

## REPORT

**SUBJECT:** iCounty Strategy Business Plan

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:** All

### 1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the iCounty Strategy Business Plan for 2016/19, along with a report on MCC's Digital and Technology service and how it aligns with MCC's iCounty, People and Place strategies.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That cabinet agree the 2016/19 iCounty Business Plan and delivery report.

### 3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Technology is moving at pace, and digital services need to embrace the digital world and harness the benefits to support sustainable communities and economies. In order to ensure that MCC captures the benefits of digitisation the iCounty Strategy was developed in April 2014 and was agreed through the Council's committee approval processes in July 2014.
- 3.2 This is the second year of implementation, and the business plan has evolved and has been refined through learning and experience, as well as through collaborating with partners and organisations across the UK to ensure the strategy is robust and sustainable.
- 3.3 MCC has achieved some significant developments since iCounty was first approved, and the foundations have been laid for a sustainable ICT infrastructure, self-build ICT platforms, digital transformation and digital service provision. The attached report outlines MCC's Digital and Technology Business Plan and proposals to achieve sustainable digital services.

### 4. REASONS:

- 4.1 In order to ensure that MCC reaps the benefits of technology and digitisation it is essential for the iCounty strategy to be supported by a robust business plan. The plan supports the 3 pillars of iCounty:
- a) Improving internal services, data delivery and infrastructure
  - b) Digitally enabled, inclusive and connected communities

c) Creating products and commercial assets

4.2 The Business Plan also aligns with the People, Asset Management, MTFP and SRS strategies as well as linking in with MCC's Business and Service Improvement Plans.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

5.1 Other than the resources to provide the core Digital Projects Team, this iCounty programme will be measured on a project by project basis with detailed business cases being brought forward for each. It is anticipated that funding will principally be on an 'invest to save' basis. Business cases will be prioritised by return on investment coupled with the optimum customer benefits.

## **6. CONSULTEES:**

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

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- a) The iCounty strategy
- b) The Digital and Technology Business Plan 2016/19
- c) Report on the iCounty Strategy, Digital Business Plan and Digital Roadmap 2016/19
- d) The ICT in schools Business Case

## **8. FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS:**

- a. The significant equality impacts identified in the assessment are summarised below for members' consideration:
  - i. Digitisation will improve accessibility of information for monmouthshires residents and businesses
  - ii. The ICT in schools business case will support digital skills, and increase job prospects in digital industries
  - iii. Monmouthshires businesses and communities will benefit from the increase in super-fast broadband connectivity.
- 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 iCounty strategy in a sustainable way for future generations.

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## Appendix 1.

### iCounty Strategy, Digital Business Plan and Digital Roadmap 2016/19

#### 1. MCC Digital Strategy

1.1 MCCs Digital direction is based upon its iCounty Strategy and Digital Roadmap which were agreed in July 2014. The strategy consists of three 'pillars' of-

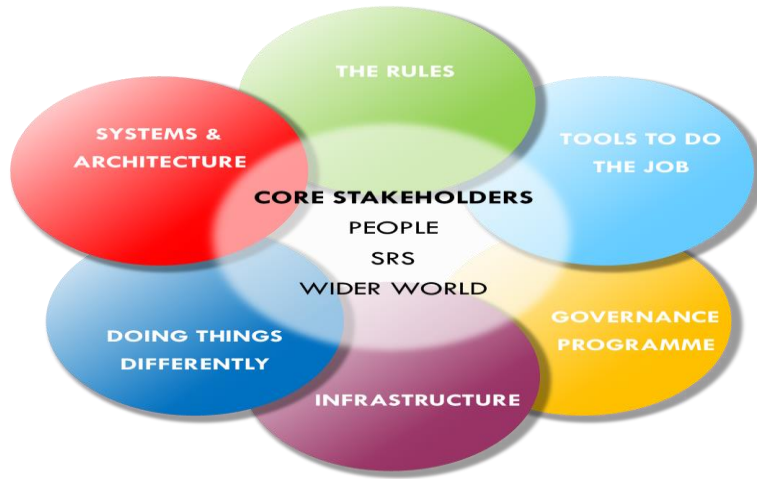
1. **Improving internal systems, data delivery and infrastructure** in order to continually re-invent the services that matter to our communities, and demonstrate the path we are on to becoming an effective and nimble council.
2. **Digitally enabled and connected communities** that recognise the increasing relevance of technology and work with the council to solve problems and improve the quality of life, position people for jobs and stimulate participation in public life
3. **Creating products and commercial assets** that realise potential commercial product offerings and support expansion and creation of local digital clusters.

