**CABINET - 11TH MARCH 2021**

**Report of the Head of Customer Experience**
**Lead Member: Councillor Roy Rollings**

**Part A**

ITEM 6 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY 2021 - 2023

Purpose of Report

This report presents the proposed Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy for the period 2021-2023.

Recommendation

That the ICT Strategy 2021-2023, attached as an Appendix, be approved.

Reason

To identify the priorities against which the Council will seek to maintain and enhance its ICT capabilities over the period 2021-2023.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Council's previous ICT strategy expires on 31st March 2021, this new strategy leads on from its predecessor to ensure continuity in the development and investment of our ICT services. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for the publication of an ICT strategy it is seen as good practice. This reflects that ICT is a key element within the Council's existing service delivery mechanisms and a major enabler in delivering significant aspects of the current Corporate Strategy (2020 – 2024).

Specifically, Theme 4, 'Your Council' of the 2020 – 2024 Corporate Strategy references delivering a range of effective, efficient, and flexible digital services to meet our customer needs.

In addition, in our Strategic Direction document (2020-24) it is set out under the 'Our People' section that we will 'provide our employees with the systems and equipment they need to deliver outstanding, effective and efficient service'

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The strategy will be implemented over the financial years 2021 to 2023. The development of the roadmap and required actions is currently being developed.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

*Financial Implications*

There are potential no additional financial implications from the Strategy itself. However, actions arising from the implementation of the Strategy will wherever possible be financed from within existing budgets or, where funding is required from capital reserves or the Reinvestment Reserve, which will be subject to separate decision-making processes and approvals in line with financial procedures

*Risk Management*

The decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

| Risk Identified | Likelihood | Impact | Overall Risk | Risk Management Actions Planned |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Failure to meet identified actions if resources and cross-council service engagement is not achieved | Likely (3) | Serious (3) | Moderate (9) | Senior Officer involvement in the implementation of the Strategy through:<br>• SWaP Board, made up of Senior Officers considering a wide range of projects across the Council<br>• Implementation will be considered in line with other Strategies such as the People Strategy and the Transformation Programme |

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: None

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**Part B**

Background

1. Information and Communications Technology is integral to the way that the Council delivers its services. The strategy sets out how the Council intends to develop its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) over the next three years. The role of ICT is essential to the delivery of all of the Council services, both in enabling ongoing day to day business processes and in supporting strategic change, particularly in the drive to 'digitise' services

2. Charnwood is likely to witness significant challenges and changes in the next three years. The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a significant impact on service delivery and future planning. There will be increasing financial pressure with the ongoing funding reduction from Government. Further pressure will come from changing population and changes in legislation. The shape and size of the Council is likely to change and increase but the need to provide high quality services to our residents will remain. With these new challenges will come new opportunities to use ICT to enable the Council to achieve efficiencies while maintaining and improving service delivery standards.

3. ICT will be a key contributor to achieving the corporate vision of being an Enterprising Council and keeping pace with residents changing needs and expectations. ICT is no longer just a support service; it has become a critical service. If it is unavailable, the organisation cannot operate. It has the ability to transform the way services are organised and delivered. It has a fundamental role to play in improving efficiency, reducing cost across the organisation, exploiting income generating opportunities and improving the customer experience.

4. Aligned to the corporate strategies of the Council and the national ICT agenda, this document sets out the vision and outcome the Council wishes to achieve in relation to its use of ICT. Inevitably, some of the content of the Strategy is somewhat technical in nature but it does aim to show its potential impact on the Council's customers, partners, and staff.

5. The ICT Strategy is presented as Appendix A and the Equality Impact Assessment is Appendix B to this report.

Appendix A – ICT Strategy 2021 - 2023

# Charnwood Borough Council

# ICT Strategy

# 2021 – 2023

## Table of Contents

# Foreword

The importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has never been felt more than over the past 12 months. The world has changed at an extraordinary pace and the Council's ability to adapt largely centres on the ICT infrastructure in place to enable remote working. Previous ICT strategies meant the Council was well placed to move rapidly to a home working model with very limited face to face interactions.

ICT presents opportunities to deliver services in a more efficient way whilst maintaining excellent customer service. Transformation is vital and this strategy evidences this Council's commitment to be a forward thinking, proactive and customer focused organisation. The benefits are not just felt by customers, but by staff and others that engage with the Council. Our ability to be accessible 24/7 is only possible with suitable investment in ICT. In addition to this, ICT further allows us to take strides towards this Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has seen a clear shift in the way customers wish to engage with the Council. Our online presence is critical to capturing this shift and ensuring we are available when customers need us. In addition to this the back-office functions and case management systems are critical tools for staff in their day to day roles delivering vital services for our customers.

Changes in legislation have also seen a shift to online Council meetings and this strategy recognises the additional work and support that is necessary to enable remote participation in local democracy.

This strategy is in parts technical in nature, but the overall message is clear. This Council is committed to investing in ICT and recognises the importance of ICT in its overall ambition to transform the way services are delivered. Huge steps have already been taken but there is much more to come.

**Cllr. Roy Rollings**
**Lead Member for Transformation**

# 1 Introduction

The strategy sets out how the Council intends to develop its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) over the next three years. The role of ICT is essential to the delivery of all of the Council services, both in enabling ongoing day to day business processes and in supporting strategic change, particularly in the drive to 'digitise' services

Charnwood is likely to witness significant challenges and changes in the next three years. The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a significant impact on service delivery and future planning. There will be increasing financial pressure with the ongoing funding reduction from Government. Further pressure will come from changing population and changes in legislation. The shape and size of the Council is likely to change and increase but the need to provide high quality services to our residents will remain. With these new challenges will come new opportunities to use ICT to enable the Council to achieve efficiencies while maintaining and improving service delivery standards.

ICT will be a key contributor to achieving the corporate vision of being an Enterprising Council and keeping pace with residents changing needs and expectations. ICT is no longer just a support service; it has become a critical service. If it is unavailable, the organisation cannot operate. It has the ability to transform the way services are organised and delivered. It has a fundamental role to play in improving efficiency, reducing cost across the organisation, exploiting income generating opportunities and improving the customer experience.

Aligned to the corporate strategies of the Council and the national ICT agenda, this document sets out the vision and outcome the Council wishes to achieve in relation to its use of ICT. The key aims of the ICT Strategy include;

- Enabling digital services and transformation through channel shift, automation, online and self-service, and the Application strategy for supporting the Digital agenda
- Continuing to work with services and partners to improve ICT processes and technologies
- Developing a modern cloud-based hybrid architecture which will enable an efficient ICT operation and supporting the new ways of working
- Supporting and complying with Robust security and governance arrangements

The document also addresses how the key risks such as Cyber security will be managed and the need for effectively resourcing the delivery for the actions identified in the strategy.

# 2 Current Position

The Council has a customer focused and adaptive in-house ICT function with supporting third party contracts for key parts of the infrastructure. The scope of the ICT service includes the delivery and maintenance of hardware, software, telephones and printing which is provided to all Charnwood staff and partners such as Harborough District Council (under the Shared Services Contact Centre), North West Leicestershire District Council (under agreed Shared Services), Leicestershire County Council (for HR) and Capita Revenue and Benefits service (for Printing and Telephones).

The service meets and exceeds Performance Indicators for Customer Satisfaction (an average of 6.8 out of 7 since January 2020 has been achieved – 7 is classed as an Excellent Service) and resolution of calls within the agreed time period has been 90%. The Performance measurements are based on SOCITM indicators.

