

1 February 2018

CORPORATE SERVICES ESTABLISHMENT PROGRAMME (CSEP) UPDATE**Purpose**

1. To provide the National Committee with an update on progress in establishing new corporate service arrangements in FC England in anticipation of the decommissioning of the current FC wide shared service provision in Silvan House.

CSEP Establishment and Governance Arrangements

2. The CSEP was established by the England Executive Board (EEB) in February 2016 to deliver the revised arrangements for the corporate services element of organisational change within FC England.
3. A Programme Board chaired by Director England meets monthly to oversee delivery and provide appropriate challenge, with two separate projects – one each for FEE and FS – established. Both these projects, as well as the three FEE functional sub-projects, maintain their own governance arrangements.
4. Annexes A and B set out the organisational and governance structures for the CSEP.
5. Linkage with Shared Services, FC Scotland and Forest Research (FR) is maintained through a Business Strategy Group (BSG) chaired by Director Central Services and with the CSEP Programme Director as a member.
6. FR has established its own Programme Board the membership of which includes the CSEP Programme Director to ensure that any cross-dependencies are recognised and managed.

Scope and Challenge

7. The CSEP intends to introduce new corporate service arrangements for IT, HR and Finance, with ownership for delivery resting with Forest Enterprise England (FEE). The intention is that FEE will initially provide both Forest Services (FS) and the Director's Office (DO) with those services, although corporate services to FS will be sourced from the Defra group as soon as it is practical, affordable and value for money to do so.
8. This follows the establishment in FCE of a first tranche of service provision for business sustainability, health & safety and technical training; with Communications and Internal Audit outsourced to Defra and GIAA respectively.
9. The programme of work follows approved Target Operating Models (TOMs) for each function, together with the successful progress of business cases through the EEB and FCTU.
10. A major challenge is that we are moving away from the current practice of managing our key systems and business applications in-house to moving to cloud-based hosting by a number of 3rd parties through the provision of software as a service (SaaS). We are also, for good reasons, taking the opportunity to revise FEE's Chart of Accounts (CoA) to more properly reflect how it operates.

11. The procurement process has, therefore, been a crucial and time consuming element; together with the need to staff up and resource the new teams responsible for setting up, testing and delivering the new services.
12. FEE has elected to take a 'best of breed' approach rather than one all-embracing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, together with improved productivity tools provided by the Office 365 suite of products.
13. It is envisaged that the new systems environment will provide transformational change in how we do business, whilst providing improved management reporting and analytics tools.

Timescales

14. The CSEP is working towards an implementation date of April 2018 for the establishment of the new services.
15. In parallel both FC Scotland and FR are working towards establishing their own new corporate service arrangements from April 2019.

Current Position

FEE

16. The three functional project teams are working relentlessly and at pace to deliver core functionality by April 2018.
17. For IT there are a number of pillars:
 - IT1 Service Desk - a skeleton service team is now in place, and the project is on track for service desk provision to be in place by the end of February ahead of the managed desktop rollout.
 - IT2 Managed Desktop Service (MDS) - Domain names were agreed at the end of November, and high and low level designs completed. The proof of concept service has been developed by Vysiion, and is now dependent on configuration changes from IS. This will inform the final detailed roll out plan for migration of sites.
 - IT3 Application Support and Hosting - Code for our core business applications such as Sales Recording was provided to the supplier, Scisys, in December, and cloud versions of have now been built and tested by Scisys, ready for interface and user testing to commence. DRIVE development is also progressing well through another supplier, DSSL.
 - IT4 WAN and Telephony - The core service order for network upgrades has been placed with Level 3 and the site upgrades are progressing well. A proposal for telephony services has been received and is currently being reviewed by the team who will make a recommendation to the next IT Project Board on 29th January.
18. For HR the position is:
 - User acceptance testing for the core system and the expenses system functionality has been successfully completed, allowing the project to move into the parallel pay running phase. Further User Acceptance Testing has commenced and is going to plan.
 - A Parallel Pay run data set has been created for January to March 2018, fulfilling a Key Performance Indicator for the project.

