



## Report to Scrutiny

Item Number:

**Contains Confidential or Exempt Information**

No

**Subject of Report:** Draft Digital Strategy

**Meeting:** Scrutiny Panel, Thursday 16 February 2017

**Service Report Author:** Jackie Fisk, Policy Officer  
[fiskj@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:fiskj@ealing.gov.uk)  
02088256853

**Scrutiny Officer:** Harjeet Bains, Scrutiny Officer  
[bainsh@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:bainsh@ealing.gov.uk)  
02088257120

**Cabinet Responsibility:** Cllr Yvonne Johnson, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance and Customer Services  
Cllr Peter Mason, Portfolio Holder for Prosperity, Skills, Employment and Transformation

**Director Responsibility:** Kieran Read – Director of Strategy and Engagement  
[readk@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:readk@ealing.gov.uk)  
Tel: 02088256395

**Brief:** To consider the Council's new draft Digital Strategy and make recommendations for improvements accordingly.

**Recommendations:** The Panel is asked to:

- consider and comment on the draft Digital Strategy; and
- make suggestions for further improvements where necessary.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 Ealing's Digital strategy will be a key document for the Council. It will outline how the Council will respond to the potential of digital to improve experiences for residents and act as the Council's Customer Strategy. It will also be a key enabler of Future Ealing, a programme to make the Council an outcome-led organisation, which is expected to be formally introduced to Cabinet in April. The strategy is informed by, and develops upon, the organizational ICT strategy including the upcoming end of the 10 year contract with SERCO and planning for the technology and cultural change that will be required as the Council's headquarters are redeveloped.
- 1.2 Scrutiny has been involved in shaping the Council's first Digital Strategy over the course of the last year, covering the initial research phase and development of the draft vision, aims, principles and strategic objectives. Most recently, Scrutiny received a report in December 2016. Feedback from the Panel during the process to date has been taken into account in developing the strategy, which is now at draft stage.
- 1.3 The need for a Digital Strategy is both to improve outcomes for residents, including the quality of their interaction with the Council, and to deliver efficiencies. Technology is evolving rapidly and affects everyone's lives. The ways in which we do business, enjoy our leisure time and interact with each other are all fundamentally being reshaped by a technological revolution. It offers immense opportunities to improve quality whilst also driving through efficiencies - which cannot be ignored at a time of rising customer expectation and great financial pressures. Residents and businesses rightly demand the same high quality interactions from public services as they now experience in other aspects of their lives.
- 1.4 The challenge for the council is to respond in a way which designs approaches around the personalized needs of residents, optimizes efficiency and gives the best possible user experience including for residents who are less confident using digital. Customer-centric design is therefore at the heart of the proposed Transformation Programme which will coordinate the work need to realize the Council's digital ambitions.
- 1.5 This report provides Scrutiny with:
  - The draft strategy
  - An updated timetable for delivery

## **2 The draft strategy**

- 2.1 A copy of the draft strategy is attached at Appendix A. This takes into account the feedback from the scrutiny process to date, including the sessions on each of its key themes: digital customer, council and place, which have covered best practice in the sector, analysis of the Ealing position and possible actions. It also takes into account feedback from the wider stakeholder engagement already reported to the Panel.

- 2.2 The strategy sets a digital vision for Ealing as ‘A connected place and smarter public services for residents, visitors and businesses.’
- 2.3 The strategy defines that vision across three key areas – digital customer, digital council and digital place, outlining a positive set of principles that inform where we want Ealing to be and strategic objectives that state priorities for action.
- 2.4 Development of the strategy is still ongoing and there will be further input from portfolio holders, officers and partners, as well as from the panel prior to the presentation of a final report to Cabinet in April.
- 2.5 Further stakeholder and staff engagement is planned during the next few months, including with VCS partners to engage further on our approach to managing digital inclusion and skills.
- 2.6 . Ongoing changes will be made, including refinement of the proposed actions, before the final version, alongside a high-level Equalities Impact Assessment, is submitted to Cabinet.
- 2.7 At this panel meeting, officers hope to receive feedback on the draft strategy and priorities for action, in particular whether it strikes the right tone and emphasis.
- 2.8 At the last panel members requested more information on digital inclusion. Statistics on internet coverage, usage and skills are included in the digital place section of the strategy and inform the approach outlined in the strategy.

