

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Policy and Governance (Introduced by the Executive Member for Customer, Advice and Streetscene	Executive Cabinet	2 August 2018

DIGITAL STRATEGY – ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report provides an overview of the projects and work that has taken place as part of the Digital Strategy 2017-2020 since September 2017, as well as what work is planned for the year ahead.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To note the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. Overall progress on the Digital Strategy during 2017/2018 has been good, with progress being made on each of the four elements of the strategy.
 - a. Increasing digital inclusion
 - b. Working smarter
 - c. Positive change culture
 - d. Increasing digital take up
4. The Digital Strategy details the Council's ambitions to further develop our use of technology to transform the way we work and way we provide services and support to our customers, including residents, businesses and visitors. In addition it aims to promote the benefits of technology and being online, support those who want to become more digital and also address digital exclusion

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 the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £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)

5. To raise awareness of the Council's ongoing work in delivery of the Digital Strategy 2017-2020

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. None.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. 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

8. The Digital Strategy approved in June 2017 sets out a clear aim for the Council. Our aim 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.

9. The Digital Strategy is underpinned by the Council's ICT strategy which will enable the delivery of this strategy. The delivery of the digital strategy will change the way we work and the way our customers access Council services.

10. Some of the benefits of delivering the Digital Strategy are;

- Using technology will transform the way people access information and services. Projects in the strategy will allow people to access services at a time and place that suits them
- Staff will be provided with the skills, tools and adopt culture change to deliver more efficient services
- It will free up staff time which will enable us to focus resources on other services such as; providing digital training to support people find work

11. The main objectives of the strategy are to:

- Support digital inclusion, providing digital skills support to those that need it
- Improvement of internal working environment, tools and skills which will allow staff to work smarter
- Further increase the take up of Council digital services
- Embed positive change culture to ensure customers receives high quality services.

The report will go through updates on projects and works associated with the above objectives. The Digital Strategy Annual Report is attached to this paper as an appendix which will provide more details on work that has taken place on the four main elements of the strategy.

OBJECTIVE 1 – INCREASING DIGITAL INCUSION

12. A digital access and inclusion project was established as part of the council's budget in 2015. A budget of £50,000 was allocated over two years to fund equipment, marketing and promotional materials and to commission training.

13. It was driven by changes to the welfare reform agenda in particular Universal Credit. These changes were and continue to be a major cultural change in the way people receive and access support and online services is at the heart of the reforms. There was a clear need to invest in digital inclusion within Chorley to ensure individuals were not excluded from receiving the help and support they needed.
14. It is essential that residents are upskilled to be able to cope with the digital changes and access Council online services at a time and place that suits them, as well as other organisations online services such as health care. With the roll out of Universal Credit online service going live in July in Chorley, the need for digital skills support is expected to increase significantly over the next year.
15. Some of the key achievements as part of the increasing digital inclusion element includes
 - a. Four Council owned community centres are now successfully established as digital hubs with full ICT suites
 - b. 340 learners have attended 23 different courses in 12 different venues since September 2017, a 45.92% increase from last year.
 - c. Further partnerships have been established with other learning providers and organisations providing digital skills training and support across the borough
 - d. There has been an addition of nine access points taking the total number up to 26, including the more rural areas of Mawdesley and Charnock Richard.

OBJECTIVE 2 - WORKING SMARTER

16. The Work Smart Programme is a programme of change across the organisation in staff and customer behaviour in order to achieve the council's objectives in respect of the digital agenda and future service delivery changes. It forms part of the wider programme of work which is set out in the transformation strategy and digital strategy.
17. Work smart is a key element of the Council's Digital Strategy which aims to further develop the Council's internal approach to improving the environment, tools and skills which staff have to enable them to work smarter.
18. The Work Smart Programme involves the remodelling of office space to increase meeting and break out space, reduction in desk sizes to smaller desks, replacement of pedestals with lockers and the overall increase in use of technology to allow staff to work more digitally.
19. Some of the key achievements over the last year include:
 - a. Dual Screens rolled out to now the majority of services areas
 - b. Remodelling of the Union Street Offices to accommodate the co-location of LCFT as part of the Integrated Community Wellbeing Team
 - c. Remodelling of some service areas in the Town Hall
 - d. A review of the Council's Local Land and Property Gazetteer has been carried out with a gold standard received
 - e. Purchase of IDOX Electric Document Management System in order to make use of all the services IDOX products have to offer
 - f. Hybrid mail has been rolled out to more service areas to increase off site printing and reduce the need for onsite printers. Print queues can now be set up as and when they are required according to business demand.
20. Over the next year this work will be developed further, and will be key to the successful delivery of the council's digital strategy. There will be additional work that can take place once the ICT Infrastructure project is complete. This will include the implementation of VOIP which will allow more agile working, allowing staff to work seamlessly across locations, including from home that in turn will allow the Council to bring in revenue through the rental of office space.

