Update on the Digital Channels Programme
4th March 2013

Herefordshire Council

The purpose of the presentation

- Summarise the work the council carried out on the digital channels project
- Describe what has been achieved and what will be achieved
- Outline the approach for the next phase of digital channels work
- Invite a discussion around these issues

The digital channels project

- Part of a programme of work to radically improve customer service, drive efficiency & manage customer channels
- Intended to enable customers to transact online, alongside improved phone and face-to-face contact

The DCP set out to deliver

- Stage 1: beta website, pilot intranet
- Stage 2: services online, improved intranet
- Stage 3: more services online including via 2-factor authentication
- Stage 4: Migrate content from microsites

By December 2012

- Stage 5: value-add functions

By December 2013

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The business case was

- The technology in use at the start of the project was expensive in terms of license fees

- The platforms in place were not appropriate to meet the vision of public services to provide greater self service, more open and transparent services and to link public services seamlessly online

- By investing in the development of new web projects based on new platforms over the first two years of the project, public services would realise significant net cost savings over the four-years of the proiect

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Key risks (at inception)

- Dependencies. The project had a large number of dependencies to other work across public services in Herefordshire

- Resources. The highlight reports suggest that the availability of developer resource created a severe constraint on the project.

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Benefits achieved to date

- The Council has a modern, flexible and powerful web-platform which can be used as the basis for a radical shift in the quality of online service provision.

- The Council has a small but very effective and flexible digital team able to operate in an agile environment and respond rapidly to user demands

- The Council is now able to develop digital services in an interactive and flexible manner in response to user demand and the experience of how local people use the web site.

- The Council also has the capability to transfer this approach to internal channels.

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Our aspirations for our customers

- We want to support people to be independent and to live in resilient communities

- We want citizens to have easy access to the information and advice that can help them when they need it

- We want to intervene early so people don't need our services later

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Key strategies for us

- Making every contact count

- Root and Branch reviews

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Not a project, a way of life

- we will move to a constant development environment

- every month we will improve the content, structure, design and functionality of the website

- we are driven by what works for citizens ("users")

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Move digital by default

- Not forcing customers online
- Providing excellent online transactions
- Build products and services that work elegantly for citizens
- Sees digital as fundamental
- Works to help the digitally excluded access digital services

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Open data and engagement

- a very open, level relationship between the Council and its citizens

- build coalitions across communities in the county with on-going conversation responsive to individuals and groups

- opening all our depersonalised data and then making this useful to citizens

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Risks

- There is a lot of work to do. Prioritising the right work will be crucial

- The work will need to be resourced

- As we focus more online, we will need fewer resources offline. But we need to reduce those at the right pace

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What do you think?

- What would you like to see in terms of strategy, priority and delivery?

- What have we missed?

- How should the Council continue this debate internally and with our citizens?