

# ICT Strategy

2014 – 2017



## Introduction

Technology and the effective management of information are vital for Chorley Council in delivering high quality services to its residents and customers. Over the past few years, the organisation has introduced a significant amount of new technology and other changes with the aims of making it easier for customers to access high quality services, to support service delivery, and to make business intelligence more readily accessible.

## Links to other strategies

The ICT strategy will support the delivery of the priorities of the corporate strategy and medium term financial strategy, as well ensuring that the organisation can rely upon the technology to deliver its services.

As a key corporate strategy, the ICT strategy links closely with a number of other strategies and policies. These include:

- Workforce development plan: this includes actions to ensure that staff members are trained in key systems and the use of ICT.
- GIS strategy: this will ensure that the systems and approach taken to mapping information will support this strategy's aims of ensuring that information is easily accessible.
- Digital strategy: which will support this strategy in ensuring that customers are able to access services easily online, and that support is given to those customers unable to use digital channels.

## Background and context

The context in which Chorley Council operates and delivers its services is important in developing and implementing the ICT strategy, as this will influence the way in which ICT needs to be delivered to support the council to efficiently deliver services.

### External and technological change

There are a series of significant external factors that have influenced the development of this strategy. These include the government's strategic aims for the use of ICT, and the development of new technology which changes the way in which the organisation works and interacts with residents. Some of the key factors are summarised below:

- The reduction in local government financing will continue to have a huge impact on the council over the period of this strategy. The use of technology and management of information will continue to support the reduction of costs while maintaining services.
- The government continues to emphasise the preference for the use of digital channels to access services and benefits, through the digital by default strategy. The approach in this strategy will be to work with the changes introduced by the government to improve access to services and deliver efficiencies through the council's Digital Strategy.
- The development of the internet over the past two decades has transformed the way in which residents expect to connect with the council; with many increasingly expecting to be able to request services and find information easily online.
- The consumerisation of ICT or Bring Your Own Device (BOYD) is becoming the norm in the business community. This means that employees are able to use their own devices that they are familiar with, which enables the service to concentrate on priority areas rather than managing a large estate of physical devices. This will be explored to understand the opportunities and risks that this may present for the council and public services network.
- Business applications are increasingly migrating to cloud based delivery, accessible from anywhere through the web, and without the need for onsite physical storage. The council will continue to use cloud-based technology where it is appropriate.

## Consultation

As part of the development of this strategy, extensive consultation has been undertaken with councillors, senior managers and members of staff in the ICT team. Those taking part in the consultation were asked where they thought ICT needed improvement, and what opportunities could be exploited through the strategy.

Some key messages emerged from the consultation which will be addressed in this strategy.

Feedback	Action
Ensure that users are properly trained in new or changed systems	The workforce development plan for the organisation for this year includes ICT training for users.
Involve services in the development and selection of solutions	One of the key long term outcomes of the strategy is for ICT to understand the business needs of services.  In addition, this strategy includes a list of principles to ensure that the decisions taken around ICT are open and understood by the organisation.
Make sure that there is time for new systems to be consolidated when they introduced	The actions which include changing systems or significant business processes in this strategy have a period of consolidation included in the planned timescale.
Ensure that the ICT service has the right skills to support the development of new systems and processes	This strategy includes two key actions; one around reviewing the skills that will be needed to deliver the key priorities, and another to undertake an options appraisal of the way in which the service is provided.

## **Implications for ICT delivery**

Technology is changing at a continually faster rate. It is highly likely that decisions that made ICT successful in the past will not be the same as those required to achieve success in the future. The biggest differences will now be expanded technological functions, features and device forms. The bigger changes will be the many ways that people interact with information technology. This will require new ways for supporting technology and the people that use it.

The emphasis and investment in IT services will primarily focus on the ability to deliver the information technology to support the council to continue improving processes and transform the way services designed and delivered and work with people to successfully achieve this and make the cultural shift to digital technologies.

The management of a robust infrastructure remains integral to this strategy. However, rapidly changing technology means that maintaining capacity and skills internally may not always be the most effective way of supporting all parts of the infrastructure. Consideration will be given as part of this strategy to the most appropriate approach to support over time.

