

Project/Item Title	Website template upgrades		Version	0.1
Corporate Head	Linda Norman, CHoS Customer, Digital and Collection Services	Service Area	Digital Transformation, Digital Experience	
Service Committee to Approve Budget	Corporate Management Committee			
Anticipated Cost of Proposal (Capital)	£10,000	Anticipated Cost Proposal (Revenue)	£0	
To be completed for Projects only				
Type of Project	Improvement	Project Duration	3 Months	
Proposed Project Start Date	Apr-24	Proposed Project End Date	Jun-24	

Business Case Context

Background

Describe the purpose of the Business Case, what benefits are expected to be delivered or what problem will be solved (What is wrong with the status quo? What are the drivers for change?). Is the scheme a result of legal/statutory requirements or a stakeholder consultation?

Runnymede Borough Council's new digital platform, including its website, was procured in November 2020 and went live in August 2021. Total views for the site since April 2022 is 3.9M page views. Most popular content being the home page and content related to bin collection dates. At least 62% of customers come to the site via organic searches with the most popular search terms being Runnymede council and bin collections. Over the last 12 months we have seen a decrease in users accessing the website via a desk top computer 131,397 active users with mobile having 211,534 active users and tablet devices having 11,808 active users. In July Google Analytics has been updated so we have access to real time data and see how many users, pages that are being reviewed. Since the launch of the site, the Council's Digital Experience team has been continually improving the website structure and content using the tools available within the system and engaging with services across the Council.

After two years in use, the website templates need a review to ensure any user experience and accessibility issues are addressed. WCAG 2.1 is the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, a set of international standards for making websites and other digital content more accessible to people with disabilities. WCAG 2.1 covers a wide range of recommendations, including making content more accessible to people who are blind or have low vision, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, people with limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity, and combinations of these.

The Council currently meets the majority of WCAG 2.1 accessibility requirements, and had previously been ranked number one nationally for web accessibility of all UK Councils for 13 months.

There is an updated standard called WCAG 2.2, which is currently in the proposed recommendation stage. This means that it has been reviewed by the W3C Working Group and is now open for public comment. The W3C plans to publish the final official version of WCAG 2.2 in August 2023. After this date Council's will begin to be officially assessed against this standard.

The Council's website is already being benchmarked by a company called Silktime against the draft WCAG 2.2 standard which has identified a number of improvements to ensure the website continues to meet the needs of all our website visitors.

This business case seeks £10,000 investment to enable the Council to undertake a root and branch review of the site, identify user experience issues with the web templates, and address those outstanding WCAG 2.2 accessibility issues.

The Digital Experience Team will conduct user research by using heat mapping technology, speaking with customers, and getting professional advice from Jady, the Council's

Strategic Links - relate this Business Case to RBC Corporate Strategies and Corporate Values

Corporate Strategies	Describe how this Business Case meets / contributes to the Corporate Business Plan through each of the Corporate Strategies. - Delete those not applicable
Climate Change Strategy <i>Reducing Carbon emissions from the Council's operations and the wider Runnymede community.</i>	The proposed changes to the website will make it more user-friendly and accessible to people from all walks of life. This will help to create a more inclusive community, where everyone can participate equally. The Council's website is a vital tool for communication and engagement with residents. By making the website more user friendly and accessible, the Council can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the democratic process and to access the information and Council services they need.
Organisational Development Strategy <i>Enable Officers and Members to perform their duties to the best of their ability and make Runnymede Borough Council the employer of choice for local people.</i>	
Empowering the Community Strategy <i>Evidence Based Decision Making, Listening to residents, Enabling Communities to help themselves and to take control of services or plans for their areas, Working effectively with partner organisations, Dealing with inequalities.</i>	
Corporate Values	Describe where this Business Case fits in our Corporate Values - Delete those not applicable
People-focussed – <i>we will put people at the heart of what we do and they will be able to deal with us easily.</i>	The project will make our website more accessible to people with disabilities. This will make the website more inclusive and accessible to a wider range of users, which will help to reduce the digital divide within our borough.
Innovative – <i>we will aim to creatively improve our services and be open to new ways of providing services.</i>	The project will use new technologies, such as heat mapping and user research, to improve the website. This will help the Council to be more innovative and to stay ahead of the curve in terms of digital technology and digital experience.
Promoting equality and diversity – <i>we believe in fairness as well as maintaining a diverse workforce so we can draw upon a wide range of views and experiences to meet the changing needs of our communities.</i>	

List your Business Case Objectives, ensuring they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely

Review the current website:

- Identify the website's strengths and weaknesses.
- Gather feedback from users.
- Develop a list of areas for improvement.

