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Cabinet

08 October 2019

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (People)

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Corporate ICT Strategy

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes - this decision is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising 2 or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the City.

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**Executive Summary:**

Over the past ten years there has been a significant shift in the digital technology we use within the organisation. This technology is now a fundamental and essential part of the running of our Council. Our recent technology initiatives culminated in the delivery of the Kickstart programme and the introduction of new digital tools and technologies to enable us to work in a more agile and modern way.

Building on the success of the previous ICT strategy we are now looking to further strengthen our approach by empowering services to really exploit the transformational opportunities that digital tools and technologies offer, directly supporting the One Coventry Council Plan by delivering the very best, easiest to use, efficient and innovative services to our citizens and customers

In line with our One Coventry approach we must look at how greater connectivity and collaboration with our partners will help us collectively address and tackle wider, whole system issues. The Corporate ICT Strategy attached to this report at Appendix 1 looks to underpin the organisations continued drive for efficiency and transformation through digitalisation. This will be supported by relaunching how the ICT and Digital service engages with our services and how we optimise the delivery of our technology services.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet is requested to:

- 1) Approve the Corporate ICT Strategy attached to this report at Appendix 1.

- 2) Note that the Corporate ICT Strategy and associated documents will be regularly reviewed and updated, following the present iteration, to reflect the needs of our customers, advances in technology and the ambitions of the Council.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1 – Corporate ICT Strategy

**Background papers:**

None

**Other useful documents**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No – however, a presentation on this matter was considered by Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## Report title: Corporate ICT Strategy

### 1. Context (or background)

- The previous ICT Strategy focussed on the delivery of the Kickstart Programme and all the activity surrounding the delivery of One Friargate. This revision of the ICT strategy looks to continue to underpin and enable the organisations continued drive for efficiency and transformation through digitalisation, making the most of the technology investments to date whilst continuing to innovate.
- For clarity, this ICT strategy is primarily focused on Coventry City Council and the technology that we use, the Digital Coventry strategy focuses on Coventry as a place and the wider region

### 2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 The Corporate ICT Strategy sets out the direction the Council needs to take to offer a greater range of good quality digital services for our residents, businesses and staff. As individual programmes, projects and changes are developed; options and alternatives for each of these will be considered and assessed in full. The lack of a Corporate ICT Strategy would be a significant risk for an organisation which is so heavily dependent on technology. It would result in eventual legacy and out of support technology and vulnerable to cyber threats. No clear direction and strategy for the delivery of ICT & Digital services will risk projects not being co-ordinated effectively and we may not necessarily focus our resources on the correct priorities.

2.2 The vision of our Corporate ICT Strategy is based on two key principles:

- **Coventry-as-a-platform** – We aim for end-to-end interactions with us to be as simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity being hidden from our customers and shared across our partners.
- **Our Digital Workforce** – We aim to enable a workforce which has access to the right tools to do its job and is confident in maximising the use and benefits of technology in its daily work.

2.3 The strategy sets our 4 priority themes which provide focus to help deliver upon our vision. It is important to note that across all our themes the focus is to directly support the One Coventry Council Plan by delivering the very best, easiest to use, efficient and innovative services to our citizens and customers:

- **Engage** – We are re-establishing ICT business relationship management with services to ensure ICT & Digital empowers and enables individual service business plans. We look to work closer with our partners, peers and like-minded organisations to share learning, platforms and solutions.
- **Optimise** – We will ensure that the day-to-day operation and use of ICT is optimised in terms of availability, resilience, security and performance. We will do this through consolidating and modernising our technology estate. Reviewing service level agreements and our key performance indicators. We will optimise the systems we use in line with the local digital declaration to ensure that they work across the most popular, commonly used platforms. This will help ensure that integration with partners, peers, stakeholders and likeminded organisation is possible.
- **Empower** – We will ensure that our workforce, including our employee and elected member cohorts, have access to the right digital tools and skills to do their jobs in the

most efficient way. This will directly support, benefit and enhance the services we provide to our customers. We will do this by further developing the DigiKnow brand supporting digital skills. Continuing to modernise our technology estate and making greater use of our data warehouse and the organisational insight that this enables.

- **Transform** - We will support a digital process revolution across the organisation making the best, most innovative use of new technology. How we best serve our customers will be at the heart of our transformation and everything we do. We will do this by proactively assessing, incorporating and developing the latest technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Automation, Blockchain, Internet of Things (full details and jargon busting is available with the Corporate ICT Strategy as Appendix 1 to this report)

2.4 The strategy is set against a business context stemming from:

- **The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2019 – 2022)** – Streamlined, modern processes and systems with staff that can make the best use of technology will significantly contribute to the efficiency and savings targets required.
- **One Coventry Council Plan (2016 – 2024)** – Streamlined, modern processes and systems with staff that can make the best use of technology will contribute to a culture of ongoing innovation and transformation in line with the One Coventry Council Plan aspirations
- **Coventry UK City of Culture (2021)** – Coventry is set to become the UK City of Culture in 2021. The ICT strategy and associated ICT & Digital service plan seeks to support all of the readiness and preparation activity required for 2021. It should also be noted that whilst the primary focus is readiness for the UK City of Culture, the City is also supporting events such as the Commonwealth Games (2022) and the European City Sport (2019). The ICT strategy seeks to support the readiness for the City to be chosen to run events which feature on the local, national and international stage.
- **Our Digital Coventry Strategy** - The Digital Coventry strategy sets out the Digital aspirations for the wider City. The ICT strategy and associated ICT & Digital Service plan fully supports the delivery of the Digital Coventry strategy and is closely aligned to the Digital Workforce theme.

