



Central Midlands  
Commissioning Support Unit



# **Birmingham CrossCity CCG Patient Council Digital Communications**

October 2013  
Design & Digital Service

## Patient Council Background

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Birmingham CrossCity CCG is establishing a Patient as one of its key priorities to secure public involvement and ensure that we create a strong collective voice to commission patient focused care.

The Patient Council will hold regular public meetings publish information related to its activities. The Patient Council will be made up of 12 patient/public representatives which will be supported by 3 representative from Birmingham CrossCity CCG



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# Patient Council Portal

# The Brief

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Birmingham CrossCity CCG require a solution which will allow members of their patient council to interact through a digital platform to enable collaboration and the sharing of information in relation to their roles within the patient council.

## Functional Requirements

- Council Member Profiles
- Role based access
- Document management
- Discussion forum
- Events calendar
- Instant messaging
- Tools to assist the CCG with reporting and evaluation

# Options

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There are a number of options which the CCG could consider to provide a solution.

This section focuses on the following options:

- Facebook
- Google+
- Joomla Bespoke

# Options – Facebook

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## What is Facebook?

Facebook is arguably the most well known social networking site available today. Built initially to connect people with friends, it has now grown into a commercial product through which brands can target customers.

## How could Facebook be used?

Facebook groups feature could be used to meet some of the requirement's in communication.

While we believe Facebook could technically provide most of the functionality you require, recent changes to the way the platform displays its content make it increasingly difficult for the public sector to use it as an engagement channel without financial investment.

Consideration will also need to be given to council members wiliness to create an account on this platform as this has further implications to these individuals beyond the Patient Council group.

We would also question the ease in access and value of the data that you would be able to get back out of the system for reporting and evaluation.

## Conclusion

We do not feel that Facebook provides all of the features you require for your patient council.

While Facebook may not be the ideal platform for engagement, its ad features are very powerful and enable you to target messages to specific audiences.

# Options – Google+

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## What is Google+?

Google+ differs to other popular social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. G+ is described as a 'social layer' – existing across Google services, providing a social element across, search, gmail, android, drive etc...

## How could G+ be used?

In relation to the Google+ platform the best option for enabling the functionality you require would be its 'Communities' feature. This would allow you to make a private group through which the council could interact. However this wouldn't allow for some functionality in particular effective document management.

While we believe Google+ could technically provide most of the functionality you require, there are some key functions missing, including document management and it is our experience that people struggle to understand the concept of G+ as many people are yet to grasp the concept of a social layer.

Consideration will also need to be given to council members wiliness to create an account on this platform as this has further implications beyond the council community.

We would also question the ease in access and value of the data that you would be able to get back out of the system for reporting and evaluation.

## Conclusion

We do not feel that G+ provides all of the features you require for your patient council, however we do feel that G+ communities should be seriously considered as part of wider engagement activity.

Due to recent changes we believe the g+ platform now offers a more exciting and viable platform for engagement than Facebook.

## Options – Bespoke Development (Recommended)

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Using a subdomain of your existing website and the same platform that powers your existing website we will build a bespoke platform for patient council communication.

This will mean that get the functionality required while removing the need to further complicate the security configuration of your existing platform.

### Features

- Council Member Profiles
- Role based access
- Document management
- Discussion forum
- Events calendar
- Instant messaging
- Tools to assist the CCG with reporting and evaluation

### Benefits

- Award winning and industry leading CMS platform used to power around 35 million websites
- The same platform as your existing website and members area
- Flexible, scalable and sustainable
- Shared hosting costs (option)
- No additional design fees
- Cost neutral – delivered within your existing service.

