved forward.

  Fabio Negro informed the Committee that these expectations and associated focus on the infrastructure were being captured in the Technology Road Map, with work also ongoing to complete the Southwark transition from a thin client to laptop operating system.

- As further updates, in relation to specific queries the Committee were advised of the efforts made to simplify the logging of service requests on Hornbill. The Committee learned that a trial across all three boroughs to develop the interface had involved persons who logged a high number of calls. The outcome of the trial had provided constructive feedback, which changes as a result due to be signed off and implemented across the service.

Fabio Negro also provided an update on the recent loss of service connectivity. The incident had been investigated and the cause found and addressed. Resilience across the network would also be improved as part of the move towards the Cloud based platform and shared data centres with capacity also being built in as part of the Technology Road Map and work to integrate Southwark's infrastructure with that of Brent & Lewisham.

As no further matters were raised, the Joint Committee completed their consideration of the update report by noting the Shared Service Risk Management register within the Performance Pack. The Chair thanked Fabio Negro for the updates provided and it was **RESOLVED:**

(1) To note the update provided and actions being taken in relation to the ongoing performance and delivery of the shared service, as detailed within Section 3 of the report.

(2) To note the contents of the Performance Pack as detailed in Section 3 and Appendix A of the report.

(3) As specific actions arising from the update, it was agreed:

(a) To provide an update report for the next meeting detailing the cost and timeline for the cloud programme in relation to migration of the Southwark data centre and benefits this would be expected to deliver in terms of shared technology and connectivity across the shared service.

(b) That updates continue to be provided on progress in developing the strategic options under each of the 5 themes within the technology road map.

(c) To thank staff across the Shared Service for their ongoing effort to support the delivery of services across each of the three boroughs during the pandemic.

7. **Exclusion of Press and Public (if required)**

No items were identified at the meeting that required the exclusion of the press and public.

8. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

Members noted the date for the next meeting would take place on:

Tuesday 2 March 2021 – 6:30pm to be hosted virtually by London Borough of Brent. (Post Meeting Update: This meeting will now be hosted by the London Borough of Southwark following the additional meeting hosted by Brent in January 2021)

The meeting closed at 7:15pm