Council
9 July 2020
IT and business improvement

Classification	Public
Purpose	For approval
Issue	The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted areas of our business which can be enhanced through embracing technological solutions and moving to a digital-first approach. This paper brings these areas together for Council oversight, as well as providing an update on planned work to identify a new CRM provider.
Recommendation(s)	1. To approve the approach for identifying a new CRM provider. 2. To discuss the business improvement suggestions, which build on the principle of a digital-first approach.
Financial and resourcing implications	The business improvement suggestions from staff would lead to cost and efficiency savings for the GOsC. These are set out further in the paper.
Equality and diversity implications	Equality Impact Assessments (as highlighted in the paper) will be completed. As a transparent regulator we will publish these assessments.
Communications implications	We will need to communicate with our stakeholders any business improvement activities which change established processes.
Annex(es)	Staff business improvement suggestions
Author	Carl Pattenden

Background

1. In May 2020, we reported to Council, through our [COVID-19 paper](#) (see Section H), the need for technological enhancement; a move towards a 'digital-first' approach and how we should embrace the pandemic as a disruptor for positive change. In that paper, we reported how we were asking staff to identify learning from the current situation in order to make the business better in the future.

2. The purpose of this paper is to build on previous reports to Council about our work to identify a new CRM provider to replace our existing system, and to provide Council with oversight of the work we are undertaking to streamline manual GOsC operational activities.

3. While work had commenced before the coronavirus pandemic, the impact of the pandemic was such that it brought into sharp focus the need for the GOsC to further use technological solutions and for the team to challenge established processes to seek more efficient ways of working. This is the continuation of the journey to make GOsC more efficient in terms of automated processes, its sustainability objectives and working environment.

Discussion

IT development: 2017 to date

4. By way of context for Council, a brief summary of the IT developments over the last three years is provided below. NB: most of this work has been overseen by the Audit Committee from the perspective of IT risk management:

   a. An independent IT audit report from Crowe Clark Whitehill (CCW) to assess the GOsC IT security and the internal processes and controls was commissioned in early 2017. This report was only able to provide limited assurance and identified several critical actions, as part of an action plan, that needed to be addressed.

   b. In May 2017, a staff restructure brought back into the GOsC, greater IT expertise. This restructure saw a new post created being the IT Manager.

   c. From May 2017 to May 2018, the IT Manager implemented the IT action plan. This ensured the IT security is on a more secure and robust footing, whilst also documenting and improving the IT offering within the GOsC, by replacing and updating all desktop PC's, and physical network infrastructure.

   d. In March 2018, the IT Manager undertook an assessment of the GOsC's IT system. This was presented to, and approved by Council in 2018, leading to the GOsC moving away from the Advanced365 cloud environment to a Microsoft Azure based hybrid cloud environment, which added more flexibility, control and resiliency over the IT infrastructure. This move included the establishment of a more robust homeworking solution.

e. In August 2019, the GOsC invited Crowe (renamed from Crowe Clark Whitehill) to carry out a follow up audit on the IT environment. The report was able to give a significant assurance rating; however, the report highlighted a critical area that concerned several aspects of the now aging CRM product. These included, not keeping up with current security standards, multi factor authentication (MFA), depth and flexibility of audit logs, and segregation of users' rights from the administrator rights.

f. In addition to the problems with the aging CRM product as highlighted by the report, staff were also experiencing challenges with the system, due to its inflexibility.

g. Following the release of the report, the IT Manager arranged for the CRM product to be upgraded, to address the concerns identified by Crowe. Unfortunately, due to significant technical difficulties between the CRM product provider and the GOsC's website developers/hosting company, upgrading the CRM is not achievable.

h. Following a review of the failed upgrade, the IT Manager has carried out a review of the CRM software pending a review of the market to identify a new provider.