## Aim

The aim of this strategy is to provide trusted and robust ICT that enables the delivery of high quality services to our customers. In addition, it will drive down costs through more efficient processes and effective management of information.

## Objectives and long term outcomes

There are four strategic objectives with accompanying long term outcomes which are set out below. These will be delivered over the course of the strategy, between 2014 and the end of 2016/17.

Objective 1:	High quality customer experience
Long term outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Customers able to access and request high volume services online</li><li>b. Information and services available through popular devices</li><li>c. Technology enables direct and targeted communications with customers</li><li>d. Customers can contact the council easily through a range of channels</li><li>e. Customers can access information about their local area and service request online</li></ul>
Objective 2:	Robust and reliable infrastructure
Long term outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Effective network and desktops in place and reliable for council office sites.</li><li>b. Reliable and cost-effective solution for storage</li><li>c. Effective business continuity and disaster recovery in place</li><li>d. Integrated digital telephony system in place</li><li>e. Infrastructure is secure and compliant with the Government Public Sector Network</li></ul>
Objective 3:	Accessible and well-managed information
Long term outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Effective and efficient information management processes in place</li><li>b. Business related information digitised and stored efficiently and effectively</li><li>c. Integrated digital document and records management in place</li><li>d. Data capture in place for council assets and work scheduling</li><li>e. Business and performance intelligence is easy to access and well used</li></ul>
Objective 4:	Coordinated and appropriately resourced support for ICT
Long term outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. ICT understands the business needs and processes of services</li><li>b. Staff in place with the right skills to deliver in-house expertise for key systems and infrastructure</li><li>c. Arrangements in place for external support where it is more effective</li><li>d. Effective procurement, making full use of systems that deliver a variety of business solutions</li></ul>

## Underlying principles

In addition to the aim and strategic objectives of the strategy, a series of principles have been developed which should guide the management of the ICT function and the implementation of technology during the period. These principles will support the delivery of the objectives of the strategy, and should help develop the organisation's understanding of the approach that will be taken to ICT.

The council will:

1. ensure that ICT supports service delivery and drives efficient and responsive services
2. seek to minimise and standardise the portfolio of technology used to capitalise on organisation-wide licensing arrangements
3. make digital access to services as easy as possible for customers, with support and alternatives available for those who cannot use it
4. consider the ability of the organisation to support and maintain new technology and solutions as part of the procurement
5. make sure that information is freely available across the organisation
6. reduce and remove paper-based storage of information
7. use minimal customisation of software
8. consider how systems will fit together when developing new and existing software
9. disaster recovery and business continuity provision will be considered when configuring systems
10. ensure that information is protected from unauthorised use and disclosure

## Delivering the strategy

This strategy continues to be ambitious, to ensure that Chorley Council is well served by information technology in delivering high quality services. The implementation of new technology and infrastructure takes time and resource to ensure that it is done properly. This means that the ICT services needs to ensure that it has in place the capacity to deliver the improvements set out in this strategy as well as arrangements to maintain business as usual.

Although the strategy sets the objectives for the organisation for three years, the actions included will be delivered in the period up to April 2015. This will support the management of the strategy delivery, and give the opportunity to review progress after one year.

The key actions will be managed through the council's project management methodology, but set out below is an overview of what will be delivered.

### Key actions overview

Objective 1: High quality customer experience

#### 1. Develop additional functionality on the website: by March 2014

The website has been well-received since it was first launched in 2012. Further improvements through this action will be put in place to make it easy for customers to move online more easily; implement the My Account feature to the site, including service expectations for the time taken to complete the work; change the infrastructure for the webforms for high volume services and introduce new forms in identified areas

#### 2. Implement direct communications solution linked to CRM: by March 2014

This solution will enable the council to complement traditional forms of communication (such as press releases) with targeted messages directly to people who should be interested in receiving them – for example to notify them of a change to a service they receive.