1.2 The iCounty strategy is part of the council's Pyramid of Plans, and is critical to the delivery of the People, Place and MTF strategies. It needs to link and work in tandem with them. iCounty is also an inextricable part of the Future Generations Act and in developing the council of the future.

#### 2. MCC Digital Business Plan

2.1 The Digital Business Plan for 2016/19 details the practical and operational actions needed to enable delivery of the iCounty Strategy. It is based on the foundation work and evidence gathering that has been undertaken over the last 18 months. This Business Plan mainly relates to the 1st and 3rd pillars of iCounty, although there is a direct link with the 2nd pillars of 'Digitally enabled and connected communities' which sits within the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise Team and is included in this commentary under Section 4.

2.2 Based on evidence and experience we have split the Business Plan and Roadmap into the following areas, putting people and business services at the heart of the plan–

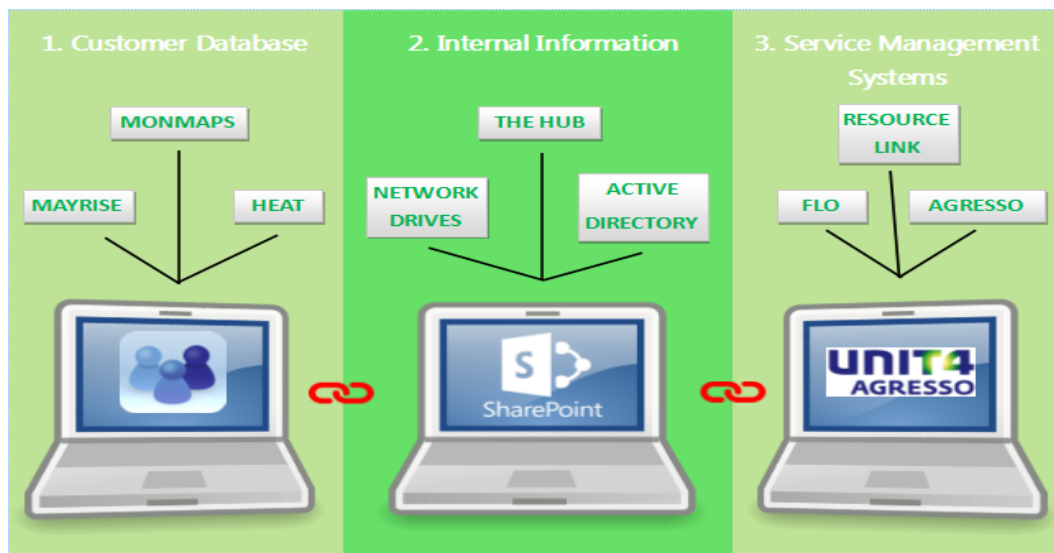


2.3 We have structured it in this way because digitisation has far more to do with the way people behave and work than the actual technology supporting it, and it's critical that we put customers and our service areas at the heart of everything we do. Giving people the tools to capture the efficiencies and connectivity that digitisation can bring will enable them to develop council services of the future in a sustainable way, whilst retaining ownership the future direction. The areas ringed in bold above are the 'people' focused sections.

2.4 Putting people at the heart of digitisation is not possible without linking directly in with the delivery of the People Strategy in order to give people the tools to do their jobs, and the Place strategy for the rationalisation of our buildings and office accommodation.