- Through ongoing dialogue with Silvan House HR, data requests, deliverable dates and deadlines for returns have been agreed. Absence management data (five years), and 2017 pay data (year to date) has now been loaded into the system, and triple entry is underway.
- The new Midland HR (MHR) System configuration has been completed.
- All HR data requests have been loaded to Itrent. Staff hierarchies in the new taxonomy have been reviewed and inputted.
- Process blueprinting documentation is complete. This is reviewed weekly with MHR and was signed off on 16th Jan 2018.
- BACS processing requirements have been finalised with MHR. Government Banking Services will now set MHR up as an agent of the Forestry Commission with banking access and administration.
- The HR team have been leading on the organisation of 21 roadshow information events. A new video showing key features of the HR system has been produced for use in the roadshows.

19. For Finance the latest position is:

- The FEE and FCE test eFinancials builds are almost complete
- The Collaborative Planning (business planning tool) allocations and forecasting modules have been completed for FEE, and the FCE build is almost complete
- Collaborative Planning training is now booked for all cost centre managers and will take place in February
- A detailed timetable for year-end data migration has been agreed with Silvan House
- Work on process set up continues –the finance team are working closely with Silvan House colleagues to transfer knowledge and process for banking, credit management, accounts receivable, and systems administration
- The team continue to work closely with HR regarding payroll file formats.

20. An overarching programme plan is attached at [Annex C](#), with more detailed programme milestones at [Annex D](#).

FS

21. Whilst FS will initially source their core IT service from FEE, they are working towards contracting with at least one external supplier on providing support to 'FS Only IT services' such as for GLOS and the Felling Licence database. The resulting supplier will provide support and hosting, as well as defined development work.

22. Shared Service IS in Silvan House will continue to support and host these FS only IT systems until the external supplier takes on the work in September 2018.

Risk Management

23. Attached at [Annex E](#) is the suite of CSEP risk registers which includes an overarching programme register as well as functional project registers.

24. Risks which are unable to be managed within the functional projects can be escalated to the Programme Board.

25. The current Programme RAG assessment is **Amber**, whilst recognising the increased risk to the IT sub-project due to the delay in rolling-out the managed desktop across all FCE sites which will now be phased beyond April 2018.

Communication Strategy, Relationship Management and Training

26. We recognise that regular internal communication is vital for the successful delivery of the programme. A communications strategy has therefore been developed which includes:
- Briefings for senior managers outlining the user impacts for each system or change, the training and support available to staff, time implications and anticipated dates.
 - A film on the intranet including updates from Director England and the project leads.
 - A Roadshow of information events for FE, FS and Director's Office colleagues have been planned to take place across England from January - March. The events will showcase the new HR system (employee and manager self service functions), give information on the new GPC system and updated finance systems (along with any planned downtime), explore what the new IT service will look like, provide guidance on data protection changes and share a preview of the new website and intranet.
 - Evolving our Corporate Services Intranet Pages which provide a summary of all projects, with detailed FAQs which are regularly updated following queries from staff. A list of dates and venues for the roadshow of information events has now been published, and a section on records management added.
 - Evolving our Corporate Services Newsletter.
 - Field Team News.
27. A significant amount of effort has also been put into maintaining good working relationships with colleagues across the shared service functions who, as well as providing business continuity and assistance in the migration of data and the setting-up of our new systems, are going through an unsettling period of change themselves.
28. Training plans are also being developed to ensure that those who require training receive it at the right time, whilst seeking to avoid training overload in the relatively short period that the systems are rolled-out.

Summary

29. The establishment of these new corporate services represents one of the biggest challenges yet faced by the FC. There are many moving parts in the programme of work which is complicated and technically demanding with numerous interdependencies. For example a key area will be ensuring robust connectivity between hosted core systems and our key business applications.
30. The opportunity is being taken to update FEE's Chart of Accounts and transform the way we operate (such as through Office 365 and HR self-services) to drive efficiencies and improve effectiveness, not least through improved management information.
31. At the same time we are working closely with colleagues in Silvan House to ensure that appropriate contingency plans are in place, and to plan for an orderly and well managed de-commissioning of the current shared service provision whilst maintaining business continuity.
32. The work is undoubtedly stretching colleagues engaged in the projects and more time than originally anticipated has been spent on the major procurement items and in recruiting key personnel. Unexpected delays were also experienced in obtaining new domain names from the Government Digital service (GDS) to support the new FC operating model, and in setting up new VPN arrangements.

33. However, and whilst not underestimating the significant challenges ahead such as payroll testing and building and testing the interfaces between the various hosted systems and business applications, we are on track to deliver the new arrangements by April 2018 with the MDS roll-out phased out through the spring/summer.

Recommendations

34. The Committee is invited to note and discuss progress towards the establishment of new corporate service arrangements in FCE.

Steve Meeks
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