

# North Yorkshire Council

## Executive Member for Finance and Resources

4 September 2024

### Budget Approval for 4404 Planning System & Business Process Convergence Project

#### Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To approve the funding of an implementation budget of £729k for the 4404 Planning System & Business Process Convergence Project.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 There are currently multiple systems and processes in place across the Planning Service aligned with the previous legacy Council localities. Following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), there is a need to operate as a single team across the North Yorkshire County footprint. To do this effectively requires the consolidation of these systems, processes and data in order to reduce the number of contracts, back-end systems administration, and to promote a single way of working for staff and customers.

2.2 It has therefore become essential that the current multiple on-premise Planning systems (including the document management systems) and business processes are harmonised to a single hosted system to enable effective and efficient service operations. The restructure for the new Planning service which has been undertaken is based on the ability to share resources across localities.

2.3 The project aim is to consolidate into a single operating system for Planning (including Planning in 7 ex-borough/district councils, former Building Control in Harrogate, Craven and the North Yorkshire Building Control Partnership (NYBCP) plus Minerals and Waste in ex-NYCC) which aligns with the service Target Operating Model.

#### 3.0 Project Business Case

3.1 An assessment of options has been undertaken and the preferred option is to consolidate existing Planning and Building Control systems to IDOX Uniform. A detailed assessment can be found in the Project Business Case (link in the Background Documents section).

#### 4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Alternative option considered was: Do Nothing.

4.2 This option means the Planning Service will continue to operate on multiple systems and processes established from each legacy localities across North Yorkshire County.

4.3 This option was discounted because following LGR, the need to operate as a single team has increased. The service cannot operate following the Target Operating Model (TOM) with the existing multi-system set up and this also results in additional system management and admin work for Technology.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The project business case has identified an additional budget of £729k is required to implement the preferred option of a consolidated system. This includes the cost of running the new system whilst dual running the existing systems, as required during the period of system implementation. A breakdown of the costs is available in the business case.

5.2 The consolidation of the system supports savings reflected in the Council's budget for both the restructure of the planning service (restructure already completed) and the reduction in the use of agency staff.

## **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This report concerns the allocation of funding to deal with a shortfall in the resources for the project. Approval is being sought in line with the requirements for a key decision and in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution.

## **7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 An Equalities impact screening has been undertaken. There are no impacts for people with protected characteristics. See Appendix A.

## **8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 A Climate Change screening has been completed. This proposal does not warrant a full Climate Change Impact Assessment because this project only seeks to implement process and IT system change and any environmental effect is negligible. See Appendix B.

## **9.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The proposal aligns best with NYC strategic aims/TOM of service convergence, singular ways of working, and customer access. It aims to adopt/harmonise existing processes (Harrogate & NYBCP) (with additional optimisation where possible) to make the most efficient use of staff time. This will also allow one way of working, flexibility in sharing resources without constraint on former locality boundaries.

9.2 Potentially be able to make Building Control more competitive in the market.

9.3 The proposal will improve efficiency and as a result of the proposal, it will be an enabler to realise savings on agency costs.

## **10.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The proposal reduces service risk through implementation of a more efficient ways of operating and enables the service to share resources which will help the Planning service to deal with the potential impact of future changes such as workload or implementation of new requirements.

## **11.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The proposal will enable services across localities to share the same processes and manage the work having one way of working. It will also allow the sharing of resources beyond former legacy boundaries.

11.2 No staffing implications are expected as a result of the proposal as the Planning Service restructure has already been progressed. There is expected to be an opportunity to reduce spend against agency staffing as a result of the ability to share workload across localities in the future.

## **12.0 ICT IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 The proposal will help to reduce the required ICT resource because as the result of the project, there will be only one system (instead of multiple) to manage and support.

12.2 The consolidated system will lead to improved information and processes across the Council enabling a better service delivery to our customers.

12.3 There is no implication on system security level, and the system security will be reviewed by ICT because the system will be moved from on-premise to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party hosted application.

## **13.0 CONCLUSIONS**

13.1 The proposal of planning system and business processes convergence is required to take place. This will also allow one way of working, improved efficiency and be flexible in sharing resources without constraint on former locality boundaries. There would also be the potential to make Building Control more competitive in the market.

## **14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

14.1 Existing systems set up does not allow one way of working or flexibility to share resource due to systems and processes having been set up differently. The new structure relies on being able to share resources.