Looking back - what has been delivered;

- Migrating Services/Users from Windows 7 and onto Windows 10/Office 365
- Virtual Infrastructure in place for both Desktops (VDI system) and Servers
- Annual compliance with PSN and the outcomes of the IT Health Check
- Implementation of a Cloud based SIP Telephony system supporting Back office users and the Shared Service Contact Centre
- Supporting Field working solutions in Housing for Operatives and Wardens
- Improving Business Continuity arrangements – offsite backup in place with Leicester City Council and improving onsite Power consumption and backup arrangements
- Improved Governance arrangements; IT Steering Group, User Group and SLA's developed with each HoS defining usage, expectations, and future ICT plans
- Corporate Rollout of MS Teams for Staff and Zoom for Public meetings
- Enabling all users to be able to work remotely at the start of the Pandemic

In March 2020, COVID 19 had a sharp impact on users relying heavily on ICT services. All users were setup to work remotely at the start of the pandemic, which had an unanticipated funding increase for remote working equipment and supporting systems. The service also experienced a continued 30% increase of support calls relating to accessing equipment and/or applications and saw a rapid surge in usage of systems such as Office 365, Teams and Zoom (for Video conferencing), including the need to hold online public Council meetings.

As we move into the 'New Normal' way of working, the impact on ICT in the medium term is relatively low as the ICT foundation blocks for remote working are in place. ICT has proven to be even more critical to supporting and delivering Council services. Moving forward this presents new opportunities and a step change in how ICT services should be delivered with focus being on Cloud based solutions (to primarily support remote workers) and the acceleration of Digital/Self Service technology which will also bolster automation and innovation.

This also brings a stronger focus to areas such as Cyber Security, Business Continuity (as not all users and systems are accessed from a single location) and Information Security as we anticipate a more complex landscape for users working and managing data remotely.

As we work towards the strategic aims covered in the document, key projects in development (January 2021), include;

- Migration and increasing use of the O365 environment - with the exception of a couple of areas due to legacy applications, the O365 migration programme was completed in December 2020. The second phase of making better of the O365 tools commenced in January 2021.
- New development approach for using the O365 development tools which includes an amalgamation of migrating legacy applications into the O365 development platform
- Implementing a single unified remote connection solution to enable access to back office applications more effectively
- Cloud migration; defining the scope, approach and implementation plan for delivering a modern ICT architecture (further details are covered in Section 6.3)
- Implementation of the single system for Planning Services, Environment Health, Strategic and Private Sector Housing and Land charges which replaces three existing back office applications
- Hybrid meeting rooms; the hybrid setup will allow multiple users onsite (using the meeting rooms) to safely and securely have a meeting with other users also joining by video conference using either Zoom or Teams. The mixed approach of onsite and remote access has been identified as a benefit for Council meetings such as Cabinet, Full Council, etc

Summary of the key challenges facing ICT;

- Increasing financial pressures - with the ongoing reduction of the general Government funding, the authority will have fewer financial resources and the need to make cost savings
- Supporting the organisation to implement priorities which are reactive or unplanned by ICT
- the requirement to review, develop and in certain areas replace systems to provide online services and improved functionality to meeting meet customer expectation and the Transformation/Digital agenda
- End users and Services focussed on current practices which are dependent on email, printing, manual processes, data creation and maintenance suited on individuals or reactive goals instead of working collaboratively to meeting the outcomes of the customer
- Users have to currently use multiple environments (O365, VDI, etc) in order to access the required applications
- Dual running of Infrastructure as we migrate systems onto the Cloud setup in the next 12 months whilst retaining a production onsite environment
- Data Retention is not in place for all systems which can lead to duplicated, conflicted, and outdated data – this in turn impacts on service delivery, Freedom of information and GDPR.
- Continued and increasing dependency on ICT (almost 24/7) and the end user expectation to have increased working hours Service Desk support and access to systems from any device and any location
- To secure and protect devices and data from the continual threat of Cybercrime which is more prevalent in the current remote working environment

In order to address the key challenges, a future approach needs to;

| | |
|---|---|
| Demonstrate value for money | Key areas include;<br>• Demonstrating a measurement for ROI for new IT developments<br>• Reviewing and improving the current spend on systems/applications<br>• Aligning the investment for future upgrades and projects – 12-month plan? |
| Include, Digital by Choice | Supporting the objectives of the future Transformation Programme by enabling and developing solutions that will add value and be easy for customers to use.<br>In addition to online services, this will also support services that are accessed face to face or by phone. |
| Continuously improve the delivery of IT Services | The ICT service is accountable to its customers and aims to improve service delivery by;<br>• continuing to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction.<br>• communication; keeping services and management informed of current performance and developments.<br>• Providing an effective IT Service Desk which adds value and allows customers to contact us in a variety of ways.<br>• Providing Innovative and Agile solutions; working with services, partners, and suppliers to deliver ICT solutions that are quick, secure and can transform service delivery. |
| Support Flexible and Agile working | Support the objectives and delivery of the People Strategy, in key areas such as remote working.<br>This will also include supporting the future onsite accommodation which is currently under review and may include co-location (sharing accommodation space). |
| Availability – anytime, anyplace, anywhere | Staff have the equipment, systems, and facilities to work efficiently and securely access council systems from any location, at any time, using any chosen device. |

Technology is one of the key components of change, it can only deliver expected organisation benefits and savings in conjunction with;

- Business processes that are efficient and fit for purpose
- Adoption of new ways of working by end users (which includes employees and customers)
- Commitment from Senior management and the organisation to deliver the agreed actions

The ICT, Digital Transformation, Customer Service and People strategies and approach therefore must be aligned in order to deliver the required outcomes

# 3 ICT Vision, Aims and Values;

## Vision Statement

**To support and underpin the aims and aspirations of the Council, it's residents and businesses by enabling digital services and improving ICT processes that will drive innovation, transformation, and efficiencies by working with users, services, and partners**

## Aims

- Enabling digital services, transformation and supporting business systems – through channel shift, automation, online and self-service
- Working with services and partners to improve ICT processes and technologies
- Modern architecture enabling efficient ICT operation and supporting the new ways of working
- Robust security and governance arrangements

## Values

Our Values are;

- a strong, caring focus on the needs of communities
- continuous improvement and delivering value for money
- valuing employees and enabling the active involvement of everyone
- innovation and readiness for change
- Integrity and professional competence

The ICT Strategy is an essential aspect in assisting the Council in achieving its vision.