#### 3. Investigate enabling service requests through mobiles: by December 2014

The proportion of people accessing the internet through mobile devices has increased significantly in the past few years with the increased prevalence of smart phones and tablets. This work will introduce a solution to make it more straightforward to request services and report issues for high volume services from a mobile phone. This key action links to key action (1).

#### 4. Implement terminals in Customer Services: by March 2015

To support changes to digital systems and improve customer access, this work will remodel the floor space and introduce terminals in Customer Services so customers can access online services while getting any support or help they might need from an advisor. This will help with building customer confidence and transition to online services.

#### 5. Implement new booking system: by March 2015

This will investigate the options for a booking system for activities such as Get Up and Go and other council events and implement the selected solution.

#### 6. Review infrastructure and usage of solutions used by customer services: by March 2014

In light of the actions to improve functionality on the website and improvements to handling service requests on mobile devices, work will be undertaken to review and improve the desktop solution used in customer services. This key action links to key action (1).

## Key actions overview

### Objective 2: Robust and reliable infrastructure

#### 7. Investigate introduction of Office 2013 and Windows 8: by June 2014

Work will be undertaken to identify the benefits and issues of introducing Windows 8 and Office 2013 across the organisation, including examining compatibility with applications used to deliver services. A recommendation will be made about a potential roll-out of an upgrade with an associated action plan.

#### 8. Implement integrated telephony solution: by March 2015

This action will implement changes to the telephony infrastructure, making use of the voice over IP functionality that is available through Microsoft Lync. This will make it far easier for users to access telephony as well as computer systems away from their normal desk.

#### 9. Reviewing telephony provision for contact centre: by March 2015

A review of the telephony system and software used in the contact centre will be undertaken and recommendations made for the best option for service management information and performance reporting. This is linked to key action (8).

#### 10. Implementing dual screens: by March 2014

Dual screens have already been implemented to support business efficiency in a number of service areas. Work will be undertaken to identify areas where dual screens would support service delivery and then introduce the new screens.

#### 11. Update the Information Security Framework: by March 2015

The framework is central to ensuring that the council continues to have robust and secure infrastructure, and complies with the requirements of the government public services network. This will be updated to ensure it remains relevant and robust.

#### 12. Upgrade disaster recovery and business continuity provision: by March 2015

The upgrade will include implementing new hardware at LCC and installing a secondary link to speed up recovery time and make the arrangements more robust.

#### 13. Review and implement new mobile solutions: by April 2014 for councillors, by September 2014 for staff

Councillors: this will be the review of the pilot of tablet devices and the implementation of a new member information system, which will utilise tablets to make information available to councillors in meetings and community work

Staff: to put in place improved infrastructure and mobile devices to make it easier and quicker to access digital systems, service tasks and access to up to date information. In addition, to facilitate meetings and reduce printing.

#### 14. Review mobile phone provision and implement changes: by December 2014

Review the approach taken to mobile phones provided for work purposes, make recommendations and implement changes.

#### 15. Develop additional functionality on the intranet: by September 2014

Following the launch of the intranet, further functionality needs to be developed and implemented to ensure that it becomes a useful business tool for everyone. Planned functionality includes better and more accessible reporting of performance information; further integration of Microsoft Lync and integration of decision making.

#### 16. Implement MyShare: by September 2014

The MyShare system is already available for use. However, there is development still needed around the system to make full use of document sets for project work and templates for regularly used documents. In addition, over the period of this strategy, the use of team and personal drives will be phased out beginning with changing them to read only access.

#### 17. Implement corporate EDMS system for remaining services: by March 2015

The electronic document management system will be extended to the rest of the organisation, prioritising those services with high volumes of customer information received on a regular basis.

### Objective 3: Accessible and well-managed information

## Key actions overview

### **18. Implement further phases of hybrid mail: by March 2015**

Work will be undertaken to extend the hybrid mail arrangements to outgoing mail from the organisation to customers. This will include letters from staff and councillors to customers, and a root and branch review of letters, corporate standards, mono print and standardisation work.

### **19. Reduce printing provision: by April 2014**

The introduction and extension of technology and solutions which reduce the organisation's need for printing (such as mobile solutions, hybrid mail and the EDMS) mean that the number of multi-functional printing devices can be reduced over time. Arrangements will be made for reducing the number of devices and removal of colour devices but ensure the organisation has necessary provision in place.

