REPORT TO CABINET

14 November 2018

Subject:	**Digital Strategy 2018 - 2021**
Presenting Cabinet Member:	**Councillor Steve Trow – Cabinet Member for Culture and Core Council Services**
Director:	**Executive Director – Resources – Darren Carter**
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan (28 day notice) Reference:	SMBC09/11/2018
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Councillor Steve Trow – 27 September 2018
Director Approval:	Darren Carter
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions o not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	This is a Council wide amendment therefore not applicable to individual wards.
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	The proposal will be consider by Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board on 6 November 2018
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DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS
That Cabinet:
1. Approve the Council's Digital Strategy 2018 to 2021.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 Our Digital Strategy 2018-20121 is a new strategy for Sandwell and one that will bring about significant transformation of services. It demonstrates in a non-technical way Sandwell's high level vision, principles and ambitions for Digital Transformation.

1.2 The outcomes detailed in the strategy have been determined following extensive engagement with our workforce and our communities. They focus not only on developing digital services, but also ensure residents are at the heart by supporting them in a digital world so that they are not left behind.

1.3 This report requests that Cabinet endorses and agrees our new Digital Strategy 2018 – 2021.

2 IMPLICATION FOR SANDWELL'S VISION

2.1 We want to be digital by default in whatever we do. An effective digital strategy will enable an agile workforce and present opportunities to deliver services in different, innovative ways which are crucial to the delivery of our ambitious Vision 2030.

2.2 Outcomes in this strategy do not just focus on service delivery and our workforce. The strategy also aims to deliver real benefits to our citizens by supporting them to learn new digital skills so that they can benefit from the opportunities digital inclusion brings.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The need for a Digital Strategy has been identified through the corporate business planning process.

3.2 Being digital by default will enable an agile workforce and present opportunities to deliver services in different, innovative ways. Digital transformation will enable us to transform and modernise how and where we work. We will be able to modernise office space providing better collaborative environments for our workforce and enable flexible working improving work/life balance.

3.3 As the trend for products and services moving online continues, the world becomes more digitally dependent with 90% of jobs requiring digital skills. To take advantage of the internet, or even undertake the simplest online task requires skills.

3.4 Sandwell's use of basic digital skills is the lowest percentage across the Black Country at only 30%. Our challenge in Sandwell is to make the best use of technology, increasing digital skills to improve people's lives.

3.5 As a way of initiating the delivery of this transformation work, the Digital Strategy has been prepared to ensure a clear vision, priorities and consistency in the way future activity is managed. The Digital Strategy is underpinned by the Council's newly revised ICT Strategy (approved May 2018).

3.6 This strategy has been developed on the strong foundation of learning which has been undertaken over the last two years and ensures we continue to make significant and effective improvements going forward.

3.7 A strong vision and sense of direction is essential for managing effective transformation, engaging all service areas across the Council is essential as we strive to deliver our Vision 2030.

3.8 Our new Digital Strategy has been developed taking a new approach producing an output which is concise, helpful and appeals to a wide audience and as such is built around a vision and a set of supporting themes and principles.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 This is a new Digital Strategy that provides clear focus for how we will best use technology to deliver better outcomes for people, rather than the information systems and technology that underpin delivery. The strategy puts inclusion at the centre of Digital Sandwell both in its development and delivery.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 The strategy has been developed in consultation with the community and our workforce.

5.2 During autumn 2017, the ICT Service conducted a number of engagement workshops with service areas from across the Council. Digital was a key area explored to understand how digital transformation could support ambitious transformation and service improvements.

5.3 Consultation with the community during summer 2018, has been a crucial stage in the development of this strategy. It allowed us to recognise and appreciate the important role that we have as a Council in addressing social isolation and social exclusion as it is clear that this can be compounded when implementing digital services. We have ensured that this strategy therefore supports social integration.

5.4 Output from this engagement has been used to shape our Digital Strategy.

5.5 Our new Digital Transformation Team will continue to engage with the community and workforce. This will be crucial to us understanding what matters most to people so that we can identify ongoing requirements.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 The lack of a Digital Strategy would present a risk to the organisation achieving priorities which are crucial to the delivery of our ambitious Vision 2030. Having a strategy ensures we can make effective and consistent decisions as these can be undertaken in the context of an agreed direction of travel.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Resources have been allocated to deliver the key areas of the transformation programme.

7.2 The delivery of the Digital Strategy will have implications for the way in which the Council develops, uses and supports digital services. As we further the development of our requirements any budget considerations will be made at that time with further reports produced as necessary.

7.3 A Digital Transformation Board will be established to provide governance around decision making and competing demands on resources.

7.4 The ICT Digital Transformation Lead will establish and manage the programme, managing theme leads who will bring together the relevant mix of colleagues in project teams and be responsible for coordinating the overall delivery of activity for that theme, adopting the matrix management approach in operation to deliver the Strategy.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The Digital Strategy will be annually reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and that technology can underpin the regulatory and legal requirements of the Council.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed and identified no major change required.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

10.1 The Digital Strategy is underpinned by the ICT strategy. The primary role of ICT is to "process" information. Information must be processed legally and lawfully e.g. Data Protection Act 2018 and the recent General Data Protection Regulations. Principle 7 of our ICT Strategy - Security and Risk Management will ensure we facilitate this.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 The corporate risk management strategy has been compiled with and an exercise has been carried out to identify any risks associated with the recommendations being sought. This has concluded that there are no significant risks that require reporting and that suitable measures are in place to manage the risks identified to an acceptable level.

11.2 The recommendations if approved, will also assist in the mitigation of risks identified in the WorkPlace Vision Project.

11.3 Project risks will be identified as part of each project established and will be monitored by the Digital Transformation Board.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

12.1 The strategy will ensure we have clear vision across the Council for Digital Transformation.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

13.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications although digital transformation enables agile working and home working which can support and maintain a healthy work/life balance.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

14.1 No impact

15   **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 Our Digital Strategy 2018-20121 is a new strategy for Sandwell and one that will bring about significant transformation of services and is necessary to ensure effective governance of Digital Transformation over the next three years.

16   **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None

17   **APPENDICES:**

Digital Strategy 2018-2021
Equality Impact Assessment

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