# 4 Overarching technology principles

| | |
|---|---|
| Add Value and Innovation | Where investments are made, it will yield demonstrable benefit to the organisation and our residents<br>Innovation; embrace the latest technology and opportunities to deliver real improvements and change |
| Digital by Choice | Develop or implement systems that are 'so good that users would prefer to use them'. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Design and deliver joined -up, end to end services |
| Focus on Customer outcomes | Engage/inform the customer from project inception to completion<br>Use the Agile methodology, which focuses of users, provides transparency, and allows for incremental change |
| Improve Information, Assets and Data | Use data and information to improve services (Business Intelligence)<br>Look at the big picture – how does it fit into the organisation and technically within the systems architecture<br>Do not develop or procure systems in isolation. |
| Cloud First | Where possible, practical, and financially viable, cloud solutions will be implemented. This will allow us to take advantage of greater accommodation benefits, technical resources, scalability, and resilience. |
| Secure by Design | Data and information security will be at the heart of everything we do along with our ever evolving and advancing strategies and activities to protect us from cyber threats. |
| Keep it simple | Understand the requirements. Challenge unnecessary complication and intricacy. Ensure return on investment and don't implement intricate technology to deliver infrequent processes or low-complexity cases. |

# 5 How does it all hang together - links to other Strategies and Policies.

## 5.1 Corporate documents.

**Corporate Strategy (2020 – 2024)**

The Corporate Strategy sets out the Council's main strategic priorities over the next four years. There are four key themes within the strategy:

1. Caring for the environment
2. Healthy communities
3. A thriving economy
4. Your council

The development of IT services will be a critical enabler across all departments to help the Council to achieve its aims under each of these priorities, from becoming a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 helping tackle climate change to building our digital services using technology that will help us be more effective, efficient and flexible to meet customers' needs.

We recognise there are financial challenges ahead for local government and we will use them as an opportunity to transform into a more efficient, effective, and innovative organisation.

We will use a variety of technology to support current and future collaborations with partners, in both the public and private sector, to bring improvements to our services and the borough of Charnwood.

**Strategic Direction (2020-2024)**

The Strategic Direction document accompanies the Corporate Strategy 2020-24 and sets out the key operating principles the Council will adopt to achieve its objectives and deliver outstanding services for residents. It identifies the Council's ambition to be one of the most effective, efficient, and influential Councils in the Country

The document also sets out challenges to be addressed in the delivery of the Corporate Strategy including the COVID 19 pandemic, a reduction in funding and increasing costs, increasing demand for council services, climate change and rapid changes in technology

The Strategic Direction document identifies how the Council will operate in a number of key areas. The four areas that are most relevant to the ICT Strategy are.

1. The Council - We will:
    - become a leaner, more streamlined organisation which delivers positive outcomes and achieves excellent value for money
    - increasingly work together across teams and services and with partners to achieve outcome
2. Customer service – We will:
    - maintain a focus on customer experience and put the customer at the centre of our thinking
    - increase the number of online services so customers can access them 24/7
3. Our people - We will:
    - create an agile and flexible workforce which is focused on improving the lives of residents and achieving outcomes
    - provide our employees with the systems and equipment they need to deliver outstanding, effective, and efficient service
4. Transformation and Efficiency – We will:
    - review all services to make them more efficient and effective
    - work with partners to deliver innovative solutions to the challenges and opportunities ahead
    - maximise the use of technology to make the Council a more streamlined, efficient, and effective organisation
    - invest in transformation to achieve measurable outcomes such as service delivery or savings

**Customer Service Strategy (2021 – 2024)**

The Customer Service Strategy sets out the Council's approach to how it will enable customers to access our services as well as the service standards they can expect when dealing with the Council. The Council will take a 'digital by preference' approach, optimising online services making them the channel of choice for most of our customers. This will require the support of

ICS in the development of innovative and intuitive easy to use online forms, as such these requirements have been considered in the development of the ICS Strategy.

**People Strategy (2021 –2024)**

The newly developed People Strategy and specifically the Agile Working Policy have been considered in the development of the ICT Strategy to ensure alignment and synergies are recognised and acknowledged ensuring both strategies support the delivery of the aims. The Agile Working Policy relies of the use of modern technologies such as Office 365 and Cloud based technologies as such these requirements have been considered and included within the development of the ICT Strategy.

## 5.2 National Picture

The Government's IT Strategy approach to technology is to provide better public services for less costs through disaggregating, re-using, optimising, sharing and modernising technology, with the aim of improving productivity, efficiency, reducing waste and the likelihood of project failure. The strategy is based on three separate sub-stands;

- Greening Government ICT; this sub section outlines the Government's commitment to reducing carbon and cost, increasing resilience, responsibility, accountability, transparency, and collaboration by engaging with suppliers, proactively reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and reusing redundant ICT within the Public Sector
- End user device Strategy; provides broad guidance on areas such as avoiding vendor lock in, security controls, devices should be used as commodities and not customised, software/services should be designed for the web and therefore not be device agnostic and finally software and data on end user devices should be minimised;
- G-Cloud; in line with the Cloud First Policy, this strand defines the vision, scope, benefits, Governance structure and services intended to be on the G-cloud. Services can be purchased as commodities covering three areas - Infrastructure, Platform and Applications

The Government's Transformation Strategy 2017 - 2020 which is based on the vision of;

- Better understanding what citizens need
- Assembling services more quickly and at lower cost
- Continuously improving services, based on data and evidence

The blueprint of meeting the vision and objectives of the Transformation strategy is based on;

- the 10 Design principles based on the user requirement and delivering service in an agile manner
- Digital Service Standard; 14 steps to help create, manage, and develop a digital service
- and the Technology Code of Practice which is set of criteria to assist in the design, building and purchasing of technology, which reinforces the approach of making IT products and services; based on the user needs, accessible, inclusive, open source, open standards, Cloud first, secure and reliable, include privacy by design, shareable, reusable and collaborative, making use of data, choosing the right tools and technology and having a clear vision of what success would look like delivered by a multidisciplinary team.

On Security, the National Cyber Security Strategy 2016-2021 is based on the "DEFEND, DETER, DEVELOP" for managing Cyber Security and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) provides key guidance and tools for protection the IT Infrastructure and data against unauthorised access, harm or misuse.

The Charnwood ICT Strategy has been developed with the areas mentioned above in mind and its objectives are considered to align with the Government IT, Digital and Security Strategies.

# 6 Strategic Aims

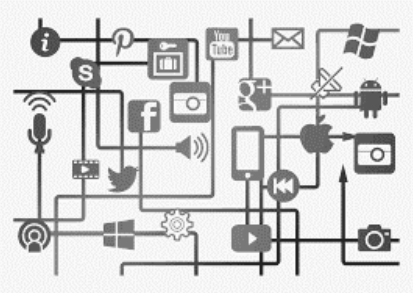
## 6.1 Enabling digital services, transformation and supporting business systems

A digital platform is an essential foundation to support and develop online services and the delivery of the Transformation programme. The platform will be an integrated communication environment defined below which offers significant benefits;

***Council services will be accessible seamlessly in the real world (telephone, face to face, etc) and online, with fully digital (and where possible automated) back office processes, knowledge-driven services, undertaking data led decisions, a genuine mobile workforce and services that are responsive in real-time***

The technology principles of the digital platform will include;

- Designing digital services around the needs of the people using them
- Creating new, simple, and secure ways for customers to use online services
- Building digital services, not just websites – think about all aspects of the service to make sure it adds up to something that meets users' needs.
- This is for everyone; understand the context, the design should be inclusive, legible, readable, and accessible. We recognise the services we build may be accessed by users who are not familiar with online services and may also be assisted by alternative contact channels (telephone and face to face).
- Do less and make it simple; make the processes and technology reusable and shareable
- Breaking our dependence on inflexible and expensive technology that doesn't join up effectively, in favour of modular common components and open data standards
- Digitise and automate back office process by working with services to transform the ways of working and integrating online processes into day to day service delivery
- Effective mobile and field working - enabling and supporting staff at all levels with effective tools for communication and accessing the required data and systems
- Developing the right skills and training programmes to support the delivery of the digital platform



