Digital Innovation Update

Digital Roadmap for Staffordshire 2024-29

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April 2024

Objectives

1. Provide an update on progress to date

2. Seek your feedback to help us shape the developing digital strategy

3. Opportunity for O&S to challenge/provide thoughts on the developing digital strategy pillars

4. Showcase some of the exciting new innovations we are actively exploring

Current Organisational Digital Challenges

1. **The Pace and Understanding of Digital Innovations** - As new technologies continue to emerge and develop it proves difficult for a large public sector organisation to remain up to date with digital innovations.

2. **Interconnectivity –** Pockets of officers understand the digital opportunities and the "art of the possible", the challenge is connecting the innovations to the business problems across the organisation.

3. **Interdependencies** – Digital change and transformation taking place across the organisation can be siloed at times, causing duplication of effort and resource as well as challenges for our ICT architecture.

4. **End State -** Current strategy does not articulate our end state and where we want to be as an organisation.

![Staffordshire County Council]

Digital Maturity Across Staffordshire
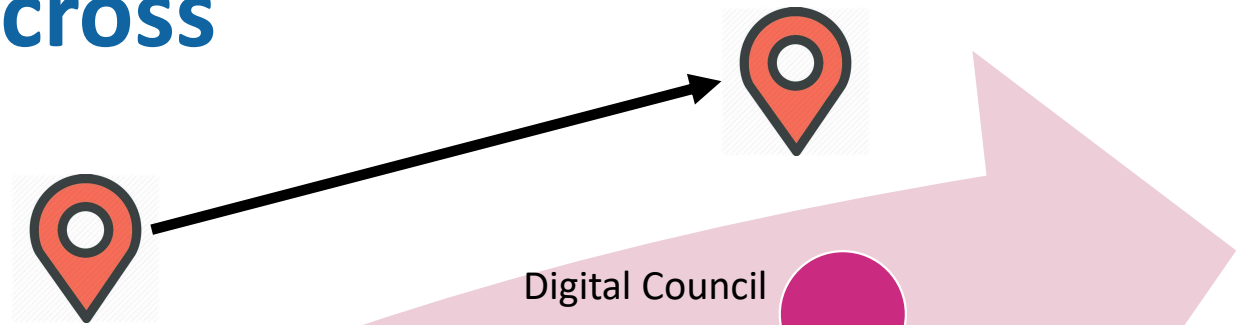
Traditional Council

Stage 0 – Largely paper based – siloed, traditional communication

Improving Council

Stage 1 – working smarter, improving processes and digital skills, some services online, modern technology used

Transforming Services

Stage 2 – people are connected and confident using online services. People and partners are involved in the design of services. We work where we need to. Data informs decision making and early intervention.

Transforming Council

Stage 3 – The customer experience is excellent, consistent and designed around the customer. Processes are automated . We use and share data to deliver, integrated, predictive services and better outcomes.

Digital Council

Stage 4 – The council is a great place to work, we're creative and innovative. We try things and deliver quickly. We shape and not just react to demand. We help people to help themselves. We design solutions with people to meet the needs in a digital age.

38%

48%

14%

Doing what we do better

Transforming

Case for Change

Develop an ambitious agenda for digital adoption, maximise the use of digital innovations to transform Staffordshire County Council into a modern, future facing organisation; using digital to enhance service provision and the customer experience.

- We will…develop a next-generation digital strategy that aims to transform our customer experience and drive efficiency and productivity.

- We will…develop and realise a digital delivery plan that focusses on implementing high impact digital improvement projects that transforms our customer interface, automation of systems, generating financial benefits and improving customer satisfaction.

