

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Customer and Digital (Introduced by the Executive Member for Customer, Advice and Streetscene Services)	Executive Cabinet	22 June 17

DIGITAL STRATEGY 2017 - 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To present and seek approval of the Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020 be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The report provides a summary of the updated Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020 which is presented for approval.
- It is a refresh of the 2014-2017 Digital Strategy and extends the scope of the strategy to also include digital inclusions and developing a positive culture which puts customers as the heart of everything we as two further key areas of work.
- The strategy should be seen as a corporate, council wide strategy as it will lead to changes and improvements to how all staff work, and also many service areas will be involved in delivery projects which are set out in the strategy.
- There are four key elements of the strategy;
 - increasing digital take up;
 - increasing digital inclusions;
 - working smarter; and
 - developing a positive culture which puts customers at the heart of everything we do.
- The strategy identifies 32 projects which will be delivered over three years and 23 measures which will help to measure the success and progress in achieving our objectives. It is proposed to report progress back to Executive Cabinet on an annual basis together with updating elements of the strategy and projects as required.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
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	the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- 8. The Digital Strategy (2017-2020) sets out the Council’s aspirations to change and improve the way many residents interact with the Council and the way that we work by maximising the benefits that technology can bring, leading to more efficient delivery of services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 9. A significant proportion of the projects within the strategy are reliant of the Council’s ICT infrastructure being upgraded, therefore there is a limit to how much progress can be made in delivering the Digital strategy projects, in the first year.
- 10. For this reason, an alternative option would be to postpone approval of this strategy for 12 months until the new ICT infrastructure is in place.
- 11. This has been rejected as there is still a lot which can be either delivered or planned during this period.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 12. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	✓
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

- 13. The Council’s first Digital Strategy (2014-2017) was approved by Executive Cabinet in January 2014, and had two main aims:
 - a. To ensure that customers are able to, and prefer to, access services easily online whilst also maintaining traditional channels and support for customers unable to benefit from self-service; and
 - b. To ensure that changes continue to be made in the way the council manages information and conducts its business in order to deliver efficiencies.
- 14. The Digital strategy 2017-2020, takes the existing strategy and extends the scope to also include digital inclusion and developing a positive culture which puts customers as the heart of everything we as two further key areas of work.
- 15. This strategy has been developed in conjunction with the refreshed ICT strategy which is presented separately for approval. Delivery of new infrastructure as set out in the ICT strategy will be a key enabler to many of the projects set out in this strategy.

16. It should also be noted that staff and some members have been engaged in the development of both strategies.
17. In addition, customers and residents will be consulted on in the delivery of a number of the projects which are set out in the strategy. For example understanding service users, their needs and barriers to using Chorley's digital services, and engaging with them in co-designing online services as far as possible is a principle of the first objective to increase the take up of digital services.
18. Further details of where we plan to further consult on with customers and residents as well as how the strategy will impact on different equality strands, health, reputation, and sustainability can be found in the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) in appendix A.

SUMMARY OF THE DIGITAL STRATEGY

19. Developing our use of technology to change the way that customers access our services and also the way that staff work, has a huge potential to transform our organisation and service delivery for the better.
20. This strategy is a corporate strategy, in that it will have impacts right across the organisation and all service areas will be involved in its delivery and success. It is not just a strategy for the Customer and Digital directorate.
21. The aim for the Digital strategy is to:

Provide the highest quality, customer focused digital services and maximise our use of technology to help us to work more efficiently and deliver more for our residents.

22. There are four key elements of the strategy, increasing digital take up, increasing digital inclusions, working smarter and developing a positive culture which puts customers at the heart of everything we do. Based on these areas the four main objectives of the strategy are to:
 - a. Further increase the digital take up of council services, enabling customers to access council services online when and wherever they like, while also reducing the demand on more expensive channels such as face to face and over the phone;
 - b. Embed and strengthen the council's approach and commitment to digital inclusion. Supporting individuals to benefit from being online and providing assisted support for users who genuinely need it;
 - c. Further develop the Council's internal approach to improving the environment, tools and skills which staff have to enable them to work smarter; and
 - d. Finally to embed a culture and understanding across all staff that Customers should be at the heart of everything we do as a Council, and providing excellent customer services is a key element of that.
23. There are many small businesses in the borough which do not yet have an online presence and could benefit greatly by being online and extending their reach to more customers. Consideration has been given to including actions within the strategy aimed specifically at supporting businesses to take advantages of the benefits that being online can bring, however it is proposed that this would sit better within the Council's economic development strategy refresh which is shortly due to be refreshed.

INCREASING DIGITAL UP TAKE OF SERVICES

24. We want more people to use our services online. It should be easier and more convenient for our customers and residents and it is cheaper for us. While we have made some progress, take up of our digital services isn't happening quickly enough. This section of the strategy is therefore about how we can improve our online services so that more people will want to and prefer to at a time and place to suit them.

INCREASING DIGITAL INCLUSION

25. We are aware that not everyone has the equipment or skills to be able to benefit for being online, and that as a community leader we need to address this issue so that residents can take advantage of the benefits of the internet and not get left behind.
26. This section of the strategy develops the digital inclusion project work which was established in 2015 through working with local communities and partners to deliver more access and support points, more free basic skills training, free access to wifi and equipment.

WORKING SMARTER

27. This section is about how as an organisation we can modernise the environment we work in and the way we work to enable staff and Members to work smarter and more efficiently.
28. To take this forwards there are actions around improving the office environment, delivering technology which will help us to work in a more agile and unrestricted way and importantly how we can bring staff with us on this journey.

DEVELOPING A POSTIVE CHANGE CULTURE WHICH PUTS CUSTOMER AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

29. The delivery of this strategy will see significant changes regarding how staff work and how customers are able to access our services. It is essential therefore that staff and customers understand the benefits that the changes can bring and that they are engaged and supported through change.
30. In addition it is important that we aim to strengthen and further embed a high standard of customer service across the whole organisation and if possible beyond to our partners.

PROJECTS AND MEASURES

31. The strategy identifies 32 projects across each of the four areas which are deliverable over the three year term of the strategy.
32. It also sets out 23 measures which will be used to measure progress. Some of the measures will link to the implementation of the projects and therefore may not all be measureable within the first year.
33. The performance measures will also be monitored and reported on, on an annual basis to demonstrate the progress being made in the delivery of this strategy. However, not all measures may be able to be measured straight away, for example web chat is only scheduled to be introduced in year three, therefore measurement of the volume and take up of this new channel will only be measured from year three onwards. Written procedures need to be developed for all of the new measures, and targets will be set, either based on an improvement of current performance or for new measures the first year will be used to baseline performance and will enable a target to be set in year two.

34. It is proposed to review progress in delivering the strategy on an annual basis, and if required the strategy will also be refreshed in a similar way to the Corporate Strategy is reviewed and refreshed each year.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

35. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	✓
Human Resources	✓	Equality and Diversity	✓
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	✓
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

36. Revenue cost implications are not fully understood at this time. All efforts must be actioned to keep any additional revenue costs within the current base budget.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

37. There are no comments.

ASIM KHAN
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Rebecca Huddleston	5779	26/05/17	Digital Strategy EC Report