



**Joint Committee of
the London Boroughs of Brent,
Lewisham and Southwark**
16 October 2018

**Report from the Head of Digital
Services**

Report to the Joint ICT Committee on 16 October 2018

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	2 Appendix A – Performance Pack – October 2018 Appendix B – Service Improvement Plan
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Prod Sarigianis Head of Digital Services Tel: 020 8937 6080 Email: Prod.Sarigianis@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an update on the 3-council ICT Shared Service.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The ICT Shared Service Joint Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the actions being taken in Section 3 – Detail.
- b) Note the contents of the Performance Pack as outlined in Section 3 – Detail (Performance) and Appendix A.

3.0 Detail

Summary

3.1 Over the last period since the Committee met, the overall number of critical service outages has reduced, however it is clear that further improvements in service stability are required.

- 3.2 The volume of open calls has been persistently high and call resolution performance is lower than what it was during the first few months of the 3-council shared service.
- 3.3 There have been significant delays in the datacentre migration project for Southwark, primarily as a direct result of delays in Virgin upgrading the links to the existing Southwark datacentres.
- 3.4 The shared service management team have agreed an initial service improvement plan to address concerns around the service and work on the improvement plan has started.

Performance

- 3.5 There has been a clear increase in call volumes for all three councils, as well as a decrease in call resolution performance.
- 3.6 This decline in performance started during the telephony rollouts for Brent and Lewisham and continued after an initial recovery when we saw the contracts of a number of interim staff funded by the project come to an end. However it is not clear that there is a direct link between the two.
- 3.7 The service improvement plan outlined in Appendix B is trying to address a number of issues that we believe are associated with business-as-usual performance, including:
- High number of interim staff are still employed by the service; following the completion of our restructure and the first phase of recruitment we have reduced vacancies from 42 to 22, but this is still quite high.
 - Most managers of the service spend significant amounts of their time performing technical work, and therefore do not have enough time to manage their staff and the work of the team.
 - The previous point means that individual performance is not managed, and that we do not have a clear understanding of the overall resource requirements for delivering business-as-usual services.
 - There are perceived conflicts between business-as-usual and project work, and without the managers' insight into their work of the team it is challenging to address that.

Service Issues

- 3.8 The last few months have seen a period of increased stability compared to the last period reported to this committee, however we are still experiencing issues with the service.
- 3.9 The number of change-related incidents has reduced significantly as our change management process is getting better embedded to the shared service.
- 3.10 We have successfully implemented workarounds in the network configuration to stop any further outages caused by the Virgin link connecting our data centres, while we are about to have the secondary link handed over by BT.
- 3.11 We did experience a number of issues with legacy systems in Southwark, with this peaking in August, with 11 P1s – of which 4 were related to issues with the

CRM system hosted externally by GDIT, 3 to legacy configurations/systems, 1 related to the old telephony system.

- 3.12 The remaining 3 P1s in August were all related to a major incident related to internet access, affecting all 3 councils. This exposed a number of weaknesses in our major incidents process and in our communications, and lessons learnt have been incorporated in our service improvement plan.
- 3.13 Lewisham also experienced significant numbers of P1s in June and July, the majority related to issues with the LCS and IDOX applications, issues that had to be addressed by the vendors.

Southwark Transition – Phase 2

- 3.14 Issues with upgrades of the links to the existing data centres (Capita, links provided by LGfL/Virgin) have resulted in further delays to the project. In all Virgin have made three separate attempts to upgrade these links and all 3 have been unsuccessful – given the fact that these attempts involve planning work, resource availability and a service outage for Southwark staff, this has meant significant delays to the project with the current projection being an end date of March 2019.

Shared Service Restructure

- 3.15 We have completed all internal recruitment and appointed to 29 positions.
- 3.16 We have 22 vacancies for which we have started external recruitment.

Update on Other Projects

- 3.17 Work has started on the laptop rollout for Brent, with the pilot taking place this month. Pilots have also been taking place in Southwark, while we have been discussing plans with Lewisham linked to their reconfiguration of their main offices at Laurence House.
- 3.18 The telephony project in Southwark has started, with the first phase being the implementation in their contact centres.

Procurement Update

- 3.19 We have signed a single contract for the supply of Children's & Educational Services software for Brent and Lewisham.
- 3.20 We have released the tender for printing services for the three councils, covering both office & bulk printing, with expected contract award by the end of the year.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The budget for the shared service for 2018/19 is currently under review as we are looking to incorporate costs linked to the service improvement plan.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 This report is for noting. Therefore no specific legal implications arising from the report at this stage.
- 5.2 Brent Council hosts the shared ICT service, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012. These provisions allow one council to delegate one of its functions to another council as well as allowing two or more councils to discharge their functions jointly with the option of establishing a joint committee. Joint committees can in turn delegate functions to one or more officers of the councils concerned. Decisions of joint committees are binding on the participating councils. However, subject to the terms of the arrangement, the council retains the ability to discharge that function itself.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 No equality implications arising from this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 7.1 There are none.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications

- 8.1 The restructure of the service was completed in June and as mentioned in section 3 we are working on recruitment for a number of residual vacancies.

Report sign off:

Althea Loderick

Strategic Director of Resources