

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



Contents

1. Foreword	Page 2
2. The Opportunity	Page 4
5. Our Digital Themes	Page 10
6. Governance	Page 13
7. Action Plans	Page 14

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

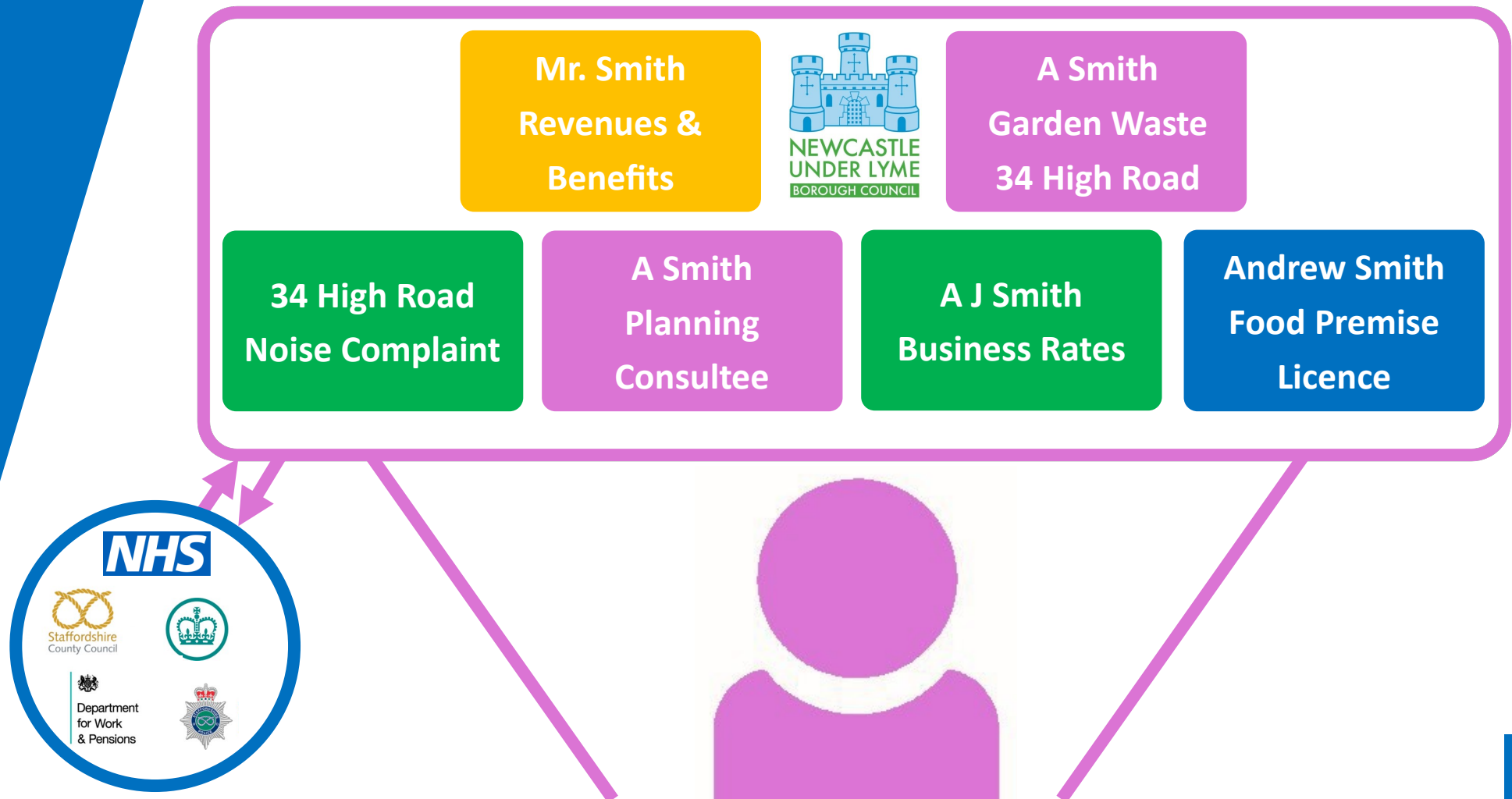
The Digital Opportunity however extends beyond simply enabling Council services online. The world of work and commerce are changing and it is essential that people have the skills and confidence to benefit from all that digital can offer. The Council is uniquely placed to support this.