### **20. Digitise historic land charges and planning records: by December 2013**

The back scanning and digitisation of historic records for land charges and planning permission will make it easier and more efficient for customers to be able to access relevant information quickly through the website.

### **21. Use GIS to capture and map work schedules and business information: by September 2014**

Working closely with services, work schedule information in key services will be captured and mapped using GIS. This will make it easier to manage service delivery as well as making information available for customers. This action will concentrate on streetscene services initially. In addition, other key business information on the empty property database will be captured through GIS to facilitate timely inspections of empty properties. This is linked to key action (1).

### **22. Launch MyWard: by December 2013**

A solution designed and developed internally, this compiles and presents information for councillors about activity in their ward; ranging from service requests to planning applications and litter bin provision. Following the pilot and testing of MyWard, it will be made available to all councillors for use and developed further to provide online reports and statistical information

### **23. Introduce use of GIS for burial records: by December 2014**

This work will make use of GIS to map burial plots and capture burial records so that they can be used in service management and make information easily accessible to customers and other stakeholders. It will also help with management of the future plots. This links to key action (5)

### **24. Review skills and capacity of the ICT service: by March 2014**

To ensure that the ICT service is able to deliver a robust service and infrastructure, as well as delivering this strategy, the council needs to ensure that it has in place the right capacity and skills. This review will make recommendations for changes that may be needed to make the service resilient.

### **25. Undertake options appraisal of service provision options: by March 2015**

As technology develops, and the organisation changes, it is important that consideration is given to ensuring that the service is delivered in the most economical and effective manner. The available options will be examined and recommendations made.

### **26. Agree further consolidation of skill and capacity for managing and administration of key business systems within the ICT service: by March 2015**

Work will be undertaken to identify and agree the consolidation of capacity to manage and administer systems into the ICT service, where it is the most efficient approach.

Objective 4: Coordinated and appropriately resourced support for ICT



## **Responding to changing needs**

The actions set out above will form the majority of the business improvement work undertaken by the ICT service. However, as a critical support service, there will be a need to respond to the changing needs of services – for example to implement new, or significantly changed, solutions. To ensure that work is effectively prioritised, work that is not planned in the organisational plan or this strategy will need a business case to be agreed by Strategy Group. This will give the opportunity to consider the organisational benefits and the resource requirements of taking a particular course of action.

## **Training and support**

Getting the most from systems and technology in place needs the users to be trained and feel comfortable with using key applications. The consultation undertaken as part of the development of the strategy showed that services felt greater time needed to be taken when new systems are implemented to ensure that they are working as expected and users are able to fully use them. Projects and new solutions delivered through this strategy will include a period of consolidation to allow time for users to become familiarised and bugs to be fixed.

In addition, the workforce development plan includes ICT training as a priority area for the year, and interventions will be put in place to ensure that users are suitably trained in the systems they use.

## **Measuring the success**

The delivery of the key actions will be managed through the project management methodology. This means that each action will identify the benefits that will be realised when the work is completed. However, there will be a series of key measures which will be used to monitor the success in reaching the long term outcomes. Targets for these measures will be set and monitored as key local performance indicators:

- % of service requests received online
- Number of active accounts on My Account
- % of councillors satisfied with the service received from ICT
- % of staff satisfied with the provision of ICT
- % of files on MyShare available across the organisation
- % of high importance service centre requests resolved within xx days.
- % availability of key line of business applications
- Number of incoming paper based application forms
- % of ICT strategy actions rated green or complete

## **Reporting and review of the strategy**

The actions in the strategy will be managed and monitored through the project management methodology and the organisational plan. This means that it will be reported on a regular basis to Members through overview and scrutiny, to Strategy Group and the Executive Member. In addition, the progress in delivering the strategy will be reported on a six monthly basis to the Executive Member for Resources, Policy and Performance and to Strategy Group.

The strategy will be reviewed and refreshed at the end of 2014/15 to update the key actions and make any further changes that are necessary.