

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Alison Webb – Executive Member for Customer & Corporate Services
To: Cabinet – 11th September 2023
Author: Ben Meen, IT & Digital Manager
Subject: IT & Digital Strategy 2023-2026
Purpose: To obtain approval to implement an updated IT & Digital Strategy.

Recommendation(s):

Approve and implement the IT & Digital Strategy 2023-26

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Over the past few years Breckland Council has gone through a rapid period of change, delivering digital change projects at increasing pace. These projects are fundamental to achieving efficiencies, delivering a better experience for our people and helping the Council to make better decisions.
- 1.2 The IT & Digital Strategy for Breckland Council (2023-26) has been developed to guide the Council's technology initiatives over the next three years. This report provides an overview of the strategy and seeks approval for its implementation.
- 1.3 The strategy is founded on three core themes that align with the broader goals and values of the Council and the Corporate Plan:

Informed: Enhancing access to information and data-driven decision-making.

Supported: Recognising the core role of technology and supporting members and officers.

Empowered: Using technology to enable users (internal and external) to solve issues and achieve goals.
- 1.4 The strategy sets out a roadmap of internal projects and service delivery activity to create a robust digital environment where our people can be informed, supported and empowered. It also details the governance, compliance and performance metrics that will help guide us on this journey.
- 1.5 Finally, the strategy outlines the next steps that, should this strategy gain approval, will need to be considered. These steps include; implementation planning, stakeholder communication, establishing monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track progress and reviewing existing resource type and levels to ensure it is sufficient to deliver against this strategy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

Agree and authorise Option 1 – Approve and implement the IT & Digital Strategy 2023-26.

3.0 OPTIONS

- 3.1 **Option 1** - Approve and implement the updated IT & Digital Strategy 2023-26.
- 3.2 **Option 2** – Do not approve or implement the updated IT & Digital Strategy 2023-26 and consider alternative content.

4.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The reasons to approve the recommendation are:

- A strategy is needed to help ensure that there is a clear vision that can be applied to ensure the Council remains at the forefront of digital and technology advancements and that these can be applied to the delivery of Council services.
- The strategy aligns with the Corporate Plan and the activities of the IT & Digital service.
- The existing strategy is now outdated and no longer fit for purpose.

5.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

The following benefits are expected:

- Efficient deployment of technology to support frontline services to ensure residents have the optimum access to the Council's services.
- IT & Digital resources are more effectively applied to projects of strategic importance.
- The Council becomes more future-ready by highlighting the importance of innovation and empowerment at all levels.
- By adopting green IT practices the strategy aligns with the Council's commitment to sustainability and reducing its environmental footprint.
- Through training initiatives and a focus on IT competency, the strategy will build the skills of staff members, empowering them to leverage technology effectively in their roles.
- The strategy fosters collaboration both within the Council and with external stakeholders, enhancing communication and alignment across different departments and the community.
- The comprehensive and thoughtful approach to technology will enhance the Council's reputation as a progressive, inclusive, and responsive organisation.
- The strategic planning and rationalisation of resources promote cost-effective solutions, potentially leading to savings and more efficient allocation of the budget.
- Robust governance, risk management, and cybersecurity measures will protect the Council's digital assets and ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Constitution & Legal

5.1.1 None.

5.2 Contracts

5.2.1 There are no supplier contract issues.

5.3 Corporate Priorities

5.3.1 This strategy aligns with the Working Smarter theme and its underlying strategic priorities.

5.4 Equality and Diversity / Human Rights

5.4.1 None.

5.5 Financial

5.5.1 None.

5.6 Staffing

5.6.1 It is proposed that following the approval of the IT & Digital Strategy a skills audit would be undertaken to assess whether existing levels and types of resource are sufficient to deliver against the strategy and the wider ambitions of the organisation.

5.7 Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales

5.7.1 Following the decision by the Committee, this strategy would come into effect immediately.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 All wards

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 Detailed within the report.

Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post: Ben Meen, IT & Digital Manager

Telephone Number: 07976791438

Email: ben.meen@breckland.gov.uk

Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Discretionary Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A – IT & Digital Strategy