

MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE LONDON BOROUGHS OF BRENT, LEWISHAM AND SOUTHWARK

Held as an online meeting on Tuesday 13 July 2021 at 6:00pm

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

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) and Councillor Lury (London Borough of Southwark) along with Peter Gadsdon (London Borough of Brent – Strategic Director Customer & Digital Services)

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 Borough IT Committee of Brent, Lewisham and Southwark held on Tuesday 2 March 2021 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**

Due to the loss of the webcasting connection, the meeting was paused at 6:05pm and reconvened at 6:20pm.

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 March 2021:

- The Target Operating Model structure had largely been implemented with the completed restructure now having gone live. This had led to a number of appointments in previously hard to fill roles and a number of roles being filled on a permanent rather than agency basis. Work was now underway to embed the new structure, roles and ways of working building on the additional capabilities available as a means of addressing the performance targets for the service with greater capacity to manage ticket volumes and reduce the causes of incidents. Details of the new structure and capabilities available within the news teams were provided in section 3.55 and 3.56 of the report.
- During the four month period between April and July, call volumes had been evenly distributed with around 7,000 calls per month in the Shared Technology Service (STS) queues. The biggest change noted, however, had been the increase of open calls (including untriaged), which had risen to over 3,500. It was reported that the increased number of calls was partly due to the restructure of STS affecting capacity as well as some of the large transition projects currently being progressed and the nature of calls being logged with the move from the old thin-client/remote desktop server environment to one that now encompassed approximately 10,000 laptops generating more complex problems.
- Members of the Board noted that between the period of 01 February 2021 and 31 May 2021, the shared service logged 41,502 tickets, which was an average of 10,375 tickets per month against 45,407 in the last period (October 2020 - January 2021 with an average of 11,350 tickets per month). These tickets consisted of both issues and service requests. A breakdown of tickets logged was detailed within section 3.10 of the report.
- Of the eight priority 1 incidents within STS queues, all were resolved within the service level agreement, which was a reduction compared to the overall number of priority 1 incidents (14) reported within the previous reporting period. Four of the P1 calls related to physical infrastructure beyond STS control including a power cut and physical fibre-cable damage. There were also five non-STS related P1s that were resolved by local applications teams within each Borough.
- Priority 2 and 3 issues within STS queues had seen an average of 57% and 67% compliance with the service level agreements (against 72% and 71% reported for the previous period). While STS had placed considerable emphasis on improved call management, more complex issues had caused resolution times to increase within this period with STS continuing to work to improve these service levels.

A breakdown of the top six categories for P2 and P3 calls had been provided in section 3.15 - 3.16 of the report. Priority 4 service requests within STS queues for this reporting period had a 79% compliance with the service level agreements, compared with 80% previously reported.

- The customer service portal Hornbill as noted in 3.19 of the report, was being developed to present a more user-centric experience that would lead to better categorisation of calls logged and allow introduction of more automated workflows with the aim to speed up the allocation and resolution of incidents and

requested tickets. A trial of the new portal had taken place with partners and received positive feedback and work was underway to plan for release of the new interface.

Fabio Negro then moved on to provide an update on the progress being made in relation to cyber security across the Shared Service. In noting the update provided within sections 3.25 – 3.36 the Board were informed that no serious cyber security issues had been recorded during this last period as work continued with a third party recommended by the National Cyber Security Centre to proactively monitor the environment across all three boroughs. In terms of specific updates, members noted:

- The implementation of a new backup solution across the three boroughs with Rubrik selected as the partner and the solution designed to provide a secure, on premise short-term backup storage synchronised into cloud storage to multiple datacentres. This had greatly enhanced the STS ability to recover from any ransomware related cyber-attack.
- The continued focus of the STS on the hardening of the internal infrastructure across all three boroughs and deployment of tools to aid vulnerability management and patching across the server estate.

Since the migration by a third party provider of various backup workloads from the old system to a new backup system, the majority of work had been completed with over 1,700 objects now on the new backup system, which included virtual servers, unstructured file-share data and SQL databases. STS had achieved 99% compliance success with the backups compared with a target of 98% in the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA). The Board noted that the transfer of all workloads was expected be completed in August as highlighted in section 3.30 of the report.

