

Item

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY



To:

Councillor Richard Robertson, Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources

Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee 02/07/18

Report by:

Andrew Limb, Head of Corporate Strategy

Tel: 01223 - 457004 Email: Andrew.Limb@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:

Abbey, Arbury, Castle, Cherry Hinton, Coleridge, East Chesterton, King's Hedges, Market, Newnham, Petersfield, Queen Edith's, Romsey,

Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces a draft Digital Transformation Strategy for Cambridge City Council. The strategy sets out a vision and ambition for the Council to use new technologies to improve customer services, improve productivity, achieve efficiencies and open up possibilities for involving and engaging residents in new ways.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree the draft Digital Transformation Strategy attached at Appendix A.

3. Background

- 3.1. Digital technology has increasingly become all-pervasive in society. It offers new ways for organisations to understand their customers' needs, to design services around those customer needs, and to provide more flexible, targeted services, available at customers' convenience.

- 3.2 Councils, like all other organisations, have been embracing this technology at various speeds over the last twenty years. Cambridge City Council has made good use of a number of online services such as its website, social media, e-revenues & benefits, route optimization for waste collections, electoral registration and many more applications.
- 3.3 However, the Council has not had a digital strategy to date. Officers have produced the attached draft with the intention of bringing clarity to the council's vision and ambition, and bringing a greater degree of coherence to our plans and investments. Officers reviewed digital strategies from a number of councils believed to be at the forefront of digital local government, and have sought to incorporate best practice.
- 3.4 The draft strategy sets out the context of how the council has been using technology and how it could make further use of digital approaches in the future to achieve the Council's Vision, and to deliver some of the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 3.5 The strategy proposes a "digital by design" approach that will ensure our online processes are customer-centred, simple to use and the channel of choice for all customers who can use digital technologies. But reiterates that the Council will continue to provide non-digital means for those who cannot.
- 3.6 The Council will continue to invest, and to work with others, to reduce digital exclusion and empower as many of our residents as possible to take advantage of the opportunities digital and online services provide.
- 3.7 The strategy explains how the targeted implementation of new technologies might help achieve significant efficiencies for the Council. And it sets out how we might use digital under four themes:
- Digital Citizen Services
 - Connected Citizens, Smart City Collaborators
 - Future Council: Digital Teams, Smart City Innovators
 - Core ICT & Digital Strategy: Data, tools, systems, apps & processes

- 3.8 Finally, the strategy explains the governance, leadership and delivery arrangements that are in place to realise the vision.
- 3.9 In terms of Digital Citizen Services, the priority actions include plans to implement a new “customer portal” and associated digital forms. This will allow customers to sign into our online services once, to ensure all their interactions with the council integrate, and to allow them to track and monitor progress with their issues.
- 3.10 Allied to this, the Council is investing in new, modern systems for managing its major services as part of the “technology road map”. These are intended to deliver the following benefits:
- (1) Allow customers to self-serve, reduce needless contact, provide 24-7 access to council services (leading to higher customer satisfaction).
 - (2) Drive down cost providing greater value for money for residents by.
 - a. Reducing re-keying
 - b. Reducing the administrative overhead
 - (3) Provide modern services that customers expect today from modern digital organisations such as tracking progress with their issue.
 - (4) Increase officer efficiency allowing them to focus on value added services (such as complex cases) rather than lengthy processes.
- 3.11 Among the first, major new systems that we plan to implement are those for planning, housing and waste/streets & open spaces. They are intended to deliver the following benefits:

Planning System

This will allow residents to view applications online, including via tablets, allowing a deeper and more flexible engagement in planning applications, and reducing the need to print plans so frequently.

Housing System

This is ultimately intended to allow tenants to view their rent accounts online, as they might a bank account. In due course it may also be possible to view and print a rent statement, make a payment, request a direct debit to be set, report a repair, book a repair appointment, track their repair job, send a communication to the Council, receive a communication from the Council, log an ASB case and update their contact and personal details, online too –although some of those functions may be implemented in later phases.

Waste / Streets & Open Spaces system

- Will enable residents to self-serve at their convenience (e.g. requesting new or additional bins) and to receive two-way information when reporting missed bins, fly-tipping or overflowing litter bins.
- Ensure that information held by the Council can be used by staff so tasks are done correctly the first time and records can be kept and accessed easily, including access codes for bin stores or properties with accessed collections.
- Search when litter bin collections and street sweeping is scheduled.

3.12 We will review the impact of these new systems, as they are implemented and start to be used. And we will review the overall strategy, on a regular basis, to ensure we keep focused on our priorities and remain open to new possibilities as technologies evolve.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

This report and decision to not have any direct financial implications. The Council has provided significant funds to invest in ICT infrastructure and digital technology through its budget setting process. The approach proposed in the draft strategy is expected to realise significant savings over time – the detail of these will be set out in the relevant business cases.

(b) Staffing Implications

The projects and initiatives described in the draft strategy will be carried out by various officers across the Council. Progress in implementing these will be monitored by the Council's Digital and Web manager. The Council is seeking to recruit a Data Scientist and a Digital Inclusion Projects Officer to support key aspects of this strategy.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix B.

(d) Environmental Implications

No direct implications, although adopting more online processes and transactions, and better digital data management, will reduce the amount of paper documents that are printed out and distributed.

Better data analysis of customer needs should also allow the Council to target its resources more efficiently.

(e) Procurement Implications

No direct implications. For information, the Council's procurement activity is carried out through e-tendering, and the Council is in the process of rolling out online tender evaluation, too.

(f) Community Safety Implications

No direct implications.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

Officers across the Council have been involved in drafting the strategy, and a managers' briefing explained the vision to around 40 managers in April 2018.

6. Background papers

- (a) [Web Strategy](#)
- (b) [Digital Inclusion Strategy](#)
- (c) [Camden Digital Strategy](#)

7. Appendices

- (a) Draft Digital Transformation Strategy
- (b) Equality Impact Assessment

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Andrew Limb, Head of Corporate Strategy, tel: 01223 - 457004, email: andrew.limb@cambridge.gov.uk.