E

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject: Digital Transformation Programme	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☒ **For Information** ☐
Prepared by: Hazel Robertson, Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Services	**Date:** 18 February 2021

Purpose:
To provide members with an overview of activity in relation to the Digital Transformation Programme

Linked to Strategic Goal: We will create high quality learning and training opportunities which are relevant, enabling and flexible

Background

The Digital Transformation Programme (DTP) commenced in summer 2020 and is being commissioned in three phases. We engaged Agenor to provide leadership for the programme, which is being provided by Steve Black with analyst support from Craig Brook. The three phases are:

1. Discovery
2. Design
3. Delivery

Discovery

This phase involved wide consultation across the organisation on current systems and processes. This phase highlighted the "dated, disconnected, and clunky" nature of our technology provision. Priorities were established. The agreed recommendation from this phase was to move to a design phase on:

1. Infrastructure
2. Management Information Systems (MIS) – student records management
3. Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

These three areas are considered to be the 'heatbeat' of the organisation and essential to consider in tandem in order to maximise benefits, optimise integration, streamline processes, improve user experience and ultimately enable better outcomes for learners. This approach will put as at the leading edge of technology deployment in the Scottish College Sector.

The finance system was also recommended for replacement as a service however due to capacity issues this has not yet been taken forward.

Design

This phase involved developing the specification of requirements, engaging staff across the organisation. This led to each workstream completing a competitive procurement exercise and awarding a contract to a preferred supplier. We engaged with APUC national infrastructure team to support procurement activity.

The Infrastructure and MIS workstreams completed the procurement exercise by end December 2020. It was agreed that the VLE workstream should work to a deadline in February 2021.

Infrastructure

- This workstream will replace aspects of the IT infrastructure and move to the Cloud. This will offer much more flexibility and resilience going forwards and is a critical enabler to implementing a service led approach, and a smoother adoption of new technologies. This solution is easily scaleable as our technology requirements change and develop. There is no capital upfront payment and a reduced requirement for technical staff on campus. The uptime target for this solution is 99.98%. This solution involves significant risk transfer to a third party, managed through an effective service and vendor management approach.
- Competitive process resulted in award of 3 years + 2 years contract to Datavita.
- Costs are between £116k and £120k annually. Moving to this model avoids capital outlay of between £500k and £700k. Moving to a revenue funded model is more sustainable and will be covered by existing IT budgets being reprovisioned, efficiency in IT staff structure, avoidance of depreciation.

MIS

- Advanced Prosolution was selected to provide a one system approach to the provision of student systems, replacing the current MIS and related systems. Self management of data will be supported. This will in turn significantly improve data integrity and management information, enabling staff to identify trends and provide targeted support to improve attendance, retention, progression and ultimately successful outcomes for learners.
- The up front cost of £155k and annual costs of £17k are within the parameters of the funding model. £70k will be received from BFET to support the capital costs. This workstream will deliver significant recurring savings which will be re-invested in the VLE.

VLE

- The completion of the competitive tendering exercise is scheduled for end February. Only one company has responded however they have provided a quality and lengthy response. We are currently clarifying some additional features and will conclude the procurement in the next few days.
- Costs are being finalised taking account of the clarifications and details will be provided to F&GP Committee for approval because they will be in excess of £100k and less than £250k.
- The current VLE (Moodle) is open source software provided free of charge through JISC. These additional costs will be covered by savings made in the other two workstreams.

Delivery

We are four weeks into the delivery phase and very substantial progress has been made on both Infrastructure and MIS.

Additionally, it has been agreed to include the Website replacement as part of the DTP due to the intrinsic links between MIS and the Website. The website project has not been through the discovery and design phases and this presents some issues.

Infrastructure

- The project team has been established both for the College and Datavita. Kick start meetings have been held with Datavita and a high level action plan has been agreed.
- We have established critical dates to support migration of MIS data, and migration of all the servers before the beginning of the new academic year.
- The order has been placed for WAN connectivity, with a 60 working day lead time – estimated mid May install. We have increased the circuit sizes which offers greater capacity and resilience.
- Migration of servers will commence thereafter, with priority to MIS.

MIS

- The project team has been established both for the College and Prosolution. Kick start meetings have taken place and a detailed timeline is in place, which highlights dependencies with the Infrastructure workstream and the VLE.
- The first data migration from UnitE to Prosolution is planned for 22 March.
- Initial training and UAT will take place in April.
- The go live date has been agreed as 16 August. This will enable on line enrolment to occur.
- An exit plan is being agreed for systems which will be retired.
- Redesign of processes will occur during the plan, currently focusing on user structures, course codes and structures.
- A workshop is being held on 19 February to view presentations of additional modules which the College may wish to procure to provide added value. These would be installed as part of a later programme of work, if prioritised.

Website

- The College conducted a tender exercise in late 2020, awarding the contract to The Union.
- An earlier installation had been planned however on further exploration of the issues it was clear that the website launch needed to dove tail with the MIS launch.
- Cameron Reith has joined the TaskForce Team.
- Detailed timeline will be reviewed alongside MIS.
- There is some risk (cost and timescale) on this workstream until we have clarified and agreed stakeholder requirements.

Digital Skills

As part of the delivery phase Borders College are taking forward a Digital Skills analysis. The first phase of this review is focussing on Office365, with later phases to cover the MIS and VLE.

Summary

The programme is ambitious and large scale. Undertaking all these activities at the same time is challenging however provides the best possible opportunity to ensure that our digital systems are set up in an optimal fashion.

Staff are responding well to take up the challenge and meet the required timescales.

As well as the detailed planning which is ongoing, redesign of processes, staff training and engagement are now critical to success of these workstreams.

Recommendation: Members to note the strong progress in relation to the Digital Transformation Programme.		
Previous Committee Approvals: none		
For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