ICT & Digital Services Strategy

Committee considering report:	Executive on 15 June 2017
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Dominic Boeck
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	18 May 2017
Report Author:	Kevin Griffin
Forward Plan Ref:	EX3267

1.   Purpose of the Report

1.1   To provide Executive with a high level overview of the various sections of the Council's new 3-year ICT & Digital Services Strategy (The Strategy itself is included at Appendix A)

2.   Recommendation

2.1   That Executive approve the West Berkshire Council ICT & Digital Services Strategy 2017-2020

3.   Implications

3.1   **Financial:** Realisation of the strategy is reliant upon revenue funding for the ICT & Corporate Support service and from the ICT capital programme. The quantum and governance for these are explained in the strategy.

3.2   **Policy:** The strategy includes descriptions of governance arrangement for ICT and for digital services and the standards which apply to these.

3.3   **Personnel:** None

3.4   **Legal:** None

3.5   **Risk Management:**   None

3.6   **Property:** None

3.7   **Other:** None

4. Introduction / Background

4.1 This new strategy sets the direction for the council's use of ICT and digital services for the next 3 years.

4.2 The strategy is 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 sections below set out the key elements of the ICT & Digital Services Strategy, which is included in its entirety at Appendix A.

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. Principles

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

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

7. Infrastructure

7.1 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

- o Upgrade network equipment to increase internal network performance
- o Increase WiFi coverage in WBC offices.

- **Servers and Storage**
  - o 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)**
  - o Provide greater choice (computers and phones)
  - o Lighter, more portable devices (laptops and tablets)
  - o Always on connectivity
  - o Explore biometric security

8.   Other Development Themes

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

- **Communication Improvements**
  - o Increased use of audio and video conferencing
  - o Improve/change customer contact channels (Channel shift/digital by choice)
  - o Increased use of social media
  - o Video streaming of meetings

- **Digital Transformation**
  - o Transforming the council's customer facing processes and make West Berkshire Council a Digital by Choice organisation
  - o Create the shortest and most cost effective route between customer request and fulfilment

- **Alternative Operating Models - Decrease the use of specialist staff to safe money by using generalists or ideally digital self-service**

- **System and Process Improvements**
  - o Take advantage of device convergence (laptops/tablets/smartphones)
  - o Consolidate the number of discreet business systems
  - o Re-use data wherever possible rather than re keying it
  - o Moderne and enhancing our Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
  - o Analyse our data to ensure we "know what we know"

9.   Appendices

9.1   Appendix A – Supporting Information (WBC ICT & Digital Services Strategy 2017-2020).