Resources and Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Panel

March 2026

New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Content

- Customer & Digital- Contact Centre Go Live
- Transformation Strategy Progress Against Objectives 2025/26
- Upcoming Milestones

Customer & Digital Services- Contact Centre Go Live

Highlights

- **Exceptionally smooth go-live** completed at 17:30 Saturday with rapid system stabilisation and no customer disruption- Strong coordinated work from ICT, Transformation, Customer Services and external partners
- Strong early performance: **84% of calls answered within 3 minutes** (exceeding SLA) and no complaints reported.
- Significant improvement in customer wait times: **Average Time to Answer reduced from 1:22 to 1:07**.
- Improved first-time resolution: **Transfers reduced from an estimated 29% to 16.2%,** meaning customers are reaching the right team more quickly.
- Intelligent routing actively diverting non-NFDC enquiries (e.g., HCC, National Park Authority) before customers enter a queue—**242 successful deflections to date**.
- **Early enhancements delivered**: clearer welcome message, dedicated elections queue, call-quality adjustments, and natural language improvements.
- **Advanced platform capabilities now live**: AI-generated summaries, speech analytics, and real-time dashboards providing stronger customer insight and improved agent support.

What’s Next?

- **Stand up CRM/Create integration** to enable full case creation, tracking and end-to-end digital journeys.
- **Expand digital channels** (webchat to more teams, SMS notifications, video assist).
- **Enhance Natural Language routing** with continual intent training to increase accuracy and reduce avoidable contact.
- **Introduce customer feedback tools** and agent quality evaluations to strengthen customer experience insight.
- **Optimise system performance and workflows**, including remaining fixes and deeper integration with back-office systems.

Customer and digital services

Customer & Digital Services

- **Objective C1** Our customers will be at the heart of our digital-by-design approach.
- **Objective C2** We will review and catalogue our data, identify the data that is most valuable as we move towards LGR and ensure it is accurate and accessible to ensure a smooth transition to unitary status.
- **Objective C3** We will invest in the digital capabilities that are most likely to bring long term benefits for customers and staff during and after LGR. This means they will be scalable, adaptable, interoperable and reusable.

Measures

- ✓ Customer experience (% rating Good or above)
- ✓ Number of fully digital services (definition and baseline to be confirmed)
- ✓ Customers choosing digital channels (% requests received via digital channels)

Progress

Objective C1

- Netcall Liberty Converse CX live and stable; faster handling and higher first-time resolution
- Intelligent routing and pre-queue messaging divert non-NFDC enquiries (e.g., HCC, National Park); ~242 deflections
- SLAs exceeded: 84% of calls answered within 3 minutes; zero complaints logged post go-live.
- Enhancements delivered: clearer welcome, elections queue, call-quality fixes;

Progress

Objective C2

- LGR Customer Steam stood up, resource allocated and work underway
- Converse CX provides structured interaction data, AI summaries, speech analytics and real-time dashboards to support clean, exportable datasets for LGR.
- MARS: data capacity in place and SAMP data-flow planning underway to harmonise datasets.
- Regulatory Services: interim approach prepared to avoid data/service disruption pending LGR decisions.

Progress

Objective C3

- Enterprise contact platform (Converse CX) with reusable components) and integrations (Case management, webchat, SMS, video).
- MARS: plan agreed with suppliers; Experts engaged to support with integrations.
- Regulatory Services: groundwork for delivering improved services regularly reviewed, ensuring flexible options aligned to LGR timelines can be achieved

People and capabilities

People & Capabilities

- **Objective P1** We will ensure our values, behaviours and culture are aligned, with a focus on prioritising customer needs through a period of rapid change.

- **Objective P2** We will invest in our people to ensure they have the skills they need to deliver, manage and adapt to the significant organisational changes ahead.

Measures

✓ Long term vacancies (% vacancies filled first time)

✓ Staff retention (% of staff who leave within 12 months)

✓ Equipping staff to do their jobs (% who agree they have had the training and development needed to perform current duties)

✓ Staff development (% staff agree there are training and development opportunities to support them to achieve their ambitions / progress their career)

✓ Net promoter (% of staff recommend the council as a great place to work)

Progress
Objective P1

- People Strategy delivered, setting strategic direction for two years
- Behaviour commitments developed and launched, supported with training, briefings and toolkits.
- Internal communications and engagement review completed.
- Embracing Change programme delivered with over 100 participants.
- New staff networks (Women’s, neurodiversity, early careers, social) launched and gaining momentum.
- LGR engagement work progressing with increased communication through depot and management briefings.
- New induction process live with positive early feedback.

Progress
Objective P2

- Growth & Goals conversations embedded with training, briefings and toolkits.
- Digital Skills for All project approved and moving into mobilisation.
- Coaching capacity expanded with trained internal coaches and an initial offer ready to launch.
- Learning Hub created to support staff development and self-directed learning.
- Recruitment process improved with automation and an online toolkit for managers.
- Workforce analytics work progressing, including familiarisation and dashboard development.
- Change tools developed to support delivery of change projects.
- Change readiness assessment delivered for the MARS project.
- New OD Facilitator starting to accelerate capability work.

Asset and accommodation

Assets & Accommodation

- **Objective A1** We will prioritise operational assets so they are in the best possible condition ahead of vesting day to the new unitary authority.