### ***Digital transformation programme***

- 2.9 Digital will be relevant to almost all areas of the Council’s business. The Council’s approach has evolved organically over the years in line with service needs. The result is that, although the Council has made considerable effort, and had major successes in delivering services digitally, for example the online MyAccount portal, those approaches have not been standardised. The overall user experience can be fragmented resulting from the differing functionalities of line of business systems developed over time. We do not always capitalize on the potential of digital to unlock data to enable more effective customer journeys, targeting and personalization of services or to drive efficiency by standardizing and simplifying processes.
- 2.10 A key cross cutting recommendation in the strategy is the development of a digital transformation programme, for which a full business case is being developed in parallel with the development of the strategy. This development work is expected to be completed by summer 2017. The purpose of the programme is to deliver the step changes in the customer experience, technology, process and culture needed to implement the digital strategy. The anticipated benefits of having a coordinated approach to transformation include better quality of service and experience for citizens, customers, businesses and visitors; more informed decision-making by staff; more flexibility enabling staff to focus more on outcomes than processes; increased productivity and a substantial reduction in costs.

2.11 It is important to be clear that realizing this goal and delivering the ambitions set out in the strategy will not be easy. It will require upfront investment for example in a council wide Customer Relationship Management system, to deliver long-term benefit. The full business case will outline the likely scale of investment and opportunity. A robust approach to benefit realisation will be required. Just as important however, is the substantial culture change internally from leadership level to frontline delivery required to become a truly digital organisation. It will be essential that the Council delivers that cultural change. Our aspiration is that wherever possible digital services will be so easy to use that people choose to use digital channels. However, residents will need differing levels of support to ensure that service redesign is effective and that outcomes for residents with greater needs are supported. The scale of change required informs the proposed approach to digital transformation.

### **3 Timetable for delivery**

3.1 Subject to any feedback from the Scrutiny Panel, the next steps are:

- Late February 2017: final version of the Digital Strategy will be resubmitted for approval to Corporate Board
- April 2017: Digital Strategy and Equalities Impact Assessment will be submitted to Cabinet
- Summer 2017: Full Business Case for Digital Strategy Implementation Programme completed and implementation subsequently commences
- Summer 2018: Review progress against Full Business Case, including benefits delivery and digital maturity assessment

### **4 Legal Implications**

None

### **5 Financial Implications**

None

### **6 Other Implications**

None

### **7 Background Papers**

None

## Report Consultation

<i>Name of Consultee</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Date Sent to Consultee</i>	<i>Date Response Received from Consultee</i>	<i>Comments Appear in Report Para</i>
<b>Internal</b>				
Kieran Read, Director	Strategy and Engagement	26 Jan 2017	30 Jan 2017	
Keith Townsend, Executive Director	Environment and Customer Services	30 Jan 2017	2 Feb 2017	
Ian O'Donnell, Executive Director	Corporate Resources	30 Jan 2017	2 Feb 2017	
<b>External</b>				
None				

## Report History

<b>Decision Type:</b>		<b>Urgency item?</b>	
Non-Key for Scrutiny Panel <i>Key Decision for Cabinet– added to Forward Plan on 3 November 2016</i>		No	
<b>Authorised by Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Date Report Drafted:</b>	<b>Report Deadline:</b>	<b>Date Report Sent:</b>
Cllr Yvonne Johnson Cllr Peter Mason	26 Jan 2017	6 February 2017	2 February 2017
<b>Report No.:</b>	<b>Report Author and Contact for Queries:</b>		
	Jackie Fisk Policy Officer Email: <a href="mailto:fiskj@ealing.gov.uk">fiskj@ealing.gov.uk</a> Tel: 020-8825 6853		