### 3. The plan sections

#### 3.1 MONMOUTHSHIRE SYSTEMS ARCHITECTURE



3.2 Monmouthshire has around 80 different applications (I.T. systems), ranging from the very large corporate systems for finance and information management to much smaller, bespoke, and work-management applications.

3.3 Over the last **18 months** we have mapped our current applications to see which ones contain common elements e.g. customer databases, workflow and case management facilities. Some of the applications are nearing the end of their useful life or are based on old, outdated, technology that doesn't 'talk' to - or integrate with - other applications making them hard to administer.

3.1.3 The systems map is called our 'systems architecture' and we are aware that this needs to be updated and rationalised over the next **3 years** to take advantage of more efficient and updated technology and to integrate the systems into single, user friendly ICT platforms. This will be done by -

- Working with the SRS is to integrate our systems architecture with those of our partner organisations and plan for its refresh in tandem with them to create single platforms across several organisations, taking advantage of efficiencies and cost savings.
- Applying an agreed set of core principles for rationalising our systems architecture over the next 3 years as follows:
  - ✓ Collaborate with partners to find the 'best of breed' of available apps balanced with 'good enough to do the job' to avoid unnecessary expense
  - ✓ Wherever possible, work with the People Services OD team to assist with redesigning business areas first, and let business users design the ICT solutions afterwards
  - ✓ Ensure that applications are built or procured using user-centric design principles
  - ✓ Ensure interoperability of applications across the systems architecture
  - ✓ Use Open Data as a standard
  - ✓ Take a modular approach to building applications
  - ✓ Reuse, buy, then build
  - ✓ Cloud first
  - ✓ No lengthy tie-in contracts

### 3.4 TOOLS TO DO THE JOB



3.2.1 In order to do their jobs people need effective applications with integrated systems architecture, along with the physical equipment to enable them to access information and interact with others wherever they may be working. They also need the skills to enable them to use technology and digitisation effectively.

3.2.2 We have listened to what customers and staff are saying about technology, and this knowledge and evidence has been used to set our direction for the next three years. This is what we have learned –

- Most employees tell us they simply want I.T. to work, and our customers are telling us that they want to transact with us 24/7 in the same way as they do with their banks or Amazon. This sounds simple enough, but to enable this to happen we need to work with our customers and employees to put the right infrastructure in place to enable it to happen, and this will take time and some investment in order to release benefits and savings.
- Our staff are also telling us that we need to communicate more, and let them know of developments in technology that will help them do their jobs as well as better ways of accessing information and self-help facilities.
- Evidence also tells us that many of the technology problems staff report to us are not as a result of faulty equipment and infrastructure, but as a result of a lack of basic ICT skills and knowledge and we need to address this too.
- In addition to having user led technology solutions it's important that any service re-design comes first. This is evidenced by our success within Social Care and Highways where customer and user-centric service re-design was undertaken before technology solutions were built. This was the key success factor for the Flo and Connected Worker apps.

3.2.3 Over the last **18 months** we have:

- Worked with service areas to give them the right tools to do their jobs, based on the way they work. This has enabled people to discharge their job roles effectively whether they are field workers, managers with remote teams, or office based staff with a need for specialist equipment.
- Found an effective 'Mobile Device Management' solution to ensure the integrity and security of any data accessed via mobile devices.
- Set equipment standards to ensure we are only supporting technologies that interact with our core technology platforms, saving money and allowing us to concentrate on problem solving.
- Identified a schedule for the replacement of equipment, based on its age and capacity. We need equipment to be speedily procured and well configured and maintained to ensure people can concentrate on their jobs rather than their equipment.
- Provided an effective Service Desk function backed up by on-site surgeries and engineers to trouble-shoot and mend.
- Provided self-help facilities for accessing information and improving digital expertise for employees via The Hub
- Developed The Hub as a corporate information platform, providing team sites for service areas to work together and share information and best practice. We have also developed areas of the Hub for Performance information and for the People Hub.
- Set up the Digital Champion network

3.2.3 Over the next **3 years** we will develop more tools for people to do their jobs by:

- Working in tandem with Service Areas to assess the ICT implications of changing and modernising their working methods, alongside changes to the systems architecture.