21. Work to progress the redevelopment of The Loop will also be progressing in the next 12 months. This will include more internal processes and forms being digitised along with the site being more user friendly, efficient and useful including the introduction of internal media channels to keep staff notified on key decisions and events across the Council in different teams.

OBJECTIVE 3 - INCREASING DIGITAL TAKE UP

22. It is well documented that online transactions can be 20 times cheaper than by phone, 30 times cheaper than by post and as much as 50 times cheaper than face to face contact. Increasing the take up of digital services will not only enable customers to access services quickly and conveniently, at a time and place to suit them; it will save the Council money.

23. Digital by default is not about offering services online or not at all, it is about designing services for the web first. The following principles will apply when designing our online services.

- Digital services should be simple and intuitive enough that users succeed the first time
- Online services should be digital by default
- Customers should only have to provide information to us once
- We should understand service users, their needs, motivation and barriers to using Chorley's digital services, and engage with them in the co-design of online services as far as possible.
- Where appropriate behavioural economics principles should be applied to identify the tone and message to drive online transactions
- Digital support should be provided

24. The take up of digital services has increased this year with 55% of transactions and contact with customers completed via the Council's website in the last quarter, this increase this quarter is primarily due to the garden waste collection service online requests, however there has been a steady increase on online transactions in each quarter over the last year.

OBJECTIVE 4 - POSITIVE CHANGE CULTURE

25. The Digital Strategy will see significant changes in both how internal staff work and how our external customers engage with us. It is essential that both staff and customers are supported through the changes.

26. It is essential that we strengthen and further embed a high standard of customer service across the organisation and if beyond possible our partners. The below principles apply to the cultural changes required.

- All staff have a role to play in delivering excellent customer service
- Public sector services in Chorley should work together to implement shared standards
- Staff should be well informed and have the opportunity to help shape improvements and be supported through change
- Customers should be encouraged and supported to change the way they access Council information and services
- As far as possible all customer enquiries should be dealt with at first point of contact
- Increases in the take up of digital services and the integration of IT systems will support the delivery of more complex services to be completed end to end.

27. Some of the key achievements over the last year include

- a. The OD strategy is in the process of being refreshed and will incorporate support to staff to enable them to take advantage of the new technology and tools that are being delivered as part of the ICT and Digital Strategies

- b. A campaign has been successfully delivered to promote the digital hubs and digital inclusion work with each centre receiving GetOnline branding. Digital skills courses have also been well attended due to successful promotion via newspaper, social media, posters and leaflets.
- c. An internal communications plan has been developed which includes a wide range of actions which will engage staff in the changes and improvements which are expected as part of the delivery of the strategy.
- d. Yammer has been successfully trailed as a new internal communications method to engage staff with changes and what else is happening across the organisation.
- e. A business case and project plan has been developed to migrate further services into the Single Front Office. This project is underway and options and recommendations should be drafted by the end of the year.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

28. 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	

RISK

A risk register has been completed	Yes	No
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COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

29. The council continues to support the Digital Strategy with a full time post built into the base budget and an additional £6k per annum non-staffing. Additional costs such as those outlined in paragraph 19 are also funded through revenue and capital budgets.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

30. No comments.

REBECCA HUDDLESTON
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Digital Strategy 2017-2020	22/06/2017	https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s75619/DigitalStrategy2017.pdf	https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s75619/DigitalStrategy2017.pdf

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Simon Charnock	5485	02/07/2018	Annual report covering report