We will deliver this by;

- Following the Design Principles, the Digital Service standard and Technology code of Practice defined as a development approach by GOV.UK and the Government Digital Service (GDS), which always start with user needs
- Implementing online tools/systems that support transactional process such as intelligent e-forms, workflow and process management, automation, secure and seamless integration with back office data and corporate systems such as payment portals, bookings, etc.
- The core of the Digital platform would be an integrated self-service online Contact Management system which would interface with online tools such as web chat, customer accounts, social media, email (for campaigns and notifications) and the telephony system. This approach will be based on the principle of 'Capture once and reuse', giving the customer a seamless experience regardless of the access channel they use

- Introduce tools in the medium/longer term improve the features of the Contact Management system to engage further with customers (e.g. webchat) and provide personalised content and transaction information based on Customer accounts

## Applications Strategy;

The second essential area to enable effective digital services and transformation includes improving the functionality of Applications to meet end user and customer requirements. There are a number of systems used across the Authority which can be categorised into the three following areas;

- *Customer facing systems;* these are systems are used directly to interface with customers and support self-service. Examples include - website, eforms, online payments, online bookings, etc.
- Back office corporate systems; this includes applications used internal by most staff across the Council. Examples include - Customer Relation Management system, HR, Finance, Intranet, etc
- *Back office specific;* used to support specific services. Examples include – Housing system, Planning and Building Control system, Environmental Health, Electoral Registration, etc.

Some applications have multiple modules which can belong to more than one category e.g. the Payment system which includes a customer facing and an internal module, etc.

The larger back office applications (for both corporate and specific categorises) have historically been purchased as third party 'best of breed' systems to support specific services or functions. There are also some medium sized or smaller systems which are developed in-house to meet specific service requirements.

The Council currently has a mixed landscape in the maturity and use of applications which need to be co-ordinated, resourced adequately and have clear lines of responsibility. In certain areas, applications are used to support semi-manual processes which are seen as operationally convenient. These processes bring the potential for duplication (e.g. data entry), inconsistency, inefficiency and are a barrier to joined up digital services.

The development of larger applications is heavily dependent on the functionality and software releases provided by suppliers. As a result of the pandemic, there has been a substantial increase to access applications remotely by all users, the need to provide self-service options for customers and the availability of mobile/field working functionality in Back office systems.

The overall strategy for applications will be to provide fewer, more integrated, flexible, and online focussed modern systems with the support of the following actions;

- Use the Digital Service standard and Technology code of Practice approach for adhering to open standards and common technology components such as application programming interfaces (APIs), web services, etc. This provides guidance for both in-house developed and third-party systems
- As covered in Section 6.2, engage with services to ensure the application systems requirements and priorities are understood by both services and ICT. This also identifies the required application landscape (i.e. what information and data does the service and users require?)
- Identify a roadmap for all key applications, that will keep the system on supported versions and not allow the application's performance to deteriorate to a level that is

detrimental to business outcomes. This will require clear lines of responsibility, funding, supporting resources and approval by the Authority

- Where appropriate, consolidate systems to improve integration and reduce costs. For certain areas this may involve moving away from the established 'best of breed' approach which was used to acquire applications for specific purposes
- For new applications or the upgrade of existing systems, first consider if other existing systems can meet the requirements
- For any key system changes, look at the big picture – how does it fit into the organisation and technically within the systems architecture. Do not develop or procure systems in isolation
- Use Microsoft's Common Data Service (CDS) for the development and amalgamation of internal systems. This can also encapsulate certain existing third-party applications. This approach is part of the O365 environment and uses the **(low code, no code)** approach by providing visual tools that can be configured to build applications rapidly.


  The CDS approach will also be used to identify common;

  - Data set Entities e.g. people, property, codes, etc which will be used as foundation blocks for all applications.
  - Standardisation of Processes into areas such as Apply, Request, Report, Provide, Book, Pay, etc
  - Standardisation of Workflow and Business rules e.g. for authorisations, notifications, etc

- Use Agile Software development approach for delivering the solution to the end users as soon as possible which supports the iterative process of testing, learning, adapting and improving solutions. Developers will use a collaborate approach by sharing development environments, code, data repositories, files, plans, and tasks, etc

**Strategic Aim Deliverables**

Summary of actions covered in this section;

- Support the delivery of the Transformation programme by covering the principles and actions outlined to develop the Digital platform
- As part of the Digital platform, review the system options for developing an integrated self-service online Contact Management system
- Develop a systems portfolio which identified the use of systems within the different services and the potential for consolidating systems
- Identify a roadmap of all key applications, including clear lines of responsibility and any supporting resources
- Apply the CDS approach for reviewing, developing, and amalgamating applications

## 6.2 Working with Services and Partners to improve ICT processes and technologies;

ICT is critical for most if not all Council services – its required operationally for daily communication and access to systems by end users. It also supports the development and improvement of services by helping to deliver efficiencies and enable new ways of working.

The ICT Service supports approximately 560 users which include; all Charnwood staff, Councillors and Shared Services Partners such as Harborough District Council, North West District Council, Leicestershire County Council, and Capita for the Revenue and Benefits service.

Service requirements, expectations, development needs and operational issues are identified and agreed as part of regular Service Level Agreements (SLA) meetings with Head of Service/Managers, which cover;

- ICT Performance and Service Profile; the profile aspect covers the current equipment used by staff and requirements to support new ways of working
- Applications; defining what is currently being used, how it can be improved and future applications/ system requirement
- Planned developments; any changes/Projects that will require input from ICT, any improvements that can be made using ICT

The table below lists the key development actions agreed with Services from the recent SLA meetings (December 2020);

| Head of Service Area/ Managers | Key ICS Future developments |
|---|---|
| Cleansing and Open spaces | • Investigate systems and data requirements for users that will be mobile/field working e.g. Enforcement officers, Contract Officers, etc.<br>• Requirements to exchange data with other systems such as the Agresso (Finance system) and the Contract Management application (Whitespaces) |
| Financial Services | • Scope the O365 Teams migration which will include migration of Shared network drives, SharePoint areas, e-Forms, processes using Power automate and potential applications using Power apps<br>• Include the Agresso Finance system in the Cloud/Hybrid migration (see Section 7.3)<br>• Continue with the Cloud migration of the iTrent (HR/Payroll system) - to be completed by end of February 2021 |
| Procurement and Property Services | • Development of the online Procurement/Contracts register using the O365 Power apps<br>• Provide ICT input into the Office accommodation review to support an onsite shared environment with Partners and the update/possible relocation of the onsite Data Centre |