CRM product

5. As part of the review into the future use of the CRM, the IT Manager met with the five main key business areas (Professional Standards, Fitness to Practise, Registration and Resources, Communications and Governance) to understand their expectations from a CRM system. It was clear that the departments, while having different needs, are seeking a system which is sufficiently agile and adept for the immediate present, and for future developments and enhancements.

6. The review highlighted some areas that require improvement, as well as highlighting some areas that the current CRM does not have the capability of fulfilling. These would not have been addressed had the failed upgrade worked.

7. We reported to Council through the budget strategy paper in November 2019 and the Business Plan and Budget paper in January 2020, that we would need to assess the market for a new CRM provider. Due to the vast size of the CRM market, we need to enlist expertise to undertake this assessment based on needs and to ensure we identify a product which addresses the immediate present, and future developments and enhancements.

8. Using the inter-regulatory healthcare IT network, we were able to identify the specialised third parties who understand our sector, and who would be able to assess our needs and requirements against the CRM market.

9. In line with the procurement policy, as outlined in the GOsC Governance Handbook, the IT Manager obtained three written quotes and undertook thorough interviews with those organisations. This also included taking

references from other regulators and speaking with clients who have used the services of those providers.

10. This process identified Hart Square, who are an independent CRM and technology consultancy, as the preferred supplier. This is based on their knowledge and experience, having worked with similar sectors, including healthcare, and similar sized organisations, as well as with businesses who are moving from the same CRM product the GOsC currently uses.

11. Hart Square's strategy (which was presented pre-pandemic) has three phases:

- Phase One includes carrying out business case workshops with the five key main business areas, as well as building a business case based on the findings.

- Phase Two includes carrying further workshops on requirements gathering with the five key main business areas. Once carried out, Hart Square will assist the GOsC in creating an Invitation to Tender.

- Phase Three includes selecting the correct vendor based on the criteria that has been gathered in the previous two phases. Hart Square will present and assist the GOsC in choosing the correct vendor based on the GOsC's needs. In addition, we will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment as part of this selection process to ensure any new system was compatible with the needs of the users, i.e. with speech-recognition software.

   NB: GOsC would not be obliged to implement a new CRM at the end of the selection process. For example, if the financial cost of the new system was unaffordable, we would not be committed to proceeding with the procurement.

12. The total cost of all three phases, including VAT is £23k for 24 days work. At this stage we have not signed any agreement with Hart Square for this work to commence and we would need to explore with Hart Square how the phases of work would be completed during a period of homeworking.

13. In January 2020, Council agreed to allocate £75,000 from reserves for IT investment. These funds have been set aside as designated for future spend, and subject to Council agreement, we would fund the activity with Hart Square from this designation.

Other business improvements

14. In March 2020 we were able to move to all staff working from home, in accordance with the Government guidance, with minimal adjustments due to the remote working solution introduced during the rollout of the new IT infrastructure in late 2018.

15. In May 2020, the Chief Executive and Registrar, asked staff for suggestions that they thought the GOsC can improve upon to make the business more efficient. The purpose was to capture learning from the homeworking situation and to

embrace the pandemic as a positive disruptor for change. This aligns with the concept of GOsC now thinking, 'digital-first'.

16. There were 46 suggestions made (some suggestions were duplicated), which when analysed, could be grouped into five main themes being:

- Technological
- Wellbeing
- Engagement
- New ways of working
- Environmental

17. Several the responses, but not all, involved changes in the way the GOsC uses technology. Each area of improvement has been given a priority rating, high (red), medium (yellow) and low (green), and as a status of complete or ongoing.

18. The IT Manager has been focussing on ensuring all members of staff have been able to continue their day to day roles, and that any improvements have been prioritised correctly. For the purpose of Council oversight, the Annex to this paper sets out the business improvement ideas, their priority rating, and their current status. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as part of the delivery of new initiatives.

19. Further information about the immediate red rating priorities we have so far been able to explore, has been provided below.

