
ICT and Digital Services Strategy

Committee considering report:	Resources Select Committee
Date of Committee:	17 th January 2017
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Dominic Boeck
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	NA
Report Author:	ICT
Forward Plan Ref:	NA

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 **To introduce to the Select Committee the Council's ICT and Digital Services Strategy for the next 3-years (2017-2020).**

2. Recommendation

To note the contents of the report and to ask questions of the author and make suggestions for additions or amendments to the strategy Executive Summary

3. Introduction

- 3.1 On receipt of a request for the subject of ICT and Digital Services strategy to be considered for scrutiny, the Chairman of the Resources Select Committee (RSC) has agreed that the matter should be examined at the 17 January 2017 meeting of the Committee.
- 3.2 A copy of the ICT and Digital Services Strategy has been provided in order that the Committee can conduct effectively conduct scrutiny.

4. Background

- 4.1 The new strategy will set the direction for the council's use of ICT and digital services for the next 3 years.
- 4.2 The strategy was written with a whole council perspective, rather than from the perspective of the ICT Service, although this service will have a key role in realising the strategy's aims and objectives.
- 4.3 The report provides a high level overview of the various sections of the ICT & Digital Services Strategy but the strategy itself is also included at appendix A so committee members can review the detail within the document.

5. Opportunities and Constraints

- 5.1 There are a number of opportunities that should help the council realise this new strategy and a number of constraints that may challenge progress.

Opportunities include;

- West Berkshire's good broadband coverage (expected to be near 100% by the end of 2017)
- Smartphone ownership of our citizens (4 out of 5 UK adults now own a smartphone)
- People are used to transacting online with public bodies e.g. Mod.gov
- Devices are getting smarter (The internet of things)

Constraints include;

- Council budget cuts
- ICT investment funding model (currently capital based, many new developments are revenue funded)
- The conservatism of software vendors in the local authority marketplace
- Cyber security issues
- Change fatigue

6. Strategy Development

6.1 The current strategy was published in October 2016 and developed within the following considerations:

- The resource and financial constraints we are working within
- The corporate aims of the Council articulated in its various strategies
- Consulting with Council Members, officers, parish councils, customers and services users and with peers from other Local Government organisations
- Current and emerging technology trends
- Adopting best practice guidelines set out by HM Government guidelines and by professional bodies such as the Society of Information Technology Management (Socitm)

6.2 The new 3-year ICT and Digital Services strategy sets out the Council's aims which are to embrace technological advancements to:

- move some of our ICT infrastructure or systems into 'the cloud' where beneficial
- increase the mobility of our staff so that they may serve our customers better
- transform more of our services so that they may be delivered by digital means
- enhance existing systems and processes to improve system integration and data re-use

In implementing our strategy the ICT service expects to;

- be more agile and responsive to the changing needs of our business and customers
- provide more access channels for many citizen and customer interactions
- achieve greater take-up of customer self service
- deliver greater availability and resilience for many of our systems

7. Principles

7.1 The ICT & Digital Services Strategy conforms to 4 key principles;

- Cost effectiveness
- Being customer-centric
- Ensuring safety and security
- Being innovative and agile

8. Infrastructure

8.1 Maintaining fit-for-purpose ICT infrastructure is key to the effective operation of the Council and the strategy focuses on 3 key areas;

- **Network**
 - Reduce WAN costs by using new broadband infrastructure
 - Seek partnership opportunities for community benefit
 - Upgrade network equipment to increase internal network performance
 - Increase WiFi coverage in WBC offices.
- **Servers and Storage**
 - Explore cloud based infrastructure for disaster recovery and for core office services (MS Office, H: and I: drives email etc)
- **Devices (Providing the right tools for the job)**
 - Provide greater choice (computers and phones)
 - Lighter, more portable devices (laptops and tablets)
 - Always on connectivity
 - Explore biometric security

9. Other Development Themes

9.1 There are a number of other development themes articulated in the strategy including;

- **Communication Improvements**
 - Increased use of audio and video conferencing
 - Improve/change customer contact channels (Channel shift/digital by choice)
 - Increased use of social media
 - Video streaming of meetings
- **Digital Transformation**
 - Transforming the council's customer facing processes and make West Berkshire Council a Digital by Choice organisation
 - Create the shortest and most cost effective route between customer request and fulfilment
- **Alternative Operating Models - Decrease the use of specialist staff to save money by using generalists or ideally digital self-service**
- **System and Process Improvements**
 - Take advantage of device convergence (laptops/tablets/smartphones)

- Consolidate the number of discreet business systems
- Re-use data wherever possible rather than re keying it
- Modernise and enhancing our Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Analyse our data to ensure we “know what we know”

10. Remaining Strategy Document Sections

10.1 The remainder of the strategy document comprises the ICT Governance regime in place, a list of ICT standards adhered to a list of activities under way or planned to help realise the strategy and a glossary of terms.

11. Conclusion

11.1 It is recommended that the Commission carries out scrutiny on the current strategy document and the supporting information provided by Officers.

Appendices

Appendix A – West Berkshire Council ICT & Digital Services Strategy 2017 - 2020