



To: Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1)

Date: 4th July 2018

Subject: Digital First

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny Board 1 with the longer term plans to improve digital across the Council.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Board 1 is asked to:
- 2.1.1 Endorse the approach of delivering the digital infrastructure across the city as an enabler for digital innovation.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The Digital Coventry Strategy was approved by full Council in February 2017 with its aim to set the scene for Coventry City Council and partners for the future direction of digital services, infrastructure and innovation. It recognised that the digital strategy was for the city and not just for the Council. Universities, businesses, residents, public sector including the NHS and the police, the voluntary and community sector will all be progressing digital work and will continue to innovate and devise digital solutions.
- 3.2 The Council's role will be focussed on helping to identify the priorities that will lead to the biggest impacts on economic growth and public service reform – this will include the infrastructure to support digital innovation in the city, providing insight and delivering public service reform directly, including working in a more digital way as a Council and promoting work that will support every resident in the city to benefit from digital change.

4 Current Progress

- 4.1 In recognition of the city wide aspirations ICT and Digital have focused upon laying the foundations for the city with digital infrastructure. Following Full Council's decision to invest £2.55 million in the CSW Superfast Broadband project in December 2016 work is planned to commence in August 2018 that will see circa 5000 homes get access to fibre to the home (FTTH) connections by September 2019. By the end of this project around 99% of homes in Coventry will have access to superfast broadband speeds which is in excess of the Central Government target of 97% and ahead of our neighbouring authorities.
- 4.2 In April 2018 City Fibre announced that Coventry would become one of the cities in its One Million Homes project alongside Milton Keynes, Aberdeen, Peterborough, Edinburgh, Huddersfield and Sterling. City Fibre have committed to deliver FTTH to a minimum of 100,000 homes in Coventry. Work will start later in 2018.
- 4.3 The projects mentioned in 4.1 and 4.2 will address digital inequality driven by lack of access to superfast broadband speeds.
- 4.4 A further infrastructure project will see the city centre broadcast free Wi-Fi to members of the public installed by August 2018. This infrastructure will also support a low power

network that will allow sensors to be installed that can measure pollution, HV levels, rainfall etc... This low power network is a key building block to enabling smart city technologies to be utilised in the city.

- 4.5 Working alongside WMG at the University of Warwick 80 kilometres of urban roads between Coventry and Birmingham will become the test bed for connected and autonomous vehicles (CAV). This will see the development of wireless networks on the roads and analysing how CAV's behave in real urban environments.
- 4.6 The projects highlighted above will create opportunities for businesses, universities and the creative arts sector to innovate and further attract new business and investment in to the city.
- 4.7 This year we will be offering free Wi-Fi to visitors attending the Godiva Festival for the first time with a view to implementing a permanent offer at War Memorial Park from next year. This will create excellent opportunities for advertising revenue as well as address digital inclusion as all visitors with a mobile device will get access. Opportunities for promoting social networking/promotion at the event will also be possible. We are also reviewing options to offer free Wi-Fi to visitors to Coombe Abbey and Park.
- 4.8 ICT and Digital have also support commissioning of new Adult Lifestyles, Family Health and Lifestyles and the Young People's Substance Misuse Service where a specific focus on the development of digital solutions across the length of the contract were included. This will ensure that services promote digital channels to customers and ensure that staff have the appropriate tools to deliver their roles in the most efficient way.

5 Better Connected Survey

- 5.1 Every year Socitm (the society for IT practitioners in the public sector) on the usability of local authority public facing websites. During 2017/8 414 council websites were tested which included tests completed by the Digital Accessibility Centre on how accessible websites are to people with disabilities.
- 5.2 Coventry City Council were awarded the top rating of four stars alongside a further 41 councils. This is the first time we have achieved the top rating and demonstrates the improved service offered by our MyAccount portal on www.coventry.gov.uk. Services offered through this digital channel are continually reviewed and improved from a usability point of view.

6 Third Party Apps

- 6.1 In general, the strategy followed by ICT and Digital is to buy and not build. Where there are existing apps in the market and widely used we will review the options to use these and integrate in to our existing systems and business processes where appropriate. However, this is not always possible. For example, when reviewing the mobile solution for Streetscene/Highways Fix My Street was initially chosen to pass defects, raised by members of the public, through to the service area to action. Unfortunately, the lack of integration options offered through the App made it impossible to bring in to a structured process for the service area to action. Consequently, a solution built using our Firm Step forms platform was developed and went live.
- 6.2 An example of a third party app we will be using is with the use of free public Wi-Fi. People will be prompted to use the Citi-Wise app to log on to the free Wi-Fi. Through the app we will be able to promote events, share history of the city and sell advertising. We will also be able to use the data captured by the app to show where people are using the service around the city, as well as other reports.
- 6.3 The Citi-Wise app will provide the opportunity to centralise event promotion in to a single place moving forwards and will support the known City of Culture requirements at this stage.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 Corporate Leadership Team are developing a Digital First concept for transformation activities and will be an integral part of the One Transformation Programme. This will reinforce our commitment to digital delivery and will demonstrate that we are a digitally mature organisation for service development and delivery. We also expect that this will highlight areas that are less digitally mature and will enable us to focus resources on these areas.
- 7.2 Continued focus on our digital infrastructure has seen us working with the West Midlands Combined Authority on a bid to central Government for 5G funding. Our proposition is to promote Coventry as the first 5G enabled City of Culture. 5G is the next generation mobile data network which could see download speeds for mobile devices exceed levels delivered through superfast broadband connections to homes. 5G would also be a key enabler for CAV and Smart City internet of things development.
- 7.3 The level of investment expected to support our City of Culture programme will see a significant demand for digital projects. It is important that this demand is managed to support the Digital Coventry Strategy and to avoid disparate projects and duplication of functionality.
- 7.4 With this in mind we will use the focus provided by the City of Culture to create a city wide governance group that will provide the challenge to emerging projects and the authority to proceed. This governance group must include key partners in the city to ensure the vision of the Digital Coventry Strategy is delivered.

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