
Customer & Digital Strategy

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Karen Ashley
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole
Report Author	Job Title: Head of Transformation, OD & Digital Email: d.poole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 1256
Wards Affected	None
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	NA
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Enabling
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	
This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive RECOMMEND that:-

- 1) The Customer & Digital Strategy be agreed and adopted**

2. BACKGROUND

Many technological changes have taken place in society over the last few years. To continue to successfully deliver services and engage with digitally connected customers, the council must embrace and exploit the opportunities presented by this continuing technological advancement.

Through the Customer & Digital Strategy the council will adopt a 'digital first' approach. Looking to identify opportunities to improve access to services, change working practices and improve service delivery by increasing the digital offer to our customers. The vision of a 'digital first' approach is supported, in the strategy, by the use of four strategic themes:

- **Digital Customer** – Supporting our customers to get the services and information they need online.
- **Digital Workforce** - Ensuring our workforce have the digital systems and skills needed to deliver services online.
- **Digital Leadership** - Providing the technology and support required to meet Councillors needs in a modern council.

- **Digital Infrastructure** - Working to maximise the use of digital infrastructures.

Focusing on these four strategic themes will enable the council to further exploit the changes that have taken place in the public sector landscape, particularly during the pandemic. This changed landscape is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, requiring the council to become more adaptable and agile in its approach.

Embracing and exploiting new ways of working and delivering services will require the shape and size of the council to change, whilst the need to provide high levels of service to our customers will remain. These new challenges will present new opportunities for the council to achieve efficiencies whilst keeping pace with customers changing needs and expectations.

These opportunities will also provide ways to reduce costs whilst offering more choice of access to our services. The strategy provides a clear direction of travel for a digital future and a clear focus on how we will use technology and digital access to help address some of the challenges faced by our organisation and our communities. The strategy is designed to ensure that our customers' needs are at the heart of our approach to greater digitisation.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The strategic objectives outlined in the strategy will require investment to be made in digital platforms, as the council seeks to exploit the opportunities digital access offers. The financial implications of this activity will be outlined in business cases for individual projects as they are developed.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 The Customer & Digital Strategy supports the delivery of all of the councils services. Whilst the strategy itself forms part of the Enabling Services strategic purpose it is particularly focused on the organisational priorities of sustainability and high quality services as outlined in the Council Plan 2020 – 2024.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 The green thread has been highlighted as running through the entire Council Plan 2020 – 2024. By expanding the councils digital offer it is hoped that online service delivery will impact positively on the councils green agenda. In particular, in relation to the use of resources and the requirement for some of our customers to travel to access services.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 Any equality implications of changing access to services will be considered on a project by project basis through the use of Equality Assessments, if required.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 It is likely that expanding the digital offer to our customers will require the implementation of new or enhanced technologies. Any operational changes brought about as a consequence of the use of technology will be considered in the business case for each project and as part of any project planning.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The use of technology to deliver our services needs to be balanced with the technological abilities of some of our customers and communities. Whilst many people have embraced the use of new technology, particularly during the pandemic, there are some members of our communities who have not. The strategy is clear that technology should be used to enhance access for our customers not to exclude those who do not wish or are not able to use digital services.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Customer & Digital Strategy 2022 - 2026

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Cllr M Rouse	2022
Lead Director / Head of Service	K. Dicks	2021
Financial Services	N/A	
Legal Services	N/A	
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)	N/A	
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)	N/A	