

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 3 October 2024

Report of the Director of Digital

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;

Digital Strategy Renewal 2025 - 2029

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

The Council's Digital Strategy is planned for renewal in 2024 and will outline the Council's digital ambitions for the coming 5 years. To support the development of this strategy and stretch thinking a leading partner in this area was commissioned in February 2024.

Over the last 6 months a significant focus has been on the Council's resident and workforce views to ensure that the Council's future direction addresses some of today's challenges as well as what is needed to deliver for the future.

Further work is underway to ensure the look and feel of this new strategy complements the Council's existing published strategies.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the Digital Strategy 2025 - 2029, as set out at Appendix 'A', and the publication of the strategy on the county council's website.
- (ii) Approve the high-level delivery plan as set out at Appendix 'B'.

- (iii) Authorise the Director of Digital, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance/Senior Information Risk Officer and the Cabinet Member for Community and Cultural Services, to make technical updates to the strategy and road map where appropriate to reflect the changing technological landscape and the emerging council plan.

Detail

Since February 2024, a significant focus has been on the county council's resident and workforce views to ensure the Council's future direction addresses some of today's challenges as well as what is needed to deliver for the future. Extensive consultation has taken place with both residents and officers, including members of the senior and executive leadership teams. The digital strategy has been shaped by this feedback and steered by a group of 20 senior officers representing a whole council view.

The strategy sets a direction of travel under six core ambitions:

- Digital partnerships for the benefit of the county
- Providing a great digital experience for residents
- Driving innovation from Data insights and artificial intelligence
- Technical foundations
- Digital skill, culture, and ways of working
- Leveraging digital in social care

These ambitions outline specific areas of focus for the next 5 years. The Council's six core ambitions will help the Council to improve the everyday lives of Lancashire's residents, by increasing digital inclusion for those who can and wish to engage with the Council digitally, making services more accessible and user friendly so that key services can be accessed easily, regardless of digital skills, as and when needed. Given the complexities and increasing levels of demand for social care services, activities and ambitions on digital innovation have been targeted in this area of the council.

The strategy aims to build on the Council's existing digital innovation journey through the use of data insights and artificial intelligence. A Generative Artificial Intelligence policy is now in place to support the Council's workforce in the adoption of generative artificial intelligence and can be seen [here](#). This policy will evolve as the Council's use of digital capabilities expand and mature.

With the changing pace of technology and emerging priorities for the council, the delivery roadmap will continue to evolve. Engagement with the Director of Transformation and Innovation has been key to ensure that there is alignment between the direction for Digital and the emerging Council plan.

Appendices

Appendices 'A' and 'B' are attached to the report. For clarification they are summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report:



Appendix	Title
Appendix 'A'	Digital Strategy 2025 - 2029
Appendix 'B'	Digital Strategy Delivery roadmap, high level deliverables

Consultations

621 people have engaged with Digital Services during the discovery period, 121 residents and 500 staff, through a range of approaches including surveys, focus groups, discussion groups and a series of senior officer stakeholder interviews. Feedback indicated a requirement for the council to focus on digital inclusion, access to information whether via the council's website or in person and increasing support for officers in the use of digital technology. These requirements are embedded within the ambitions in the new digital strategy and will feature within the Council's detailed delivery roadmap.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

The council will:

- Build digital partnerships with the wider ecosystem of organisations for the good of the county.
- Provide a great digital experience for residents and its workforce.
- Drive innovation from Artificial Intelligence and data insights.

Legal

Legal Services will provide advice and support to digital services as is required to protect the interests of the council and its residents in the implementation of the digital strategy.

Financial

Commitment to a number of deliverables within the strategy will require additional funding. Work has been completed to assure all commitments with leads.

Risk management

There is a risk that the strategy fails to be delivered or fails to meet the needs of residents and the Council's workforce. An oversight steering group will assure delivery to minimise this risk.



List of Background Papers

Paper

Date

Contact/Tel

None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

