

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

27 MARCH 2019

JOINT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER – K.JONES AND THE HEAD OF ICT – S.JOHN

SMART AND CONNECTED – DRAFT DELIVERY PROGRAMME

Purpose of Report

- 1 To endorse the initial phase of the delivery programme developed to implement the Council's new digital strategy – Smart and Connected.

Background

2. The Council's first digital strategy was approved in 2015. The initial strategy – Digital by Choice – focused on developing on-line services, predominantly for transactional services, and encouraging take up of those services.
3. Considerable progress has been made towards the objectives set out in Digital by Choice. This was summarised in the report presented to the Cabinet in August 2018 when authority to consult on a revised Strategy was sought and secured.
4. Since 2015, the rate of technological change has continued to accelerate. The Council must adapt to the way in which technology is shaping the way citizens want to access and experience services, take every opportunity to harness the potential of technology to transform our environment and our economy whilst also working to reduce the inequalities for those not yet participating in the digital revolution.
5. A revised Strategy was developed, consulted upon and approved prior to Christmas 2018. It seeks to extend the scope of the initial digital strategy considerably to focus on three strategic priorities:

- **Priority 1** - transforming the way we deliver our functions/services and increasing use of the Council's on-line functions/services by residents;
 - **Priority 2** - to contribute to the development of favourable conditions for economic growth in the county borough; and
 - **Priority 3** – embracing a “digital first” approach to the way we support our workforce.
6. Over the last three months, the actions we will take in the first phase of implementing the new strategy have been identified and reflected in a delivery programme. That initial programme is attached for Members to review and, if thought fit for purpose, to endorse.

Delivery Programme

7. The delivery programme reflects a mix of planned ICT infrastructure changes which will provide the foundations upon which we can then develop and implement other digital initiatives. These changes are already reflected in the Council's revenue budgets, augmented by the £500k allocation within the Capital Programme for 2019-20 which was approved as part of the budget setting process to enable the extension of agile working.
8. All management teams were asked to identify digital developments that would support their service delivery and policy objectives. These include adding to and enhancing the Council's on-line services such as the on-line reporting of pot holes; providing on-line services for staff inspecting the county borough's playgrounds; enabling businesses to check their trade waste accounts on-line; and many others.
9. As well as extending the range of services provided on line, the delivery programme also identifies where the Council will initially concentrate the development of other digital technologies. For example:
- How we replicate the benefits of the robotics and process automation piloted for processing Disclosure and Barring checks in the Human Resources Department to other areas of the Council where we have high volumes of administrative and repetitive tasks;
 - The extent to which we can use machine learning technologies to automate translation of English into Welsh which would speed up translation processes; reduce cost and enable the Council to

significantly extend the use of the Welsh Language in the conduct of its business;

- How we could apply chat bot technology to ensure customers have a good experience when using our website services – a service that can routinely be available in Welsh and English;
 - How we can maximise the benefit of the huge amount of data we hold about the way our citizens use Council services to improve access and customer services at best value for the Taxpayers money – starting initially with those families who have children below the age of two as part of our First 1000 Days programme; and
 - Using the .Gov service to broadcast text messages in volumes but a no/low cost – for example to update bus and taxi operations when individual schools close in adverse weather conditions.
10. The programme also identifies how we will begin to build a new digital capability across the Council's workforce, including:
- Building on the work we have started to improve digital literacy;
 - Creating a workforce development programme to develop digital leadership across the Council, working in partnership with the Society of Information Technology Managers (SOCITM) who have considerable experience in this area of work;
 - Establishing a strong communications and engagement programme to raise awareness of the aims of the new Smart and Connected strategy and to capture in more innovative ways how the deployment of the new approaches is impacting on staff; the experience of people who use our services; and the way we are adapting to the changes in the community around us; and
 - Ensuring there is sufficient change management support within the programme so that managers and staff are supported to engage with the programme in ways that can be tailored to their situations.
11. Alongside the programme of work we will initiate and deploy at the local level the delivery programme also reflects the Council's involvement in regional and national programmes:
- Swansea Bay City Region;
 - Schools and the Digital Curriculum; and
 - The Public Services Board's work to tackle digital exclusion across our communities.
12. The programme attached is a first phase of the work we will need to take forward over the remainder of this Council. The programme

will need to be continuously updated as priorities change and new technologies emerge. It will also form the core of the ICT Service work programme.

13. The work will be overseen by a Digital Transformation Group, chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer with Membership drawn from the management teams in each directorate of the Council. The Digital Transformation Group will report to the Corporate Directors Group and to the Cabinet. A programme team is currently being established with the membership of the team to be multi-disciplinary to reflect the corporate and cross-cutting nature of the programme.

Financial Appraisal

14. The Council confirmed the following planned investments to support its digital ambition in its budget setting process.