2.5 Cabinet is recommended to approve the strategy to maximise the opportunities that ICT & Digital technology will deliver for the Council, for customers, for residents and for Coventry.

### 3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 None – although research has been carried out across ICT strategies of our national peer organisations and wider industry. The strategy has been developed in conjunction with briefings to our Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1), Strategic Management Board and Corporate Leadership Team where feedback has been incorporated in the final document. The strategy has also been validated by Gartner the research and advisory company to ensure that it meets the current industry expectations of a forward-thinking ICT strategy.

### 4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Subject to approval it is proposed to adopt the strategy with immediate effect.

## **5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

Existing funding programmes, both revenue and capital are in place to support the revised ICT Strategy therefore there are no direct financial implications of adopting the strategy. The individual ICT & Digital programmes that support the Corporate ICT Strategy will be funded from the existing resources in the first instance, however, in some instances and for larger scale projects additional funding may be sort as required. This will be subject to the relevant business case and appropriate approval at that time.

It should also be noted that any significant changes to the expectation in the level of support currently available from ICT & Digital, for example, enhancing the “out of hours” support provision, will require additional revenue funding, again subject to business case and relevant approvals should this be required by the organisation.

### **5.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications arising out of the contents of this report.

Whilst there is no legal requirement for the Council to have a Corporate ICT Strategy, the strategy approved under this report will ensure that there is a document which governs the ICT & Digital estate which underpins all services provided by the Council, including statutory services. The ICT Strategy will be annually reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and that technology can underpin the regulatory and legal requirements of the Council.

## **6. Other implications**

Any other specific implications

### **6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))?**

Adoption of this strategy aligns with and supports the One Coventry Council Plan as ICT & Digital changes create the opportunity for innovation and growth, improving the lives of Coventry residents and helping the Council to deliver outcomes in a more effective and efficient way, working with partners and residents. The strategy and associated ICT & Digital Service plan has been designed to directly support our One Coventry Council Plan key themes of:

- Globally connected
- Locally committed
- Delivering our priorities with fewer resources
- Managing performance and measuring progress

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

The Council has incorporated a risk management strategy in its governance procedures. ICT & Digital have proactive processes in place whereby risks are identified and managed in line with this strategy.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The revised strategy has a greater focus on supporting colleagues with the adoption of new technologies and integrating the ICT & Digital service more closely into the organisational

business planning activity. This will be done by developing our “DigiKnow” skills and adoption brand and offer further, supplemented by delivering a digital skill framework. We are also re-introducing business relationship management principles within ICT & Digital to work alongside services. There are no direct HR implications as a result of this report. HR impacts would be considered for each individual programme launched via the strategy.

#### **6.4 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA)**

As the strategy is an over-arching document it has been determined that an Equalities and Consultation Analysis is not required. The individual ICT & Digital programmes that support the Corporate ICT Strategy will cover the specific equality considerations that impact on their scope.

#### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment**

The actual impacts on the environment would be considered for each individual programme launched via the strategy. However, it is envisaged that the strategy, in conjunction with the Digital Coventry strategy, would promote positive impacts on the environment in several ways. For example, data from traffic monitoring or weather patterns from networked monitoring stations across our highway’s infrastructure could lead to informed decisions on traffic management that would reduce carbon emissions. There are increasing amounts of research which supports the evidence to suggest the positive environmental impact of increasing home working and agile working. The ICT strategy continues to support and promote agile working for all computer users. As part of our analysis for how our technology infrastructure is provided we also consider the environmental impact of each option.

#### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

There is no direct impact on partner organisations however, in line with our One Coventry approach, our corporate ICT strategy seeks to enable greater connectivity and collaboration with our partner organisation to assist with joined up responses to system/regional issues The Council also includes ICT & Digital in its commissioning and procurement activities.

**Report author(s):****Name and job title:**

Paul Ward, Head of ICT &amp; Digital

**Directorate:**

People

**Tel and email contact:**

024 7697 1381

Email: [paul.ward@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:paul.ward@coventry.gov.uk)

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	08/08/2019	08/08/2019
Adam Simmonds	Lead Architect – ICT & Digital	People	07/08/2019	08/08/2019
Gary Griffiths	Engagement Lead – ICT & Digital	People	07/08/2019	08/08/2019
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)</b>				
Finance: Ewan Dewar	Finance Manager (People)	Place	07/08/2019	19/08/2019
Legal: Oluremi Aremu	Major Projects Lead Lawyer	Place	07/08/2019	17/08/2019
Director: David Ashmore	Director of Housing & Transformation	People	30/08/2019	05/09/2019
Deputy Chief Executive (People): Gail Quinton	Deputy Chief Executive (People)	People	30/08/2019	04/09/2019
Councillor J. Mutton	Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources		03/09/2019	06/09/2019

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