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

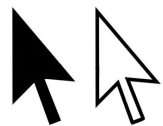
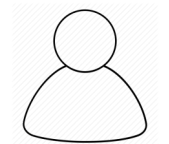


Average Phone Calls Per Month

2009: 16,250 → 2019: 13,700

Face to Face visits per month

2009: 4,500 → 2019: 1,500

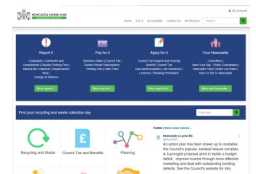


Transactions Completed Online

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.

Local Services that Work for Local People

Growing Our People and Places

A Healthy, Active and Safe Borough

A Town Centre for All

Our Digital Service **Creating valuable, insightful and reliable digital services for our residents, businesses and visitors**

Developing exceptional, frictionless, digitally enabled services that work consistently across channels
Using robotics, automation and artificial intelligence to assist the delivery of services
Deliver personalised content and services, tailored to the needs of the individual

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

Developing the digital skills of our communities to remove digital exclusion
Encourage the development of the digital service sector and infrastructure through innovative policy and partnerships
Ensuring that our communities are informed, engaged and energised to the possibilities of digital

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

Becoming a Digital First organisation with a skilled workforce that challenged inefficiency and embraces opportunity
Ensuring the open, transparent and ethical use of digital services across the organisation
Invest in technology that facilitates smarter working and better service delivery

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

Using our knowledge to design services and inform decisions that positively influence our community
Delivering personalised services tailored to our citizens needs
Using our insight to deliver targeted interventions and focus our resources where they are most beneficial

