

# DIGITAL STRATEGY

for Newcastle-Under-Lyme  
2019-2022

To provide easy-to-use online  
services for our residents and  
business that deliver value and  
greater independence



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# Foreword



Cllr. Simon Tagg - Leader of the Council

As Leader of Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council I have the privilege of overseeing one of the most ambitious transformation agendas ever envisioned.

Our plan is to make sure that every resident, business and visitor to our Loyal and Ancient Borough can benefit from the opportunities that our digital future can provide; whether that's accessing Council services or ensuring people have the skills they need to make the most of digital services.

Martin Hamilton - Chief Executive

This strategy is really kick-starting our work to deliver the Council's four priorities as so much of our future relies on digital services.

Over the next few years we will embrace what these opportunities can offer and ensure that we put digital delivery at the heart of everything we do. There is tremendous potential and this strategy outlines how we will turn our ambitions into reality.



# About the strategy

The Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council Plan 2018 - 2022 sets out the Council's priorities for the next four years:

- Local services that work for local people
- Growing our people and places
- A healthy, active and safe borough
- A town centre for all

The Digital Strategy is intended to support the achievement of these priorities, enabling the Council to transform itself and to realise the opportunities that a digital future may hold.





# The Opportunity

Technological innovations have fundamentally changed how people interact, share information and deal with the world around them. Every bold step forward has resulted in faster, cheaper, more accessible technology that's been quickly adopted and embedded as part of modern life.

**86%**

of Adults in  
Newcastle use the  
internet  
every day

**78%**

do this using a  
smartphone

**3,160**

Telephone  
transactions each  
week

**20.2%**

Of residents are  
over 65

**50%**

Prefer electronic  
communication

**65-74**

Age group with the  
biggest increase in  
internet usage  
2019

**22mbps**

Average internet  
speed in  
Newcastle

**129,000**

People live in  
Newcastle under  
Lyme

**35k**

People visit the  
Council's website  
monthly

**9%**

prefer face to  
face services

# The Opportunity

The last decade has been particularly exciting and Councils, like other organisations, have developed their services to meet growing consumer demand. Public expectations have also changed, increasingly expecting access to services at any time, from anywhere, using any device.



By **2028** almost  
**7 million**  
Adults will lack  
**Essential**  
**Digital Skills\***



Central Government  
aspires by **2025**  
to have **Nationwide**  
**Gigabit**  
Broadband