Assess the website's compliance with WCAG 2.2:

- Conduct a self-assessment of the website's accessibility.
- Identify any areas where the website does not meet WCAG 2.2 standards.

Design improvements by creating prototypes in Adobe XD:

- Create prototypes of new website features.
- Get feedback from users on the prototypes.
- Iterate on the prototypes until they are satisfactory.

Document the requirements for the improvements:

- Create a technical specification for the improvements.
- Create user stories for the improvements.
- Define the acceptance criteria for the improvements.

Commission Jadu to deliver the improvements:

- Provide Jadu with the technical specification, user stories, and acceptance criteria.
- Work with Jadu to ensure that the improvements are delivered on time and within budget.

List the Constraints or Parameters in which this Business Case will operate**Time**

The project will need to be completed within the first three months of 24/25 to ensure we meet WCAG 2.2 as soon as practically possible.

Budget

The project will have a budget of £10,000 that must be adhered to. This will need to be taken into account when making decisions about the scope of the changes and the resources needed by Jadu to deliver them.

Customer Insight

A review of our website templates needs to be undertaken prior to developing requirements. Customer insight is crucial to ensuring we make the right changes, this will be gathered through user feedback and utilising heat mapping technology. The Digital Experience Team plan to use Microsoft Clarity which is a free tool available to the Council to provide heat mapping, using this tool is subject to a Data Protection Impact Assessment being undertaken.

List the Outcomes and Benefits (including efficiency gains) you expect the scheme to achieve**Increased user satisfaction**

A well designed website with easy to use templates and homepage widgets will make it easier for our customers to find the information they need and complete their tasks as quickly as possible.

Compliance with legislation

The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to make their services accessible to people with disabilities. By complying with WCAG 2.2, you can ensure that our website is accessible to everyone and in line with the law.

Goodwill and reputation

Investing in making sure we continue to offer accessible online services demonstrates our commitment to making www.runnymede.gov.uk for everyone. This ensures we legally comply but protects and improves the Council's reputation

Silktide Accessibility Ranking

Runnymede Borough Council had been joint first of all UK Council's for the accessibility of it's website. Since Silktide started to assess against the WCAG 2.2 criteria our site ranking has dropped to 13th in the Country. We are clear on what template code work needs to be changed and once implemented this will ensure we that when we are reassessed we meet all WCAG 2.2 AAA criteria.

Appraisal of Business Options (must include evaluation of a 'do nothing' option)**Option 1 (preferred option):****Description**

The recommended option is to invest in the changes required to the Council's website, www.runnymede.gov.uk. We are already aware that elements of the website do not meet the new WCAG 2.2 standard. We have been collating feedback over the last two years since the website went live and would look to address some user experience improvements to the website.

Benefits (comparison to other options considered)**Increased user satisfaction**

A well designed website with easy to use templates and homepage widgets will make it easier for our customers to find the information they need and complete their tasks as quickly as possible.

Compliance with legislation

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Advantages to Service Area (preferred option)

Keep the website up to date with accessibility legislation and standards
 Improve user experience for visitors to www.runnymede.gov.uk
 Improve the look and feel of our website to ensure it continues to reflect our corporate branding

Disadvantages to Service Area (preferred option)

Not applicable. However resources from the Digital Experience team will be assigned to this piece of work to review the templates and build a specification for Jadu to deliver.

Costs to Organisation (preferred option)

£10,000 capital costs for web development and deployment.

Benefits to Organisation (preferred option)

Compliance with WCAG 2.2

Environmental Sustainability Benefits (direct and indirect benefits to support Climate Change Strategy)

Outline any direct and indirect benefits of the Preferred Option that aims to minimise negative and promote positive environmental impacts and/or reduce carbon emissions, where possible

