



Cabinet

Tuesday, 10 May 2022

ICT Strategy 2022-2025

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Customer Access, Councillor G Moore

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The current Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Strategy expired at the end of 2021/22. In terms of ICT, much has changed over the last few years, not least because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and so it is important that the Council's ICT provision is reviewed. This will ensure the Council keeps abreast of new developments that could improve the ways in which residents do business with us as well as making improvements to the ways in which the Council does its business ensuring processes are as efficient as they can be.
- 1.2. Appendix One presents a draft updated ICT Strategy for consideration and approval.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the 2022-2025 ICT Strategy for adoption.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The current ICT Strategy expired at the end of March 2022. Significant progress has been made towards the goals outlined in that Strategy and an updated, more forward-looking strategy is required to guide the future direction of ICT Services at the Council.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. This document sets out the Council's ICT Strategy over the period 2022 to 2025. It builds upon the previous Strategy and takes into account the achievements of the last few years including (full list available in the Strategy):
 - Microsoft Office365 – increased flexibility, availability and reduced local data store capacity
 - Hybrid Video Conferencing with Teams and Zoom – provided the ability to host meetings with attendees being onsite or remote
 - Telephony systems migrated to Cloud Services – enhanced the Council's business and continuity arrangements
 - Digital Services (MyAccount and Self-Service technology)

- Customer Contact Centre CRM System – this is now in the Cloud, providing resilience and availability
 - Microsoft Server 2016 / 2019 upgrades
 - Microsoft Windows 10 upgrade
 - Microsoft Exchange Online
 - Corporate Firewall
 - Enhanced Security Protection.
- 4.2. The role of ICT Services is essential to the delivery of all of the Council's services and is fundamental to most business change programmes across the organisation. With advancements in technologies over the past 3 years, and preferred communication methods used by residents, this ICT Strategy aims at ensuring the Council stay ahead and continues to explore new and better ways technology can help residents access both the Council and its services in the ways that are right for them.
- 4.3. This is an emerging strategy enabling an agile approach to operational delivery. This will allow the Council to take advantage of technology and digital platforms as they become available and respond quickly to changing times, to better serve residents in accessing Council services to provide more efficient and economical communication channels.
- 4.4. The mission statement for ICT Services has also changed to be more relevant to today's service expectations:
"to provide excellent customer service, experience, and embrace technology as an enabler for efficient and economical services".
- 4.5. This ICT Strategy will build on the strength from previous strategies and will focus on five strategic themes:
- **People and Smarter Ways of Working** with a focus on people and their experience when accessing Council services
 - **Business Continuity, Cloud Services and Hybrid Technologies** continue to improve business continuity arrangements and underpin other strategic objectives and their success
 - **Information Management and Governance, and Security** To safeguard Council data by ensuring legislative, central government security standards are followed and using security and privacy by design principles
 - **Think Green!** to be aware of and help achieve local net zero targets from energy efficiency savings when upgrading existing or implementing new systems
 - **Collaboration and Partnerships** continue to work closely with other authorities, establishing effective partnerships to share common challenges for efficient outcomes.
- 4.6. The draft ICT Strategy can be found at Appendix One and also contains a high-level action plan containing eight primary tasks:
- Enhance the Council's backup and recovery environment by 2023
 - Refresh and update the Council's main website by 2023
 - Support the launch of the new Crematorium due to go live in Autumn 2022

- Enhance 'MyAccount' portal to increase services and provide personalised information by 2024
- Move business systems into Cloud Services where appropriate by 2025
- Replace the Council's main Storage and Computing environment by 2025
- Assess existing energy usage in the Council's data centre with an aim to reduce power by 2025
- Continue to deliver the Infrastructure and Digital-by-Design programmes by 2025.

5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection

5.1. No alternatives were considered.

6. Risks and Uncertainties

6.1. There are no risks or uncertainties involved with forwarding the draft ICT Strategy to Cabinet for consideration. However, there are significant risks to the Council in not maintaining a forward looking ICT Strategy in terms of security, the inability to enable residents to access Council services using the most efficient means, and a lack of agility and resilience in the Council's working practices and systems.

7. Implications

7.1. Financial Implications

Any necessary expenditure contained within the ICT Strategy will be incorporated into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Transformation Plan which are approved by Council. Projected Capital programme costs are stated in the Action Plan and Resources Section within the Strategy. As the actions required evolve going forward so will the financial implications.

7.2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to the recommendations contained within this report.

7.3. Equalities Implications

The ICT Strategy supports the Council's Equalities Scheme by increasing the variety of ways in which residents can access Council Services and increases the diverse ways in which officers can work supporting those with different needs or preferences.

7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Section 17 implications to the recommendations contained within this report.

8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The ICT Strategy supports the Council's Corporate Strategy and all Corporate priorities.
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	
The Environment	

9. Recommendations

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet approves the 2022-2025 ICT Strategy for adoption.

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Director – Finance and Corporate Services 0115 914 8439 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix One – ICT Strategy 2022-2025