- Working with the Customer Services Programme team to implement customer-centric ICT platforms that support the customer services strategy and channel shift as well as integrate with back office systems, assisting with the systems architecture rationalisation.
- Developing team sites across all services, building on existing successful sites and connecting the whole authority.
- Developing more effective communications on digital issues via newsletters, a Digital Hub site, training videos, 'how to' videos, the Digital Champion network and a 'Call to action for digitisation!' across the council.

### 3.5 THE RULES



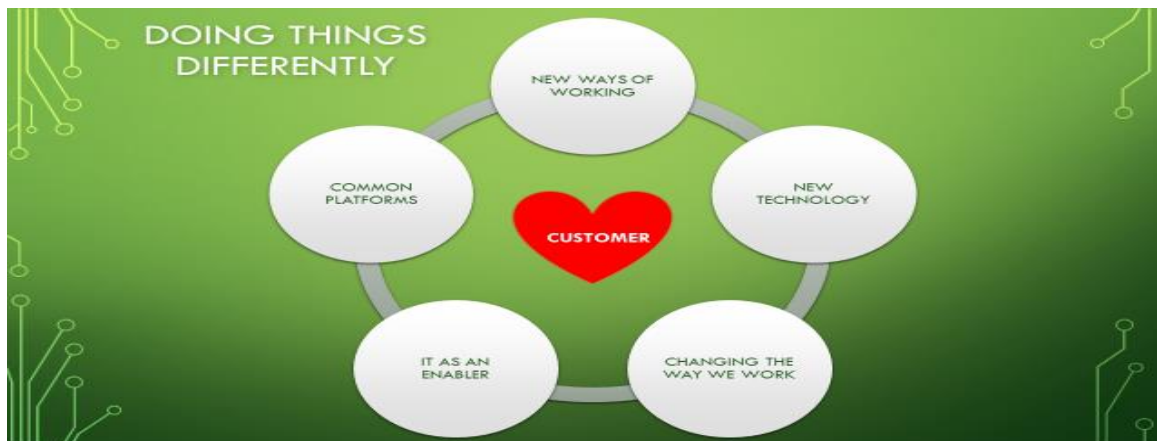
3.3.1 MCC has developed policies for information governance, security, agile working, equipment use and electronic communications. There is some evidence that current rules and policies are not integrated into everyday working life, or that their purpose is not readily understood. These rules are meant to guide people's behavior in relation to security and data integrity, and to protect them from inadvertently releasing the wrong data to the wrong people. There is also a need to ensure the rules enable the council to discharge its safeguarding obligations.

3.3.2 We need buy-in from all of our partners, Members and staff to ensure that policies are fit for purpose, are understood and can be applied across the whole business, whilst recognising there is a balance between getting the job done and safeguarding sensitive information for vulnerable people.

3.3.3 The current policies will be refined and reviewed in **2016/17** to ensure that they are fit for purpose and can flex with business demands and advancements in technology.

3.3.4 In order to simplify the tools we use on an everyday we have agreed principles for the replacement of systems

### 3.4 DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY



3.4.1 There is an imperative for the council to keep pace with the digital revolution, and harness the benefits that it can bring for the council of the future freeing people up to make the biggest impact in their professional skills rather than getting bogged down in administration. Digitisation is no longer a trend but an essential part of daily life, and investing in delivering digitised services will enable us to capture economic as well as improved customer services.

3.4.2 The implementation of the Customer Services Strategy, including channel shift and the review of our systems architecture won't be undertaken by the Digital Projects Team alone. The business comes first, and there is an inextricable link with the OD service and the People Strategy to managing business change and upskill employees to spread their digital knowledge throughout communities.

