REPORT

SUBJECT: **The Digital Strategy**
MEETING: **Economy and Development Select**
DATE: **13th July 2018**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1.   PURPOSE:

1.1   The purpose of this report is to present for scrutiny the Digital Strategy and action plan for 2018/21.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1   That the Committee considers the draft Strategy and action plan ahead of subsequent consideration by Council.

3.   KEY ISSUES:

3.1   MCC's first digital strategy, iCounty, was implemented in July 2014 and was based on three pillars of:
   a) Improving internal services, data delivery and infrastructure
   b) Digitally enabled, inclusive and connected communities
   c) Creating products and commercial assets

3.2   There have been significant developments in technology in the last 4 years, and the experience, data and evidence we have collected from our customers about the way they wish to engage and transact with us has informed this new strategy.

3.3   Our workforce needs to have the digital knowledge and skills to build in end-to-end automated customer services and business processes. We need to reduce demand through self-service facilities and provision of accurate, relevant data and information that people can use with confidence to make decisions.

4.   REASONS:

4.1   In order to reap the economic and efficiency benefits from emerging new technologies enabling automation of processes and provide end-to-end customer services we need to re-think our investment in digital technologies, knowledge and skills.

4.2   This strategy is based on a significant amount of data and evidence collated from customer insights in how as well as through knowledge, learning and experience gained through collaborating with partners and other organisations to ensure the strategy is robust and sustainable.

4.3   The strategy is based on 7 key themes that together will improve the digital maturity of the organisation and realise significant business efficiencies and economies through digitisation. The themes are:

  i.   **Building a digitally skilled and enabled workforce –**We need service managers who understand the internet, its potential and its users. They need to know what's possible in a digital world and how use it to improve services and the lives of people in our communities. We need a workforce with the digital skills to do their jobs in a digital world and that they can pass on to the community.

  ii.   **Digital Customer Services –** Customers expect a similar experience from councils as they do from their banks or online retail services.We must design our digital services to be so simple to use that they wouldn't want to do it any other way. Digital design involves us walking in our customer's shoes to build excellent but simple customer services accessed through any kind of SMART, mobile or computer device

  iii. **Business Digital Capacity and Automation –** Our most successful digital projects are the ones where the business has worked its way through service re-design first, looking in-depth at the service and applying digital solutions to any residual problems. We need to find ways to automate and deliver their business more effectively and economically through digital innovation and design.

  iv.   **Technology –** Customers should be able to access our digital services through any type of SMART device. We must design our digital offering to be incredibly simple and using the internet and as the main vehicle. Our workforce will need to have the right tools to do the job too, with devices being able to access data and systems seamlessly.

  v.   **Data and evidence –**In order to be a data-led organization we need to gather and use evidence of what works, and cut out the things that don't. We need data that follows the golden rules of being necessary, useful, readable, easy to find and accurate. We need to open up our data for others to use without us having to manually manipulate it first.

  vi.   **Digital Platforms and Standards –**We need core inter-connected digital platforms and data registers coupled with common standards so that people can plug in their new, restyled services at speed.

  vii. **Protecting our Digital Assets and Security –** We are well aware that cybercrime is on the increase, and that we need to secure our information at the same time as ensuring the right people can access it.

4.4   The focus of the strategy centres around people, and helping them to discover how digitisation can transform the way they work and free them up to do the rewarding and interesting parts of their jobs within the community rather than the routine tasks that can be automated.

4.5   Delivery of the Digital Strategy is not just about the wires and ICT infrastructure that we have in the SRS and our buildings. It is more about how we capture the benefits of digitisation to connect people, make work and life easier, and reap the economic bonuses that it can bring. Putting people at the heart of iCounty means that business redesign comes first, and we can use technology as an enabler to make things simpler, faster and cheaper.

5.   RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1   Delivery of this strategy will require investment in new business applications, enhancement of our ICT infrastructure, project and change management support and development of the digital knowledge and skills of our workforce.

5.2   Each investment will require evidence-led business cases which identify a cashable return on investment and/or a significant benefit to our communities and customers.

6.   CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Digital Programme Board
Economy and Development Select Committee
SRS

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

a) The iCounty Strategy 2014/2018
b) The Digital Strategy 2018/2021
c) The Digital and Technology Business Plan 2016/19
d) The SRS strategy

8. FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

a. The significant equality impacts identified in the assessment (Appendix 1) are summarised below for members' consideration:

   i.   Digitisation will enable end-to-end customer services and the ability for people to engage and transact with the council in a way that's convenient to them
   ii.   The safe sharing of digital data with police and health colleagues will enable a more joined-up approach to care of vulnerable people in our communities
   iii. Increasing the digital skills of our workforce will enable them to pass this knowledge on into communities and families to help them function in this digital world.

b. The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed every 3 years and criteria for monitoring and review will include: Continuous assessment of the Digital And Technology Business Plan to ensure it aligns with and delivers the digital strategy in a sustainable way for future generations.

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