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

Held as an online meeting on Tuesday 19 March 2024 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT (online): Councillor Mili Patel (Chair) and Councillor Fleur Donnelly Jackson (London Borough of Brent), Councillor Stephanie Cryan and Councillor Natasha Ennin (London Borough of Southwark) & Councillor Amanda De Ryk (London Borough of Lewisham)

Also Present: Councillor Paschaud (London Borough of Lewisham)

1. **Appointment of Chair**

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

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

    No apologies were received.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

    There were no declarations of interest declared by Members at the meeting.

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 Tuesday 28 November 2023 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. **Shared Technology Service Update Report**

    Kevin Ginn (Head of Operations of Shared Technology Services) introduced the report to the Joint Committee providing an update on key performance areas in relation to the Shared Technology Service (STS).

    Members noted the summary of key performance management indicators for the service across all three Council's, which had been included within the report and in terms of detailed service performance, the Joint Committee were advised of the following:

- In this reporting period, STS had made strong progress in meeting three of the main performance indicators, with significant reductions in the number of open STS operational Hornbill calls, the number of open Operational Aged calls (dating back to 2021) and then a significant improvement in SLA performance for priority 3 incident calls and priority 4 (P4) request calls.

- In the period November 2023 through to February 2024, there were ten P1 incidents related to STS infrastructure, four of which were resolved within SLA.

- P3 incidents were the most common type of incident, as these were generally related to issues experienced by individual users. The target SLA was to resolve 90% of P3 incidents within two working days. 10,051 P3 incidents were logged into STS operational queues by the partner councils (11,299 overall) during this reporting period, with an overall SLA performance of 75% (compared with 66% in the previous reporting period) and the top eight categories for P3 calls detailed in section 4.10 of the report.

- Priority 4 were defined as requests for standard service or catalogue item. The standard SLA was to resolve 80% within 5 working days. In the current reporting period, there had been 10,373 P4 requests logged into STS operational queues, with an overall SLA performance of 83% compared with the previous reporting period figure of 74%.

- Response times to P3 and P4 incidents were recorded as faster than they had ever been before, and STS was remaining within SLA across all three local authorities.

- The on-site service for face-to-face visits by users was now covering standard Business as Usual (BAU) hours of 8am to 6pm, as STS strived to improve the user experience further. This service was being provided at the Councils' main offices at Brent Civic Centre, Lewisham Laurence House and Southwark Tooley Street.

- In terms of users needing face to face support, STS had improved the queuing service by implementing the QMinder system, which provided a controlled queueing and notification mechanism, and this will result in tickets being completed quicker.

- The telephony provider was Risual Ltd and when staff rang the IT Service Desk number, it was answered by operatives from Risual who acted on behalf of the three councils. Members were advised of measures being undertaken to resolve an ongoing issue involving the logging of tickets via Risual on Hornbill which had been designed to provide a more accurate picture of first-touch ticket resolution volumes and was also expected would improve SLA performance for P3 and P4 priority tickets. The integration should be delivered by the end of March 2024.

- Overall, the volumes of calls coming into STS were reducing when compared to previous years, which was demonstrative of the mitigation and work put into

place to reduce the number of issues users were facing with a breakdown on tickets logged provided in section 4.15 of the report.

- The Asset Management System had now been fully implemented across all three councils which was being used to manage the issuing, repairs, returns etc. of laptops to users.

- In terms of service user experience a workshop had been held in October 2023 with all councils focussed on areas for improvement, identifying the challenges and opportunities and working together to find solutions, with further details on the programme being delivered in response included under the continuous improvement section in section 5 of the report. This had included use of increased automation and also the potential to utilise AI enabled solutions.

- The details provided on the Top 10 risks identified for STS and the relevant mitigations in place to address them, as detailed within section 6 of the report.

- The details provided on the STS related audits which had been undertaken across all three authorities during 2023-24 along with progress on delivery of the recommended actions identified and audit plan for 2024-25, as detailed within section 7 of the report.

- The outline provided on the 6-month overview of the STS Technology Roadmap, as detailed within section 8 of the report including the refreshment of all laptops of staff across all three councils, wider area networking and improvement of band width and resilience and better network traffic management and Windows Server upgrade (scheduled to be completed by November 24).

- Updates were also provided in relation to a range of other key projects, as detailed in section 9 of the report including the compute and storage infrastructure replacement, Windows laptop pilot, Wi-Fi and network upgrades. Mobile device migration to O2 and renewal of automated switchboard for the Contact Centre with members noting that there were a total of 75 projects currently in flight.

- In terms of the STS budget this was projected to remain in balance to the end of the financial year.

The Chair thanked Kevin Ginn for his update and commended the Service for the performance outlined. Comments were then invited from Members on the update with the following issues raised:

- In response to further details being sought on the O2 migration Fabio Negro stated that Southwark was fully migrated and it was expected that 95% of Brent would be migrated by end of March 2024 and Lewisham in April 2024.

- In terms of open tickets, confirmation was provided that all those from 2021 had now been closed with progress being made in resolving the outstanding requests from 2022.