3.4.2 We have learnt by experience that the most successful digital developments are those driven and owned by users and customers expressing their needs first. This is demonstrated in practice within the Social Care and the Operations teams, where service redesign was undertaken before applying technology solutions. To effectively capture the benefits of digitisation we need to work in partnership with the service areas, the SRS, SRS member organisations and our own OD/HR team. This will be our focus **for 2016/19** and we will -

- Concentrate on putting the customer and business at the heart of our work, implementing the customer services strategy and the ICT strand of channel shift and digital transformation.
- Prioritise the technology projects arising from Service Redesign, budget mandates and customer services projects choosing projects with the best customer benefits and/or the biggest financial savings.
- Work with Service areas to identify areas for automation or for inclusion in the corporate ICT platforms of Connected Worker, Customer Services and SharePoint apps.
- Work with the SRS to help us collaborate and integrate new technologies with the existing ICT infrastructure and systems architecture, and to give us advice and guidance on technology good practice.
- Develop a programme of systems architecture integration with partner organisations, choosing applications where best practice has been demonstrated.
- We will continue to develop integrated council platforms, share our information technology platforms where they are operating best practice and we want to help them when we have knowledge and expertise.



### 3.5 INFRASTRUCTURE



3.5.1 We absolutely rely on the SRS to provide a robust infrastructure for us to enable the council to work. That's our motto; "I.T. just works!" To do this we need the equipment, networks, communications, internet and all the wires and security to make it work, all of the time.

3.5.2 Over the last **18 months** we have worked with the SRS to review our network and communications infrastructure to ensure it is fit for purpose. We have found areas where investment is needed to upgrade it, particularly in our schools. We have also replaced the servers that hold the council's information to ensure it is safe and secure.

3.5.3 Our focus over the next **3 years** is to -

- Apply 'Cloud First' principles when we are refreshing our systems architecture, reducing the reliance on physical data halls and buildings.
- Upgrade and refresh the whole of the school estate infrastructure with the ICT in schools project.
- Ensure our ICT infrastructure is 'fit for purpose' to improve our own internal mobile communications at the same time as enabling the community to benefit from it.

### 3.6 MCC DIGITAL GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURES



3.6.1 MCC has a business plan for implementation of its iCounty strategy, and recognises the importance of owning the governance, process and administration of its digital direction. It puts the customer at the heart of the business and looks at

ICT as an enabler to solve business problems falling out of service redesign. We recognise that simply applying technology to a problem doesn't work without first having analysed the problem we are trying to solve. The implementation of the iCounty strategy is a very large and complex programme of work, set out in this business plan. During the last **18 months** we have –

- *Established A Digital Programme Board* – ensuring iCounty is implemented as intended and managing our own performance as well as that of the SRS
- *Created a Digital Business Plan and roadmap*– this is the operational plan for implementation of the iCounty strategy for 2016/19
- *Set up a Digital Projects function* – which manages the business plan and provides essential digital programme support to the business and operating a relationship and performance management function with the SRS.
- *Linked in with the following key corporate strategies and legislation-*
  - The People and Organisational Development Strategy** – Flexing and changing digital technology to meet the demands of service redesign as well as modernising the way we work and giving staff the tools to do their jobs.
  - The MTFP** - Implementing technologies that automate processes and free people up to do their professional jobs at the same time as enabling efficiency savings. We have put in the groundworks for the Customer Services strategy, including the opportunities for channel shift via the web site, creating transactional savings. We have also reviewed the systems architecture and built interoperable apps with automatic e-forms and API's that will reduce license fee expenditure and the costs of supporting and maintaining apps.
  - The Whole Authority Asset Management Plan** – Linking in with the Councils accommodation and buildings requirements and ensuring that the right technology platforms and infrastructure are in place to make our buildings work.
  - The SRS Strategy** – Ensuring the SRS strategy aligns with iCounty and the digital strategies of our partners, creating a cohesive and interoperable direction for all partners.
  - Future Generations** – Ensuring that we harness the benefits of digitisation in providing sustainable services for future generations.

