

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Monday 18 th March 2019
Report Subject	Digital Strategy Update
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Corporate Management and Assets
Report Author	Chief Officer Governance
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the update report to Cabinet in November 2018, the Digital Customer Programme Manager (DCPM) has drawn up a single digital programme plan, which will help us to more effectively manage our limited resources and make better informed choices around prioritisation.

We have also defined a number of design principles which we will apply to every project at the design stage to ensure that we are consistently moving towards an agreed digital vision for Flintshire. This will allow us to track progress to modernise and 'mature'; whilst also providing assurance that the different projects we implement will all work effectively together to deliver the best services we can for our customers.

A number of key issues around the digital strategy were explored with Members in a briefing session in January 2016; specifically:

- A reminder of why we need to progress the rollout of digital services;
- An explanation of how we will ensure that no one in our communities is excluded as a result of the addition of online services;
- An overview of current digital services and the lessons we learned in delivering them; and
- A description of the next phases of functionality which will be launched.

It is recognised that the development and delivery of the Digital Strategy is a long term commitment and will require ongoing engagement and dialogue with services, customers and elected members. Accordingly, there is a commitment to ongoing reporting to and conversation with Members as delivery gets properly underway.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	<p>That the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) note the key points arising from January's briefing for Elected Members on the development of online functionality for our customers; and(b) approve the design principles and programme for the delivery of the Digital Strategy.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	DIGITAL STRATEGY FRAMEWORK
1.01	<p>Following the report in November 2018 on establishing a combined contact centre for the Council, the Digital Customer Programme Manager consulted all portfolios on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how their services could/should be modernised and which tasks could be transferred to the contact centre; and• the range of IT projects this would require.
1.02	<p>To ensure that we are applying consistent standards in the way we design projects and modernise services, a number of design principles have been agreed. All of our projects will be evaluated at the design stage to ensure that they will help us to move consistently forwards against the following core principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• customers will be able to report and manage service requests from their account on the web;• customers will be able to get in touch using a range of different channels, including, for example, online, by email, webchat or social media. These channels will be integrated with our business processes so that we can respond to them efficiently;• staff will be able to raise requests on behalf of customers using mobile devices while they are out and about, without having to return to the office;• we will create a single view of the customer, which provides an overview of all contacts in one place;• our staff will be mobile and able to access information and do their jobs at first point of contact with customers, without having to come into the office to update systems;• staff will be able to take payments and capture electronic signatures using mobile devices to allow services to be completed at the first point of contact;• information captured by mobile device will automatically update back office systems;• our core infrastructure will modernise and take advantage of cloud technology where it is appropriate and cost-effective to do so;• we will introduce data mastering principles, which will give us better flexibility to design business processes across portfolios and across partners• when we implement projects, we will create management information

	<p>and business intelligence reports which will make it easier to manage and direct our services.</p> <p>We recognise that projects will not be able to deliver all of these elements from the beginning, so we will put systems in place to capture our journey as the programme is delivered.</p>
1.03	<p>In working with portfolios, the Digital Customer Programme Manager also created a combined digital programme plan as the baseline for delivery, consolidating a number of previously standalone plans. This digital programme contains the essential works which need to be resourced before we can consider making further choices around priorities. Categories for essential works are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades and investment to the core infrastructure which are required to keep it operating; • Legislative and compliance-related work; • Essential replacements of business systems; • Approved priorities. This currently only includes projects required to deliver the council's agreed shift to an integrated contact centre. <p>The high level programme is attached as a high level diagram in Appendix A.</p>
1.04	<p>A governance framework has also been developed which will be used to manage requests submitted for changes to the programme. This will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • priorities remain up to date and that the plan is achievable within our capacity to deliver; • each project will be evaluated to understand how it helps us to achieve our defined vision and set of objectives; • The design for each project fully considers how technology and data will work with business processes to make the service efficient and easy for both staff and customers.
1.05	<p>As discussed in the briefing with Elected Members on 16th January, this programme and framework will translate into a range of specific capabilities which will allow customers to access a growing range of services and information online.</p>

2.00	ELECTED MEMBERS' DIGITAL STRATEGY BRIEFING AND THE WAY FORWARD
2.01	<p>A briefing session was held for members on 16th January 2019. It focused on four key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a reminder of the rationale for the shift to online services; • discussion on the commitment to ensure that we proactively manage against digital exclusion; • a summary of the progress that has already been made; and • an overview of the roadmap for next steps.