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

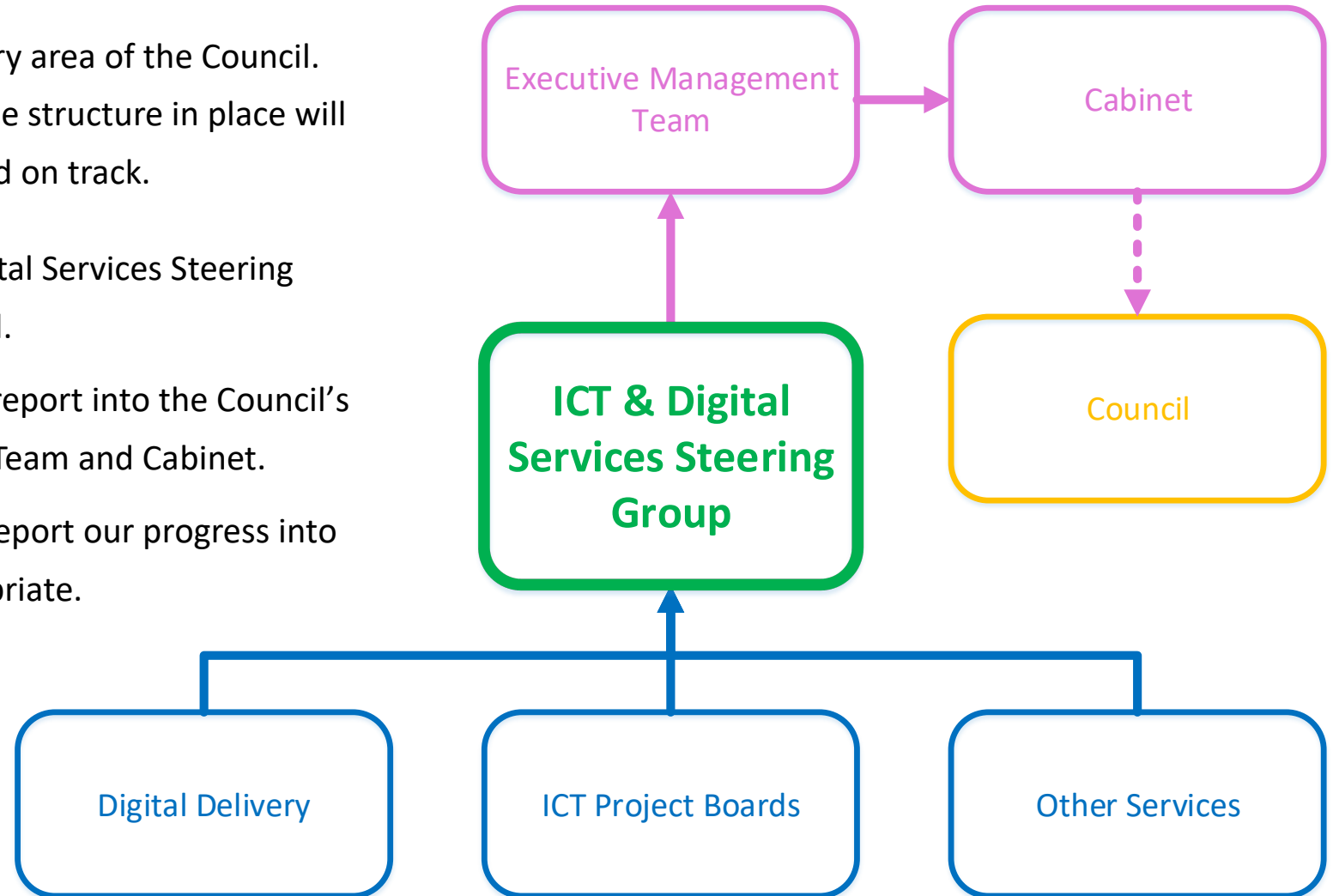


Government
Digital Service

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



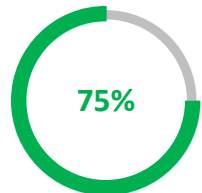
Anticipated Benefits:

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

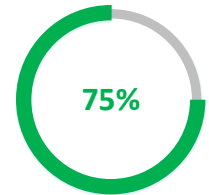
Service transformation

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
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Mobile working for front line services

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

By 2020



Anticipated Benefits:

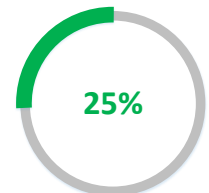
This will provide a seamless solution for staff out in the Borough resolving issues. There is a potential saving for dealing with issues, there and then whilst in the locality when a problem is reported, along with potential capacity improvements and more efficient methods of working.

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



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
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Digital Inclusion

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



Anticipated Benefits:

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.

Self Service

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.



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.

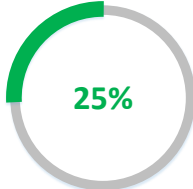
Action Plans

Our Digital Culture


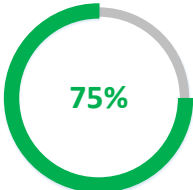
Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
Staff Development	Our staff will be key enablers of digital opportunity. A digital skills audit will be undertaken to understand our organisational capabilities and address where support is needed	Work with Human Resources will be undertaken to design a suitable development scheme Q1 2020/21	 100%
Members development	<p>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.</p> <p>A training and development program will be delivered for Members and their engagement with the digital delivery process sought.</p>	Work with the Council's Cabinet and group leaders will be undertaken to develop and agree a suitable program of engagement Q4 2019/20	 100%
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	 50%

Action Plans

Our Digital Culture

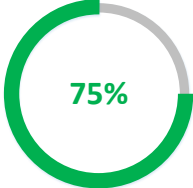
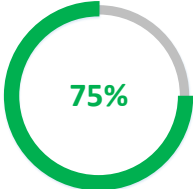
Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
Digital learning network	Establish a network of digital champions across the organisation to act as a reference point and advisor for change.	An implementation plan will be discussed and arranged in conjunction with Human Resources	 25%

Our Digital Organisation

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy	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	 100%
Transparency and Information Management	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	 75%

Action Plans

Our Digital Organisation

Project	Description	Status	2022 aim
Insight Development	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%
Data Pooling & Address Referencing	<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%