3.6.2 Over the **next 3 years** we will review and flex the governance arrangements to ensure they continue to provide effective performance management and relevant decision making processes.

## **4 Digitally Enabled and Connected Communities**

4.1 Delivery of iCounty is not purely intended to benefit the council itself, but to benefit the communities and businesses of Monmouthshire. To this end the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise team have achieved the following:

- In March 2015 Cabinet approved the [Broadband in Monmouthshire report](#) recommending access to ICT transformation funding to undertake digital access and ICT exploitation activities. The following outcomes have since been achieved:
- A [Digital Monmouthshire](#) web portal has been developed which is hosted as part of the [www.monmouthshire.biz](http://www.monmouthshire.biz) offer and also includes a directory of Tech, Digital and Creative businesses in the county; promotion of iCounty, promotion

of Online Council Services and promotion of Free Wi-Fi Public access and broadband guidance for the County.

- A **SMART Communities and Digital Access Manager** has been appointed to drive forward activities associated with the external strand of iCounty until May 2016;
- An £850,000 UK Government funded **infrastructure pilot offering innovative broadband solutions** for 1600 hard to reach Monmouthshire premises is expected to complete in March 2016. Rural properties in targeted areas that can now access a superfast broadband service for the first time have been direct mailed by AB Internet with a short term promotional offer which includes free connections and three months free service.



...even in these postcodes!

