

## REPORT TO OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2018

### Update on BRUM Account

- 1.1. This report outlines the plans to replace the current online account solution with the BRUM account (**B**irmingham's **R**eport it, **U**ppdate it and **M**anage it account).

### Report Objectives

- 1.2. The objective of this report is to update members on plans to implement a new online solution which will enable citizens and businesses in Birmingham to request services, track progress or view their personal account information online.  
The report will update members on the approach, timescales and savings associated with the implementation of the BRUM account, including the Members Portal.

### Background

- 1.3. The current Birmingham.gov.uk website went live in August 2016. This was the first step in a work plan to improve availability of online information and services to citizens and businesses. Post go live the website received positive feedback and was recognised in a number of awards in 2017, these were Honoree status in the Webby Awards (International), winners of the public vote and gold status in the Lovie awards (33 countries) and the Plain English Campaign Website Award.

The following comment was made by the Plain English Campaign in relation to the website.

*When the time came to revamp their website, Birmingham City Council felt that the best results would involve the contribution of its users. So they collaborated with locals through the design process, and the results are excellent.*

*The new website is a joy to use, and is a credit to everyone involved. It looks great, is easy to navigate and is a vast improvement. Perhaps this example will set a precedent other city councils might follow?*

- 1.4. The new website was designed and built with contributions from citizens, staff and a cross party member group that informed the final version. In response to the increase in use of mobile devices, the site was designed to be mobile responsive and has seen an increase in mobile access to the site from 54% to 64% between September 2016 and September 2017.

It was identified prior to the launch of the new website that the next step in the journey should be the replacement of the My Account. This was further reinforced by feedback from stakeholders post go-live. The only negative

feedback on the new website was around the experience of using My Account.

- 1.5. The current My Account was implemented in 2009 and is part of a full SAP Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution which was developed to support the take up of online services in Birmingham.
- 1.6. It is an online self-service channel giving citizens access to create their own online account to allow them to view and track the requests they have raised with the Council. The services available have reduced over time. The CWS platform (Corporate Web Services) which supports the My Account and associated online forms including integration to CRM or service delivery systems has reached end of life and requires upgrading or replacing.
- 1.7. Customer Services conducted an extensive soft market testing exercise to engage with suppliers who provide off the shelf technologies which could be a replacement to the My Account. To support this, a number of visits and engagement sessions have taken place with other local authorities to enhance the information received during soft market testing and to learn from other council's experiences of implementing online solutions.

To better understand how the market has progressed in the last 7 years and what products are available, Customer Services and Corporate Procurement Services (CPS) undertook a soft market testing exercise supported by Service Birmingham.

It is proposed that the "My Account" be replaced by the "BRUM Account" which will allow citizens to register for an account and add services as they require them. This will consist of a number of different solutions accessible via a single online account. In order to ensure security of individuals information the first time a citizen requests a service they will be required to provide information that will authenticate them to each service. Once authenticated; future access to the service will be via a simple click on a link within the BRUM account to the individual's information.

### **Overview of BRUM account**

- 1.8. The customer services online solution will allow citizens to self serve with council services through the website enabled by simple account registration, enquiry tracking, the ability to update personal information, status reporting and notifications.

The "BRUM" Account will be enabled on the Birmingham.gov. uk website, the current CMS (Content Management System) provided by Jadu. The high level requirements below support the ambition to meet citizen expectations by making the online transactions easy to use. The requirements are also in line with the principles defined in the Citizen Access Strategy, including a mobile responsive service that is accessible 24/7.

1.9. The registration and manage your account element of the BRUM Account solution will include:

- Simple Registration Process
- Personalised welcome message
- Online account maintenance, including ability to reset password
- Enable authentication to service specific self-service solutions, once authenticated the service will be accessible via a single click from within the BRUM account
- Each service will display a history of activities that shows last date accessed
- Ability to retain partially completed forms which can be edited or deleted later
- Find My Local (Local View) functionality with pre-populated address
- Campaigns/Marketing functionality
- Agent view allowing auditable transaction/ account creation by contact centre staff on behalf of the citizen

The customer home page is the main entry point for registered users to view all their service requests and access other transactional and personalised services.

<b>Services In Scope</b>		
<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>Business Rates</b>	<b>Highways</b>
<b>Parks</b>	<b>Skips</b>	<b>Complaints</b>
<b>Skips</b>	<b>Elections</b>	<b>Neighbourhood office</b>
<b>Members Portal</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Housing Repairs</b>
<b>Housing Rents</b>	<b>Environmental Health</b>	<b>Tenancy Management</b>
<b>Anti- Social Behaviour</b>	<b>Waste Management</b>	

1.10. The “BRUM Account” will be implemented in phases; each phase will be supported by end to end reviews that will identify and support the implementation of the changes necessary to business processes that will ensure effective and sustainable self-service delivery.

The “BRUM Account” will consist of a number of ‘out the box’ solutions which have been developed and tested in the market as well as used by other local authorities with integration into line of business systems. This will also support agility and increased availability of the BRUM account in the future as changes to one module for example rents can be made without impact on other services delivered via the BRUM account.