- **Objective A2** We will continue to challenge our asset portfolio to reduce environmental impact and enhance their financial contribution

Measures

✓ Assets have been identified, classified and had a condition survey undertaken as part of the asset strategy (% conditions surveys undertaken)

✓ Improvement in financial return of NFDC asset base (confirm method)

✓ Reduced emissions from operational council assets (% reduction against baseline)’

Progress
Objective A1

- Strong progress against Year 1 SAMP roadmap, especially Digital Asset Management and Asset Optimisation.
- Governance structure established with 3-stage Asset Challenge Framework agreed and tested.
- Estates-led asset data validation completed; senior manager validation next.
- Public Conveniences refurbishment programme agreed in principle and progressing through governance.
- PSDS Phase 4 (Applemore) advancing, supporting condition and energy-efficiency improvements.
- Cross-service alignment strengthening, embedding SAMP corporately.

- **Launch of Grounds Maintenance review** to modernise processes, SLAs and pricing so services are LGR-ready

Progress
Objective A1

- Enhanced 3-stage Asset Challenge Framework rolled out to support structured portfolio decisions.
- Regeneration priorities for Public Conveniences identified.
- Energy efficiency and AMR schemes aligned with Estates and climate objectives.
- Sustainability policy explicitly linked to SAMP principles.
- Clear pipeline of optimisation work forming for PMO monitoring.

Grounds Maintenance Review Scope Includes:

- full cost-recovery pricing model and income opportunities for internal/external customers
- site management plans with biodiversity and environmental improvements
- Area risk assessments and equipment/operating model review to increase efficiency and reduce avoidable costs/emissions

Transformation Delivery & LGR Readiness

- **Objective D1** We will ensure that all transformation activity will deliver meaningful improvements for customers in the short term and/or will position the organisation to transition as smoothly as possible to the new unitary authority.
- **Objective D2** We will shift to a more empowered and accountable management culture.

Measures

✓ Project objectives and benefits defined for all transformation initiatives, linked to transformation drivers and monitored by PMO.

✓ New service and financial planning processes implemented

✓ Managers agree they are empowered to manage resources to deliver their target outcomes (% agreement)

Progress Objectives D1 & D2

- Netcall Converse CX successfully implemented – immediate customer benefits and a scalable platform ready for unitary integration.
- Create/CRM integration beginning – enabling fully digital customer journeys pre-LGR.
- MARS project plan aligned with partners, and LGR-critical systems work underway.
- Regulatory Services work progressing – demos completed, expectations reset, and interim plans ready pending LGR decisions.
- SAMP digital asset management foundation – TotalMobile implementation, validated asset data, and a full challenge framework to support rationalisation ahead of vesting day.
- Grounds Maintenance Review-ensures NFDC enters LGR with a clear, evidence-based model
- People-focused transformation delivered – Growth & Goals, coaching programme, new staff networks, Change Support Programme, new induction, and stronger internal communications all strengthen organisational readiness for major structural change.
- Digital Skills for All project approved – builds future digital capacity essential for LGR service integration.
- Leadership and behaviour commitments embedded – aligning culture across services before new structures are formed.
- Improved PMO governance and reporting – clear oversight of risks, interdependencies and readiness across all transformation programmes.
- Asset optimisation pipeline formed – enabling financially sustainable services and reducing maintenance pressure ahead of LGR.

What's Next

Customer & Digital/Assets

1. Customer

- CRM/Create integration stands up – first end-to-end digital journeys
- Netcall expansion – SMS, video assist, richer natural-language routing, full customer feedback tools.

2. MARS Programme

- Full NFDC plan overlay completed and approved.
- Templates and configuration aligned with for LGR
- Delivery of System & Integrations

3. Regulatory Services (Idox & LGR Pathway)

- Final decision on regional Regulatory Services solution (pending LGR direction).
- Configuration and design progresses if decision window opens mid-year.

4. Asset Management, SAMP & Grounds Maintenance

- Senior manager validation of asset data completed.
- TotalMobile upload + system testing goes live.
- PC refurbishment business case approved → procurement route confirmed → tender issued.
- Grounds Maintenance major review starts (May 2026):
  - Phase 1 site-based review (June 2026)
  - Phase 2 operational model review (Aug 2026)
  - Phase 3 SLAs & pricing model drafted (Sept–Oct 2026)

People, Leadership & Culture/LGR

5. People, Leadership & Culture

- Change Support Programme launched (Apr–May).
- Leadership competencies finalised and development offer designed.
- Coaching offer live, early cohorts embedded.
- Recognition programme implemented.

6. OD, Workforce & Engagement

- Staff networks continue to grow, with formal development plans.
- EDI Group & Employee Forum meet throughout spring/summer, embedding new ways of working.
- Persona-based comms strategy implemented following comms review recommendations.

7. LGR Readiness & Corporate Planning

- Key engagement milestones delivered as LGR decision points approach.
- Service data, asset data and customer data aligned to support LGR transition planning.
- Strengthened PMO- with dependencies, benefits tracking, and risk management embedded.

8. Major Corporate Events & Deliverables

- All-staff event – 17 June 2026.
- Full staff survey – June 2026.

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