



Policy and Finance Committee

Date: 17 June 2019

Title: Websites update

Purpose of the Report: To update Committee on the status of the websites refresh project.

Contact Officer: Sarah Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central Services
Amy Holden, Senior Administrative Officer

Corporate Objective/s	To consolidate processes and procedures, ensuring operational efficiency.	
Implications:		
Financial		
Human Resources		
Operational/Service delivery	√	

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 To note the report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Following a period in which the Town Council was using a free parish council template as the basis for its website, in 2013 the ever-increasing importance of digital communications was recognised by Council, resulting in the development and launch in 2014 of the current website.

2.2 The new site incorporated new branding and new features such as enquiry forms and the ability to download publications such as About Town.

2.3 Since 2014, work has been undertaken on an ongoing basis by both Town Council staff and outsourced technical consultants to maintain and continually improve the Town Council website.

2.4 Examples of work undertaken include:

- A revamping of the Community Events pages to showcase photo galleries and make it easier for the public to find information

- Latest news feeds linking from the Council's social media channels
 - The addition of many Town Council policies and procedures for transparency purposes
 - The ability to publicise public consultations and seek electronic responses
 - Compliance with new data protection legislation
 - Improved transparency for the public to access several years' worth of meeting agendas and minutes, following the adoption of the Modern.gov meetings management software
- 2.5 A dedicated website for the Teenage Advice and Information Centre has also been run and maintained by the Council for a number of years.
- 2.6 Following its opening in 2014, a dedicated website was created for the Astral Park Sports and Community Centre, highlighting not only its sporting facilities but its offer for business use and private function hire.
- 2.7 Following the Town Council taking on the management of the twice weekly street market and its dedicated website, work was done to create branding for the different markets and to incorporate this into the site. In addition, the website would provide information to market visitors and allow potential traders to download forms and policy information.
- 2.8 In late 2017, it was agreed to change websites provider to a specialist company for a one-year period. The support contract would be for not only technical support but also content management support. During the year, the provider would work with officers to undertake a thorough audit of all sites and make recommendations for future work.
- 2.9 Recommendations were taken to committee in November 2018 and were endorsed. Alongside renewal of the technical support contract for a 3 year period, the agreement was for structural work to be done to amalgamate three of the websites: the main website, the TACTIC site and the Astral Park site. Doing so would reduce ongoing costs, enable content to be largely managed internally and provide a better structure for ongoing maintenance and content management.
- 2.10 It was agreed that the Market website would remain standalone.

3. UPDATE

- 3.1 Central Services officers have been working with the websites support provider and with internal departments for a period of several months on the websites refresh project.
- 3.2 Work undertaken with the websites provider has included a complete review of all existing website pages, comparison with other councils and development of a final framework. Structural work is now complete and a range of template

pages has been created, providing the framework for officers to now populate the content of the web pages.

- 3.3 Work undertaken internally has included the comprehensive review of all existing web pages for content, whilst also developing new pages and content.
- 3.4 Officers are currently in the process of testing the site to identify snagging issues which will need to be resolved prior to going live, as well as creating the new pages and content.
- 3.5 Clear branding and page structures will ensure a clean and professional looking website which will be easy for users to navigate on any device.
- 3.6 The existing TACTIC branding has been refreshed, with the creation of a line drawing of the Centre and this will be incorporated into a fresher and more professional look for the TACTIC pages.
- 3.7 Existing Astral Park branding will also be incorporated into the relevant pages on the website.
- 3.8 The new structure is fully compliant with data protection legislation and is also compliant with new accessibility requirements, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility (Websites & Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Regulations 2018, which came into force on 23 September 2018.
- 3.9 The new site will also incorporate an A-Z list of services, including not only those which are the responsibility of the Town Council but also some of the main services provided by the local authority. This will link through to the local authority website and facilitate the user's search for information.
- 3.10 It is anticipated that content creation will be completed by the end of June/beginning of July.
- 3.11 Once a period of testing has been completed and all essential snagging actions rectified by our support provider, the new sites can be launched. It is anticipated that the new websites will be live in July 2019.

End.