- In relation to the Public Service Network (PSN) compliance, the Joint Committee were notified that Brent had recently submitted their annual PSN and were awaiting certification, Lewisham were currently compliant and Southwark had had a health check and a submission was being prepared.
- Brent and Lewisham old smartphone estate was scheduled for upgrade as their devices had fallen below the current security compliance levels. Brent had completed their replacement programme and were in the process of updating all compliant devices to the latest iOS version as Lewisham considered their model around mobile telephony with a strategy currently being developed. The outstanding devices owed by Southwark, had been managed on a case-by-case basis.

The Joint Committee then moved on to note the update provided in respect of Continuous Service Improvement within sections 3.37 – 3.43 of the report. Following the successful recruitment of three new Service Design Officers and a MI & Analytics Officer, a review had been undertaken of the approach to Service Improvement, in line with the Target Operating Model objectives. This involved the new team under the supervision of the newly appointed Head of Strategy & Technology working within an Agile project methodology that aimed to deliver improvement and change on the highest priority items in the new Service Improvement Backlog (SIB). Members were

advised this was a list of identified improvements initially prioritised on the basis of urgency and impact, with the finalised priority order forming the focus for delivery. Members noted, as an example, the screenshot of items included within the SIB included within section 3.40 of the report, which would be expected to increase further as the list of potential development items was expanded.

Following a request made by the Joint Committee in March 2021, a breakdown had also been provided in section 3.44 – 3.46 of the report on the outstanding audits involving STS to be completed, with details of the completed audits now having been removed from the report. Members noted the details provided on the six outstanding audits and co-ordinated approach developed to ensure the necessary actions were completed. In addition, details were also provided on the audit programme involving STS for 2021/22

Moving on Fabio Negro then provided an update on the progress made in relation to the Road Map. Members were informed of the focus and progress made in the development of the business case for a planned investment in the STS storage, computing and disaster recovery tools as well as changes implemented in the organisation around the ongoing return of staff across all three boroughs to the office environment. The Board noted that upon completion of this work, business cases for further activities planned in 2021/2022 would need to be developed.

In terms of other updates, the Joint Committee also noted:

- The update on the proposed model for delivery of IT infrastructure support services to Lewisham Homes, as detailed with sections 3.57 – 3.61 of the report, which had now been approved by the Shared Service Joint Management Board. Members noted that since the last update provided, Lewisham Council had presented their proposal for the model to Lewisham Homes. The proposal had been agreed in principle, with the final details now subject to conclusion.
- The project and procurement updates provided within section 3.62 – 3.77 of the report.
- The details provided on the financial performance of the STS as detailed in section 4 of the report. In terms of performance in 2020/21 the Service had reported an underspend of £1.5k against a full year budget of £14.6m. During 2021/22 the Service was currently forecasting an overspend of £45k relating to agency staff pending transition into permanent posts. The Board noted that the forecast would change throughout the financial year as it was currently based on P1 and P2 outturn and the current service knowledge with details also provided on Covid-19 related expenditure, which currently stood at £975.5k across all three boroughs compared to £954.8k at the end of 2020/21.

Following the Service Performance update provided Fabio Negro invited questions from Members with the Joint Committee discussing the points highlighted below:

- Further details were sought in relation to the impact, which the increased number of open calls recorded for this quarter would have on the day to day activity of the service as work was undertaken to manage and reduce the backlog. In response, Fabio Negro informed the Joint Committee that whilst the restructure of STS had impacted on capacity of the service, the overall aim had

been to provide additional support and enhance the capacity available to manage ticket volumes as well as reduce the causes of incidents being logged as a further means of addressing demand. STS had already seen a reduction in calls logged as the new structure and staff were embedded in their roles, which, it was anticipated would continue during the next quarter.

In response to a further query on service issues, Fabio Negro went on to confirm that whilst the number of tickets logged by the Brent Applications Team was currently higher than other boroughs this had related to a number of specific significant application upgrades and windows updates but it was expected that this would settle down and stabilise.