Digital Spend Analysis :-

	<u>18/19</u>	<u>19/20</u>	<u>20/21</u>	<u>21/22</u>
	<u>£'s</u>	<u>£'s</u>	<u>£'s</u>	<u>£'s</u>
	<u>000's</u>	<u>000's</u>	<u>000's</u>	<u>000's</u>
ICT GROSS BUDGET (no FFP Savings or Pressures have been built in 20/21 onwards)	4,908	4,837	4,584	4,434
LAAP Expenditure re - ICT Reserve	462	409	583	81
CITY DEAL	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Digital Skills Support Post	50	50	50	50
RDP funded post to cover Digital Inclusion - Grade 7 - 30Hrs	31	31		
TOTAL SPEND	6,451	6,327	6,217	5,565

NOTES

- 1 ICT Reserve will be exhausted by 21/22
- 2 RDP funding is not yet secure post 18/19
- 3 City Deal costs are based on a £25m budget across the region with an NPT allocation of 20% spread evenly across a five year period.
- 4 Digital Skills spend is assumed at £50k per annum but this may be a one off allocation made available during 18/19
- 5 Figures above include all known income but further grant/income opportunities will continue to be sought
6. A capital sum of £500k has also been included in the capital programme for 2019-20 to support the extension of agile working.

Workforce Impacts

15. The principal areas of impact for the Council's workforce arrangements are as follows:
16. Automation of work – the adoption of this strategy will mean that some jobs/parts of jobs will be automated. Consequently, as each element of the Strategy is implemented it will be vital that the Management of Change in Partnership Policy is fully embraced so that the jobs affected can be clearly identified and the appropriate

steps taken to ensure employees and their trade unions are actively engaged throughout the change process.

17. Digital Exclusion – from earlier work, we know that digital literacy varies across the workforce with those on lower incomes or in higher age groups likely to have the lowest level of digital literacy. Implementation of this Strategy should positively impact on digital literacy enabling employees to access the opportunity to be considered for new digital roles but also in taking the benefits of participating in the wider digital economy.
18. Job Content – it is likely that the implementation of this Strategy will change some job roles and create new roles. The Council's Workforce Plan already recognises this and makes provision for creating a Digital Skills Strategy that should enable the Council to build a digitally capable workforce.
19. The consultation process underlined the need for adequate investment in the management of change. Leadership, workforce engagement and communication were identified by many internal stakeholders as key to the delivery of the Strategy.

Equalities Impact Assessment

20. The Integrated Impact Assessment that was developed to support the Strategy, clearly identified that people are less likely to participate in the digital economy if they are older, on lower incomes or disabled/in poor health. There is no evidence to demonstrate that people with other protected characteristics are particularly affected. The digital inclusion work identified in the Strategy aims to reduce/eliminate digital exclusion and consequently there should be an overall positive impact on the Council's equality duties from adopting this Strategy.
21. The Council's obligations in relation to the Welsh Language Standards are embedded into the approach. The expectation is that new digital approaches will embrace a bi-lingual approach to the delivery of Council services and open up new opportunities through digital innovation for people to use and learn the Welsh language.

Legal Duties

22. The delivery programme will implement the agreed Smart and Connected Strategy and helps to discharge the extant duty to secure continuous improvement of the Council's functions and related duties which are set out in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.
23. This work also directly assists to deliver the well-being objectives set by the Council in the Corporate Plan 2019-2022.

Risk Management

24. There are a number of risks that this Strategy seeks to address:
25. Risk that people will be unable to participate in digital services due to digital exclusion – this Strategy makes a commitment to upskilling the Council's own workforce; upskill the resident population through the education and adult education sectors; facilitate the upskilling and capability of the third sector; and challenge other Public Services Board partners to directly address digital inclusion within their own corporate digital programmes;
26. Risk that attempts to hack into/disrupt Council services through cyber-attacks – this Strategy identifies the growing importance of the cyber-threat and makes an explicit commitment to protecting systems and data;
27. Risk that the county borough is not seen as an attractive investment proposition for businesses - this Strategy recognises the importance of the digital revolution that is taking place and clearly positions digital as a core element of the Council's approach to economic development;
28. Risk that the Council does not exploit the potential to change the way residents'/customers' needs are met through digital innovation at lower costs – this Strategy recognises the potential for further significant transformation in the way demand and need is responded to both through the creation of a new data science capability and through the experimentation, development and deployment of a wider range of new and emerging technologies;

29. Risk that key partners do not keep pace with digital developments increasing threat to the sustainability of their organisation – this Strategy recognises that both the third and SME sectors will require support and encouragement to build capacity and capability to operate effectively within a digital world;

Consultation

30. The Cabinet approved a 12 week public consultation exercise in August 2018. The consultation ran until 6th December 2018 and were reported to Cabinet with the final strategy in December 2018. The delivery programme is to be supported by a dedicated communications and engagement worker to ensure there is effective and continuous engagement and consultation as the Strategy is implemented.

Recommendations

31. That, subject to any amendments agreed at the meeting, the Cabinet endorses the Delivery Programme developed to implement Smart and Connected as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Reason for Proposed Decision

32. To implement the Council's Digital Strategy – Smart and Connected.

Implementation of the Decision

33. The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call in period.

Appendices

34. Appendix 1 – Smart and Connected – Delivery Programme – Phase One

Background Documents

35. Digital By Choice, 2015

36. Smart and Connected – report to Cabinet, August 2018

37. Smart and Connected – report to Cabinet, December 2018

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