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Journey So Far

Engagement
- Commenced over Summer 2023
- SLT / WLT Sessions
- 34 x 1-2-1's with key stakeholders
- 12 x wider workforce strategy engagement sessions

Research
- Outward look at what other LA's are doing / have done Digitally
- What can we learn from others?
- Analysis of our current digital programme

Development
- Senior Leadership Conference – 11th October
- Development of "Art of the Possible" and Strategy
- Workshops / Use Case Development

Pilot Scoping & Development
- Microsoft Co-Pilot
- Digital Translation Service
- Utilising AI to develop SEND EHCPs
- Expanding RPA Offer

SLT Approval
- Review & expand Digital Team's role
- Shape and deliver a pipeline of digital opportunity

January-February 2024

Engagement with the wider organisation around how the refreshed digital strategy can support the workforce to succeed

Future State Journey

Staffordshire County Council

2024 •--• 2029   Future State

Publish Digital Strategy

Strategy Deliverables

- Automation Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (RPA, chatbots, virtual agents) capability deployed across the organisation
- Digital opportunities rationalised, piloted and reviewed
- Robust Digital Champions Network in place and support to wider digital learning & skills
- Ongoing website development and maintenance
- Ongoing horizon scanning and best practice exploration

Future State

- Forward thinking digital authority
- Confidently utilising automation and AI technology
- Data driven and customer centred
- Simple tasks digitised
- Meeting rising demand via channel shift
- Engaging and interacting with the customer virtually

Benefits Tracking

Re-positioning The Digital Team

Support the organisation to deliver the Digital Strategy

Oversee and manage Digital Pipeline & Digital Business Case Development

Coordinate/Lead Digital Activity & Exploration

Embed a holistic and consistent organisational approach to Digital Innovation

Digital Expertise (Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning)

Business Cases

![Staffordshire County Council logo]

Digital Vision

Our vision for Digital across Staffordshire is...

> **"Driving digital excellence to enhance our services, fostering inclusivity and building a smarter, more connected future for our community."**

To deliver on that vision we are seeking to pursue six strategic pillars:

Digital Pillars					
Digital Champions	Digital Council	Digital Place	Digital Inclusion	Digital Data	Digital Pipeline

Digital Champions

"Empowering our staff through innovation, cultivating a culture of digital fluency to support our teams navigating the evolving digital landscape."

Objectives	
Empowerment: Foster a culture of digital empowerment by equipping team members with the forums, access to skills development and tools needed to excel in the digital landscape.	
Advocate Innovation: Drive innovation across business areas by championing digital solutions and advocating for the safe adoption of emerging technology.	
Collaborative Leadership: Cultivate a collaborative leadership approach, encouraging teams to leverage digital capabilities for enhanced efficiency and outcomes.	

Deliverables

Digital Champions Network
- Further development of our Digital Champions Network
- Define and embed the role of Digital Champions
- Implement strategies for leveraging the Digital Champions Network to support digital projects.

Continuous Improvement & Feedback Mechanisms
- Establish feedback loops and continuous improvement mechanisms to enhance digital practices
- Provide an opportunity to capture 'staff voice' to capture ideas and explore future digital innovations.

Digital Council

"Improving access to information and resident's services. Making sure that council systems are easy to use for all residents and internal processes are as simple and as effective as they can be."

Objectives

User-Centric Accessibility: Strive to enhance accessibility to information and services for residents, placing a strong emphasis on user-centric design to ensure a seamless and intuitive experience.

Process Optimisation: Lead efforts to streamline and simplify council processes, making them more efficient and user friendly for residents and internal partners.

Strategic Partnerships: Forge strategic partnerships with technology providers and community organisations to leverage expertise and resources enhancing the overall effectiveness of digital initiatives.

Deliverables

Website Maintenance & Improvement
- Identify areas for improvement for the organisation's website
- Embed strategies for regular website maintenance to ensure optimal performance, security, and compliance.
- Explore ideas for enhancing user engagement

Automation Development
- Exploration & implementation of RPA, AI, Chatbots, and Virtual Agents.
- Scale automation across the organisation to streamline workflows and reduce manual tasks.
- Identify opportunities to implement automation technologies to improve efficiency, reduce operational costs, and enhance the overall digital experience for both internal and external stakeholders.

