

# Report of the Head of Democratic Services & Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Democratic Services Committee – 20 December 2016

## USE OF MODERN.GOV SOFTWARE BY SCRUTINY TEAM

<b>Purpose:</b>	The Democratic Services Committee requested a report outlining when the Scrutiny Team would commence using the Modern.gov software.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that: 1) The report be noted;
<b>Report Author:</b>	Huw Evans
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Carl Billingsley
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Phil Couch

### 1. Introduction

1.1 At the Democratic Services Committee held on 18 October 2016, the Chair of the Committee requested that a report be presented to the December meeting outlining when the Scrutiny Team would commence using the Modern.gov software as the Democratic Services Committee were keen to utilise one platform for all relevant publications.

### 2. Benefits of Modern.gov Software

2.1 Modern.gov is the Authority's software solution for meeting management including placing agendas, reports and minutes online. It is an integrated package which aims to simplify websites for Councillors, Officers and the public.

2.2 The system is a comprehensive database of forward plans, agendas, minutes, and reports. The software creates electronic document packs as PDF files, including running page numbering, headers, restricted notices and watermarks. Both PDF and HTML links are available automatically for all documents published.

2.3 The system has comprehensive security allowing for all common types of information to be published fully secured, safeguarding sensitive documents. It also allows selective Intranet / Internet publishing.

2.4 The system also allows "free-text" searching via web on all content including scanned material.

- 2.5 Additionally, there is a Modern.gov application “App” which may be downloaded for Android, Apple and Windows devices. The App can be used to ensure that an individual always has the latest meeting papers for the Committees they are interested in. The App is primarily aimed at Councillors but is also available to anyone with an interest in having Committee papers on their device.
- 2.6 The App allows you to specify the Council and Committees of interest and will then automatically keep itself updated with all the latest meeting papers including the full agenda pack. Additionally, the App enables you to highlight sections of the agenda pack and make annotations just as you would with a paper copy. Document navigation is made quick and simple via bookmarking and intuitive controls.
- 2.7 Modern.gov software supports the management of citizen focused government and open decision-making, leading to accountability and inclusiveness.
- 2.8 The software also has an e-Petitions element which the Head of Democratic Services is currently exploring as to its future use.
- 2.9 A comprehensive meeting and event calendar is available, allowing users to drill down into full meeting information.

### **3. Scrutiny Current Practise**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Manager has created an informative website [www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny) which sets out the work of the Scrutiny Programme Committee and the Scrutiny Inquiry and Performance Panels. Additionally, it links to a blog that the Team regularly update.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny Team convert all of their documentation into PDF format and publish it on their website.

### **4. Switching Scrutiny to Modern.gov**

- 4.1 The Democratic Services Team are the main users and administrators of the Modern.gov software system. In order for Scrutiny to fully embrace the change, a period of transition is required to allow adequate training.
- 4.2 The Scrutiny Team will be trained over the coming months, so that they are able to fully go live immediately following the Annual Meeting of Council in May 2017.
- 4.3 This approach compliments the Authority’s Digital Strategy.

## **5. Council of 24 November 2016**

- 5.1 Council at its meeting on 24 November 2016 considered the “Councillors’ Broadband and Telephone, ICT and Mobile Phone Allowances – May 2017 and Beyond” report. During the debate on that item, an additional resolution was added stating that all Scrutiny agendas, reports etc. utilise the Modern.gov Software by May 2017.

## **6. Equality and Engagement Implications**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening process took place prior to the consultation period. The outcome indicated that it was low priority and a full report was not required.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The proposals outlined in the report are contained within existing budgetary constraints.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The proposals identified are in accordance with relevant legislation.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Appendices:** None.