14.2 Ex-borough and districts deliver the majority of Planning services using the IDOX Uniform system. Convergence into a unified IDOX Uniform platform is the most suitable and cost-effective option considering the cost of change to a different system such as timescale, technical integration, staff training requirements and data migration.

## **15.0 RECOMMENDATION**

15.1 That the Executive Member for Finance & Resources approves the funding of an implementation budget of £729k for the 4404 Planning System & Business Process Convergence Project in consultation with the Corporate Director Resources.

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix B: Climate Change Impact Assessment

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Project Business Case

*Nic Harne*

Corporate Director – *Community Development*

County Hall

Northallerton

*4 September 2024*

Report Author – Trevor Watson Assistant Director: Planning  
Presenter of Report – Trevor Watson Assistant Director: Planning

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Initial equality impact assessment screening form			
This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
Directorate	Planning		
Service area	Planning		
Proposal being screened	<b>4404 - ICT50/PLA09/PLA10 - Planning System &amp; Business Process Convergence</b>		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Martin Gillespie, Shuwan Wang, David Clothier		
What are you proposing to do?	<p>This project aims to converge multiple Planning systems into one unified system as well as a full Business Process Review to harmonise and improve service delivery. A high-level breakdown of Planning into sub-team areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning in 7 legacy localities</li> <li>• Building Control in Harrogate, Craven and North Yorkshire Building Control Partnership (NYBCP)</li> <li>• Minerals and Waste in ex-NYCC</li> </ul>		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	Project established on the basis of service convergence and the aim is to consolidate multiple systems and business processes into one way of working before current contracts expire in October 2025.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	It is not an objective of this project to directly impact the size of the workforce.		
<p><b>Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics</b></p> <p>As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics?</li> <li>• Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important?</li> <li>• Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to?</li> </ul> <p><b>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your directorate representative for advice if you are in any doubt.</b></p>			
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	Yes	No	
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Sex		X	
Race		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief		X	
Pregnancy or maternity		X	
Marriage or civil partnership		X	

People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	
Are from the Armed Forces Community		X	
<b>Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts</b> (for example, disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
<b>Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (for example, partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics?</b> Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No. There is no significant effect on how other organisations operate. Other organisations may operate slightly different but there's no fundamental requirement change.		
<b>Decision (Please tick one option)</b>	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue to full EIA:
<b>Reason for decision</b>	This project impacts staff by bring together system and data for more efficient working. It is not going to impact protected characteristic as a result of the work.		
<b>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</b>	Trevor Watson		
<b>Date</b>	17 June 2024		

## Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment (Form created August 2021)

The intention of this document is to help the council to gain an initial understanding of the impact of a project or decision on the environment. This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. Dependent on this initial assessment you may need to go on to complete a full Climate Change Impact Assessment. The final document will be published as part of the decision-making process.

If you have any additional queries, which are not covered by the guidance please email [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk)

<b>Title of proposal</b>	<b>4404 - ICT50/PLA09/PLA10 - Planning System &amp; Business Process Convergence</b>
<b>Brief description of proposal</b>	<b>This project aims to converge multiple Planning systems into one unified system as well as a full Business Process Review to harmonise and improve service delivery. A high-level breakdown of Planning into sub-team areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning in 7 legacy localities</li><li>• Building Control in Harrogate, Craven and North Yorkshire Building Control Partnership (NYBCP)</li><li>• Minerals and Waste in ex-NYCC</li></ul>
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Planning</b>
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Planning</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>David Clothier</b>
<b>Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment</b>	<b>Shuwan Wang Martin Gillespie</b>

The chart below contains the main environmental factors to consider in your initial assessment – choose the appropriate option from the drop-down list for each one.

Remember to think about the following;

- Travel
- Construction
- Data storage
- Use of buildings
- Change of land use
- Opportunities for recycling and reuse

<b>Environmental factor to consider</b>	<b>For the council</b>	<b>For the county</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Greenhouse gas emissions	No effect on emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

If any of these factors are likely to result in a negative or positive environmental impact, then a full climate change impact assessment will be required. It is important that we capture information about both positive and negative impacts to aid the council in calculating its carbon footprint and environmental impact.

<b>Decision (Please tick one option)</b>	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full CCIA:	
<b>Reason for decision</b>	This project only seeks to implement process and IT system change and any environmental effect is negligible.			
<b>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</b>	Trevor Watson			
<b>Date</b>	17 June 2024			