Overview and Project Development

The following text provides a narrative of the programme history as well as documenting the path to completion. Areas covered include.

- Background / Overview
- Programme complexities
- High level plan with key milestones
- Key workstream and activity descriptions
- Benefits
- Reporting and Governance activities.

Background/overview

1. Cabinet Member decision ECR01 19-20 approved the commencement of a procurement process for the replacement of the business management system and the Oracle Fusion system was chosen to replace the existing SAP system which has reached the end of its useful life.

2. The procurement resulted in the selection of a business management solution (Oracle Fusion), to be implement by the chosen systems integration partner DXC (Entserv UK) with a planned completion date in late Autumn 2021.

3. Competing priorities within the Council and the Covid-19 pandemic diverted resources initially planned for use in implementing the programme leading to a reset of the programme in December 2020, the then anticipated go live date being put back to Spring 2022. A Cabinet Member decision ECR07 20-21 approved the funding for the implementation of the system in March 2021 to meet the March 2022 go live date.

4. However, the project did not restart until November 2021 following discussions between the Council and the systems integration partner during 2021. It became clear the go live date of Spring 2022 was not achievable and a proposed date of September 2022 was put forward. Complexities of the project delivery schedule were discussed with our implementation partner and a revised go-live of January 2023 was agreed, the complexities can be summarised as follows.

- Insufficient internal resources to successfully deliver the programme

- Skills gaps in such areas as Training, Change Management and Testing

- Complexities around quality of the data in the existing systems

- Misalignment of activities within the joint plan

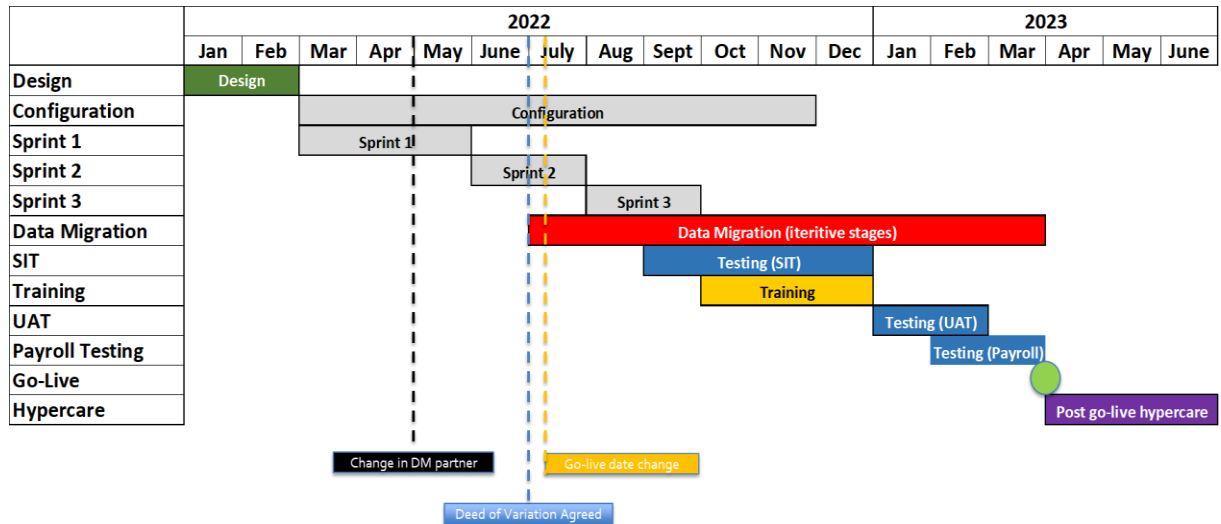- Negotiations were on-going with DXC to realign and recommit to contract.

Programme complexities

5. Complexities around data migration introduced further delay into the programme and following a detailed review of resourcing and plan the programme revised the go-live date to April 2023.

6. The period of reset and the work undertaken in reviewing the resourcing, programme plan, and data migration challenges have ensured that additional

resources have been brought in to fill skills gaps and drive forward the delivery. The contractual arrangements have been reviewed and revised to ensure the additional requirements are contractualised.

Plan and Milestones

7. The following diagram presents a simplified, high-level plan that covers the previous periods of reset and the activities to deliver the programme.

	2022												2023					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Design	Design																	
Configuration				Configuration														
Sprint 1			Sprint 1															
Sprint 2				Sprint 2														
Sprint 3						Sprint 3												
Data Migration					Data Migration (iteritive stages)													
SIT								Testing (SIT)										
Training									Training									
UAT														Testing (UAT)				
Payroll Testing														Testing (Payroll)				
Go-Live																		
Hypercare																Post go-live hypercare		

Change in DM partner

Go-live date change

Deed of Variation Agreed

Activities

8. The key phases for delivering the programme are set out below

- Design
- Configuration and Sprints
- Data Migration
- Testing
  - System Integration Testing
  - User Acceptance Testing
  - Payroll Testing
- Training

9. The **Design** phase has been completed and the **configuration** stage is underway the results of which are demonstrated to West Sussex County Council users as part of the **Sprint** process, there are three sprints during this cycle, sprints one and two have being demonstrated and the third is due for completion during September.

