

# Shadow Dorset Council

Date of Meeting	Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 7 March 2019
Lead Member	Graham Carr-Jones
Officer	Matt Prosser
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Dorset Council Interim Intranet</b>
Executive Summary	<p>On 4 February, the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the latest Highlight Report for the Shaping Dorset Council Programme. As part of the Communications workstream update, the following 'medium' risk was identified:</p> <p>"There is a risk that an interim intranet will not be in place on Day 1, causing serious disruption to internal comms channels and staff transactions".</p> <p>The Committee noted that interim arrangements were being put in place until the introduction of a permanent intranet solution in October 2019. A request was made for this matter to be looked at by the committee at their next meeting. This report provides background to the issue, an assessment of progress made so far in resolving it, and next steps.</p> <p>The most important message is that since 4 February there has been good progress with the development of the interim intranet solution. Business requirements are now captured, the software is installed and build is underway. We are on track to demo the solution to the SDC Programme Board on 6 March. The risk that there will not be an intranet in place on Day 1 has now been closed. There remains a low risk that intranet content will be not as complete as would be desirable on Day 1 - more content will of course be added throughout April and beyond.</p>
Impact Assessment:	<p><b>Equalities Impact Assessment:</b></p> <p>An EqIA screening process for the interim intranet has been completed, and if this is agreed by Equalities Officers, no further EqIA will be required.</p>

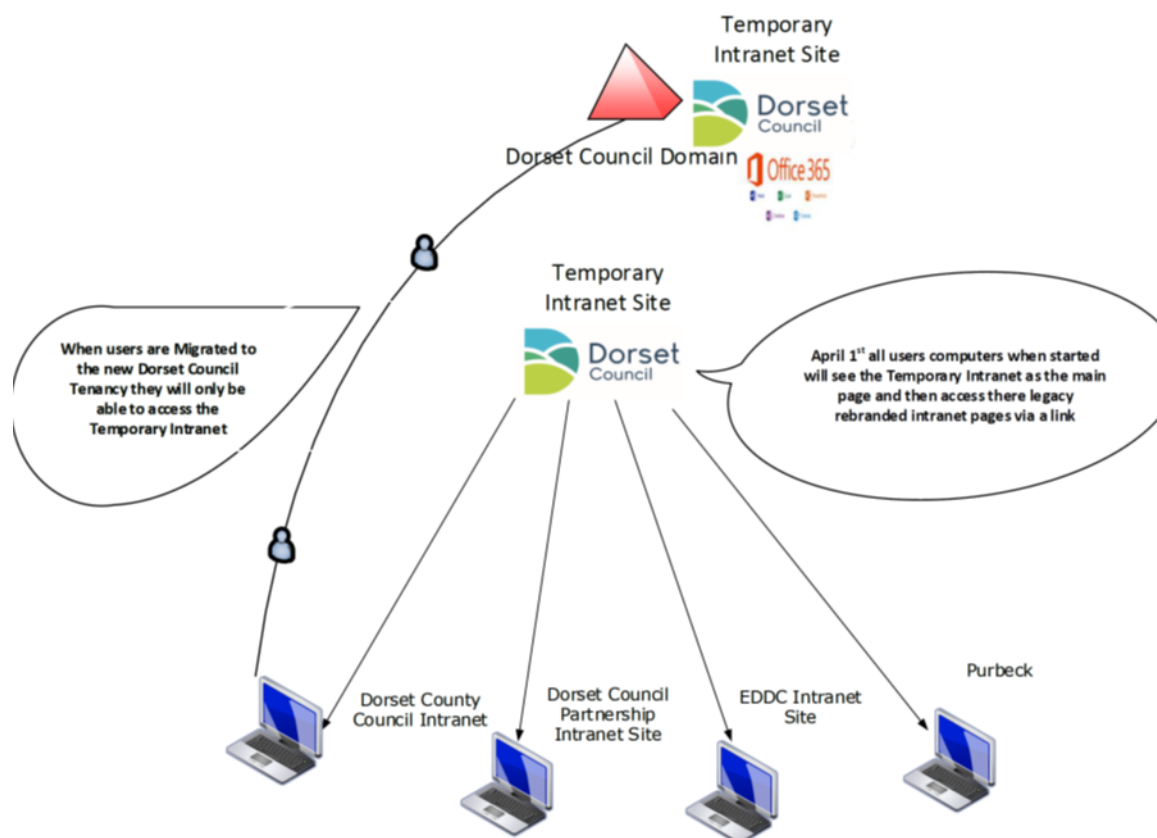
	<p><b>Use of Evidence:</b></p> <p>This report is based on evidence from the Interim Intranet Project Outline; the project Implementation Plan; and SDC Programme Highlight Reports.</p> <p><b>Budget:</b></p> <p>There are no significant financial implications associated with the identified interim intranet solution. Developmental work is being carried out by existing officers from across the sovereign authorities, and from the Shaping Dorset Council programme. Licenses for the intranet software - WordPress - cost less than £1000 pa.</p> <p><b>Risk Assessment:</b></p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the LGR approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:          Current Risk: LOW          Residual Risk LOW</p> <p><b>Other Implications:</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the committee notes the update on the interim intranet in this report.</p>
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>No decisions are required at this time in connection with this report.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Officer Contact</p>	<p>Name: John Alexander          Tel: 01305 225096          Email: j.d.alexander@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>
<p>Date agreed by Lead Member</p>	<p>Cllr. Graham Carr Jones, 25-02-19</p>

