

## Appendix 4

### Benefits of portal consolidation

#### Main Benefits:

- **Market Leadership:** The council will be acquiring a product which already provides digital services to approximately 4,500 public sector organisations including Central Govt, NHS, blue light and half of all Local Authorities in the UK (over 200). This community provides great opportunities for collaboration and sharing services.
- **Integrating Comms with Digital Services:** By selecting a solution which has unified digital services and communications platforms, the two systems can be used to 'drive' each other. For example, communications can be setup with topics and campaigns designed to drive people to self-serve. And while the customers are self-serving, the Customer Portal and Forms can be dynamically prompting customers to register for topics and alerts. This approach would prove hugely beneficial for driving channel shift and ROI for the Authority.
- **Intuitive Form and Process Design:** The Authority will acquire the tools needed to build its own forms, processes, and integrations.
  - This will remove the need for consultancy with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties.
  - Costs of digital programmes/projects will be kept down.
  - Spelthorne will be able to respond to challenges with greater efficiency and as it sees fit.
  - The forms and processes already created by the authority can be folded-in without the need to be re-created or transferred across (potentially losing functionality) from other systems, saving huge amounts of staff time and effort.
  - Forms are fully integrated in the back-office systems and can provide full end-to-end automation
  - Spelthorne IT staff already have development capability and would be able to begin development much sooner than if the Authority were to use another provider. Although training could be provided for an alternative solution, there would be a significant delay as they were brought up to speed.
- **Revenues & Benefits Process, Data and Automation:**
  - The products in scope will provide a platform which extends the login and verification of customers to enable detailed account information & balances to be pulled through from back-office systems into the customer portal. This includes Council Tax, Benefits, Business Rate & Landlords.
  - These detailed online accounts (and ebilling) provide a large amount of information to customers and staff – all under individual logins within the platform (SSO).
  - This removes the need for Spelthorne to have a separate Revs & Bens portal – making revenues savings whilst providing an improved customer journey
  - As forms can be integrated and automated, staff only need to be involved on an exception basis. This will free up staff time to help in other ways – or remove the need for as many roles.
- **Flexible Integration:** The Authority will benefit from real time 2-way integration with back-office systems without the need for lengthy development/approval from the platform supplier before they can be published.
  - There will not be a reliance on 'connectors' which are usually one-size-fits-all and often not suited to work with local government as Councils tend to use different versions of the same software, have different API's, different integration requirements etc.
  - The solution in scope better suits Spelthorne's technical infrastructure as it had an integration management tool which would allow the Council to build any number of re-usable integrations using open standards, to connect to webservices, databases, HTTP, input & output files etc. By having this capability in-house Spelthorne will keep overall ownership costs down and see a better ROI where systems require integration. For example, a neighbouring Authority were charged £100k for an API for Capita who supply the Councils Revs and Bens Software.

- The software can integrate with: Idox, Uniform, Locata, Northgate, Capita Civica etc
- **Market Leading Security:** Security and data protection was a key factor during the workshop stage of this project. Granicus work with Central Government, the Home Office, DFE and UK Border Force so security is up to a high standard.
  - They are ISO27001 certified, as well as their hosting partner AWS
  - Data is fully encrypted at rest and transit using industry standard methods (SSL and AES256)
  - As the products are modular but designed to work seamlessly these standards are applied across the entire platform from the ground up.