Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

3 July 2017

Subject: **Draft Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021**

Cabinet Member: **Councillor Phillip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement, IT and Operational Assets**

Key Decision: **Yes**

Executive Summary

The Wiltshire Council Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021 sets out how as an organisation we can harness technological opportunities to deliver the council's priorities and outcomes by making our services more easily accessible for our customers, maximising the potential of our workforce, working more collaboratively across the local public sector, and delivering operational efficiencies (especially through automation) whilst keeping our systems and data safe and secure.

Proposal

Cabinet is asked to review feedback from Overview and Scrutiny on the Draft Digital Strategy at its meeting on 3 July, with a view to adopt the Strategy.

Reasons for proposal

The organisation has already been progressing on a digital journey. Whilst development has been made by many areas of the business, this strategy will ensure greater coordination of digital activities in an efficient and more cost-effective way to maximize the potential for cost savings and leading to an improved customer experience.

Dr Carlton Brand
Corporate Director

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

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Key Decision: **Yes**

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to recommend the adoption of the Wiltshire Council Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. Adopting a strategic approach to the use of digital technologies will enable the council to deliver its business plan priorities and outcomes by making our services more easily accessible for our customers, maximising the potential of our workforce, working more collaboratively across the local public sector, and delivering operational efficiencies (especially through automation) whilst keeping our systems and data safe and secure.

Main Considerations for the Council

3. The Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021 identifies a range of transformational digital activities across all parts of the council and proposes a strategic corporate approach. It has been consulted on across all areas of the organisation.[1]

4. The Medium Term Financial Plan to 2020/21 identifies £5m of savings through the implementation of digital solutions. The Digital Strategy identifies opportunities to deliver these savings.

5. The Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021 aligns with the national Government Transformation Strategy 2017 – 2020 and the emergent Sustainability Transformation Plan for B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire.

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[1] The Digital Strategy will be further supported by a new ICT Technical Strategy, setting out the technical architecture.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

6. The Digital Strategy has been reviewed by an Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (the Digital Strategy and Implementation Task Group) who presented their report at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 21st June, with comments referred to the Cabinet Member for consideration. Amendments to the Draft Digital Strategy arising from the Task Group Review will be reported to Cabinet on 3rd July as an Addendum to the Strategy (see Appendix B to this report).

7. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 21st June agreed that the Digital Strategy and Implementation Task Group should continue oversight of the Digital Strategy, receive the draft tender document for the proposed new platform, and provide regular updates on the progress of the Digital Strategy and its implementation.

Safeguarding Implications

8. Bringing together disparate digital systems will enable a more holistic view of our customers, including the vulnerable. Having this information more readily available should ensure a swifter response to managing safeguarding risks.

9. Customer facing systems will be designed with safeguarding in mind.

Public Health Implications

10. An improved digital platform will allow for better reporting of, management of and prevention of public health issues.

Procurement Implications

11. Where new ICT solutions are required to deliver the objectives of the Digital Strategy, these will be assessed on a case by case basis through the appropriate channels. Where such new ICT solutions require a procurement these will be undertaken in accordance the Council's Procurement and Contracting regulations and in consultant with the Strategic Procurement Hub. To maximize cost efficiencies, an overarching principle will be to 'buy once use many times'.

12. A set of standard 'digital' procurement requirements have been developed to ensure that any future systems being procured include vital elements for the future development of our digital platforms. These are included in the appendices of the Strategy.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

13. Accessible design will be a key design principle from the outset. Customer input will be included in the design phase where appropriate. Customers who face digital literacy challenges will still be able to telephone or visit the council. Officers will use the same system, but a different view to process calls and visits, thus making best use of the technology.

14. An equalities analysis will be conducted as part of this strategy.

15. Training for officers will be provided. The council supports a Digital Literacy programme through network of volunteers in the community.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

16. The use of digital technology so that officers, councillors and the public can attend meetings remotely will reduce the need to travel and therefore reduce carbon emissions. Additionally, where travel is required, digital technology can be used to plot more fuel-efficient routes and avoid having to return to the office for paperwork or to be allocated work tasks.

17. Having quality information available online can reduce the need to consume paper through printing.

18. The digital strategy promotes efficient data storage, such as cloud storage, to reduce the environmental impact of energy hungry data centres.

Risks that may arise if proposed strategy is not agreed and no action is taken

19. An un-coordinated approach could lead to duplication and missed opportunities with siloed solutions leading to additional cost to the council and confusion for customers.

20. The lack of a proactive approach could lead to reduced customer satisfaction as they increasingly engage with other sectors through digital channels and expect the same level of service from their local council.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

21. A significant portfolio of work is needed to deliver the Digital Strategy and the financial savings identified through the Medium Term Financial Plan. Sufficient funds and human resource need to be made available and will be identified on a case-by-case basis. Capital funding will be applied for via the capital assets committee.

22. Future digital projects will need to fit into the outcomes of the digital strategy. Future digital projects will require review by the digital board before being initiated.

Financial Implications

23. The Medium Term Financial Plan identifies £5m of savings to be delivered through digital efficiencies. Business cases will be established on a case-by-case basis. Benefits realisation plans will be identified and monitored to ensure successful delivery.

Legal Implications

24. Information governance will be need to carefully managed to ensure security of systems, correct data sharing protocols, and that personal data is properly protected.

Conclusions

25. A final version of the Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021 will be prepared for publication incorporating feedback from scrutiny (as per the attached addendum) following consideration for adoption at Cabinet on 3 July.

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Appendices
Appendix A – Draft Digital Strategy 2017 – 2021
Appendix B – Addendum to the Draft Digital Strategy

Background Papers
None