| Head of Service Area/ Managers | Key ICS Future developments |
|---|---|
| Planning and Regeneration | • Implementation (from January 2021) of the single system for Planning Services, Environment Health, Strategic and Private Sector Housing and Land charges, this will replace three existing back office applications and reduce the existing issues (with VDI, pdf documents, etc) being encountered with users accessing multiple environments<br>• Printing/scanning requirements for digitise documents and distributing incoming post |
| Building Control | • Lead on the ICT aspects of setting up the joint service with North West Leicestershire District Council (from January 2021)<br>• Implementation of the single system with Planning, Environment Health, Strategic and Private Sector Housing and Land charges, which includes the Building Control module |
| Regulatory Services | • Provide general training (across all services) on O365, new systems such as Teams, Forms, SharePoint online, and awareness on IT access and guidance procedures<br>• Migration of the Care parking system (WPS) onto the Cloud<br>• Improve remote access for the Noise and Air protection systems<br>• As mentioned above, Implementation (from January 2021) of the single system for Planning Services, Environment Health, Strategic and Private Sector Housing and Land charges, this will replace three existing back office applications |
| Leisure and Culture | • Support the implementation of the online booking system for Markets and Fairs, including payment integration and the use of mobile/tablet devices<br>• Agreement on the priority of O365 Teams migration<br>• Support the update on the Town Hall website |
| Customer Experience | • Complete the O365 migration for Customer Services<br>• Support the implementation of the upgrade Contact Centre Telephone module<br>• Review the potential of the O365 Bookings system to replace the Bookings Live application |
| Neighbourhood Services | • Assist in the CCTV system upgrade and relocation to the onsite Data Centre<br>• Investigate systems, data and equipment requirements for users that will be mobile/field working |
| Strategic Support | • With input from Democratic Services, implement hybrid meeting rooms facilities which will allow multiple users onsite and users with remote access to video conferencing facilities. |

| Head of Service Area/ Managers | Key ICS Future developments |
|---|---|
| | • Work with Legal Service to review and implement a replacement Case Management system |
| Strategic and Private Sector Housing | • Implementation (from January 2021) of the single system for Planning Services, Environment Health, Strategic and Private Sector Housing and Land charges, this will replace three existing back office applications |
| Landlord Services | • Investigate, scope and if approved implement online services (as part of the Transformation programme) for Tenant information, Rent statements and Repairs<br>• Investigate and implement a Document management system for the current paper-based Tenant files<br>• Provide Intranet access that will enable mobile operatives to share and update the required documentation |
| Organisational Development | • Migration and development of HR information for the new SharePoint/Intranet site<br>• Migration of HR paper files into digital files<br>• Replacement of the Performance Management system |

Common areas, identified from the SLA meetings;

- Services have confirmed that the IT equipment is suitable for remote working but have reported the lack of flexibility of accessing multiple environments
- Linked to above, the need to access Applications more seamlessly – without logging into the VDI environment
- Some Services have identified staff which would need to use Field working/mobile equipment and systems e.g. Enforcement Officers, Wardens, Housing Repair Operatives, etc
- All areas identified a requirement for making better use of O365 and Teams by migrating shared files, developing workflows (Power Automate), e-Forms, Bookings, Planner, etc
- As covered in Section 6.1, Applications Strategy - with Services, review the ownership, roadmap, and development of Applications. The development aspect will include (where appropriate) consolidation or building applications using Power Apps and the CDS approach
- Develop a Governance process for assessing, prioritising, and implementing new ICT projects or developments
- Services expressed the need for an online Training facility which will enable services to make effective use of applications
- Support remote and agile working by reviewing and agreeing the hours ICT Services will be available

**Strategic Aim Deliverable;**

Continue to work with Services to progress and implement the Future Development and Common areas listed in the table above

## 6.3 Delivering a Modern ICT Architecture;

The ICT architecture is the underlying foundation and building block of all ICT services, required to support daily operational use of ICT and the delivery of all the actions/objectives covered in this Strategy. The objective of the ICT architecture is to provide;

***A technology Infrastructure that is efficient, resilient, reliable, responsive, secure, supports innovation and agile working, allows users to make maximum use of technology with ease of use and provides seamless access to required services and systems***

Currently a single purpose-built onsite Data Centre is in place with appropriate environmental, physical and security controls supporting access to both onsite and remote workers. The Data Centre hosts virtual environments (for Desktops and Servers) which has seen substantial reduction in physical space and power consumption. The onsite fibre network is designed to be resilient and avoids single points of failure. The Server environment is segregated and designed on the guidance of the National Cyber Security Centre and PSN requirements.

The Council has a stable and resilient IT Infrastructure but needs to review and further improve the architecture for the following reasons;

- Refresh of IT Infrastructure; upgrades are required to the Virtual Server environment and key aspects of the onsite Data Centre are approaching 'end of life'.

- Efficiency costs - covering two areas;
  - the migration of the CCTV recording and connection equipment to the Data Centre is being recommended to ensure the CCTV infrastructure has the required level of resilience
  - Server room power consumption – improvements are required to ensure we make the most effective use of cooling and power consumption technologies in the Data Centre, as less than half of the physical allocated space is used

- Smart working – increasing requirements for the infrastructure to support onsite and remote access (including mobile access to systems). User expectation is to have a single environment/method of access regardless of the device or location.

- Government's Cloud First policy - the policy states that "when procuring new or existing services, public sector organisations should consider and fully evaluate potential cloud solutions first before considering any other option. This approach is mandatory for central government and strongly recommended to the wider public sector." Services are encouraged to initially consider Software as a Service (SaaS), particularly for enterprise IT and back office functions

- Review our options periodically - is there something better that can be used to reduce costs and improve IT service delivery?

The Authority has 'sweated its IT Assets' over the last 10 years. Although the development of the IT Infrastructure overall has been positive, it has also been piecemeal and undertaken on a project-by-project basis. Due to the 'end of life' of some of the Infrastructure, continuing with the AS-IS approach is not a sustainable solution. Recent changes/upgrades within areas such as O365, the Telephone system and applications such as the Payment system, HR/Payroll application have resulted in the implementation of Cloud based or SaaS solutions.

After comparison with a number of different options, including; on Premise, Private Cloud, and Public Cloud. The Hybrid Cloud approach (which uses a combination of Public Cloud installation and an on-premise Data Centre) was selected for the following reasons;

- There is a requirement to host Servers/Applications onsite, this includes; CCTV, Doors access system, network management and security systems, etc. For certain systems, a cloud solution either isn't available or isn't cost effective and would therefore need to be hosted onsite until an effective cloud solution is available
- There will be a period of migration as not all applications can be transferred simultaneously and may involve third-party suppliers. For some systems this may change how the application is accessed, costed, or used
- The Hybrid approach has the potential to transform IT service delivery and provides easy access to back office applications (without needing to log-in to the internal network).
- Provides Agility by ensuring we are not locked into a supplier-based Cloud model and only migrate applications that will provide an added benefit - 'best of both worlds'
- Not a 'one size fits all' approach - this setup also gives the opportunity to 'mix' different Cloud models which is suitable in our environment where several different applications are in use
- The on-premises installation, allows a phased implementation/migration to the Cloud which provides added benefits in testing, migration, assessing platform suitability and avoiding unforeseen costs
- Capacity expansion – allows incremental expansion of the network by allowing existing technologies, tools, and techniques to be reused without impacting on the business or end users. Additional Hardware can be easily scalable (Storage, Servers, etc)

The Hybrid migration approach in the next 12 months will be to assess and simplify the IT architecture, moving away from incremental refresh and develop a single secure network that will be accessible internally (when users are onsite) and remotely. The following factors will be used to measure the suitability and location of different applications;

- Costs; This will involve understanding the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) and the operating cost model – what will be included as 'standard' and what will be classed as 'additional' cost and how will this compare to the existing costs?
- Benefits; How will Cloud adoption provide added value and transformation for the Business/services and technical delivery? How will the benefits be achieved and measured?
- Performance; this will include identifying what needs to be measured (supplier's SLA), the metrics of measurement as well as setting achievable targets

- Compatibility; will there be any loss of functionality in access the cloud-based solution? Including access to download or report on data
- Security; what security controls will be covered by the supplier? How will data resilience be covered? How will the backup and disaster recovery process work? And what assurances will be included in the event of a cyber-attack or in resolving major vulnerabilities?
- Complexity; how will this change the access, management, and maintenance of the systems/infrastructure? Will the management of systems therefore need more or less resources?