- Given reference to the Service Improvement Plan, details were sought as to when this would be shared with the Joint Committee given the increasing reliance on IT systems and costs involved with members keen to explore the associated risks in terms of service delivery and impact on residents should systems be unavailable. In response the Joint Committee was advised that STS were aware of the impact on the wider community when issues were experienced with issues reported being classified under different priorities during triage to ensure fast tracking of those systems identified as key or high priority. In terms of costs and value for money, the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) had been asked to carry out a financial benchmarking exercise on the provision of IT Services across a sample of local authorities, including the STS, which was in the process of being completed and on which further details could be provided as part of the next update for the Committee.

- Further details were sought regarding performance in relation to P1 incidents given their more significant impact on those Councils and services affected especially in cases involving third party suppliers. In terms of these suppliers members were advised of the measures being taken to ensure third party suppliers were integrated into the resolution process with further details requested for the next meeting on the triage process for calls logged and how these were prioritised to reflect the impact on the wider business and local residents.

- Members advised there were also keen to explore the procurement process being developed for the windows laptop refresh across all 3 partner boroughs with a focus on the procurement methodology and provisions included for securing best value, social value and other key considerations. In response the Joint Committee were advised of the work being undertaken with the procurement teams across all three member authorities to review procurement methods and gain a consensus on the right approach going forward including value for money and added social value with work also undertaken in relation to risk and quality assurance. Given the timescales involved, members were advised that a separate paper would need to be provided (outside of the main meeting) outlining the procurement process developed for the windows laptop refresh across all 3 partner boroughs.

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 Technology Service, as detailed within the report.

(2) In relation to further actions identified:

(a) Further details to be provided as part of the update for the July Committee on the outcome of the VFM benchmarking assessment being undertaken by LOTI on the provision of IT Services across a sample of local authorities, including the STS.

(b)   Further details to be provided within the update for the next Committee on the triage process for calls logged and how these are prioritised to reflect the impact on the wider business and local residents.

(c)   A separate paper to be provided for members (in advance of the next Committee) outlining the procurement process developed for the windows laptop refresh across all 3 partner boroughs. Update to include a focus on the procurement methodology and provisions included for securing best value, social value and other key considerations.

7.   **Date of Future Meetings**

Members noted the following dates scheduled for future meetings of the Joint Committee during 2024-25 Municipal Year:

- Tuesday 9 July 2024 at 6pm – to be held online chaired by the London Borough of Southwark.

- Tuesday 26 November 2024 at 6pm – to be held online chaired by the London Borough of Lewisham.

- Tuesday 18 March 2025 at 6pm – to be held online chaired by the London Borough of Brent.

8.   **Exclusion of Press and Public**

At this stage in proceedings the Chair advised that she intended to move into closed session for the remainder of the meeting in order to consider a separate report for the Joint Committee providing updates on the Cyber Security status, threats, and mitigations in relation to the Shared Technology Services (STS).

Given the commercially sensitive nature of the details contained within the update, the Joint Committee were advised that the report would need to be considered in closed session which would require the Joint Committee to pass a formal resolution excluding the press and public for consideration of the item.

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 following item 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.

9.   **Shared Technology Service Cyber Security Update Report**

Kevin Ginn (Head of Operations of Shared Technology Services) then introduced the update report in relation to Cyber Security status, threats, and mitigations for the Shared Technology Service (STS). In considering the report members noted:

- The outline of events impacting on STS along with an update on current threats and mitigating actions in relation to the following key areas of activity as detailed within section 3-7 of the report:
  - ➢ DEFEND – which had involved STS developing the means to defend against evolving cyber threats, respond effectively to incidents, and ensure networks, data and systems were protected and resilient.
  - ➢ DETER – which had involved STS detecting, understanding, investigating, and disrupting hostile activities against the service.
  - ➢ DEVELOP – which had involved STS developing a coordinated and tailored approach to risks and threats encountered and mitigating against potential vulnerabilities.
  - ➢ REACT – which had involved STS in developing sufficient controls to respond to any attacks including the organisational channels and processes required to make efficient decisions further protect data and limit any scope of attack.

- The aim to present the future Cyber Security Strategy 2024-2026 to the Joint Committee for approval at the next meeting.

- The outline of future plans being developed in relation to the STS Cyber Security Strategy, as detailed within section 8 of the report, which had included a project focussed on future laptop design as well as work to develop the plans for implementation of Microsoft's biometric authentication method for logging into devices, work to reduce the amount of open old vulnerabilities and to engage with third parties to onboard a Security Operations Centre.

- To protect against privilege escalation in the cloud and on-premise environment, STS had been working with CrowdStrike on their identity protection tool to understand the risk with accounts and the likelihood of exploit and the process to secure corporate identities.

The Chair thanked Kevin Ginn for his update with additional clarification provided for members in relation to the following issues raised:

- The background and resolution of recent cyber security events impacting on the STS across each borough, including the costs and resources involved in dealing with any incidents.

- The approach being developed towards the use of biometrics as a potential security feature.

As no further matters were raised, the Joint Committee completed their consideration of the update report. The Chair thanked Kevin Ginn and Fabio Negro for the details provided and it was **RESOLVED** to:

(1)	note the update and actions being taken as detailed in the report.

(2)   To request (in view of the issues highlighted during the meeting) a separate paper to be provided for members of the Joint Committee (in advance of the next meeting) on the approach towards the use of biometrics as a potential security feature on devices to be included within the laptop refresh programme including a focus on risks, mitigations and also opportunities alongside consultation with staff representatives/Trade Unions.

10.   Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 7.04 pm

COUNCILLOR MILI PATEL
Chair