## 1. Background

- 1.1 It is widely recognised that Dorset Council requires an intranet, accessible to all staff and members, to facilitate internal communication and transactions, offer easy access to employee and member information and applications, and allow knowledge sharing.
- 1.2 This needs to be in place by Day 1 (01-04-19). The preferred platform was Microsoft's SharePoint, currently used by 3 of the 4 sovereign councils. However, due to Microsoft licencing limitations around transferring of contractual agreements, the permanent site is unable to go live until after 1 October 2019 once all agreements are in place. Therefore, an interim solution was needed, and given the tight timescales, its identification, development and testing are urgent.
- 1.3 The initial assumption was that the Shaping Dorset Council Intranet site could be used as an interim solution. This site was created on SharePoint for the period leading up to the creation of Dorset Council. It is hosted on the DCC Office 365 environment and is largely accessible to all employees and Elected Members across CED, DCC, NDDC, PDC, WDDC and W&PBC councils. However, some weeks ago it became clear that this access will be lost 90 days after DCC licences are transferred to Dorset Council. This transfer date is scheduled for 1 May 2019 meaning that access to the site would be lost by everyone on 30 July 2019.
- 1.4 It is possible that the 90-day licensing limitation could have been extended with Microsoft, allowing access to the SDC site to be maintained until October. However, even if this were the case, it would not be possible to give access to the DCC Office 365 environment, including the SDC site, to new employees or members from May 1. In addition, it would not be possible to give access to the site via a single log on, and as a result the intranet would not load automatically when staff and members connect to the network - they would have to then log on again, to the intranet. Experience suggests that this additional step is disruptive to communications channels and significantly reduces the coverage and reach of internal communications.

## 2. The Agreed Solution

- 2.1 A project team was put in place to resolve this issue, comprised of SDC Programme staff, and employees from ICT and Communications from the sovereign councils. After considering various options, the team recommended that WordPress be used as a platform for the interim intranet until the permanent solution is in place (there is an assumption that the permanent intranet solution will be SharePoint). WordPress is currently used to host the public Shadow Dorset Council website.
- 2.2 All new information (news, blogs, new staff terms and conditions, information for councillors following the May election, etc.) will be housed on the WordPress platform. **Importantly, existing staff and members will continue to be able to access existing content held on the intranets from their own "legacy" councils, via links from the WordPress platform.** However they will not be able to access the intranets of the other councils. In effect this means that a former member of staff, or councillor, from (for example) the Dorset Councils Partnership will be able to access the old DCP intranet via a link. They will not, however, be able to access the intranets from other sovereign councils, and staff and members from other councils will not be able to access DCP's intranet.
- 2.3 The proposed interim intranet solution is represented in the following diagram:



2.4 The recommendation was based on:

- The functionality that WordPress provides, which is fit for purpose
- It would guarantee access to all staff and members for the duration of the transfer period
- No login will be required, and the intranet will open automatically for all users
- Branding is easily applied
- We can use the correct "Dorsetcouncil.gov.uk" URL
- Licensing costs are minimal (<£1,000 pa)
- We can use a cost-free plug-in to restrict access to specified IP ranges (i.e. Dorset Council computers/sessions only)
- The ability for remote workers to access the site is also a consideration, as using this platform will make things easier to communicate across all services
- home access can be provided for "mediated access" users.

