



Information Technology (IT) and Digital Communications Working Group Meeting

Agenda

Chair: E Csuka

Councillors: P Breen, P Carter (Mayor), S Mallett and M Moorhouse

Co-opted Member: G Gray (Interim Town Clerk)

Invited: K Palmer (RFO)

Members are invited to attend an Information Technology (IT) and Digital Communications Working Group meeting in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on Wednesday 21st June 2023 at 4.00pm to undertake the business on the Agenda below.

1. Apologies for any absences received.
2. Declarations of Interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda.
3. To agree the minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday 7th June 2023: **Decision required** **Attach 1**
4. To review/update actions from the previous meeting, including approval of the updated Terms of Reference for The Working Group : **Decision required** **Attach 2**
5. Exercise to capture user requirements for both the IT support arrangements and the Town Council website.
If attendees have time, could they add suggested requirements to the two templates included with the papers for the meeting. **Attach 3**
6. Any other business
7. Date and time of next meeting to be agreed.

Cllr Emmet Csuka

**Minutes of Sandwich Town Council IT and Digital Communications Working Group Meeting held in the Council Chamber on:
Wednesday 7th June 2023 at 18:00**



Chair: Cllr Csuka
 Councillors: P Breen, P Carter, S Mallett and M Moorhouse
 Observers: 1 resident
 Officer: Gill Gray – Interim Town Clerk

ITDC.06.23.1	<p>Elect a Chair Cllr Carter proposed Cllr Csuka for Chair of the IT&DC WG, it was seconded by Cllr Breen and RESOLVED: that Cllr Csuka was duly elected as Chair of the IT&DC WG.</p>	
ITDC.06.23.2	<p>Apologies for absence received: Apologies – None. Cllr Mallett advised he would be late to the meeting.</p>	
ITDC.06.23.3	<p>Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda.</p>	
ITDC.06.23.4	<p>Confidential Matters</p> <p>Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) the public may be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.</p> <p>1. Information relating to information of a commercially sensitive nature: It was moved by Cllr Csuka and seconded by Cllr Carter and RESOLVED: that the Working Group agreed that the public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve information of a commercially sensitive nature.</p>	
ITDC.06.23.5	<p>Terms of Reference for the Working Group Members debated the draft Terms of Reference, and it was agreed that they be updated to become a publicly available document. Emmet Csuka agreed to complete this in time for the next Working Group meeting.</p> <p>The following actions were formed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members agreed to recommend to the F&GP Committee that a Business Continuity Plan be commissioned. Emmet Csuka to raise this in an update report to the committee on the first meeting of the working group. • Members agreed that when capturing user requirements for the Town Council website it would be helpful to have input 	

	<p>from residents. The next working group meeting will focus on capturing these requirements and residents will be encouraged to feed in their views particularly on the website design and content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members agreed that the focus of the second meeting of the working group would be to capture user requirements for both the IT support arrangements and the Town Council website. • Members agreed that a review and retender of the website would provide an opportunity to improve how the Council engages with the community. Town Clerk suggested that a free platform Hugofox can also be used to demonstrate a website suited to a local Council. • List of user requirements to be debated at a future meeting. • Communication needs to be more effective with the community. • Members agreed that ideas should be shared by email between meetings to ensure the working group moves at pace. Simon Mallett agreed to consider how this communication exchange might work. • Members agreed that the working group should produce a draft Social Media Policy to be considered at a future F&GP Committee meeting. 	
ITDC.06.23.6	<p>IT Related Matter Cllr P Carter reported to the WG on a recent IT related matter, the Members noted the report.</p>	
ITDC.06.23.7	<p>List of Items Reviewed and Scope Considered Members reviewed and discussed the scope of the work that will be undertaken by the working group. Key points highlighted in the discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication needs to be more effective with the community. • Members agreed the need to look at how the Town Council will take ownership for the live streaming of meetings. The Town Clerk agreed to contact MITEC to arrange an awareness session on how this might be done. • Ideas from Members to be shared by email between meetings. • To clarify the position with the Town Council Facebook page Mayor Carter agreed to write to Training Highway to request a full transfer of ownership for the Town Council Facebook page to the Town Council. • Members agreed as the working group progresses it should also consider cyber security training for officers and Members as part of any recommendation to the F&GP Committee on training. • Draft Social Media Policy • To request a copy of the Assets, register and to seek the renewal cycle for items. • To clarify the source of the domain name and the cost for this each year The Town Clerk will investigate the source of the domain name for the Town Council Website and identify the cost associated with its renewal. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To arrange a meeting with the current IT provider Emmet Csuka agreed to arrange a meeting with David Shaw of HIBITS to discuss the current scope of provision and the associated costs. • To seek the details of what IT services are currently paid for by STC and how much those cost. • Share copies of IT tender scoping document from December 2022 <p>The Town Clerk was asked to provide the working group with a copy of IT tender scoping document that was presented to the Town Council in December 2022; a copy of the Assets Register for the IT hardware owned by the Town Council, including any information held on a refresh cycle of items held.</p>	
ITDC.06.23.8	<p>Provisional Plan to Measure Progress</p> <p>Members discussed how best to approach the work needed and agreed that, whilst some of the tasks will be undertaken in parallel, they should move through each stage of the life cycle in a sensible and managed way by starting with looking at user requirements before considering how best to retender for any of the existing services. The Working Group will also explore how best to engage with the Finance and General Purposes Committee as this will be particularly important if/when it is decided to move to a retendering exercise for all or some of the current IT related services.</p> <p>Members agreed to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate ideas. • Create a tender list which is reviewed and approved. • Explore how this project can be discussed at F&GP Committee for considering expenditure 	
ITDC.06.23.9	<p>Meeting closed at 19.57 hours.</p> <p>Date of next IT&DC WG Meeting: 21 June 2023 4pm to 6pm</p>	