Direct Environmental Sustainability Benefits (preferred option)		Indirect Environmental Sustainability Benefits (preferred option)					
Not applicable.		Not applicable.					
Negative Environmental Impacts							
Not applicable.							
Resource Requirements							
Staffing Appraisal (preferred option):							
Outline the expected staffing / resourcing requirements for the preferred option in the table below, think about resources required in your team and others. This should include job titles, number of hours worked and salary.							
Existing Staffing		New RBC Staff Requested		New External Staff Requested			
Existing Digital Experience team to lead a review of the website, design amendments, build specification of requirements for changes and commission Jadu to deliver the improvements.		Not applicable.		Jadu web developers and project management of the website template changes.			
Add any costs into the financial appraisal table.							
FINANCIAL APPRAISAL							
Finance Appraisal (preferred option) - To be completed with the Finance Department:							
Describe the financial and resource implications of this option. See Financial Appraisal below to capture numbers. How will it be financed? Is a Supplementary Revenue Estimate required? Can it be resourced via a Virement (including areas other than your own)? Is there other funding available? Has funding been agreed? Demonstrate how the council can receive a return on investment, whether cashable, cost avoidance or quantifying tangible benefits – Seek advice from your accountant. Business cases will not be considered by the Chief Executive unless a full financial appraisal has been agreed by the Accountancy Team.							
Explain how the cost estimate has been drawn up e.g. based on the costs of a similar project/item; based on quotes from suppliers etc:		The £10,000 budget has been drawn together based on experience working with Jadu on previous patches and upgrades. The Digital Experience team will maximise this budget by leading the review of the website templates inhouse, designing the amendments and new functionality required and documenting our requirements. This will save the Council in the region of £5,000 in Jadu time and effort.					
Please explain how you have considered the VAT implications of the project/item:		A statement of works will be shared with the Council all prices include VAT.					
If this project involves building or refurbishment work within corporate assets has the project/work been consulted on and agreed by the Corporate Head of Strategic Land and Property Assets? Please give details.		Not applicable.					
CAPITAL COSTS							
Capital Expenditure (specify codes required)		Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)	Year 5 (£)	Year 6 (£)
RBC Website Template Refresh		10,000					
Total Capital Expenditure		10,000	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Income (specify codes required)		Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)	Year 5 (£)	Year 6 (£)
Total Capital Income		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Capital Outlay		10,000	-	-	-	-	-
Estimated Useful Life of the Asset: Where the expected lives of each significant component of the asset are different (i.e. buying a house with a flat roof) you must estimate both the useful live and cost of replacing each component part. Please only include components greater than £20,000 in cost or more than 20% of the total value of the asset.						Estimated Value (£)	Estimated Life (yrs)
Overall asset							
Component 1 (specify):							
Component 2 (specify):							
Component 3 (specify):							
REVENUE COSTS							
Revenue Expenditure (specify codes required)		Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)	Year 5 (£)	Year 6 (£)
Less: Savings to existing budget (Please specify)							
Total Revenue Expenditure		300	300	300	300	300	300
Revenue Income (specify codes required)		Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Year 4 (£)	Year 5 (£)	Year 6 (£)
							200

Total Revenue Income	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net change to revenue budgets	300	300	300	300	300	300
Business Case / Risks						
Outline the risks (Managerial, Financial, Operational etc.) to RBC if delivering the preferred option. A risk summary only is required here.						
Risk Description			Mitigation / Help needed			
Existing template functionality fails when new functionality is deployed.			New fixes and functionality will be deployed to our website test system. The Digital Experience team will undertake detailed testing prior to approving the release to our live system.			
Scope of requirements exceeds budget available.			The Digital Experience team will maximise the budget available by undertaking the review, requirements and web design work in house. This will save the Council in the region of £5,000. The budget available will be prioritised to ensure we meet all compliance requirements in the first instance then we will focus on additional functionality needed.			
Not meeting WCAG 2.2 standards which could impact the Council's reputation and could incur legal action and even financial penalties of up to £5,000 per each day the site remains in accessible.			The project scope will ensure accessibility fixes are prioritised in the first instance to ensure compliance with WCAG. Template fixes will be tested in UAT prior to sign off and patched into live. External benchmarking will ratify compliance in National UK Council rankings.			
Option 3 (rejected option)						
Description						
An alternative approach would be to do nothing. As a authority we need to comply with WCAG 2.2 and amendments need to be made to the templates to meet this new accessibility standard.						
Advantages to Service Area (rejected option)			Disadvantages to Service Area (rejected option)			
Resources which will have focused on the scope of the improvements will be used to deliver other priorities.			Improvements to web templates are not delivered. Accessibility improvements cannot be funded therefore outside of the teams control. New template features to structure web content will not be made available to be used by the team. Risk to Council by not meeting Accesibility standards and legislation.			
Costs to Organisation (rejected option)			Benefits to Organisation (rejected option)			
Save £10,000 capital investment.			No benefit to the Council other than the Digital Experience team will not spend time on this piece of work. This will free the service up to continue with reviewing and designing services within our website and CRM system.			
Authorisation						
Approved by Corporate Head of Finance					Date	
Approved by Corporate Leadership Team		Date	Priority Score			
Corporate Leadership Team Feedback						
Taken to Corporate Property & Acquisitions Member Working Group / Services and Digital Transformation Working Party (Where applicable)					Date	
Committee Report to be presented to:					Date	