North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet

13 February 2020

Digital Strategy

Report of Councillor J Kenyon, Portfolio Holder for Business Strategy, Commerce and Assets

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To adopt the Digital Strategy as recommended by Transformation Governance Group

1 Report Details

1.1 The Council's Transformation Plan outlines the ambition for council services to:

- Created access to all services wherever internet access is available, irrespective of the type of device or time of day.

- An organisation where digital channels are the primary gateway to access council services.

- Investment in digital infrastructure to rationalise systems, reduce paper usage, maximise staff flexibility to improve efficiency and reduce travel related costs.

- Digital inclusivity for our customers and service users by ensuring ease of access and supporting the development of skills, motivation and trust to confidently go online.

1.2 In recent months, good progress has been made in developing the foundations to drive forward the council's digital ambitions with the launch of the new website, redesign and expansion of Self-Service, upgrade of the Contact Centre telephony solution and the upgrade of collaboration tools such as Micollab.

1.3 The Council understands the benefits that digital transformation can have on the customer experience, accessibility of services and efficient use of resource. In acknowledgement of the opportunity digital transformation presents, the Council have set an ambitious corporate target to 'Ensure that at least 50% of transactions are made through digital channels by Dec 2024'.

1.4 To support the delivery of the Council's digital ambitions, the Digital Transformation Theme Group has drafted a Digital Strategy **(Appendix 1)** which outlines the strategic direction, aims/objectives and an action plan highlighting potential projects which will contribute to the delivery of the aims.

2   Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

2.1   Adopting the Digital Strategy provides clear direction for officer's in order to drive forward digital transformation. It outlines what we are trying to achieve and why we are doing it.

2.2   The focus on digital transformation is fundamental to the Council's business activities. Digital transformation can deliver significant cost savings and improved customer service allowing for 'self-service' to deliver a true 24x7x365 service to the public. At present approximately 10% of transactions are conducted online with telephone contact the preferred access channel (14,000 calls per quarter). The LGA have provided a breakdown of costs for each type of transaction:

Face to Face	£8.21
Telephone contact	£2.59
Online transaction	£0.09

2016 LGA 'Engaging Citizens Online' report

2.3   A shift of just 15% of transactions from telephone to online would result costs of transactions falling by approximately £21,000 per annum.

2.4   It is acknowledged that to realise the full potential saving it would require less staffing resource in other areas of the council. However, the channel shift to online will happen gradually and reducing resource can be managed through vacancy management.

2.5   In addition to reduction transaction costs, reductions in face-to-face contact will provide benefits in line with the climate change/carbon reduction objectives, preventing the need to visit.

3   Consultation and Equality Impact

3.1   The Digital Strategy has been developed and reviewed by the Digital Transformation Theme Group and also considered at the Transformation Governance Group before being recommended to Cabinet.

3.2   The Digital Strategy has been subject to an equalities review by the Performance Team which resulted in the following being added to the document:

'Accessibility is important when considering digital inclusion, particularly for residents with disabilities. Implemented correctly digital inclusion also means making accessing services easier, for everyone. Users of online services should be able to use their existing devices and software to access the services we provide. We are continually working towards ensuring that our websites and online services are fully accessible and built to meet public sector accessibility standards and best practice. This process includes a regular review of the accessibility of our websites to ensure they remain accessible to all and to identify potential improvements.'

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Cabinet could choose not to adopt the strategy. The strategy won't in itself deliver digital transformation and as evidenced in 1.2, progress is being made towards the Council's digital ambitions. The strategy provides clear direction for officers in what is the vision, scope and aims of the Council when it comes to digital transformation which informs and aids the development and future direction of service areas.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

5.1.1 There are no direct risks in relation to the adoption of the Digital Strategy.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications in relation to the adoption of the Digital Strategy.

5.3 Human Resources

5.3.1 There are no direct HR related to the adoption of the Digital Strategy.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That Executive agree to adopt the Digital Strategy in full and be utilised to shape future service delivery.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision?
 A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:
 BDC: *Revenue - £75,000* ☐
             Capital - £150,000 ☐
 NEDDC: *Revenue - £100,000* ☐
             Capital - £250,000 ☐
 ☑ *Please indicate which threshold applies*
	No

Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed	Yes
District Wards Affected	All (indirectly)
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Ensure that at least 50% of transactions are made through digital channels by Dec 2024

8   Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Digital Strategy
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive (BDC) or Cabinet (NEDDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	

Report Author	Contact Number
HOS – Partnerships & Transformation	2210