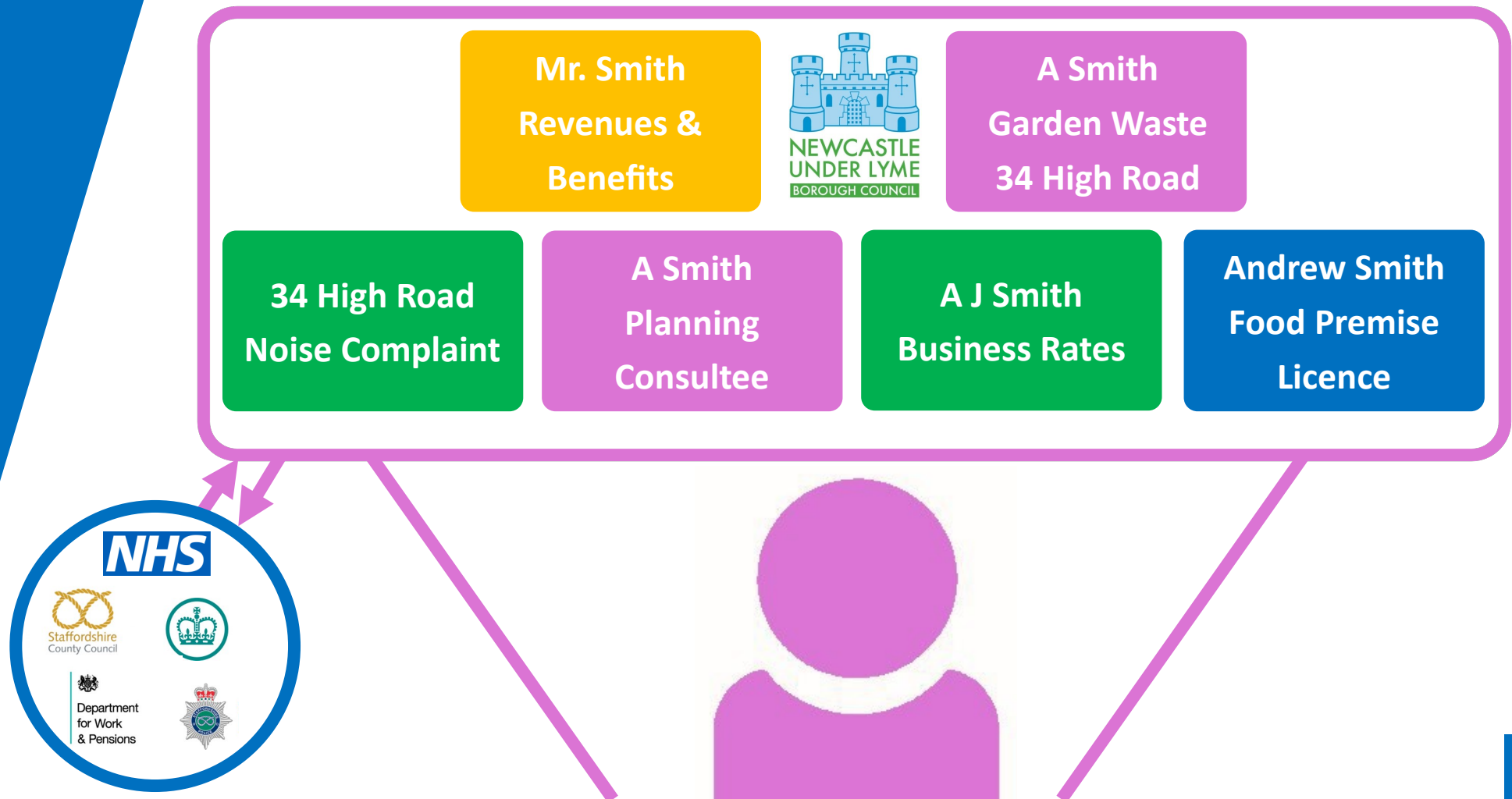
The Digital Opportunity however extends beyond simply enabling Council services online. The world of work and commerce are changing and it is essential that people have the skills and confidence to benefit from all that digital can offer. The Council is uniquely placed to support this.

Our built environment must also be able to deal with the challenge that digital presents. Council's have a responsibility to ensure that their policies and practices support creating a physical environment that is a catalyst for digital change and that residents, businesses and visitors alike can all benefit from digital opportunities.

\*Good Things Foundation - Bridging the Digital Divide 2018

# The Opportunity

Councils and other organisations in both the public and private sectors also have the potential to deliver truly joined up services. Technology no longer restricts these possibilities which would benefit both the organisation and the citizen.



# The Opportunity: Garden Waste

In 2018, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council began the introduction of a chargeable garden waste service. The Council's recycling service anticipated that approximately 20% of Newcastle's 43,000 households would want to use the service, each requiring a method of processing the subscription.

The Council's Customer Service, ICT and Waste teams all identified that processing transactions over the phone would not be practical, so a decision was made early in the service design, to produce a digital solution.



The service was hugely successful, processing nearly 14,000 subscriptions online in the first three months. This was blended with Contact Centre operations and limited face to face interactions.

**20,000**

subscriptions

**19,500**

households

**78%**

processed online





# The Opportunity: Shifting Channels

The past 10 years have seen a clear and definite shift in how citizens consume Council services. Website usage has grown significantly whilst face to face interactions have plummeted. This trend will continue as more and more people begin to consider the Council as nothing more than a website they visit to access services.

