



ALEXANDRA PARK AND PALACE CHARITABLE TRUST
BOARD MEETING
14 DECEMBER 2023

Report Title: Technology Programme Progress Report
Report of: Richard Paterson, Director of Finance & Resources
Purpose: This report provides Trustees with an update on the work of the Technology Programme.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 N/A

1. Recommendations

1.1 To note the content of this report.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report is to inform board members of the purpose and activities of the newly formed Alexandra Palace Technology Programme (TP).

2.2 An IT Discovery project in 2022 documented all systems and processes and resulted in a report containing 21 recommendations. As a result, the Executive Team formed a new Technology Programme to provide consistent governance of IT projects. An advisory meeting is independently chaired by a volunteer consultant, Richard Warner every 4 to 6 weeks.

2.3 The purpose of the TP is to continuously prioritise technology projects, monitor and support progress, and align projects to Alexandra Palaces strategy and business plan.

2.4 Governance and guidance is in place including Terms of Reference, Reporting Templates, Technology Assessment Framework and a revised Business Case template. Care has been taken to ensure this governance is light-touch while remaining effective.

2.5 Project update:

- Projects nearing completion: Revised Electronic Point Of Sale solution for tills, Upgraded WiFi, new Customer Relationship Management system
- Projects underway: New Venue Management system, GDPR Audit, revised Technology Strategy
- Projects being initiated: New Rostering capability for staff, Estate Security, Buildings and Infrastructure Technology, Wifi Phase 2, CRM phase 2

3. Background

- 3.1 An IT Discovery project in 2022 documented key systems and processes in use across Alexandra Palace. The systems and processes were assessed via workshops with staff and interviews with key users. 21 improvement recommendations were made. They ranged from introducing new systems, to upgrading existing capabilities and enhancing processes.
- 3.2 After reviewing the report the Executive Team formed a new board to provide a more consistent approach to the management of IT. After a few months, the scope was widened to include all technology. For example, Wi-Fi and devices.
- 3.3 In preparation for the first TP meeting a workshop was held to prioritise the improvement recommendations, agree the top nine projects and establish executive sponsorship.
- 3.2 The first meeting was held on the 26th May 2023.

4. Purpose of the Technology Programme (TP)

- 4.1 The purpose of the TP is to provide a consistent way of managing technology projects to improve quality, cost and timely delivery. It also ensures that benefits are optimised, manages dependencies and aligns projects with Alexandra Palaces strategy and business plan.
- 4.2 The TP recognises that Alexandra Palace has limited resources to apply to technology project and programme management and has adopted a pragmatic light-touch approach. This uses only the essential aspects of project and programme management needed for an organisation of this size to get the best from common practices.
- 4.2 The TP Terms of Reference are as follows:

Objectives

- To monitor and support projects to improve AP IT, Tech and Processes.
- Continuously prioritise active projects, add new projects when capacity allows.
- Scrutinise progress against critical milestones and benefits for each project.
- Review and approve key outputs e.g., Business Cases, Project Plans, Post-Implementation Reviews.

Technology Programme Meeting attendees

- Alexandra Palace Executive Team
 - Emma Dagnes, CEO
 - Richard Paterson, Director of Finance & Resources
 - Catherine Solomon, Director of HR & Organisational Development
 - Lucy Fenner, Commercial Director
 - Simon Fell, Director of Events, Leisure & Festivals
- Independent Chair – Richard Warner
- Secretary – Natalie Layton

Frequency

- Initially every two to three weeks

5. Progress

5.1 Governance

- Terms of Reference have been agreed.
- A standing agenda is in place to review the status of all active projects
- The following frameworks and templates have been created and are in use:
 - Prioritisation framework
 - Project Initiation Document template
 - Updated Business Case template
 - Project Reporting template
 - Technology Assessment framework (aligned with Alexandra Palace procurement policies and procedures)

5.3 Projects - The following projects are nearing completion:

Site Connectivity Phase 1 – WiFi enhancements

- After feedback from staff, volunteers and customers that there were occasional problems with WiFi coverage a survey was undertaken to establish the effectiveness of WiFi during events and to review the deployed hardware. An improvement plan was created and WiFi infrastructure was upgraded over the summer, in time for the September concert season. It improves coverage, resilience and capacity. Positive feedback has been received and complaints reduced. A final assessment of WiFi under load is planned to ensure expected benefits have been achieved before sign-off.

Revised EPOS solution – Till System

- Completed Phase 1: Cross organisation project to implement a single till system to replace the existing combination of systems and hardware which had become increasingly difficult to operate and reconcile. The requirements of a new system were integrated menu, recipe and stock management whilst maintaining speed of sales, i.e. moving away from fixed terminals to handheld devices. Trials of the four main suppliers took place and results were recorded and the various stakeholders agreed on a single provider (Sum Up) that met all the requirements, integrated with existing finance system and was easy to use.
- The system is providing the following benefits: single solution for all outlets (easier for staff to move between sales points), multiple menus/outlets trading / using the live sales reporting functions to make decisions on staffing.
- Phase 2 by end of 2023: to integrate a fully linked ingredient based stock system (back of house linking with front of house menus), staff to receive training.
- The final phase will be connecting all menus to live stock which will simplify reporting, improve stock control and help to drive revenue.

Customer Relationship Management system Phase1

- A new system, Spektrix, has been implemented, data loaded and is in use. Benefits for Phases 1 and 2 include:
- Improved Customer Experience, Customer Acquisition and Customer Loyalty by:
 - Acquiring a rich 360° view of our customers through collating and analysing data we have
 - Segmenting these audiences to effectively market to them and find new customers through look alike analysis
 - Creating personalised email campaigns

Venue Management System

- This project aims to create a framework for log and incident reporting and simplify workflows for key safety and operational checks and remove manual, duplicated processes.
- New system, Halo, successfully running for estate Security. New hardware installed in our Control Centre and HALO device handsets in use. Good feedback from staff. Cleaning/Facilities departments configuration and testing commenced, which highlighted a change in the approach to full system usage across AP.

GDPR Compliance Audit

- Following four estimates, a supplier was chosen to conduct an audit of Data Protection Compliance and provide a gap analysis report with recommendations to reduce risk of data breach. The audit will take place over 5 days towards the end of January 2024 with a final report expected in February 2024.

Technology Strategy Development

- An effective Technology and Systems strategy will align our IT, systems and technology capabilities with the new business plan and build a baseline for future investment in technology/IT infrastructure.
 - A list of technology used across the organisation has been produced and Head of /Tech Manager job Description created and budgeted for. Ongoing
- Projects being initiated.
 - HR capabilities Phase 1 – Rostering and Attendance Management
 - Estate Security
 - Buildings and Infrastructure Technology
 - Wifi Phase 2
 - Customer Relationship Management (CRM) - Phase 2
 - Projects on hold
 - Activity Management Solution (until Venue Management System rolled out sufficiently)

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council's Head of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The Council's Chief Financial Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no comments.

8. Use of Appendices None

9. Background Papers None