

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 07 June 2022

TITLE	Digital Strategy 2022-27		
Ward(s)	All		
Author: Sian Houdmont / Doug Clarke	Job title: Change Business Partner / Project Manager		
Cabinet lead: Cllr Cheney	Executive Director lead: Mike Jackson		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Timescales: The strategy covers a medium-term period 2022 – 2027, with two-yearly review points and annualised action planning. A further Cabinet report related to approval of the associated Digital Transformation Programme is anticipated to be presented to Cabinet in July 2022.			
Purpose of Report: The council’s current IT Strategy was approved in 2018. Since then, significant progress has been made to modernise the IT estate and work has been underway to refresh the strategy to better align to latest plans. This report seeks Cabinet approval of a refreshed Digital Strategy 2022 –2027. Additionally, work has been underway to scope the next phase of the council’s IT and digital change work. However, this report seeks Cabinet approval of the strategy only, defining our aims for the next five years to which digital change projects will align.			
Evidence Base: In April 2022, Cabinet noted the emerging digital transformation narrative and the plans for further digital transformation. Since then the Digital Strategy has been refreshed, building on the previous IT Strategy and benefitting from inputs from colleagues, in parallel to progression of a programme Business Case for the next phase of the council’s Digital Transformation Programme. The Digital Strategy 2022-27 has been refreshed and updated to take account of the latest Corporate Strategy 2022 - 2027, the council’s current technology position, and our understanding of priorities of our services. The Digital Strategy and change roadmap have been updated and have four core ambitions:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Easy, engaging, and inclusive. Provide easier digital access to council services and encourage people to use it. Take a user-centred approach to design and maximise accessibility. Take action to improve digital inclusion. 2. Simple, stable, and secure. Work in a prioritised and systematic way to simplify and modify our digital estate to make it as secure, resilient, and reliable as practicable. 3. Well-used and used well. Support colleagues to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them, developing high levels of digitally skilled collaboration. Provide robust data and insights to ethically improve effectiveness and efficiency. 4. Ready to partner, willing to share, and able to innovate. Adopt the right technologies, systems, processes, culture, and governance to provide a safe and productive environment for wider collaboration and problem-solving using technology. 			

There has been extensive engagement with the council's Enterprise Architecture team in rebuilding a core document with support from an external partner. The Strategy has benefitted from consultation through several workshops with Director and non-Director level representatives from all three directorates within the council. This includes adult social care, public health, citizen services, housing, property, and legal services. Chairs of the council's Staff-Led Groups (including the Disabled Colleagues' Network, embRACE, Young Professionals Network and LGBT+ Group) have also had the opportunity to discuss the strategy and will continue to be engaged throughout its life.

The Digital Strategy is attached as **Appendix A1: Digital Strategy 2022-27**.

The Digital Transformation Programme (which intends to bring about the changes arising from the strategy) will be brought to Cabinet for approval in July 2022.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. **Approves** the refreshed Digital Strategy for 2022-2027
2. **Notes** that a further report will come to Cabinet to approve the Digital Transformation Programme.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

Digital transformation work supports and enables the 22-27 Corporate Strategy ambitions, in particular:

- Development Organisation - "The council is larger than most of its counterparts and not always more efficient or effective. We need to consider what the right size, shape and scale is for the city's future needs, streamline processes and target our limited resources to those most in need given the financial pressure we face."
- ED02 One Council - "We need to work more smartly and intentionally together as 'One Council'."
- ED03 Employer of Choice - "Support them with improved digital tools and technology"
- EDO4 Data Driven - "We own a wealth of information and data, and through an ongoing programme of digital transformation we are able to do more with it"
- EDO5 Good Governance - Resilience theme – "We must keep a good financial grip and manage things effectively without making things too bureaucratic and unwieldy, because part of being resilient means being able to be fast, flexible and adaptable in what we do"
- Resilience - "Build Bristol's city resilience through early intervention, minimising our contribution to future environmental, economic or social shocks and stresses. Build our ability to cope by learning from our past, taking a preventative approach and planning for long-term outcomes that support resilience"
- "Make sure that we are financially competent and resilient, offering good value for money."

City Benefits:

- Bristol citizens and users of our services rightly expect a digital experience comparable to other areas of their lives. Excellence in digital service delivery frees up staff to be able to spend more time answering phones and conducting face to face meetings in order to support people more effectively.
- As described in our Corporate Strategy, the way in which the council will interact with its citizens will need to change, delivering quicker and better outcomes, helping the council to be more efficient whilst making things easier for citizens.
- Our digital ambitions have a critical part to play in achieving the future vision of a council that encourages inclusion, independence and enablement of all its citizens.
- Our digital implementation plans are being designed to achieve the right balance of minimising operations cost whilst maximising the quality and effectiveness of our services.

Consultation Details:

Internal officer and Cabinet Member engagement (via Digital Transformation Board), as well as support and challenge from external partner, Agilisys.

Five workshops with People; Growth and Regeneration; Resources directorate representatives; the Estate Rationalisation programme; Staff-Led Group Chairs.

Public consultation has not been undertaken but will be relevant for a future Channel Strategy which aims to provide a more detailed plan for the development and take-up of services via digital means.

- Background Documents:**
- [IT strategy 18-23](#) – this was [approved at Cabinet July 2018](#)
 - Digital Transformation Programme – 1st tranche of work [approved at Cabinet Sep 2021](#)
 - Digital Plans and Strategic Partner – [approved at April 2022 Cabinet paper](#)

Revenue Cost	£ n/a	Source of Revenue Funding	n/a
Capital Cost	£ n/a	Source of Capital Funding	n/a
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice: This report sets out the Council’s proposed updated Digital strategy for 2022-2027. Adoption of this strategy does not in itself give rise to any consequent funding commitment. Any Digital programmes of work which emerge from this strategy and require financial investment will separately follow the decision-making pathway.

Finance Business Partner: Jemma Prince – Finance Business Partner
Date: 11 May 2022

2. Legal Advice: There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Leader/Solicitor 4 May 2022

3. Implications on IT: This strategy sets out a direction of travel for digital transformation inside the council, and further collaboration with citizens and partners on major issues related to digital technology. Whilst the direction should be positive for the council’s resilience, security and efficiency, it will also entail a large amount of complex change which will need careful management to avoid initial disruption and/or the limited benefit realisation. The strategy seeks to mitigate this through simplification of the council’s digital estate, prioritising good governance and change management, and co-sourcing additional staff resource and expertise from the Digital Strategic Partner. Whilst adoption of the strategy itself does not give rise to specific funding commitments, the pursual of the strategy will help enable council-wide savings. However, it will also increase revenue cost within the central IT service, as the purchase of technology continues to move from traditional capital investment towards revenue-based subscription models to purchase software and ‘rent’ cloud infrastructure.

IT Team Leader: Tim Borrett; Director – Policy, Strategy and Digital; 15th May 2022

4. HR Advice: There are no direct HR implications of the recommendations. The opportunity should not be lost to consider – in light of the strategy – what functions are best discharged by the Council’s own staff, and which could be delivered by contractors and/or in partnership with others.

HR Partner: James Brereton; 17th May 2022

EDM Sign-off	Mike Jackson	11 May 2022
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Craig Cheney	19 May 2022
For Key Decisions - Mayor’s Office sign-off	Mayor’s office	9 May 2022

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
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• Appendix A1 – Digital Strategy 2022-27	
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	YES
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO