



Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee
17 April 2013

Financial Management New Technology Project

Purpose of the report: Scrutiny of Services

To update the Committee on progress on the implementation of the Financial Management Reporting and Forecasting Technology

Introduction

1. This report provides an update on progress made on the implementation of the Budget Monitoring Dashboard and Forecasting tools and the Sickness Absence Dashboard.

Objectives of the New Technology

2. The Financial Management Public Value Review (PVR) set out an objective **to invest to exploit financial systems and technology** by purchasing and implementing new functionality.
3. The investment will automate or reduce time spent on manual activities and present revenue budget monitoring information to managers in an intuitive and timely manner, enabling better informed decision making.
4. The tools will enable budget holders to self-serve, focus quickly on the fundamental issues and take accountability for their budget.

Implementation Progress

5. The solution design was signed off by the Project Board in the Summer 2012 and the development (technical build) of the new tools took place during the Autumn and the early part of Winter.
6. There have been a number of technical difficulties in the build of the Budget Monitoring Dashboard and the project team have worked hard to

overcome these difficulties and are in the process of testing the technical solution. However, these difficulties have resulted in a delay in the original planned go live.

7. An independent project Health-check has been undertaken and has identified no fundamental issues with the project documentation, project governance or the capability of the project team.
8. However, the Health-check has identified some improvements, including better resource scheduling for planned and unplanned activities and better progress tracking.
9. A new Project Manager has been appointed and the project plan has been revised to ensure that there are no further delays to the project.
10. A new regime of focused project team meetings has commenced and progress against the revised plan is being closely monitoring by the Project Board.
11. There remains, as originally, a phased approach to go live and the Project Board will be confirming the revised plan in early April. An oral up-date will be provided at the meeting on the expected go-live date.

Conclusions:

12. Although there has been a delay in the implementation of the new technology, the assumptions behind the business case that was presented to Cabinet in February 2012 have been validated throughout the PVR and remain unchanged.

Financial and value for money implications

13. The business case presented to Cabinet in February 2012 still applies and there are no material changes to the estimated investment and savings.

Equalities Implications

14. The Financial Management PVR has an approved Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA).

Risk Management Implications

15. The Project Manager will continue to set out the project risks and issues during the implementation for monitoring by the Project Board.

Implications for the Council's Priorities

16. Improved budget management and better informed decision making will ultimately enhance our ability to plan for and fund our priorities

Recommendations:

17. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee understands the challenges faced by this project and stresses the importance of completion within the first six months of this financial year.

Next steps:

18. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an update in July 2013 on the progress of the new reporting and forecasting and technology.

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