

- Frees up human talent – As the virtual workers undertake the time-consuming and repetitive tasks this frees up employees to undertake the tasks which add value and require a specifically human touch.
- Improved productivity – The virtual workers will work 24/7 and can complete repetitive IT-based tasks much more quickly.
- Improved service levels – The faster and more efficiently you can complete tasks the more able you are to improve service levels. Customer requests can be dealt with more effectively and with a greater focus on positive outcomes first time
- Increased accuracy – Once programmed the virtual workers will follow the scripts and will not make mistakes, which supports compliance and quality control. It also means that time is not spent rectifying the mistakes that employees may make.
- Reduced cost – the use of automation will improve efficiency and reduce the time it takes to complete core tasks, so operational costs are reduced. The virtual workforce can be scaled up or down according to changes in workload. It is estimated that robotic automation can complete routine tasks at up to two-thirds the cost of an employee.
- Centralised control – As automation connects diverse systems this can provide a central point for monitoring and control. It enables changes to processes to be deployed quickly across a range of services which can promote data security.
- Rapid ROI – Automation can be quick to deploy and scale up, which means that the organisation will very quickly be able to see a return on its investment.

**31.** The upgrade to the CRM system was completed in 2022. The council has a number of indicators and targets which monitor the performance of the CRM system and are reported to the Corporate Policy and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel every quarter. The performance scorecard notes that the majority of indicators are achieving the targeted level of performance.

**32.** The council is now progressing further automation programmes, of other internal processes that can be improved or streamlined through automation. The council looked externally to other councils, who had already introduced Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to better understand how it can be used to benefit its own services.

**33.** The council has progressed this through investment in RPA and since it commenced in September 2022, there are a total of 20 projects live or in current development with a further eight awaiting initial assessment.

- There are six live projects, these include a new automation to allow parents/guardians to purchase extra nursery hours, other live projects support largely tasks in Finance and Property Services such as online