

Policy and Resources Committee

Item No.....

Report title:	Good for Enterprise Outage – Service Failure 3 July to 14 July 2015
Date of meeting:	20 July 2015
Responsible Chief Officer:	Executive Director of Resources
Strategic impact: The effectiveness of member communications is critically important.	

Executive summary

This paper sets out the course of events that occurred between 3 July and 14 July when there was a failure of the Good for Enterprise service provided by Vodafone. It explains the reasons for the failure, the sequence of events and the actions that are now being taken to make sure any issues like this cause much less disruption in future.

Recommendations:

Members are invited to comment on this report and the actions now being taken.

1. The Good for Enterprise (GFS) service which we buy from Vodafone, provides a secure way for all Norfolk County Council Members and around 60 other NCC staff to access their email and calendar information on an iPad or iPhone – allowing them to work flexibly and remotely around the county in a way that suits them best.
2. Inevitably, with any technology system which offers good flexibility, there will always be potential for things to go wrong. However this episode has highlighted the need to put in place mechanisms to more speedily and robustly hold our suppliers to account for the detection and correction of service failures. This episode solely concerns a contract with Vodafone and is not connected to our contractual relationship with HP for the DNA programme.
3. Outlined below are details of the course of events and the actions now being taken to prevent any recurrence of this level of disruption.

On **Friday 3 July** Members began to report a problem with their Good for Enterprise system – which wasn't allowing them to receive email or update their calendars.

On the same day our ICT team immediately checked this with Vodafone – as they found Vodafone had made a system change to their national service - but they assured us that this change couldn't have affected the service they provided to us. They advised us to check our own servers and to talk to Microsoft, who provide the Outlook system which is delivered through the GFS service.

By **Wednesday 8 July**, we had established that there were no problems on our servers and issued a message to all staff through our intranet system letting them know that there were problems with Members emails, and requesting that staff contact Members in other ways.

We again escalated the problem at Vodafone, and also with Microsoft – who confirmed that there was no problem with Outlook.

By **Saturday 11 July** Vodafone accepted that the problem stemmed from them and traced it to a corrupt file on the national server that is used to provide our service, which was then fixed using a back- up file.

On **Monday 13 July** – the system was back up and running, but wasn't allowing some users to open or forward attachments. Again we checked our own systems, and found this was still a fault with the national Vodafone server and reported it to them.

On **Tuesday 14 July** a further message was sent to staff to tell them that while most of the system was working, there was still an issue with some Members receiving attachments which was being fixed.

On **Wednesday 15 July**, this issue was fully resolved by Vodafone.

4. Under the terms of our contract with Vodafone we have established we aren't entitled to any automatic compensation for this failure of their service, but we will be taking the matter up at the most senior levels of Vodafone.
5. The Head of ICT and his team are working on two areas to make sure any issues like this cause much less disruption in the future:
 - Looking into alternative platforms they could easily move Member communications to – providing a short term but secure solution in the event of any future server failure.
 - The moves being put in place to strengthen ICT services at NCC will also include ways to more speedily and robustly hold our suppliers to account for the detection and correction of service failures.

Recommendations

Members are invited to comment on this report and the actions now being taken.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained or want to see copies of any assessments, e.g. equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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