10. **Data Migration** is currently underway and will build the data required for the formal testing stages. Data migration is inherently complex and required the County Council to complete key activities including initial data extraction, cleansing of the data within SAP, mapping data objects to the new Oracle structure and the identification of data that fails GDPR compliance.

11. **Testing Requirements** – The Test Strategy has been defined, a more detailed Test Script definition phase will follow, this details every aspect of a business process. Testing will be segmented and follow detailed scripts, System Integration Testing will test the end-to-end process and involve other line of business systems and 3rd parties, User Acceptance Testing will follow, users

will follow business process scripts and check the data values against the existing SAP system. Users from across the business will be involved in certain aspects of testing. Payroll testing is currently being defined and is highly complex, multiple parallel payroll runs need to be undertaken in both systems and compared, this is a time-consuming process and requires near perfect results.

12. **Training plans** – The Change Management team has engaged with the core teams and is developing a training plan as well as methods of training. Its engagement scope will increase to define requirements within individual directorates, i.e., what changes are being made to the procurement process within Adult Social Care and what training is required to attain proficiency prior to go-live.

13. In addition, a Business Readiness Group has been initiated, this works across all directorates and will be used to communicate and consult stakeholders and users on all aspects of the programme, including change to process, testing, training and resource requirements.

Benefits of the Smartcore programme

14. The Oracle Fusion system benefits support the Councils' priority "making best use of resources", key benefits of the new system include:

- Introduction of best practice and revised business processes will enable the business to carry out core business and statutory functions more effectively and efficiently.

- Adopting a 'digital first' philosophy allows for a more efficient service for employees, partners, providers, and citizens.

- Improving data quality and having a 'single version of the truth' will allow for greater analysis of the data, whilst tighter integration with other key lines of business applications, will ensure that data is easily accessible and up to date.

- Use of a Cloud hosted system and access via a web browser increases the level of accessibility to users beyond those directly connected to the Council's internal network, benefiting those working remotely and those staff who are considered 'hard to reach.'

- Through implementation of a 'Software as a Service' Platform – use of a robust, sustainable technology platform that evolves with the Council. With upgrades and patching routinely delivered directly by Oracle as part of the quarterly update cycle.

- Simple, role-based access, secured through use of single sign on (when connected to the Council's network) or (when connecting remotely) through use of industry standard multifactor authentication to ensure access to Council systems and data always remain secure.

- Implementation of a single integration solution, simplifying how systems integrate and how data from other Council systems flows into Oracle Fusion (e.g. Social Care or Library systems). Also improves timeliness of data processing and removes manual processing.

- Implementation of digital solutions to replace existing paper-based processes – e.g. Payslips, Cheques, Remittances etc, increasing speed of process execution, and eradication of supporting downstream infrastructure costs and maintenance. (e.g., print and mailroom)

- Efficiency savings through the 'self-service' principle will ensure that employees have immediate access to key information (i.e., payslips, P60 and online expenses submission) whilst removing manual processes for back-office staff.

- Greater compliancy within procurement, purchases will have to be matched to a contract.

- Improved management information reporting through greater capability within the application and custom reports aligned with better quality data.

- Better budget forecasting, setting and accountability, more accurate and up to date reporting.

Reporting & Governance

15. The programme will continue to deliver through the existing governance and reporting framework, including:

- Regular Programme Board meetings where escalations are raised, and approvals are sought.

- Fortnightly resource, finance and contract panel meet to discuss resource planning, budget management and alignment to the contract. Reports progress back to the programme board.

- Continue to monitor and report on entry and exit criteria of each of the programmes stage gates and report on any deviation from the expected results to the relevant boards to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

- The programme will continue to update the Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development through the currently scheduled meeting with the sponsors. The quarterly Performance and Resources Report will report progress on the programme to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees.

- The programme has approached this replanning and re-costing exercise with a high degree of due diligence to ensure that every eventuality and additional requirement has been captured. However, it is possible that with a programme of complex change and extremely elevated level of business transformation that other previously unknown challenges may surface. Should this occur, the programme will identify the problem, consult, seek a solution, and escalate to the relevant decision-makers as necessary.

Lessons Learned

16. A number of lessons learned in delivering this project to date:

- The importance of engaging individuals with specialists' skills with appropriate experience at the inception of a project.

- Understanding how major projects sit amongst other council priorities and a clear assessment of the ability of council resources to deliver on its initiatives.

- The importance of clear governance routes for major projects including changes in resources due to conflicting priorities or dealing with other unknown events.

- Ensuring appropriately experienced individuals are engaged on major change projects for its duration.