Evolution of M365
- Wider exploration of M365 e.g. Copilot and Power Automate.
- Understand potential impact of these tools on day-to-day operations, collaboration, and workflow optimisation.
- Define approach for adopting and integrating M365 advancements into existing processes

Digital Place

"Having consistent technology and connectivity available that is accessible for both businesses and residents."

Objectives	
Objectives	**Robust Connectivity:** Develop digital infrastructure that ensures reliable and high-speed connectivity for the majority of residents that lays the foundation for seamless communication and data transfer across Staffordshire. **Future Readiness:** Prepare the digital infrastructure of Staffordshire that enables faster and more reliable connectivity to support emerging innovations and technology.

Deliverables

Increased Connectivity
- Continue to understand current state of connectivity within the County and deliver on aspirations for increased connectivity.
- Identify potential challenges related to connectivity and develop solutions to mitigate.

Accelerate Gigabit-Capable Tech & Infrastructure
- Implement strategies to accelerate implementation of gigabit-capable technology.
- Explore the benefits of gigabit capability, such as faster data transfer, improved connectivity for remote work, and remote healthcare.

Promote the Opportunities and Benefits of Digital Infrastructure
- Understand the opportunities and benefits associated with robust digital infrastructure within the County.
- Showcase how improved digital infrastructure can positively impact residents' lives.
- Promote awareness and understanding of the advantages of investing in digital infrastructure.
- Encourage dialogue on potential collaborative initiatives, both internally and externally, that can further enhance the County's digital infrastructure and contribute to our overall digital place.

Digital Inclusion

"Identifying digitally excluded residents, providing access to devices and digital skills where possible to enable residents to safely participate in the digital world."

Objectives	
Objectives	**Collaborative Partnerships:** Form partnerships with community organisations, businesses and education partners to create a collaborative ecosystem focussed on addressing digital inclusion challenges. **Accessible Devices and Technology:** Promote the development and availability of accessible devices and technologies to accommodate diverse needs and ensure that technology across Staffordshire is inclusive for all. **Inclusive Design Principles:** Encourage the adoption of inclusive design principles in digital products and services, ensuring that technology is designed to be usable by people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities.

Deliverables

Increased Digital Inclusion for Residents
- Explore the current landscape of digital inclusion within the community, identifying gaps and challenges.
- Implement initiatives to increase digital inclusion for residents
- Seek input on specific programs or outreach efforts that could address the diverse needs of residents.

Improved Access to Digital IAG and Support
- Examine the existing channels for providing digital IAG and support to residents.
- Introduce enhancements or innovations in delivering digital IAG.
- Explore ways to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of digital support services.

Improved Outcomes for People at Risk of Digital Exclusion
- Identify groups / individuals at risk of digital exclusion
- Explore collaborative efforts with community organisations, educational institutions, and local businesses to create tailored solutions for those at risk.
- Understand the benefits of improved digital inclusion on overall community well-being, economic participation, and social connectivity.
- Monitor success and continuously adapt initiatives to address the evolving needs of residents at risk of digital exclusion.

Digital Data

"Using our data to better understand our customers and improve the way we deliver services by making quick and robust decisions for residents."

Objectives	

Objectives

Customer-Centric Data Collection: Develop strategies for collecting customer-centric data that provides valuable insights into preferences, behaviours, and needs, enabling a more nuanced understanding of residents that inform future solutions.

Continuous Learning and Adaptation: Establish a culture of continuous learning, using customer data insights to adapt strategies, innovate services and stay responsive to evolving resident needs.

Agile Decision-Making Culture: Foster an agile decision-making culture within the organisation, encouraging teams to use customer data for swift and informed decisions that enhance service delivery.