The implementation of the BRUM account also aligns to the city councils corporate objectives, Citizen Access Strategy and ICT-D strategy and supports the following themes:

#### **Citizen Access Strategy**

- Develop citizen access arrangements that are designed to meet the differing needs of our citizens, focused on the citizen, not internal service boundaries

- Develop a consistent, dynamic and excellent experience for our citizens whenever and however they contact us, building in continuous flexible change made rapidly in a controlled manner
- Improve the efficiency of citizen access arrangements by reducing failure demand – designing service delivery to get it right first time, every time so as to , remove duplication and failure and prevent demand arising in the first place
- Develop an improved digital offer, better citizen confidence in digital access channels and significantly increase take up and use of digital access channels
- Reduce demand by changing the relationship with citizens so that those that are able do more for themselves

### ICT-D strategy

- Integrated ICT and Digital Services - We'll deliver an innovative, reliable, flexible,
- Integrated, secure and well managed service.
- Digital Facilitation – We will help you to go digital
- Insight – to boost our capability, to turn data into information and information into insight

### Implementation

1.11. The BRUM account will be delivered in two phases; the 1<sup>st</sup> phase delivered by March 2018 will enable access to key services available as outlined in table 1.

**Table 1 - Project Deliverables - Phase 1 – March 2018**

<b>Solution</b>	<b>Citizens and Businesses will be able to</b>
Citizen Portal	Registration for BRUM account using email and password. Ability to opt into services as required
Council Tax	View instalments and payments, Make payment, Amend account e.g. request/end SPD, open or close account
Highways	Report issues via maps, geo tagging or postcode Get update on progress
Parks	Report issues via maps, geo tagging or postcode Get update on progress
Skips	Request and pay for a permit
Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missing Polling Card form</li> <li>• Change in Circumstances form – Hand off to back office</li> <li>• General Enquiries form</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood Offices	For use by Contact Centre staff to transfer information to Neighbourhood offices

Complaints & Compliments	Log a complaint or compliment. Improved functionality to monitor progress on resolution and root cause analysis. All complaints including ombudsman and statutory will move to this solution, giving a single view for all.
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Phase 2 will build on this and include additional services in the BRUM account offer outlined in table 2.

**Table 2 - Project Deliverables - Phase 2 – finalised Dec 2018**

<b>Solution</b>	<b>Citizens and Businesses will be able to</b>
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support	View payments due and apply for benefit or report change in circumstances
Housing Repairs	Report repair and track progress
Housing Rents	View account, rent due and payments received
Environmental Health	Report issues via maps, geo tagging or postcode Get update on progress
Tenancy Estate & Anti-Social Behaviour	Report anti-Social Behaviour
Waste Management	Report missed collection, order new bin, pay for Garden Waste
Planning	Currently available and will be added to the BRUM account
Members Portal	Allows members to record enquiries on behalf of constituents, monitor progress and report on speed of response and resolution rates by services.
Landlord Portal	Landlords can view Housing Benefit payments for their tenants when paid direct to the Landlord

1.12. Many of the solutions are developed by suppliers and available in the market to other local authorities, only in instances where there is no developed solution that integrates with line of business systems will the solution be developed. When this becomes necessary all developments will be made available for other local authorities using the same software and vice versa.

There is now a greater desire across suppliers and local authorities to do more collaborative working on developing technological solutions that can be easily shared amongst Authorities. This approach will enable best practice and cost avoidance.

Each implementation will include refinement of requirements and design workshops that will inform the design and configuration of the new solution as well as the changes needed to business processes, policies and procedures, to enable a high quality experience for BRUM account users.

Lessons learnt and successes in previous implementation projects for that solution in other local authorities will also inform workshops. All workshops

will have a consistent framework and principles focused on citizen requirements.

Customer Services and Service Areas are working very closely together to support the project requirements.

The BCC web team will work on website content to ensure it supports the take up of the new BRUM Account. This will include working closely with service areas in advance of the online solution for their service becoming available via the BRUM account, to ensure accuracy and effectiveness of associated content on the website.

## **Savings**

- 1.13. Savings of £3.858m will be generated over the next six years of the project. Savings will be realised from 2019-20 onwards and may increase as Service Birmingham are finalising due diligence on the level of support required from them for the BRUM account.

## **Members Portal**

- 1.14. As part of the implementation of the BRUM account, a Members Portal will be installed to support enquiry and complaint handling on behalf of constituents. This will allow members to move away from the current paper and free format email approach to case handling.
- 1.15. To ensure this best meets the needs of members a cross party working group has been set up to identify requirements for the Members Portal. Following feedback and the refinement of requirements, demonstrations of possible solutions were undertaken leading to a decision on which solution would be procured.

### **How the Members Portal will assist:**

- Members will be able to log enquires / requests and see the progress on activities completed by services who are dealing with the enquiry
- It will be mobile responsive, allowing members to work with their constituents in the local communities and at surgeries
- Report on the status of cases and let members know when deadlines for replying have not been met
- Automatically escalate if deadlines have not been met
- Ability for a response from officers, members and citizens to a case within the case management system
- Able to create and use letter templates
- Allow support officers to access and deal with enquires on behalf of members
- Reporting is available – showing the number of cases, categories in case type, number of cases dealt with, number of cases by ward, number of cases outstanding or of breach of SLA's
- Can upload photographs or other information onto an enquiry

**Next Steps:**

- Commence implementation plan Jan 2018
- Members will be invited to be involved in the design and test of the system from all parties
- Complete configuration of the system April 2018
- Ready for members induction and training May 2018

**Engagement and Involvement**

- 1.16. As was done with the website the development of the BRUM account will include engagement from citizens and staff across the council. The design workshops for each service currently include members of staff from the service and customer service staff who answer phone calls and deal with customer queries.
- 1.17. When the first iteration is available, engagement sessions will take place with citizens to obtain their feedback and changes made depending on that feedback. Members will also be given the opportunity to provide feedback, initial contact will be with the cross party group who are supporting the member portal implementation. If any other members wish to be involved please contact

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