As shown in Figure 1 below, the Hybrid environment will be based on Microsoft Azure which allows the authority to make increased usage of the 'Enterprise Agreement', benefiting from software licencing and the CDS software development environment covered in Section 6.1.

In the next 12 months, the migration of the Server environment will be based on the Azure Migration Programme (AMP) to develop a cost effective, secure and scalable extension of the existing network

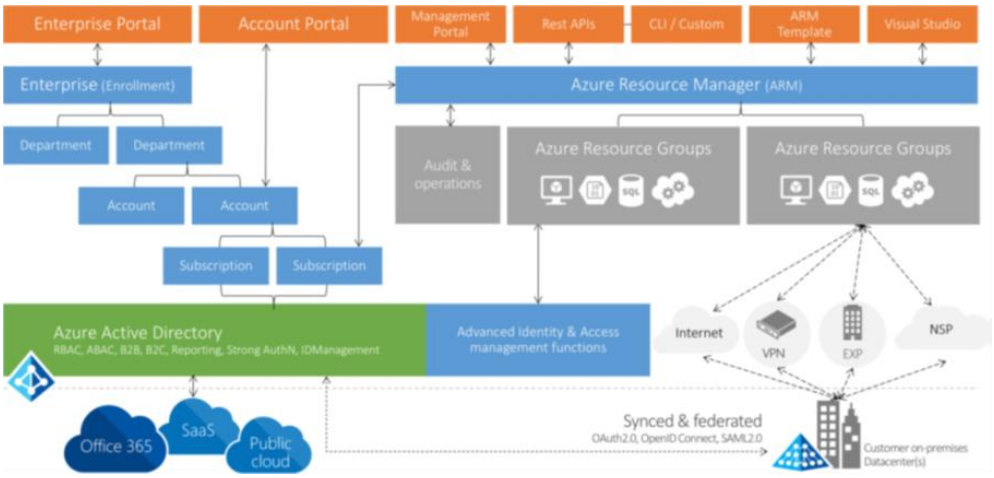



Figure 1: Azure migration Framework

The onsite Data Centre will be redesigned following the scoping of services and applications to be migrated onto Azure. The location of the Data Centre is dependent on the onsite accommodation which is under review.

The development of the ICT infrastructure will be based on common technologies and platforms, consolidating where possible and allowing resources to concentrate on value added activities striving for an "always on" ICT infrastructure

The other two areas within ICT Infrastructure which are being developed include;

## Unified Communications (UC);

UC refers to a central platform or communication tool used for the phone system, instant messaging, video collaboration, etc.


The authority already has a cloud based VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol – *uses data/ Internet instead of traditional analogue lines*) for supporting all users including the Shared Service Contact Centre.

Since March 2020, the Council has made substantial use of Microsoft Teams as a video conferencing, collaboration, and installation messaging system. The next key development is to enabled voice within Teams – this would allow users to access their phone extensions within Teams, providing users with an all in one cloud solution which would also increase the access (including using mobiles) and methods of contact between users and customers.

There has also been a sustained increase in use of mobile devices (smartphone, tables, etc) for both Android and iOS environments. The O365 Microsoft investment is utilised further with Endpoint Manager for managing access to mobile devices, including BYOD devices.

## Printing and Document Management;

The Council uses standard multi-function device (MFD) for printing, scanning, faxing etc, with a central 'follow-me' printing queue where users 'pull' their print jobs from any MFD regardless of the printer location, by using their ID card or pin.

Printing statistics/usage are shared as part of the regular SLA meeting with Services (covered in Section 7.2) . The requirement for reducing print volumes vary in different service areas.

Services will be required to print less in support of the Environmental, Transformation and accommodation agendas. Key developments to support this, include;

- Printing to MFDs from mobile devices (including BYOD devices)
- Digitising (scanning and distributing) incoming mail to services using Microsoft One Drive and SharePoint online
- Enabling users to scan directly to and from One Drive
- Delegated printing – where approved users can print jobs on behalf of other users
- Hybrid mail – in support of agile working, developing a business case and (if approved) implement a solution for staff to send print batch jobs from anywhere which will result in reducing existing printing costs, centralised printing rules and provide transparency of print jobs undertaken by services.

Our intended approach for a corporate Document Management solution is to use Microsoft SharePoint, which will make use of the existing O365 environment and provides a familiar user interface for staff. This requirement is currently being investigated as a solution in Housing (for managing Tenant files) and Customer Services for scanning, indexing, and retrieving customer documents provided for verification. Both areas will make use of O365 workflow (e.g. approving documents) and use the existing MFDs for scanning paper-based documents.

**Strategic Aim Deliverables;**

- As part of the Azure Migration Programme, complete the migration of identified Servers and Applications in the next 12 months - commencing in January 2021
- Redesign the onsite Data Centre – the location and timescales are linked to the ongoing review of Accommodation
- Unified Communication; enable Voice (Users' Direct Dial Numbers) within Microsoft Teams
- Printing; Once scoped and approved, enable and support development areas listed above – digitising incoming mail and Hybrid mail
- Document Management System (DMS); investigate and if approved implement SharePoint as the corporate DMS solution

## 6.4 Robust Security and Compliance;

The increased reliance and dependency on ICT systems to support the redesign/ transformation of council services, enable the delivery of efficiency savings, meet customer needs as well as the expectation to access systems remotely and on any device and location requires the ICT Infrastructure and systems to be protected continuously from a variety of sources without compromising access and functionality.

***Our approach is to maintain a resilient and robust Infrastructure and have Security built by Design into all ICT products and services***

In accordance with the National Cyber Security Strategy 2016-2021 and the guidance, tools and partnership services provided by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), the Council will take the necessary "DEFEND, DETER, DEVELOP" measures to protect the Hardware, Software and associated infrastructure, the data on them and the services they provide, from unauthorised access, harm or misuse.

List of key ICT Security threats facing the authority and our approach for mitigating the risk are listed below;

| Key threats | Mitigations |
|---|---|
| Expanding range of devices accessing the Network from different locations (remote working) | • Only compliant devices access the required systems, this also includes users' own devices (BYOD)<br>• The Unified Threat Management system (UTM) secures all incoming and outgoing Gateway traffic (between the network and the outside world)<br>• Strong Passwords and two factor authentications are in place for required systems<br>• Latest anti-virus, malware and ransomware protection, email and web filtering and encryption software are in place |
| Poor Cyber hygiene and compliance *"Cyber-attacks are not necessarily sophisticated or inevitable and are often the result of exploited - but easily rectifiable and, often, preventable - vulnerabilities"* [1] | • A periodic cycle of vulnerability scans protecting new and existing aspects of the Infrastructure and Client devices.<br>• Separate Firewalls protect the different network layers (web facing traffic, internal network, etc). All Client machines have Firewalls activated<br>• Port level security standards are in place which only allows approved users and devices onto the Network<br>• Only approved System Administrators have access to Servers<br>• Standard protocols are in place and continue to be developed for Hardening of new builds (Infrastructure, Software, and end points)<br>• Patching 'Important' and 'Critical' Software are installed promptly. We plan to introduce more regular maintenance windows for software upgrades<br>• Develop real time monitoring and clear escalation points for network traffic and suspicious activity<br>• Continue to undertake and implement actions from Penetration assessment and vulnerability assessments |