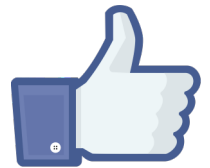


**Twitter Followers @NewsNBC**

**2009: 0 → 2019: 8149**

**Facebook Followers @NewsNBC**

**2009: 0 → 2019: 3700**

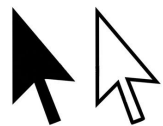
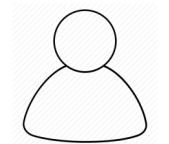


**Average Phone Calls Per Month**

**2009: 16,250 → 2019: 13,700**

**Face to Face visits per month**

**2009: 4,500 → 2019: 1,500**

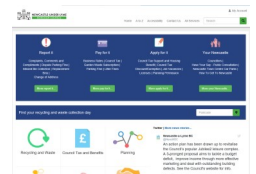


**Transactions Completed Online**

**2009: 0 → 2019: 49,000**

**Monthly Website Visitors**

**2009: 11,000 → 2019: 35,000**



**Monthly Average MyStaffs App**

**2009: 0 → 2019: 1,027**

# Our Digital Themes



## Our Digital Services

**Creating valuable, insightful and reliable digital services for residents, businesses and visitors**

This priority underpins everything digital services can offer, delivering exactly what the citizens actually needs, when they need it via a means they are happy with.

Importantly, the services introduced must not only be easy to access, but they must also be easy to use and work - first time, every time.

## Our Digital Community

**Enabling our communities to benefit from the opportunities digital can offer**

By including policy, practices and partnerships as a key digital theme, the Council can ensure that every aspect of how Newcastle develops supports future digital opportunities. Relatively simple decisions may be all that is required to have a big impact.

# Our Digital Themes



## Our Digital Culture

**Empowering our staff with the skills and tools to develop and deliver efficient services**

Staff are at the heart of Council services and must be empowered to become Digitally focused – to deliver effective and efficient public services. We need to address staff skills to push the boundaries, pursue opportunities, understand our environment, manage data, act ethically and responsibly and collaborate in ways never seen before.



## Our Digital Organisation

**Using data to inform decisions, deliver value and better understand our world**

Moving towards a model of decision making that is based on insight is key to the Councils future. A better understanding of our citizens will allow us to focus our resources in the right places and provide the understanding to make more effective interventions at the right time. All of which makes better use of public money.

# Our Digital Themes

Our digital themes cut across the entire organisation and are specifically intended to support the delivery of the Council's plan.



# The Local Digital Declaration

The Local Digital Declaration is a common set of aspiration for the future of local public services, initiated by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Government Digital Service.

The declaration contains a number of commitments for an organisations Executive Management, Heads of Service and Elected Members. It commits organisations to:

- Design services that best meet the needs of citizens
- Challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need
- Protect citizens' privacy and security
- Deliver better value for money

These commitments are directly compatible with the themes of the Digital Strategy and we will commit to the Local Digital Declaration, to ensure that we deliver the highest quality digital services and share our experiences with others who may benefit from what we have learned.



