

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017/18

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22nd January 2018

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR
CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES**

Agenda Item No. 6

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an updates in relation to Agile Working pathfinder project which formed part of the Workplace strand within the Council's Digital Strategy.
- 1.2 This report sets out the progress to date and planned developments in this area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Consider the progress to date as part of the pathfinder project; and
- 2.2 Challenge the identified lessons learnt alongside the adequacy and appropriateness of the planned way forward

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on Agile Working in December 2016 to inform a recommended way forward to be reported to the Cabinet.
- 3.2 As stated in our previous report our vision for transforming (aligned to the Councils Digital Strategy) the way we work through Agile Working focuses on achieving this non-exhaustive following benefits:
 - Increasing the effectiveness & productivity of our activities;
 - Directly support our accommodation strategy through the reduction of our office footprint

- Focusing our work more on outcomes and less on presence in the workplace;
- Reducing the financial costs of running our organisation; and
- Helping staff to balance work and life better.

3.3 Agile Working is about the HOW (optimum work method enabled by technology), the WHERE (different buildings, in the field, varying degrees from home or any combination of these) and the WHEN (appropriate working time arrangements) that are designed to deliver greater focus on our customers and outcomes.

3.4 Members formed a view in December 2016 that the planned developments with regard to the pathfinder projects were adequate and appropriate.

3.5 The pathfinder projects were planned to inform and influence the wider opportunities for agile working within the Council, and allow support services (ICT, HR, Finance and Estates) to validate their approach to ensure a standard repeatable business model.

4. PROGRESS TO DATE: DELIVERING AGILE WORKING

4.1 The Agile Working pathfinder project were undertaken with two service areas that were based at Ty Elai. The service areas were :-

- Public Health & Protection (PHP); and
- Adult Services.

Note: Other small scale Agile Working projects have also been deployed during this period that include Stay Well @ Home (RCT & Health Collaboration Project), Access & Inclusion, with work currently underway for the Resilient Family Project and Building Control.

4.2 The pathfinder projects were initiated to be used to inform our medium term Digital Workplace Strategy, providing valuable learning for respective services (service staff, managers, Property, HR & ICT), whilst agile principles were tested and a framework for future implementation e.g. engagement, data collection & service baseline, solutions design, policy, collective resource requirements, business case, delivery is developed.

4.3 Projects were initiated on a staggered basis to allow for maximised learning opportunities between services implementations and to deliver plans effectively within available resources.

Services were initiated as follows:-

- Q4 16/17 - Public Health & Protection & 79 staff
- Q3 17/18 - Adult Services & 230 staff

With stages implemented as follows:-

- a. Development of HR policies to support new ways of working by agile means.
 - b. Implementation and adoption of Team Zones and shared desk usage within the existing office space
 - c. Implementation & adoption of regional shared hot desks with WiFi access (See Appendix 1 for site locations and usage)
 - d. Implementation of “virtual” desktop technology to allow seamless logon from any location
 - e. Provision of mobile computing devices to allow for the optimum ability to access business systems and data whilst “in the field”
- 4.4 Projects are currently at different stages of delivery and maturity with regards to learning and demonstrable outcomes.
- 4.5 PHP are currently as stage d. and have been operating post implementation of stages a, b, c and d since February 2017.

The demonstrable outcomes to date are:-

- 30% reduction of office utilisation equating to 136m² of floor space vacated at Ty Elai, providing enough space for an additional 30 members of staff.
 - A reduction in the requirements of physical assets or furniture required by the service (19 desks & chairs, 95 cupboards, 37 filing cabinets, 9 tables all now released, 139 bags of confidential waste disposed of during one month)
 - Reduction of PC assets at Ty Elai
 - Reduction in commuting and business mileage
 - Improvement in staff efficiency, quality & responsiveness
 - Positive feedback as part of staff survey
- Final stages are in progress within the service to deploy a Mobile App Solution for the regulatory services areas to enhance the efficiency of existing Mobile & Field Working. This will allow staff to capture inspection and assessment information through a tablet device at the time of an inspection, capturing information digitally at a single point in time and eradicating the need for the same information to be manually collected on traditional paper forms and re-entered into a database at an office location. The mobile App is planned for launch in Q4.
- 4.6 Adult Services are currently at stage (e). with the learning taken from PHP allowing for a shorter implementation timeframe. All 230 staff will be fully enabled with mobile technology and software by the end of January 2018. As such outcomes continued to be evaluated however feedback received to date has been positive.
- 4.7 As part of the Agile working programme 8 regional ‘ Hot Desk’ facilities were deployed through the County Borough. These digital facilities allow staff to the ability to process, collate and access information in localities they perform their duties without the need to return to their substantive base. This has a positive effect on improving efficiency and reducing unnecessary travelling

cost and time and will be monitored to identify productivity improvements that can be achieved.