[1] National Cyber Security Strategy

| Key threats | Mitigations |
|---|---|
| Legacy and unpatched systems | All hardware and software eventually become out of date, after which point, ideally – it should not be used.<br>The cycle of Vulnerability scans, independent IT Health check, and regular patches and system upgrades are in in place to identify and keep systems up to date. Back office application should not be more than two versions behind.<br>The NCSC guidance will be used if we are in the unlikely situation of using obsolete platforms |
| Vulnerabilities associated with the Cloud Infrastructure | • Have a clear, committed, and documented plan for how the cloud infrastructure will be used and its associated connections<br>• Get assurances on the security and privacy protection, controls, and accreditation of suppliers – use tried and tested platforms which have been approved for Public Sector use.<br>• Confirm the availability, resilience and business continuity procedures and the assurances on the location and storage of data,<br>• Test access, application security, functionality, permissions, etc. Any changes should follow the Change Management process |
| Increasing threats from Cyber Criminals, Hacktivism, etc | Cyber security risks can be best mitigated using a combination of the controls covered with the areas in this table and the - IDENTIFY, PROTECT, RESPOND, RECOVER - approach with particular emphasis on the areas listed below;<br>• Using the NCSC guidance and tools; Cyber Assessment Framework, https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberessentials/overview, 10 steps to Cyber Security, Active Cyber Defence Hub , 'Exercise in a Box', etc<br>• Keeping software and infrastructure patched and up to date<br>• Robust End Point Security to protect user devices<br>• Implement Multi-factor authentication which clearly separates external access<br>• Effective and tested backup and restores processes<br>• Clear and documented recovery plan |
| Insufficient training, skills and resources for end users and ICT staff | • Continuous awareness and education on the threats/risks, mitigations and best practice for IT Security and Cyber Security<br>• Promote User responsibility - Acceptable usage polices are signed prior to access for key IT services. Communicate updates and resign of Policies at regular intervals<br>• Educate and ensure users are aware of the Reporting processes for incidents/vulnerabilities<br>• Work in partnership to access resources, including training and awareness programmes offered by NCSC |
| Lack of a recovery Plan | Our Recovery plan is based on the Council's Business Continuity Plan and NCSC's Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) D.1 Response and Recovery Planning which provide a comprehensive plan for incident management and steps for managing responses, containment (block and isolate the issue) and recovery (restore the required service/system).<br>The recovery plan also involves working with Partners such as the (NCSC, CiSP (Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership) and the EMWARP (East Midlands Warning, Advice and Reporting Point) Group |

| Key threats | Mitigations |
|---|---|
| Constantly evolving risks | The impact of an IT security attack can be critical for the organisation, the challenge is to;<br>• keep users aware of the risks and the controls in place<br>• apply the controls covered in this table<br>• Secure buy in and resources from Senior Leadership<br>• And apply the guidance and advice provide by the NCSC<br>• And continue work in partnership with (NCSC, CiSP (Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership) and the EMWARP (East Midlands Warning, Advice and Reporting Point) Group |

In addition to the actions above, the authority uses the principles of, complies with or is in the process of meeting the following standards;

- Cyber Essentials Plus certification; provides assurance and confirms that a clear approach for security measures in place
- PSN (Public Services Network); the annual compliance demonstrates the organisation's security arrangements, policies and controls are sufficiently rigorous to allow users to connect to the secure PSN network. The process also includes the need for an annual independent IT Health Check
- Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS); requirements ensure that the processing, storage, and transmission of payment information for face to face, telephone, Internet, and Self-Service payment are handled securely
- Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL); the framework places importance on improving customer satisfaction by providing effective service delivery while being cost effective
- Network Access Standard (802.1X); is used to control access to the network using policies for approved users and devices

Working with services and suppliers, the Strategy will comply with principles in areas such as information security, data classification, storage, and integration/interoperability. In line with best practice these standards could relate to an ISO Management (ISO 27001) or Open data standards. BS7666 (standard for spatial datasets) will continue to be complied with for the Council's corporate addressing system

## Data Backup and Recovery;

An effective backup and restore system is a key component for managing security.

A central corporate backup solution is in place, which is integrated with the virtual and storage environment. The solution uses a combination of disk and tape media for effective restores and to reduce storage on servers by including features such as deduplication and offsite storage.

Backup data is retained for a full year, Incremental backups are undertaken during the week and a full back up at the end of the week. Details of the Backup cycle and supporting infrastructure are covered in the ICS Infrastructure Policy.

The Hybrid ICT Architecture (covered in Section 6.3) for future systems will change the location (Cloud based) and method of system backups which will either be included as a managed service with Suppliers (this is in place with certain system and the existing Telephony infrastructure) or be integrated into the existing corporate backup solution.

The main backup and recovery areas moving forward will include;

- Resourcing, agreeing, and investing in new cloud-based backup and recovery systems which in line would see a reduction in the data volume for the existing onsite corporate system
- Reviewing and setting effective policies for archiving and deletion of information
- Continue to develop and undertake tests the integrity of restores

The backup and recovery policy will continue to be reviewed and tested in line with the Council's Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity arrangement and guidance from the NCSC.

**Strategic Aim Deliverables;**

IT Security does not include a set of fixed 'start and finish' tasks but instead requires ongoing and proactive awareness of Network, Software, Cyber and Operational security. Key principles and deliverables, covered in this section include;

- Achieving compliance of Cyber Essential Plus Accreditation and any other agreed standards covered in the above section
- Review and implement effective defences to the network, data and systems and have in place cyber incident reporting measures and be able to respond effectively to cyber-attack, maintaining functions and recovering quickly through appropriate service and business continuity arrangements.
- Implement "Security by Design" by carrying out IT Security risk assessments when selecting new systems, on-line services or implementing digital processes.
- Ensure that cyber security skills and awareness within the Council are maintained to mitigate the cyber security threats including the monitoring and reporting of incidents.
- As covered above, develop the Backup and Recovery processes to;
    - invest in new cloud-based systems which in line would see a reduction in the data volume for the existing onsite system. This will also include undertaking regular integrity restore tests
    - in line with GDPR, review and set policies for archiving and deleting information
- Continue to work in partnership with NCSC, East Midlands WARP and the Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership (CiSP) to implement approved programmes, resources, and schemes