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government



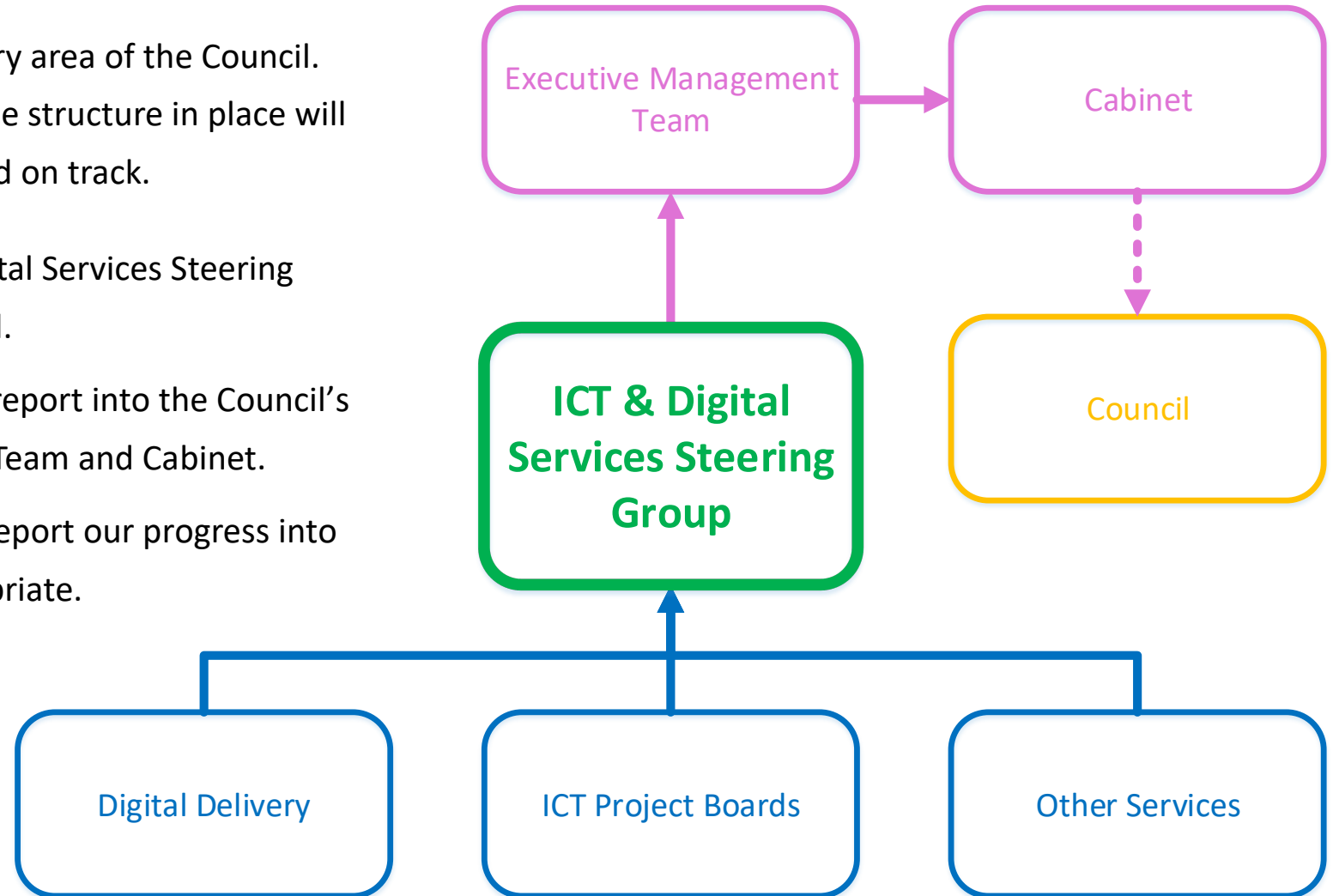
Government  
Digital Service



# Governance

Our digital strategy affect every area of the Council. Having an effective governance structure in place will ensure we remain focused and on track.

- A combined ICT and Digital Services Steering group will be established.
- The Steering Group will report into the Council's Executive Management Team and Cabinet.
- Cabinet may choose to report our progress into full Council when appropriate.



# Action Plans

A clear action plan has been developed to deliver the digital strategy.

It will ensure an ambitious and clear direction of travel for Digital Services in the Council, , inclusive services are developed that are accessible to all and establish a framework for supporting the development of Digital communities and provide digital services fit for the future.

## Our Digital Services

### Project

### Description

### Status

### 2022 aim

#### Migration to the Jadu CXM Platform

The Council must migrate its existing citizen forms away from its legacy CRM platform to our replacement Jadu Citizen Portal.

Commenced February 2019

100%

#### Anticipated Benefits:

- The introduction of a citizen portal with end-to-end services, available 24x7x365, from anywhere, on any device.
- Shift towards online access away from telephone and face to face
- An increase in overall levels of satisfaction.
- Quantifiable efficiency savings for the Council.
- A reduction in the cost of legacy back-office applications.

# Action Plans

## Our Digital Services

Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
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**Council website**

The Council’s website is effective in its delivery of content, but is not particularly interactive and provides no facilities for personalisation. A project will be commissioned to investigate how the website can be developed and what opportunities exist to better engage with our communities.