- Further details were sought on progress with the roll out of the Hornbill customer portal, after the positive trial experience with partners. Fabio Negro confirmed that due to the current increase in call numbers a decision had been made to delay implementation of the new interface in order to allow focus to remain on addressing current service demand and formation of the new Service Delivery Team who would be responsible for leading on the roll-out. Members were advised they would be kept informed of progress made and the proposed date for implementation, once this had been finalised.
- In response to a number of queries raised around cyber security, Fabio Negro informed the Committee that SMS messages were not currently monitored as a source of threats or risk but that all staff and members needed to remain vigilant of the threat and risks posed to all mobile devices including smartphones and emails. Members were advised that whilst it was possible to monitor threats via laptops mobile phones required a different process. Work was currently being undertaken to review a suite of tools for mobile device security management and members were advised that the comments and concerns raised would be considered as part of that process.
- Further assurance was sought on the measures in place to manage delivery of the 55 in-flight projects, which had been identified across Brent, Lewisham and Southwark, given the work currently being undertaken to embed the new structure. In response, Fabio Negro assured members of the activity being undertaken to effectively manage and co-ordinate these projects through the new project management element within the service structure. This had been supported by development of a new Forecast tool to assist in monitoring demand and prioritising resources accordingly with monthly meetings also being undertaken with each borough to ensure all projects were being managed effectively. The Board noted that regular meetings were also being undertaken with project management teams in each borough in order to share information about potential projects and establish a future pipeline.
- Members support for the restructure of the STS and its impact on delivery of the service moving forward.
- In noting the work being undertaken in relation to Lewisham Homes, Members of the Joint Committee were informed that it was anticipated the current model of apportionment would continue under the existing proposals with Lewisham Homes being added to Lewisham Councils contribution to the Shared Service

and also being represented by the Council in terms of the existing governance arrangements. In terms of physical infrastructure, Lewisham Homes were currently seeking to end their current arrangement with the provider used to host their datacentres. Subject to final agreement, the proposal would then be to move the physical infrastructure to the datacentres hosted by the STS, which it was anticipated may be finalised in time for the move to take place by December.

- The Joint Committee commended the Service for the work being undertaken with the Department for Housing, Communities & Local Government (DHCLG) in response to recent high profile cyber-attacks across the sector and for the resulting award of £100k to help procure additional tools and training to assist in combating the issues moving forward.

As no further matters were raised, the Joint Committee completed their consideration of the update report. 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 Appendix A of the report.
- (3) As specific actions arising from the update, it was agreed:
 - (a) To ensure councillors and members of staff across all three boroughs within the STS continued to be reminded about the risk of cyber threats to all mobile devices, including smartphones and the need to remain vigilant, particularly in relation to emails.

7. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Members were advised that meetings, which did not require the Committee to make any formal decisions, could still be held virtually and on this basis it was noted that future meetings had been scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday 12 October 21 at 6pm to be hosted by London Borough of Brent
- Tuesday 15 March 22 at 6pm to be hosted by London Borough of Southwark

9. Exclusion of Press and Public (if required)

At this stage in proceedings the Chair advised that he intended to move into closed session for the remainder of the meeting in order to consider an additional update (following on from the STS performance report) on the progress being made with the

decommissioning arrangements across the STS in relation to Windows 2008 server platform.

Given the commercially sensitive nature of these arrangements the Joint Committee were advised they would need to pass a formal resolution excluding the press and public in order to receive a more detailed update.

It was therefore **AGREED** that that under Section 100A (4) of the Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for consideration of the update in relation to the Windows 2008 decommissioning programme on the grounds that it would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

The live webcast was ended at this stage of the meeting to enable the Joint Committee to move into private session.

10. Windows 2008 Decommissioning Arrangements

Fabio Negro then provided members with a further update on the current progress being made with the decommissioning programme for the Windows 2008 legacy server platform across the STS being undertaken as part of the Technology Roadmap for the Service.

Members noted the progress made in terms of the applications within Brent and Lewisham and ongoing timescales for completion of the programme along with the different model adopted within Southwark based on their cloud migration programme.

The importance of the programme was recognised by members in terms of wider system support arrangements and resilience issues given the work being undertaken to harden the infrastructure and provide necessary back-up and recovery solutions.

Having noted the update provided it was agreed that further background details (in the form of a detailed Excel spreadsheet) would be provided for members of the Joint Committee on the decommissioning programme.

The meeting closed at 6.59pm

Councillor Bonavia
Chair