# 7 Risks

The delivery of the Strategy will be structured through a series of programmes and projects linked to the strategic components within the Authority and will be subject to establishing ICT Governance arrangements (covered in Section 8). The key risks and planned mitigations associated with the delivery of the Strategy include;

| Key risks | Mitigations |
|---|---|
| Future funding constraints | • As covered in Section 6.2, work with Services and Senior Management to demonstrate the dependency, value and improvements that are being achieved by using ICT<br>• Undertake regular market test of ICT products and services to ensure value for money<br>• For new initiatives or changes to existing ICT infrastructure; as part of the Business Case or the Project Mandate - provide clear details of the costings and benefits (including payback) |
| Important and urgent organisational business priorities emerging which require significant ICT resourcing (possibly on concurrent projects), necessitating the redeployment of ICT resources as priorities dictate | • See Section 8 - SWAP Board to monitoring the progress and agree on corporate priorities and resources on ICT developments<br>• Work with Services (as covered in Section 6.2) to identify future development which will require ICT input |
| Cultural challenges associated with new ways of working, the use of technology and the desire for customised local solutions | • Alignment with the People Strategy and the Agile Working Policy will ensure the users concerns and queries are addressed and support the delivery of common objectives/aims<br>• With the introduction of new ICT projects or technologies - Ensure appropriate skills, support and training is in place to empower employees to deal with ICT changes |
| Constantly evolving threats of Cyber Security | List of key ICT Security threats facing the authority and our approach for mitigating the risks are covered in Section 6.4 of this document |
| Cloud/Hybrid technologies not delivering intended benefits or outcomes | Have a clear strategy and approach for why Cloud or Hybrid technologies are being used - Section 6.3, defines the reasons, options considered, measurement factors and approach for developing the Hybrid ICT Infrastructure. |

Current and future ICT risks will be managed within the Council's Risk Management Framework

# 8 Resourcing and Implementing the Strategy

Effective resourcing is an essential requirement to enable the delivery of the Vision, Aims and actions covered in this Strategy.

The document covers key areas such as the development of the Hybrid Cloud infrastructure (Section 6.3), making increased use of the O365 environment and the implementation of the single application for Planning Services, Environment Health and Strategic and Private Sector Housing (see actions under Section 6.2) which have already been approved and costed.

The strategy also includes the following new requirements which (as part of the Monitoring and Review arrangements, mentioned below) will need to be resourced;

1. Supporting the delivery of the new Transformation programme - Services, Workspace & People (SWaP) by delivering the actions covered in Section 6.1. Some aspect of the Digital platform have already been resourced as part of the O365 programme.
2. Also as part of Section 6.1 (in line with strategy for reviewing and consolidating Applications), key changes to existing systems and the introduction of new applications will need to be funded. This should follow a standard approach for outlining a Business case, return of investment (as part of a 5-year plan) and the alignment of supporting resources such as software licences, system administration, etc
3. Agile working changes - any new practices that will increase the need for ICT resources and equipment e.g. increased Service Desk hours of support, the need to provide new equipment for field or mobile workers, etc
4. Accommodation – relocation or changes to the onsite accommodation which will impact both on end users and the ICT Infrastructure
5. ICT training - The ability of the Council to gain maximum advantage from its investment in ICT depends crucially upon the existence of adequate operational ICT skills. In line with the People Strategy, ICT training and development should be resourced for different users e.g. end users, system administrators, IT Developers, etc

## Monitoring and Review

The outcomes and actions of this strategy will be incorporated in the ICT Development plan that will be overseen by the SWAP Board

This principle body will have decision making responsibility, approve resources, agree the development of new ICT projects and ensure that business, user and technical agendas are fully recognised in ICT development and will be chaired by the Chief Executive

The membership of this group as of January 2021 includes;

| Name | Position | Role |
|---|---|---|
| Rob Mitchell | Chief Executive | Chair |
| Justin Henry | Strategic Director - Commercial Development, Asset and Leisure | Member |
| Simon Jackson | Strategic Director - Strategic Support, Governance & Procurement | Member |
| Eileen Mallon | Strategic Director - Community, Planning and Housing | Member |
| Karey Barnshaw | Head of Customer Experience | Member |
| Lesley Tansey | Head of Financial Services | Member |
| Helen Gretton | Organisational Development Manager | Member |
| Mike Roberts | Communications Manager | Member |

Appendix B

# Charnwood Borough Council

## Equality Impact Assessment
## 'Knowing the needs of your customers and employees'

### Background

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

### Legislation- Equality Duty

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion or belief
8. Sex (Gender)
9. Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

1. Direct Discrimination
2. Indirect Discrimination
3. Harassment
4. Victimisation
5. Discrimination by association
6. Discrimination by perception
7. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
8. Discrimination arising from disability
9. Failing to make reasonable adjustments

**Note: Complete the action plan as you go through the questions**

## Step 1 – Introductory information

| | |
|---|---|
| Title of the policy | ICT Strategy 2021-2023 |
| Name of lead officer and others undertaking this assessment | Karey Barnshaw |
| Date EIA started | 10/2/21 |
| Date EIA completed | 10/2/21 |

## Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed:

| |
|---|
| Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives) |
| The purpose of the strategy is to set out how the Council intends to develop its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) over the next three years. The role of ICT is essential to the delivery of all of the Council services, both in enabling ongoing day to day business processes and in supporting strategic change. |
| What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them? |
| The strategy is not aimed at any specific groups it covers all users of Council wide ICT system. It is designed to support users by providing them with efficient and effective system that support the delivery of the roles. Whilst also ensuring the Council is protected from any system security threats. |
| Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy? |
| There has been no specific consultation with any groups. Consultation has been undertaken with CLT, SLT and the Lead member for ICT to ensure there is consideration of the strategy will impact on their service area. |

## Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps

| |
|---|
| List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.<br><br>Data/information such as:<br>▪ Consultation<br>▪ Previous Equality Impact Assessments<br>▪ Demographic information<br>▪ Anecdotal and other evidence |
| There is no specific data in relation to different groups of people, this is a internal strategy aimed at supporting the needs of the Council and its users |
| What does this information / data tell you about diverse group? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list) |
| N/A |

| |
|---|
| |

## Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

| In light of the answers you have given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why. |
|---|
| No as there is a neutral impact to all groups |

## Step 5 – Assessing the impact

In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups (including what barriers these individuals or groups may face) who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

| | **Comments** |
|---|---|
| **Age** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of options to meet individual needs. |
| **Disability** **(Physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health)** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |
| **Gender Reassignment** **(Transgender)** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |
| **Race** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs. |
| **Religion or Belief** **(Includes no belief)** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |
| **Sex** **(Gender)** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |
| **Sexual Orientation** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |
| **Other protected groups** **(Pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership)** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |
| **Other socially excluded groups** **(carers, low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, health inequalities, rural isolation, asylum seeker and refugee communities etc.)** | Neutral Impact – all users will have the opportunity to discuss any specific requirements they have and there will be a range of option to meet individual needs |

| Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.<br><br>Please note:<br>a) If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.<br>b) Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. |
|---|
| N/A |
| Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page). |
| The ICT strategy 2021-2024, has a neutral impact in relation to the Council responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity. Where there are any specific requirements relating to a protected characteristic these can be considered an solutions provided to meet any individual needs |

## Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation and review

| Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact? |
|---|
| The implementation of the strategy will be monitored by the SWaP Board, if there any issues arise relating to equality and diversity these will be picked up and addressed. |
| How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems. |
| The assessment will be include as part of the background papers that will go to Cabinet on 11th March 2021 |

## Step 7- Action Plan

| Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan:<br>The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Reference Number** | **Action** | **Responsible Officer** | **Target Date** |
| | | | |

## Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?

| | **Who needs to know**<br>(Please tick) | **How they will be informed**<br>(we have a legal duty to publish EIA's) |
|---|---|---|
| **Employees** | Y | This assessment will be attached alongside the Cabinet paper of 11th March 2021 |
| **Service users** | | |
| **Partners and stakeholders** | | |
| **Others** | | |
| **To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there?** | | |

| **Please delete as appropriate** |
|---|
| **I agree** |
| **Signed (Service Head): Karey Barnshaw** |
| **Date: 10/2/21** |