Commencing Q2 2020/21



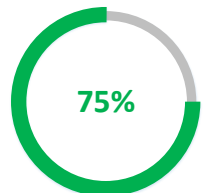
**Anticipated Benefits:**

An improved website could provide the Council with a way to engage with the public to make information accessible in a timely and relevant way. A flexible website that allows information to be reused and engages with the specific needs need’s of the citizen will provide a much richer experience than is presently available.

**Automation, Robotics and Knowledge**

The Council’s Citizen Portal provider, Jadu, has existing partnerships in place with automation providers. The Council should actively begin looking into areas of possible robotic automation through Artificial Intelligence and the supporting requirements such as a comprehensive knowledge base.

Commencing Q4 2019/20



**Anticipated Benefits:**

The simplest transactions could be automated through the use of robotics. The use of a multi-channel system could reduce the time spent with citizens via phone, face to face or even online channels. The potential savings could be as a result of the reduction in face to face and telephone transactions at a cost of £10 and £3 retrospectively.

# Action Plans

## Our Digital Services

### Project

### Description

### Status

### 2022 aim

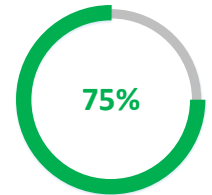
#### Service transformation

The Council has already begun the work of re-engineering services

The design and future commissioning of services must take account of community involvement and feedback to ensure that services are as accessible to the public.

The Council will develop and promote the use of a “My Account” portal, providing a single sign on service for both residents and business – providing bespoke information based on needs and location.

In progress, however, resourcing for the programme will need to be considered to achieve longer term objectives



#### Anticipated Benefits:

The anticipated benefits of service transformation are considerable and stretch across the digital landscape. These include but are not limited to:

- The introduction of a citizen portal with end-to-end services, resulting in a possible reduction of transactions across other channels
- Access for citizens, 24x7x365 with the ability to provide a single login for multiple services
- Redesign of back-office services to take advantage of digital delivery models and the retirement of legacy platforms
- An increase in overall levels of satisfaction
- Quantifiable efficiency savings for the Council
- Better service delivery for residents, businesses and visitors to Newcastle under Lyme

# Action Plans

## Our Digital Services

### Project

### Description

### Status

### 2022 aim

**Mobile working for front line services**

Deployment of mobile working solutions for field based service operatives and front facing services.

By 2020



100%

**Anticipated Benefits:**

This will provide a seamless solution for staff out in the Borough resolving issues. There is a potential saving for dealing with issues, there and then whilst in the locality when a problem is reported, along with potential capacity improvements and more efficient methods of working.

## Our Digital Community

**Internet of Things**

Internet of Things is a proposed development of the Internet in which everyday objects have network connectivity, allowing them to send and receive data. We will use the Internet of Things to improve service delivery where appropriate.

Development of pioneer projects within relevant service areas will begin in Q4 2020/21



25%



**Anticipated Benefits:**

Due to the complexity and potentially wide spread of applications, benefits will be defined on a case by case basis.



# Action Plans

## Our Digital Community

Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
<b>Digital Inclusion</b>	Mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that service development takes account of what we know about our residents, what we can prove will be acceptable to them and how we can tailor services to be specific to the individual.	Initial work has already been undertaken but will be developed throughout 2019/2020	 100%
<b>Anticipated Benefits:</b>			
Understanding our residents will allow the council to provide better services. Also, in the current financially challenging environment ensuring that our resources are targeted in the areas of most need, where the impacts will be most beneficial is essential. Achieving this consistently is dependent upon understanding our service users and their collective needs.			
<b>Self Service</b>	By using digital technology the resident can enter service request information directly from their computer, smartphone or tablet. The service request can be processed automatically and all information provided back to the resident electronically to satisfy the request. This is a more cost effective way to provide services, with fewer staff needed to process requests	Phase 1 self service roll-out will be completed in September 19. Work will then commence on phase 2 for completion by 2021.	 100%

Self Service is a building block of digital delivery and a core aim; to allow residents, business and visitors to help themselves, 24x7x365. Facilitating our citizens retrieving information and logging their own requests online will create obvious efficiencies within front line operations, however phase 2 is where the real benefits will be delivered. Seamless, end-to-end transactions that are designed for electronic delivery could fundamentally improve how some areas of the authority work, for the benefit of all.