Information Technology (IT) and Digital Communications Working Group Meeting

Terms of Reference (draft 0.2 13th June 2023)

Background

A number of concerns have been expressed by councillors, staff and residents that the existing IT services and digital communications are not meeting the standards expected.

There is an urgent need to:

- Undertake a review of the current Information Technology (IT) support arrangements to ensure that what is provided delivers a service that is fit for purpose, and secure, and is affordable; and
- Improve the digital communications used by the Council to engage with the residents of Sandwich

This Working Group will oversee both streams of work described above as they are intrinsically linked.

Scope

For the IT support arrangements, the scope will include:

- A review of the existing IT services contract to understand the range of provision included, the costs associated with this provision, the agreed service levels and an assessment of the quality and security of service delivered;
- A review of the assets register to establish the range of assets provided to/ or owned by the Council, the age of these assets and the cycle, if any, of replacing these assets;
- To seek service improvements from the existing provider;
- A preparation of user requirements to inform a re-tendering exercise for the IT services contract eg server, hardware, software, migration, help desk etc; Identifying a potential list of companies that might tender for this contract by



Town & Cinque Port of Sandwich Sandwich Town Council

surveying other local councils and KALC for approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee;

- Organising and running of a re-tendering exercise for the IT services contract, including overseeing the procurement and contract award for approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- Agreeing roles and responsibilities and associated training needs to use and maintain the new system.

For improving the digital communications, the scope will include:

- A review of the existing Digital communication channels used ie The Sandwich Town Council website and the Sandwich Town Council Facebook page, to identify any quick changes that can be made to improve communications;
- A preparation of user requirements (both for staff and residents) and establishing best practices to inform what longer-term improvements need to be made to the Digital communications used by the Town Council, including a re-launch of the Sandwich Town Council website;
- For the relaunch of the Sandwich Town Council website, user requirements to be captured and used to inform a separate exercise to secure a stand-alone website provider;
- Identify a list of potential website providers and engage with them to develop a set of costed proposals that meet our needs for approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- To investigate options of bringing in-house the recording and live-streaming of all Council meetings. To include the identifying and procurement of hardware requirements to support this activity for approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- To update and publish a social media policy for the council that covers councillors, staff and volunteers.

Authority

The Working Group cannot make decisions on behalf of the Town Council, any recommendations made will be presented and subject to approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee first and then on to the full Town Council, where deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Meeting of the Working Group



Town & Cinque Port of Sandwich
Sandwich Town Council

The frequency of meetings will be determined by the Working Group members, with a date for the next meeting agreed at the end of each preceding meeting.

The Town Clerk will be notified of any meetings with at least 3 clear working days, with an agenda issued to members to the same timescale.

The quorum of the Working Group shall be 3 elected members, with co-opted members not counting towards the quorum.

The working group is expected to be time-limited. The need for a continuing Working Group will be reviewed no later than 6 months from the date of the first Working Group meeting. The decision to extend or reform the Working Group, at this point, will be subject to approval by the Finance and General Purposes Committee first and then on to the full Town Council, if deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Working Group Membership

Elected Councillors: Breen, Carter (Mayor), Csuka, Mallett, and Moorhouse.
Co-opted member: Gill Gray (interim Town Clerk)

Cllr Emmet Csuka