High-priority areas

20. The areas which have been addressed as high priority are:

   a. Renewal process
   b. Direct Debit renewals
   c. Certificate availability
   d. Renewal reminder notices
   e. Meetings (location and paperless)
   f. Homeworking opportunities

21. Of the high priority areas, it is possible to consolidate points a-d together as they are inter-connected and relate to the renewal of registration process. The main issue is that the process could be streamlined and made fully online which would improve the registrant experience and enhance our internal operation.

22. We estimate that by making the process fully online, supplemented by the new GOsC Coronavirus Amendment Order which enables electronic reminders to be issued, there would be a cost saving of c.£8.5k per annum through not printing and posting the renewal forms and reminders. There would be a further cost saving of c.£11.5k of not printing and issuing certificates (NB: this saving is higher due to the cost of purchasing the certificate paper). Council should note

these forecast savings do not include an estimate of the staff time saving of not having to undertake manual processing.

23. Turning to meetings (location and paperless). The thrust of the suggestions was that online meetings should become the norm, with face to face meetings being limited. This would result in less travel for individuals, meaning an improvement in our carbon footprint, as well as financial saving from the travel cost not being incurred. A reduction in travel costs incurred by Council and Committee members would also result in a smaller tax liability as GOsC pays tax on travel expenses incurred due to HMRC considering Council and Committee members as 'officeholders'. A blended fitness to practise approach, using virtual and office facilities, would also result in travel cost reductions and improved efficiency.

24. In addition, moving to a paperless model, i.e. Council, Committee and hearing bundles not being produced in hard-copy, would result in savings - both cost and staff time; however, we have not yet had the opportunity to cost the expected saving from online, paperless meetings.

25. The final high-priority area was in relation to the telephone system, and that we wished to explore how the system might be enhanced to better support office and home working. We have not yet undertaken work on this area.

Recommendations:

1. To approve the approach for identifying a new CRM provider.

2. To discuss the business improvement suggestions, which build on the principle of a digital-first approach.

Staff business improvement suggestions:

Theme 1: Technological

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Renewal process	Hard-copy renewal forms printed in-house and posted to registrants. Registrants may renew online or return hard-copy forms. Hard copy forms returned to the office require Registration staff to manually update these records, including the fee payment processing. See point below re barrier to online renewals.	To move the renewal process completely online. A registrant should be able to renew their registration fully online regardless of their payment method.	Ongoing	■
Direct Debit renewals	A registrant needing to set up, or amend, a direct debit has to contact the office to complete a hard-copy form as the facility is not available online.	Provide the online facility for the direct debit renewals (initial set-up and amendment).	Ongoing	
Certificate availability	Printed paper certificates are sent by post, to registrants at the point of initial registration and then each year following renewal.	Printed certificates replaced by non-modifiable secure online certificates that can be accessed and downloaded from a registrant's ozone profile.	Ongoing	■

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Renewal reminder notices	The GOsC is committed to sending out all registration renewals by post, as stated in legislation.	The GOsC coronavirus Amendment Order has now been laid before both Houses of Parliament. Renewal reminder notices will be able to be sent electronically in the future.	Complete	■
Student applications	Entire end-to-end process carried out offline, including paper-based forms and manual internal processes.	Review entire end-to-end process, with the target of creating an online portal/system for use by students and staff.	Ongoing	■
Conversion of manual processes	Existing processes have not been amended or modified to include technological advances, such as making paper copies available online to downloaded and print.	Manual processes (across all teams) will be reviewed to decide if more efficient options are available. This will assist us in meeting our own Corporate Social Responsibility aims, which is important as a registered charity.	Ongoing	■
Ozone document availability	Registration forms, such as those for practising overseas and non-practising are available online but cannot be completed electronically and must be downloaded.	Enable forms to be completed, and submitted, online.	Ongoing	■

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Certificate of Current Professional Status (CCPS) process	The CCPS form is not currently available online and has to be requested. On receipt of a request form, the CCPS certificate is issued by post – one copy to the individual, one copy to the overseas body.	Enable the form to be completed, and submitted, online. Issue the certificate electronically not by post.	Ongoing	