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| NP75EE | NP77LA | NP78BP | NP78SE | NP79NU | NP79TE | NP253PW | NP151QQ | NP166LS | NP265PE | NP265UN |
| NP75TR | NP77RY | NP78BS | NP79AA | NP79PH | NP79TF | NP254AT | NP151TZ | NP166PH | NP265PF | NP265UQ |
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| NP77ES | NP78AH | NP78DE | NP78EB | NP79QA | NP79TL | NP255FB | NP165PC | NP263GF | NP265PQ | NP265UX |
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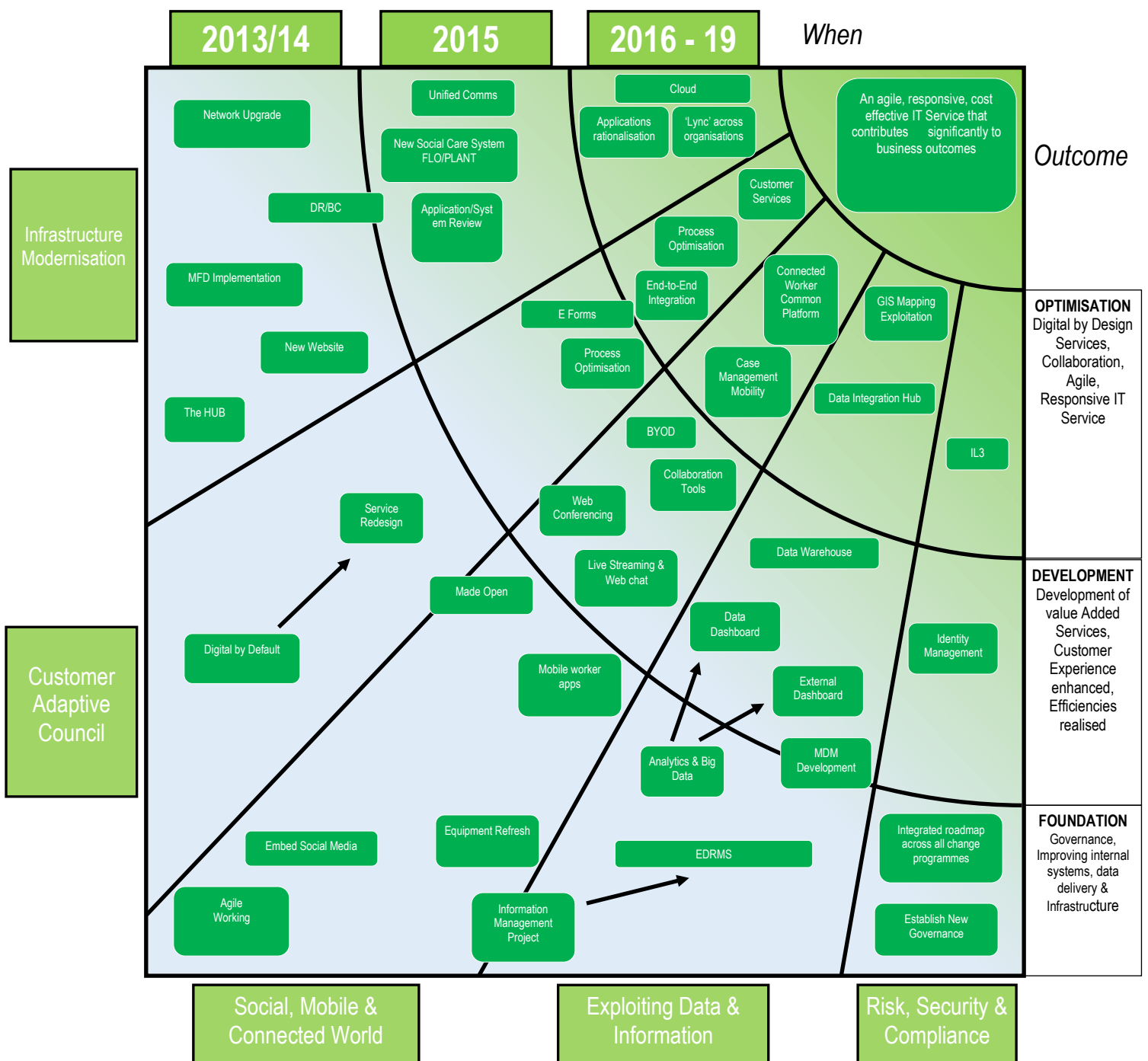
- **36,400 premises are now able to access Superfast Broadband** connections and there is an increased uptake with Monmouthshire's figures now standing at 15%;
- The UK Government's Super-Connected Cities Voucher scheme was closed in October 2015. 60 Expressions of Interest were supported from local businesses and 27 vouchers were awarded (with a cumulative value of £81,000 investment). In January 2016 the Welsh Government extended its [Ultrafast Broadband Connection scheme](#) for businesses into Monmouthshire and updated the [Access Broadband Cymru](#) grant scheme for residents and businesses. Both of these grant opportunity are now being promoted.
- A web page promoting [Skutrade](#) has also been launched. Skutrade is a pre-trade cloud based software that enables businesses to know the real-time full costs and profitability of selling products in international markets. Skutrade is being supported by MCC further to a [Cabinet report](#) presented in July 2015 which stipulates how Skutrade will help deliver the Council's iCounty and Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise strategies by enabling Monmouthshire businesses to have reduced fee access to the platform. A progress update will be provided to the Economy and Development Select Committee at its April 2016 meeting.

## 5 Creating products and commercial Assets

5.1 Over the last 18 months we have created two self-build applications. One is the Social Care service case management system, Flo, and the other is the Operations service work management application, the Connected Worker. Both of these applications serve different purposes, though have the same features of scalability and integration with the rest of MCC's systems architecture. Both have the potential for commercial viability too, and whilst finalising completion and live launch of the products we have been exploring opportunities for commercialisation with very real potential shown through a re-seller for the Flo application, and through surrounding local authorities for the Connected Worker app.

5.2 Over the next **3 years** the commercial potential will be pursued, covering the initial investment costs of the systems plus income generation through ongoing sales.

## 6 Our Digital Roadmap



## **7 In Summary**

7.1 Delivery of iCounty is not just about the wires and ICT infrastructure that we have in the SRS and our buildings. It is more about how we can 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.

7.2 The focus of the business plan therefore centres on 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.