# Action Plans

## Our Digital Community

### Project

### Description

### Status

### 2022 aim

#### Assisted Services

Not every resident will have a computer or smartphone and they may not feel confident in its use even if they did. The Council has to consider how it will support people to willingly transition to digital. The Council should begin to look at how digital services can be made sustainable and how it can use its position as a community influencer to give people the confidence and

Discussions will be held with other Council teams to ensure the benefits of assisted services can be felt across the community. Commencing Q1 2020/21



#### Anticipated Benefits:

Digital exclusion is a significant problem and it is estimated that within the next 10 years, 11% of the UK's population will not have the skills or confidence needed to fully engage in the digital world. By introducing assisted services, the Council can use its unique position within the community to positively encourage participation - ultimately resulting in better service access for residents and greater satisfaction.

# Action Plans

## Our Digital Culture

### Project

### Description

### Status

### 2022 aim

#### Staff Development

Our staff will be key enablers of digital opportunity. A digital skills audit will be undertaken to understand our organisational capabilities and address where support is needed

Work with Human Resources will be undertaken to design a suitable development scheme Q1 2020/21



#### Members development

Members are key representatives of the Council both within the community and the organisation. It is essential that they not only have access to the tools necessary to fulfil their roles, but also the confidence and understanding to use them and champion digital opportunities within the wider world.

A training and development program will be delivered for Members and their engagement with the digital delivery process sought.

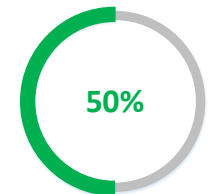
Work with the Council's Cabinet and group leaders will be undertaken to develop and agree a suitable program of engagement Q4 2019/20



#### Cultural & Policy Development

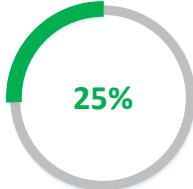
To ensure our success in the future, we need to prepare and ensure that our staff not only have the soft skills that are required, but also the specialist skills to effectively analyse data, gain insight, spot trends, effectively create content, dig deeper and feel empowered to make changes where the opportunities exist to make this possible

The initiative is dependent upon the related department and will be an ongoing process over the life of the Digital Strategy


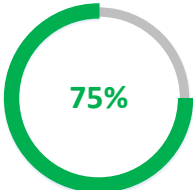


# Action Plans

## Our Digital Culture

Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
<b>Digital learning network</b>	Establish a network of digital champions across the organisation to act as a reference point and advisor for change.	An implementation plan will be discussed and arranged in conjunction with Human Resources	 <p>25%</p>

## Our Digital Organisation

<b>Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy</b>	The ICT Strategy is designed to ensure that the council's ICT environment is properly managed, maintained, secured, resourced, is cost effective and designed to supports the council's business needs.	The ICT Strategy will directly underpin and support the Councils Digital Strategy. Work will commence Q4 2019/20	 <p>100%</p>
<b>Transparency and Information Management</b>	Information management is a discipline that governs the transparency and accountability for the structure, storage, quality and usage of information required for management and business intelligence purposes. Including Geographical Information Systems.	Project plans in Legal Services for enhancements to Mod Gov and ICT services - EDRM project plan	 <p>75%</p>

# Action Plans

## Our Digital Organisation

Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
<b>Insight Development</b>	To ensure decision-making that is not based on instinct but on insight. This insight will allow us to focus our resources in the right places and provide the understanding to make more effective interventions at the right time.	Work is underway with the Communications Team to fully develop an insight function	 75%
<b>Data Pooling &amp; Address Referencing</b>	<p>Ensuring that the Council's various applications are integrated with the local land and property gazetteer will be a huge step forward in assisting a digital transformation. Ultimately, creating a common view of our residents will enable us to produce truly joined up services and facilitate delivery on a level not previously seen.</p> <p>The potential to work with external organisations in both the public and private sector is significant and the benefits for the</p>	Work to investigate developing a common citizen record through data pooling and address referencing will commence in Q1 2021/2022	 75%