2.5 The recommendation to use WordPress as an interim intranet solution was agreed by the Corporate Theme Board via a Decision Request on 23-01-19.

### **3. Interim Intranet: Project Approach**

- 3.1 Project Management, Project Support and Business Analysis is being provided by the Shaping Dorset Council Programme Team.
- 3.2 A project team comprised of SDC Programme staff alongside ICT and communications officers from DCC and DCP scoped the original recommendation to the Corporate Theme Board. This team has now been reconfigured to include business representation from all the sovereign councils, to ensure business needs are fully understood and met. The team meets weekly to review progress.
- 3.3 The following steps are required:
1. Configure "on premise" web servers and database
  2. Install WordPress and configure for testing
  3. Identify and agree business and content requirements
  4. Build 'wireframes' - i.e. layouts of the web pages that demonstrate what interface elements will exist on key pages.
  5. Harvest the required content and populate the solution
  6. Build and test connectivity
  7. Configure analytical tools
  8. 'Show and Tell' / user acceptance testing and troubleshooting
  9. Produce user guidance documentation and help/ support functions
  10. Ensure resourcing is in place for ongoing content management.
  11. Liaise with the appropriate Subject Matter Experts to ensure the designed solution is compliant in terms of Information Security
  12. Complete an EqIA "screening", and if necessary a full EqIA.

### **4. Intranet for Elected Members**

- 4.1 Until the local election in May, elected members will continue to have access to the intranets for their current councils. Following the election, members of the new Council will be issued with new ICT equipment, and using this will be able to access the new WordPress intranet site. Current members who are re-elected will also be able to access the intranet sites from their own former councils.
- 4.2 The new intranet will have a link to ModGov, for quick access to committee papers. There will also be a new, searchable Dorset Council Policy Library hosted on ModGov. Via a link to SAP, members will be able to claim their allowances using the intranet.
- 4.3 A member portal on the new intranet will include new member induction materials, as well as information about buildings, ICT, other members, and other useful information. Training on use of the intranet, ModGov and SAP will be available.

### **5. Progress to date**

- 5.1 As described above, key project staff have been identified and are meeting weekly. Their contributions have been agreed by their management. A solution has been proposed and agreed, and there is a Decision Record from Corporate Theme Board

to this effect. The technical plan is defined. Web servers are configured and WordPress installed.

- 5.2 By the time of publication of this report (26 February), content requirements had been agreed and signed off - all SDC Workstreams, and all services (via the three Service Continuity Theme Boards) were consulted about business requirements. There is an agreed emphasis on ensuring that the interim intranet has accessible content to ensure the new council is safe and legal, with service continuity, from Day 1, and that initially content needs to be prioritised according to these criteria; other content that is less essential but would be "nice to have" can be added incrementally after Day 1. The "Wireframe" has been designed and built, and some content added.

## 6. Next steps

- 6.1 Technically, the main remaining tasks are building and testing connectivity, network configuration, load testing and user acceptance testing. These tasks are on track. Non-technical tasks - apart from content capture and site population, include checking Information Security compliance, producing guidance documentation, and setting up help and support functions. Work will also be needed, soon, to ensure the site is managed properly over the next 6 months, and to ensure continuity between the interim site and the permanent site, so that content is successfully migrated between the two and no work is unnecessarily duplicated. A demo of the Interim Intranet site will be presented to SDC Programme Board on 6 March.

## 7. Project Risks

- 7.1 As noted by this committee on 4 February, there was a high level risk that no interim intranet would be in place by 1 April. However, strong progress over the last three weeks means that this risk is now closed. The following risk remains:

Risk	Impact Description	Current Impact	Current likelihood	Score	Mitigation
There is a risk that Intranet Content requirements will be incompletely/ inadequately provided in time for the interim intranet to fully meet business need from Day 1	Staff unable to access all of the information they require via the intranet.	2	2	4	Steering Group in place and meeting weekly. Interim solution on WordPress under development.