Deliverables

Development of the Centre for Data Analytics
- Continue to develop the Staffordshire Centre for Data Analytics.
- Position the centre to advance data-driven initiatives, foster innovation, improve services and promote data literacy.
- Seek input on key focus areas, potential partnerships, and the desired impact of the Staffordshire Centre for Data Analytics on the organisation's overall data capabilities.

Data Strategy for the Council
- Define the key components and objectives of the Data Strategy for the Council.
- Establish the strategic priorities for data management.
- Seek input on how the Data Strategy aligns with the broader organisational goals.

Utilising Data Across systems to provide a Single View
- Explore the concept of creating a single view through the integration.
- Understand the benefits / challenges to achieving a unified perspective through data integration.
- Identify use cases and scenarios where a single view of data could enhance operational efficiency, collaboration, and decision-making.
- Implement strategies, technologies, and collaborative approaches to overcome challenges and successfully implement integration of data across systems.

Digital Pipeline

"Rationalise and support delivery of the organisation's dynamic digital delivery plan."

Objectives

Collaborative Development: Foster collaboration among cross-functional team involved in the digital pipeline, promoting synergy and effective teamwork to support the dynamic nature of the delivery plan.

Strategic Alignment: Ensure that the digital pipeline aligns closely with the organisation's strategic plan and Digital Strategy supporting the strategic goals and initiatives outlines.

Performance Monitoring: Implement robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track the performance of the digital pipeline, providing visibility into the progress and impact of digital initiatives outlined in the delivery plan.

Deliverables

Rationalise and Prioritise Pipeline of Digital Projects
- Implement a process to rationalise and prioritise digital project pipeline.
- Agree criteria for project prioritisation.
- Streamline the pipeline to ensure optimal resource allocation and successful delivery.

Manage, Report, and Escalate Exceptions
- Introduce mechanisms for managing, reporting, and escalating exceptions within the digital project pipeline.
- Agree strategies for effective communication and collaboration among project teams and stakeholders when exceptions arise.
- Explore the role of reporting in providing transparency and accountability.

Digital Pilot Exploration
- Delve into the concept of digital pilot exploration.
- Establish criteria for selecting projects suitable for pilot exploration and the process for evaluating their feasibility and success.
- Capture lessons learned from digital pilot initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of future explorations.
- Create a culture of experimentation and learning within the organisation to drive continuous improvement in digital project implementation.

Feedback from O&S Committee

Staffordshire County Council

New Digital pilots we're exploring

Pilot Scoping

Staffordshire County Council

Microsoft Co-Pilot

Microsoft Copilot is an AI-powered assistant that works across Microsoft applications and experiences. It can answer queries, assist with research, and provide summaries of various content. We are actively exploring it's application and implementation across a range of teams in the organisation to explore what efficiencies can be unlocked with it's deployment.

Robotic Process Automation
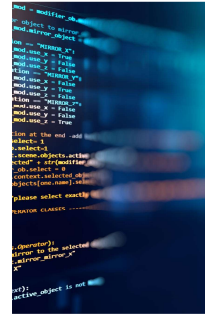
Expanding upon the RPA pilot initiated last year (within ASC and Finance) to ready The Digital Team and the wider organisation for a wider rollout and adoption. Focussed on back office functions where clear efficiencies, benefits and ROI can be unlocked. Developing a centre of excellence to embed the use of this technology as Business As Usual.

Digital Translation Service

Exploring the adoption of a digital platform/technology that utilises generative AI to automatically translate documents into multiple languages and produces easy read documents. Working across a number of business areas to reduce current service translation costs and increase the speed and efficiency of translation.

Producing Education Health & Care Plans Using AI

Working with AI providers and other local authorities to explore the adoption of Artificial Intelligence and digital technologies to understand the opportunities of deploying AI to produce EHCPs faster and more efficiently.

Next Steps

Staffordshire County Council

Digital Strategy Sign Off - Next Steps

- Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 9th April 2024

- Full SLT – 17th June 2024

- Pre-Cabinet – 3rd July 2024

- Full Cabinet – 7th July 2024