2.02	<p>The session identified the following issues as being important to members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • digital exclusion; • ensuring that there is a clear workflow from an on line request for services to the delivery of those services by officers; • preserving the ability of members to assist their residents.
2.03	<p>Despite the increasing trend towards the on line availability of services, we recognise that the people in society who do not have access to the internet are often the most vulnerable people in our communities. We need to ensure that the way we design digital services does not exclude them or make their lives even more difficult. In implementing our Digital Strategy, we will ensure that access to a service is maintained for people who do not have the skills or confidence to self-serve online.</p>
2.04	<p>A number of lessons have been learned through the implementation of existing digital services. In particular, we will make sure that services are ready to shift and work in a different way and that there has been sufficient communication with customers in advance so that they are aware of the changes before they happen.</p>
2.05	<p>Members did express some concern that, with a shift to digital self- service online, they may lose visibility of issues within their ward; thereby making it more difficult for them to be effective in supporting their constituents. It was noted that work is underway to provide Members with an overview of issues reported in their ward, which will help to mitigate that risk and ensure that we retain transparency. Further consultation with members on this will be scheduled for later in 2019.</p>
2.06	<p>The next phases of functionality to be digitised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the launch of the Flintshire 'My Account' from the website, which will provide customers with the ability to raise and monitor requests, view information on their councillor, view planning applications and access information on bin collections. • the addition of a portal for Housing tenants in March, which will allow them to view tenancy details, view their rent account and make payments, view repairs and key information, such as gas servicing due dates. • the launch of an end-to-end pothole processing system, which will push reported incidents directly to inspectors on their mobile devices; enabling the end-to-end completion of jobs directly from the point it is reported.
2.07	<p>A commitment was given to arrange demonstrations to members of digital services prior to them being launched, to ensure that Members have the opportunity to know what is happening and can, therefore, speak more confidently to people in their wards if any questions are asked.</p>

3.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
3.01	<p>The Digital Customer work stream has an invest to save budget allocation of £550k. This is funding three new posts, all of whom are contributing to the delivery of the Digital Customer project; namely:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Customer and Community Resilience Programme Manager; • Customer Transaction Officer (responsible for process design and web content review); • Income and Marketing Programme Manager. <p>In addition to these posts, staff from across the authority are actively involved in delivery of the Digital Strategy. The IT team have aligned their Business Plan directly to the Digital Strategy, with all other services required to support the redesign of business processes and systems as projects get underway across the authority. Resource management will be a key challenge which will require ongoing review and possible re prioritisation.</p>
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>This strategy will involve the delivery of a large number of projects, some of which may have implications for staffing structure and roles as we move forwards. With the exception of phase 1 of the contact centre, the exact details of this are currently unknown, but employees who are affected will be fully engaged, with HR and Trade Union involvement.</p> <p>The strategy also commits to ongoing internal and external communications to raise awareness and encourage involvement as Flintshire’s digital services evolve. Aligned to our commitment to ensure that we do not exclude vulnerable members of our communities, we will proactively with customers and key frontline staff to ensure that we have mechanisms for support in place for those who need it.</p>

5.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
5.01	<p>Key risks and mitigations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation struggles to resource the delivery of projects in the digital programme concurrently: Governance arrangements have been put in place to ensure that as new projects or requests emerge, these are considered alongside other priorities to ensure we are focusing on the right things, without overcommitting. Chief Officers recognise that this is a long-term commitment and we will have to make choices about what we can deliver and the timescales in which it can be delivered. • Reputational risk of providing a poor online service: We have agreed a number of design principles which will underpin the solution we create online. This is aimed at making the online experience as easy as possible for customers and citizens. This will make best use of the technology and ensure that the user experience is consistent across services. • Focus on digital service provision excludes vulnerable members of our communities: As we improve the information available online and make it easier for people to access online services 24/7, we will look to promote the capability and direct people online. However, non-digital

	<p>services will be retained for those who do not have access or are not confident to access services online. This will include support to get new skills if people want to, via the Connects centres and libraries. No one will be refused service access in any way as a result of not being able to go online.</p>
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6.00	APPENDICES
6.01	Appendix A – Digital Programme.

7.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
7.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Gareth Owens, Chief Officer Governance Telephone: 01352 702344 E-mail: Gareth.Legal@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Design principles: principles which will be applied as new functionality is created online to ensure that the experience for users is as easy as it can be and, across different services, is consistent. 2) Digital Customer: a work stream within Flintshire’s Digital Strategy which aims to build the capability for customers and citizens to access our services online, both via improved and easier to use systems, but also through improvements to the information which can be accessed via the website. 3) Core infrastructure: the technical base on which business systems sit and, therefore services run. This includes web connections, servers, telephony etc. If this base is not solid, responsive or flexible, systems cannot deliver or modernise effectively. 4) Digital exclusion: a disadvantage caused to a customer or group of customers as a result of services moving online and their inability to access them; either through lack of access to technology or the skills and confidence to do so. 5) Roadmap: a plan which sets out intentions and direction of travel, with high level milestones identifying when new functionality will go live.