See Appendix 1 for map and locations of the Regional Hot Desk sites, plus usage for Year 1.

- 4.7.1 Feedback and usage of this service has been extremely positive to date:
- Since the launch over 13,000 bookings have been made
 - Llantrisant Leisure Centre and the Valleys Innovation Centre have been the busiest sites with 3,541 and 3,500 booking respectively.
 - Ty Glyntaf and Rhondda Fach Leisure centre have been the lease busy with 1,087 and 287 slots booked to date.
 - Usage should be considered in the context of the pathfinder services and their phased implementation approach. See 4.3.
- 4.7.2 As part of the pathfinder project, Hot Desk utilisation is continually monitored and reviewed to ensure there is enough provision to meet the needs of our community based or agile working staff.
- 4.8 A delivery team is established within ICT that has led and supported the implementation of the Agile Working pathfinders. Through positive collaborative working between ICT, Human Resources, Estates, PHP & Adult Services the following developments have been achieved
- HR Policy successfully tested to support staff and managers who are work in an agile manner.
 - Staff Guidance & Information provided via the Inform Intranet
 - On-line booking system to book a Hot Desk
 - Development of an Agile Working Tool-kit that maybe used as a repeatable process and model for any future implementation.

5. OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNT

- 5.1 The delivery of the Agile Working Pathfinder Projects focus on achieving this non-exhaustive following benefits:
- Outcomes – in the context of the early service adoption and that progress is still in the process of being monitored, early findings indicate that the projected benefits can be delivered e.g, accommodation footprint reduction, productivity improvement, improved customer service, improvement in managing attendance (maybe other contributing factors also), improved work / life balance etc
 - Engagement & Communication – staff buy-in and continued cross service support/communication (service areas, ICT, HR & Estates) has been crucial to the delivery and positive feedback to date. Senior leadership within PHP & Adult Services management has been crucial to adoption

- Delivery Timescales – the PHP pathfinder project implementation was not a true reflection of the actual timescales required for delivery. As the first test case a significant amount of enablement work was required that positions us well for future service engagements. This has been further proven as part of work with Adult Services, and use of the now developed 'Agile Toolkit'.
- Technology – a one size for all approach will not fit as service business processes may be better optimised with different solutions e.g. laptop v smartphone/tablet device, mobile app v full access to council systems.
- Connectivity – to deliver an optimised agile solution, connectivity such as WiFi is a key enabler and its deployment will need to be scaled as part of any future service deployments.
- Line of Business Applications (LOBA) – LOBA's will vary from service area to service area and again will support the one size will not fit all finding. Effective delivery therefore will require some element of dependency upon 3rd party suppliers timely support and engagement.
- Accommodation – Ensure any office space saving is re-purposed as part of the Council's accommodation strategy and not lost in 'business as normal'
- Hot Desks - We will need to review & revise hot desking facilities based on our experience to date & future implementation.
- Business Process – An opportunity to re-engineer current business processes to provide more effective and efficient digital services
- Resources – a requirement for a dedicated project and implementation team to focus solely upon delivery.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Following a presentation to the Council's Senior Leadership Team and based upon findings, alongside projected opportunities moving forward it is considered advantageous to scale and further implement agile working within the Council.
- 5.2 A forward plan will be developed in Q4 2017/18 to define an implementation roadmap for Agile Working in 2018/19. Colleagues from Corporate Estates & ICT will form a joint approach to identify the priority services and building asset opportunities that may benefit from the further implementation of agile working. The plan will be clearly aligned to the Council's Accommodation Strategy.

6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no immediate equality or diversity implications attached to this report. Should any changes in employees working arrangements be agreed, these will be assessed to ensure no negative impact is experienced by any protected groups.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Appropriate consultation across services has been undertaken in establishing the framework and principles of agile working for the Council. Where any working practises were proposed to be changed, staff and Trade Unions have been consulted with in full as part of any implementation arrangements.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Ultimately the development of Agile Working is predicated on delivering improved customer services and financial savings, and as such the savings achieved on implementation will be incorporated into future financial plans and updates as appropriate.
- 8.2 Both Pathfinders have sought to identify efficiency savings through various aspects of service delivery and agile working is a key tool that enables services to be delivered differently. The lessons learnt from the Pathfinder Services will help inform how savings can be quantified and achieved.
- 8.3 At a corporate level savings will be achieved through a reduction in floor space supported in part by agile working. At a Service level, as changes bed in, it is anticipated that productivity improvements will provide opportunities for services to continue to hit efficiency target requirements into the medium term.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

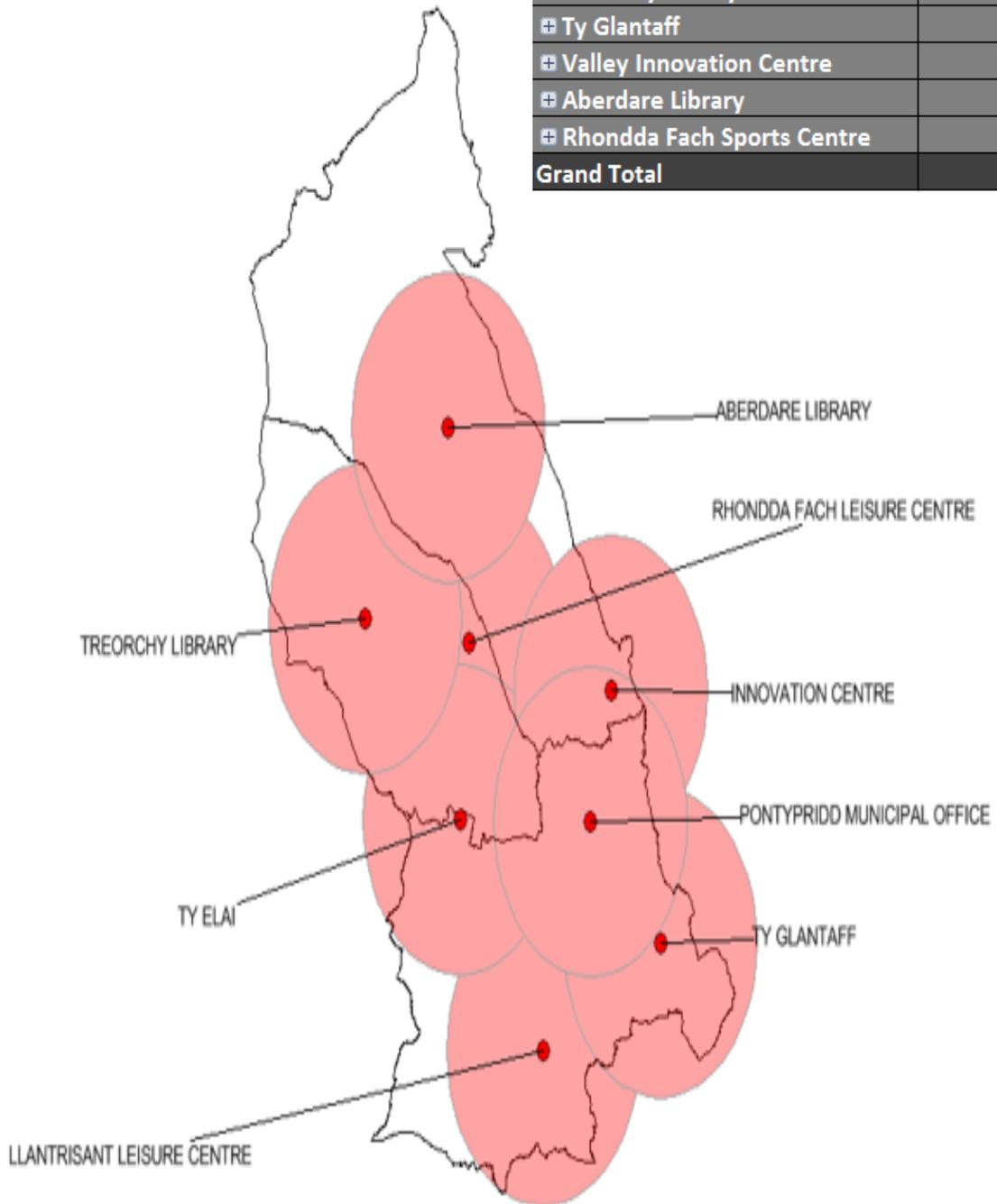
- 9.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

10. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES / SIP

- 10.1 The development of the digital work place, and the associated actions around the digital customer will link to all of the desired outcomes of the Corporate Plan and the Council's role in the delivery of the priorities set out in the Single Integrated Plan.

**APPENDIX 1 – Regional Hot Desk Sites & Usage
(January 2017 – January 2018)**

HOT DESK SITE	Slots Booked
+ Llantrisant Leisure Centre	3541
+ Municipal Buildings Pontypridd	1294
+ Treorchy Library	1088
+ Ty Glantaff	1087
+ Valley Innovation Centre	3500
+ Aberdare Library	2411
+ Rhondda Fach Sports Centre	287
Grand Total	13208



Note: The pink circle highlights a 3 miles radius from each Hot Desk to households within RCT.