Theme 2: Wellbeing

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Homeworking opportunities	The phone system at the GOsC is currently only available in the office. Office phones can be diverted to mobile numbers and staff can dial into the office and collect messages from the office phones. A limited amount of corporate mobile phones have been provided for key front-line staff members.	A review will be carried out into the phone system to see if there is a solution that is more compatible with staff working in the office and remote working at the same time.	Ongoing	

Theme 3: Engagement

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Meetings (location and paperless)	Staff use a variety of methods to carry out meetings either: • In person – in designated meeting rooms within Osteopathy House, or at other suitable venues. • Online – using GoToMeeting, or any other form of online system, provided by the host. Meeting papers are traditionally provided in hard-copy format.	The presumption will be that in person meetings to be moved online, with limited face to face meetings carried out in Osteopathy House. This approach will generate cost and efficiency savings. Papers for meetings will no longer be provided in hard-copy format. This will reduce printing, postage and staff time (collation of papers), while providing an environmental benefit in line with our CSR approach.	Ongoing	■ (red)
Student presentations	Members of the GOsC undertake presentations to students about various	Undertake a review to understand if online student presentations can reach a wider audience in less	Ongoing	■ (yellow)

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
	aspects of the GOsC work.	time. These can be supplemented by introducing short 'how-to' online videos.		

Theme 4: New ways of working

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Hard-copy new graduate welcome packs made digital	When a new graduate (or international applicant) joins the Register for the first time, a hard-copy welcome pack is produced and sent to them.	The welcome pack contains materials which are all available online. Explore how this activity could be digitalised, and made more personal, i.e. email to individual with links to the materials, plus an embedded video from Chair or Chief Executive welcoming individual to the profession.	Ongoing	
Improvement in digital offering for the profession	Range of processes and/or communications which are print based.	Explore enhancement of digital offering for profession. Can be explored as part of approach to communication and engagement with the profession – Council strategy day September will explore further.	Ongoing	
GOsC finance applications	The GOsC uses finance systems that are locally installed on users' desktop PCs	Transition locally installed systems to cloud based applications.	Ongoing	
Discontinue ID card production	GOsC produces annual ID card for registrants at point of entry to the Register and at renewal. Sent to	Explore appropriateness/relevancy of ID production. We are unaware of any other regulator who	Ongoing	

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
	registrant by post.	produces annual ID card.		

Theme 5: Environmental

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Reduction in need for stationery	Activities undertaken in person using hard-copy materials.	More activity undertaken online, using a digital-first approach. Reduction in stationery usage, leading	Ongoing	

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
		to cost reductions and an enhanced environmental footprint.		
Reduction in food waste, and use of more local suppliers	Catering for meetings can result in food waste. Catering tends to be purchased from large corporate firms.	Identify local suppliers for catering use to boost local community (GOsC CSR role and as a charity in Southwark). Identify local charities, i.e. homeless support, where any leftover food may be donated.	Ongoing	
Reduction in plastic	Activities undertaken in person using hard-copy materials.	More activity undertaken online, using a digital-first approach. Reduction in stationery/plastic usage, leading to cost reductions and an enhanced environmental footprint.	Ongoing	
Computers/printers turned fully off each evening	While computers are shut down by the user before leaving Osteopathy House, they are not turned off fully, i.e. there remains an electric current. Printers are not turned off and go into overnight 'sleep' mode.	Explore mechanisms for ensuring computers and printers are turned off so that the GOsC is more environmentally friendly.	Ongoing	

Suggested area of Improvement	Current Method (pre-pandemic)	Proposed Target	Status	Priority Rating
Reduction in numbers in office	Majority of staff are office-based workers – overall desk occupancy rate approximately 70%-75% based on short study conducted late 2019.	Explore potential for greater degree of homeworking, which may lead to reduction in numbers in office. This may lead to reduced office costs, i.e. reduction in postage, stationery etc., and the increased potential of space being available for rental to third-party organisation.	Ongoing	