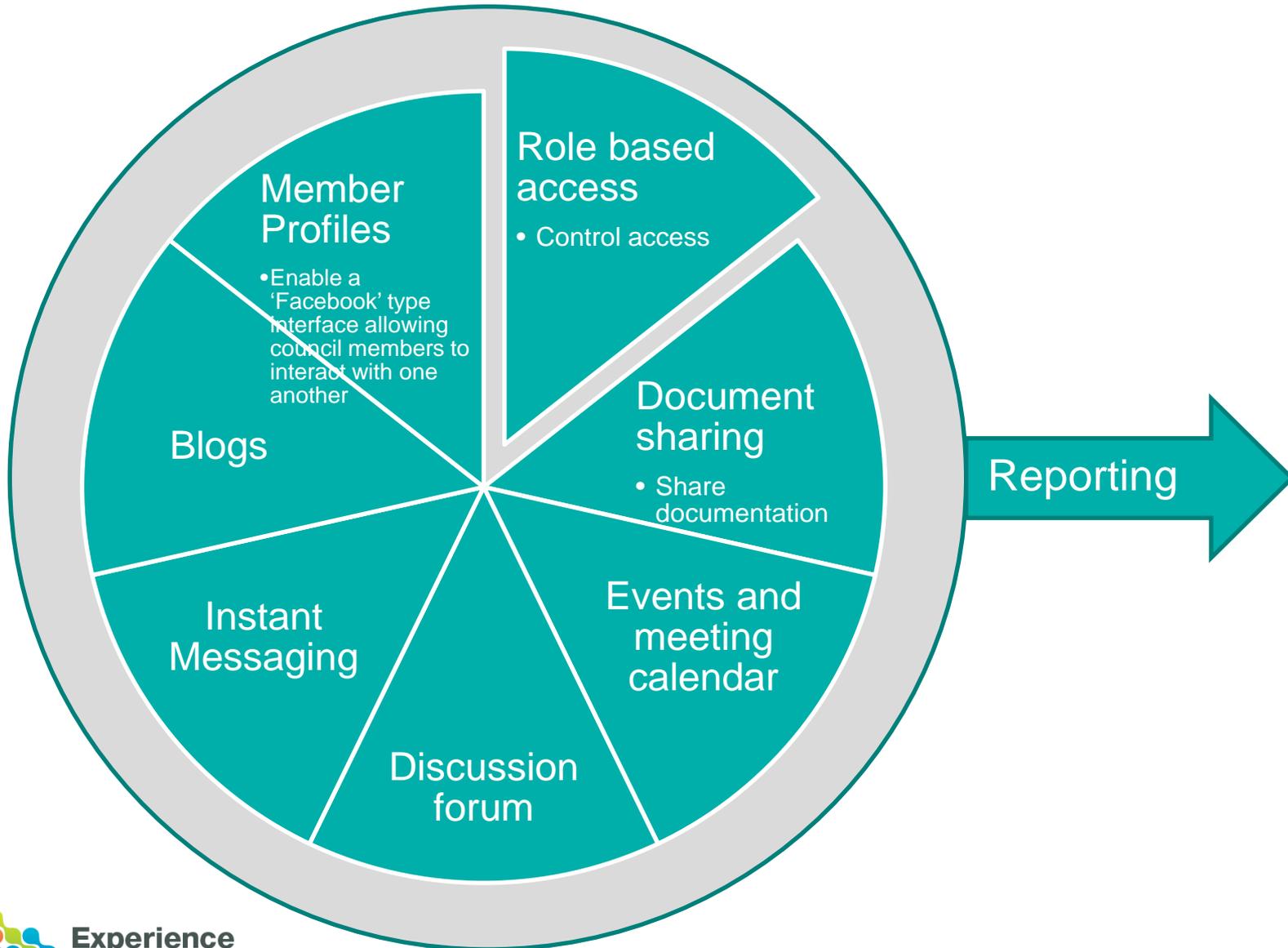
### Subdomain examples:

<http://council.bhamcrosscityccg.nhs.uk>

<http://voice.bhamcrosscityccg.nhs.uk>

# Recommended Solution - Overview

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# Hosting Considerations

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The new platform requires a hosting environment. There are options for how this could be implemented:

## 1. Host on your existing server (recommended)

### Benefits:

1. No additional hosting cost
2. No additional hosting management

### To be considered:

1. Possible effect on speed on the existing website (measurable, but unlikely to be noticeable)

## 2. New hosting environment

### Benefits:

1. No impact on existing systems

### To be considered:

1. Additional hosting costs and management costs (approx. £800 per year)



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# Plans & Next Steps

# Project Timeline

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