

DIGITAL INNOVATION STRATEGY 2020-2024

Cabinet Member for Innovation, Commercialisation and Corporate Services



Date:	1 December 2020
Agenda Item:	6
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Key Decision?	NO
Local Ward Members	ALL

CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 A Digital Strategy for Lichfield District Council has been developed based on our aspirations for an improved approach and our experience to date, and following a review of good practice in relation to digital approaches amongst Councils.
- 1.2 The Strategy focuses on the needs of the Council's customers, and how engagement can be increased, and their needs and expectations met, through the use of innovation, digital channels and technology.
- 1.3 The Strategy proposes activities under four work streams, E-Services and Engagement, Technology, Infrastructure, and Capability to deliver the Council's aims in this area.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet consider the discussion at Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 19 November 2020, as summarised at paragraph 3.9 of this report.
- 2.2 That subject to any changes, Cabinet agree to adopt the Strategy at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet Member for Innovation, Commercialisation and Corporate Services be given delegated authority in consultation with the Interim Head of Corporate Services to make any minor changes necessary to the Strategy prior to publication.

3. Background

- 3.1 Councils across the country are increasingly adopting digital strategies to guide investment in technology, to improve customer experience and deliver additional value for money for taxpayers.
- 3.2 This Strategy is presented following a review of local experience, literature and current practice, and seeks to provide a four-year framework for decisions and activity in relation to the digitisation of services.
- 3.3 The Strategy sets out an aim of delivering "the best possible services to our customers by harnessing technology effectively".
- 3.4 It helps to take forward the Council's strategic aspirations to work collaboratively to Enable People, Shape Place and Develop Prosperity across Lichfield District and supports being a Good Council. It is a sister strategy to the recently agreed Engagement Strategy 2020-2024 and complements and supports this.

- 3.5 There are four objectives that provide a means to monitor progress and outcomes within four work streams, building on past success, including our 4-star rated (Socitm) website.
- 3.6 The Strategy will be delivered over a four-year period, and some activity has already started. In year one it is intended that the focus will be on customer insight and understanding where further digitisation and the streamlining of customer journeys could improve services. In addition, there will be work to further improve the website and intranet and promote the Council's online services to our customers, whilst developing new skills in the workforce. A first-year action plan is proposed and set out at pages 13-15 of the strategy attached.
- 3.7 The Strategy is aspirational, and its speed of delivery and scope will be dependent on the ability to invest in the strategy, within affordability. We will monitor our performance and report on this annually. We have identified a series of potential measures that can help us obtain a baseline of the current position, while also allowing us to shape the impact of the Strategy.
- 3.8 The Strategy sets out a whole Council approach which recognises the importance of consistency and working together to achieve success.
- 3.9 The Strategy was considered by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 19 November, and a range of matters were discussed, in particular: care with the use of jargon, including a request for a glossary of terms; the importance the Council places on inclusion and making sure everyone can access services, whilst making digital services better and easier to use; the use of anonymised information to help make services better, and the policy framework and approach the Council has to ensure compliance with GDPR and the value it places on transparency; opportunities for the use of new technologies in services in the future, and the importance of the governance meetings highlighted in the strategy.

Alternative Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council choose not to have a digital innovation strategy. However, this is likely to lead to a lack of clear direction and is not considered to be good practice.
Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the production and consideration of this strategy, consultation has been undertaken with key Officers and Members and the Leadership Team. 2. The Strategy was considered by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 19 November 2020, and a summary of the comments made is provided at 3.9 above.
Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whilst the Strategy can be largely advanced within existing resources, to deliver it to the level it is anticipated to meet Member and Officer expectation going forward, there may be a need to identify further resources in due course and any budget request will be subject to the normal process. 2. Year one of delivery is estimated to require a one off budget of £40,000 which can be funded from underspends, and a reserve no longer needed, from within the Central Services budget. The work undertaken will assist in improving the efficiency and customer focus of services delivered digitally across the Council.

Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	1. The Strategy supports and indeed underpins the delivery of the Strategic Plan as highlighted in paragraph 3.4 above.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. There are no perceived negative Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications. All moves to on line transactions and access by customers will be in accordance with the existing national guidance and standards on accessibility for all.
Crime & Safety Issues	1. There are no perceived negative Crime & Safety Issues Implications. The strategy, and planned actions will assist in mitigating the risks of cybercrime.
Environmental Impact	1. There are no perceived negative Environmental Impacts. Remote working will be supported by technical development and this will reduce need for travel and reduce carbon emissions. The use of the Cloud reduces demand for power to support servers and again reduces carbon footprint. Any innovation which reduces the need for customers to visit the office to transact with us further reduces the carbon footprint.
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	1. There are no perceived negative GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment Implications.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Overall Rating
A	Additional resources may be required beyond year one to meet the needs and expectations of our Customers	We will mitigate this using best practice and value for money tools and raise specific business cases to ensure funding is planned and manageable	Yellow (material) (Likelihood – medium; Impact – significant)
B	SR6*- Failure to innovate and build on positive experience of Covid -19 in terms of technological solutions to remote working and good customer service	Corporate reinforcement of a culture of innovations using virtual meetings and committees. Businesses cases to support individual projects. The introduction of this strategy.	Yellow (material)(Likelihood – medium; Impact – medium)
C	SR7* - Threat of cyber attack	Use of firewalls and virus protection; strong access level controls, including remote access, training and regular briefings for staff controls.	Green (Likelihood – low; Impact – medium)
	*These are risks in the Council's Strategic Risk register, and the descriptions SR6 and SR7 relate to the numbering in this register.		

Background documents
None.

Relevant web links

None.