



Subject:	Digital Strategy
Date:	24 May 2024
Reporting Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Paul Gribben – Head of Digital Services

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 									
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 20%;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
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Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	Following SP&R approval, Digital Services worked with Castlerigg Consulting to develop a new Digital Strategy (Appendix 1). Castlerigg are a specialist management consultancy who help to develop digital transformation and innovation strategies for the public sector. The Digital Strategy

	aims to provide a framework for elected members under the remit of the Strategic Policy and Resources committee, to oversee the strategic use of digital technology as a key enabler of service improvement – over a period of 5 years – in alignment with the Council’s key business priorities.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the contents of the report and to approve the new Digital Strategy attached.
3.0	Main report
3.1	In the past, a traditional ICT strategy looked to change, fix, or improve technology without impacting on the council’s business strategy. A good strategy ensures that information and digital technology will contribute to achieving the success of the organisation, which is why we have taken time to engage extensively with Departments and CMT members to ensure that the aims of the new strategy align with the development of our new Corporate Plan and emerging Medium Term Financial plan and performance improvement priorities. The strategy can act as one of the key drivers for operational service improvement and will feed into the next phases of our efficiency and customer focus programmes. The strategy will continue to evolve as the Council’s detailed delivery plans emerge, this will enable Digital technology to support our immediate and longer-term objectives.
3.2	Strategic oversight of both information and technology are essential as they underpin the majority of the Council’s service improvement initiatives, new and improved business processes, and the delivery of essential operational efficiencies. Consequently, the new Digital Strategy will be extremely important to help us to make the most of increasing digital transformation opportunities and in managing the significant cyber security threats that we are currently facing. The strategy has the potential to help optimise, transform, and improve the operational services we deliver and to maximise the value of our information assets.
3.3	Delivery of the new Digital Strategy will focus on delivering the right set of policies, working practices, and supporting technologies as information technology and the management of our information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is an essential element of good corporate governance, • provides Members and Chief Officers with the right information to support effective decision making, • challenges our thinking on how we deliver services and supports innovation in service design, • sets direction in terms of investment in technology assuring alignment to corporate objectives, • and provides the basis of accountability to Elected Members and the citizens of Belfast for the stewardship and use of IT resources.
3.4	Some of the key messages that the strategy delivers are outlined below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have set a bold vision for how technology can transform Belfast City Council. We want to strengthen our digital and information capability, enhancing our ability to be an effective civic leader in a data-enabled smart city. • Service Improvement is integral to the next chapter of the Council’s development. The digital strategy recommends that we do not plan digital in isolation. The benefits of digital innovation come from being able work differently and that involves designing all aspects of our services so they work together. • Digitally enabled service design provides an opportunity to drive our service improvement agenda. It is only when services can be fully automated end-to-end, that we will improve customer experience, remove inefficiency, and ensure our resources (finance, people, and assets) are focused on what matters to our communities.

- Our current technology architecture already gives us a robust foundation for the delivery of a different delivery model. We now need to exploit the enterprise solutions and technical architecture that are already in place or are currently in the process of being delivered.
- With demand for digital projects growing, prioritising and resourcing our digital programme of work appropriately, whilst challenging, will be key to the successful delivery of the Digital Strategy. If the digital programme is integral to our future council aspirations, then we need to ensure our digital and change teams are resourced to meet this challenge.

3.5 The 4 main pillars of the Digital Strategy are described in the image below.



3.6 Work has already started on the delivery of the strategy. Some of the key projects that are included in the digital programme of work are summarised in the table below:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status</u>
Time & Attendance (Corporately significant)	Live project
Online Recruitment (Corporately significant)	Live project
Finance system (Corporately significant)	Live project
Corporate Asset Management (Corporately significant)	Live project
Customer Focus Programme (Corporately significant)	Live project
Cyber Security Programme (Corporately significant)	Live project
Building Control (Service Improvement)	Live project
Grants Management system (Service Improvement)	Live project
NI Enterprise Support Services CRM (Regional system)	Live project
Network Redesign (Infrastructure improvement)	Live Project
In-Cab Technology (Service improvement)	Requirements
City Services (Service Improvement)	Process review
EDRMS (Corporately significant)	Pilot review
Intranet Replacement (Corporately significant)	Emerging

	Climate Data Platform (Data and analytics)	Emerging
	Inclusive Growth (Data and analytics)	Emerging
	Windows 11 upgrade (Infrastructure improvement)	Emerging
	Legal Case Management System	Emerging
Financial & Resource Implications		
3.7	Delivery of the Digital Services programme of work is managed through normal rate setting processes and through the ICT strand of the capital programme.	
Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment		
3.8	A new Digital Strategy will need to be screened for any equality, good relations or rural needs implications.	
4.0 Appendices – Documents Attached		
	Appendix 1: Digital Strategy	