



85%

of adults in
Melton have
been online

77%

of adults in
Melton have
Basic Digital
Skills

93%

of households in
Melton do receive
broadband speeds of
at least 10 megabits
per second

(Go-on.co.uk)

Digital Strategy Melton Borough Council Phase 1, 2017

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Foreword - Keith Aubrey, Strategic Director, Melton Borough Council

We live in a world that is being remade by the internet. Today you might start the day by checking social media, order your weekly groceries on your smartphone on the way to work and then use Google maps to find your way to a meeting, all before 9.30am. Only 10 years ago none of this technology existed.



This digital revolution matters to Melton because digital change creates both opportunities for innovation and growth, but also the potential to create greater uncertainty and alienation for those left behind. The Council needs to keep up with this revolution and we're developing this strategy to guide us. Our vision ***is to help to support a digital Borough with digitally confident people and organisations so that everyone, including the Council, can make the most of the digital age.***

By bringing new technology into the heart of how we do things, we can ensure that more people get the service they need in a way that's intuitive and convenient. Accessing the council should be as easy as buying a book on Amazon. Just as importantly, going digital will save us money and help us to protect services that still need face-to-face contact.

We can only make the most of digital technology if we are prepared to change as a Council and move away from the usual ways of doing things. Digitisation isn't just about developing digital services. Digital tools could help to change so much, such as transform labour intensive caring services, contribute to faster economic growth, renew local democracy and ultimately change the way councils organise themselves and manage their resources, particularly to be faster, more adaptable and more responsive to user needs.

Successful public service transformation requires redesign and reengineering on every level – workforce, customer services, process, technology and governance – to make organisations faster at doing things, more adaptable, able to share more information and to do so securely. There is a view that digital transformation for councils is more complex than in the private sector due to many more lines of business, the governance role of local authorities in communities and rising citizen expectations at a time of budget cuts and lack of baseline skills within the sector.

In Melton, we have already started to deliver some of these changes; launching a new website, enabling more services to be accessed online and fostering a paperless, smarter organisational culture. Our staff are working hard to change the way they work to make the most of the opportunities digital brings. But we're only at the beginning of our digital journey and we need a clear map to show us the way forward.

Introduction

Customer expectations are forever changing. Time is now a key factor for most customers when interacting with an organisation. Along with the growth of new technology and access channels, organisations have to evolve to keep pace with new technological advances which means there is a need for a clear strategy to steer how we move forward in this “Digital World”.

In order to meet customer expectations we need to develop services that are recognised by citizens and businesses as being outstanding whilst with the challenge of decreased funding secure efficiencies over the longer term.

We need to increase access routes for information and transactions that will enable customers to intuitively and easily achieve what they want within an acceptable timescale.

Through the use of customer insight we will need to ensure that services are designed to be more personalised, more pro-active and better meet the needs of different groups of people.

By placing the customer, citizen or business at the centre of service delivery and developing a single version of the truth for each person or business will lead to a seamless end to end experience.

Current Situation

Some of our current ICT systems are not future proof or fit for purpose. We are yet to fully exploit new technology for the benefit of the customer, and we still have legacy systems in place which rely on API's or modular add-ons to “speak” to each other. There are opportunities to be exploited with cloud based systems which would enable the council to create a centralised platform which would hold the “golden record” for all of our citizens; it would also allow us to have a holistic view of customer contact across different services meaning we can provide our citizens with a consistent experience. Therefore our processes become more streamlined and as efficient as they can be.

Internal and External cultural issues need to be addressed through leadership and ambition, alongside the investment in technology to turn this vision into reality.

There needs to be a strong drive from back office staff to “own” processes and make them work for customers and for staff, with effective technical integration between front and back office systems. This will lead to less reliance on training and knowledge for customer service staff and more time available for helping customers to access services.

The Digital Champion programme needs to be supported from the top-down to ensure staff has the capacity and direction to prioritise the delivery of online services.

Vision

- Put customers of public services at the heart of process designs
- Provide services that are so “straight forward and convenient that all those who can use the digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded.” (GOV.uk)
- Harness the continuous growth in technology and provide digital solutions to support advancing channels.

- Work closely with Partners to keep up with demand for information and transactional services.
- Have an up-skilled and dynamic workforce who can provide efficient services while promoting the benefits of using digital channels.
- Ensure there are other more “supportive” channels to complement our digital platform for our more vulnerable customers.

Principles

Our key aim is to put the citizen, customer, or business at the centre of what we do. We will design services by adopting these 5 Digital Principles to ensure they are completely fit for purpose for the customer using them.

5 DIGITAL PRINCIPLES

Adopting common principles in the move to digital means a greater chance of achieving the benefits and overcoming the barriers.

This doesn't mean one size fits all; different organisations will have their own priorities and plans for design and delivery of digital services.



Accessible

Provide digital services and information online in a user friendly and inclusive way.



Reliable

Provide quality digital services that perform consistently according to specification.



Well Designed

Online service design will involve customer engagement throughout to ensure that processes are designed for you.



Safe

Digital services will have security measures in place to assure that all your personal information is safe.

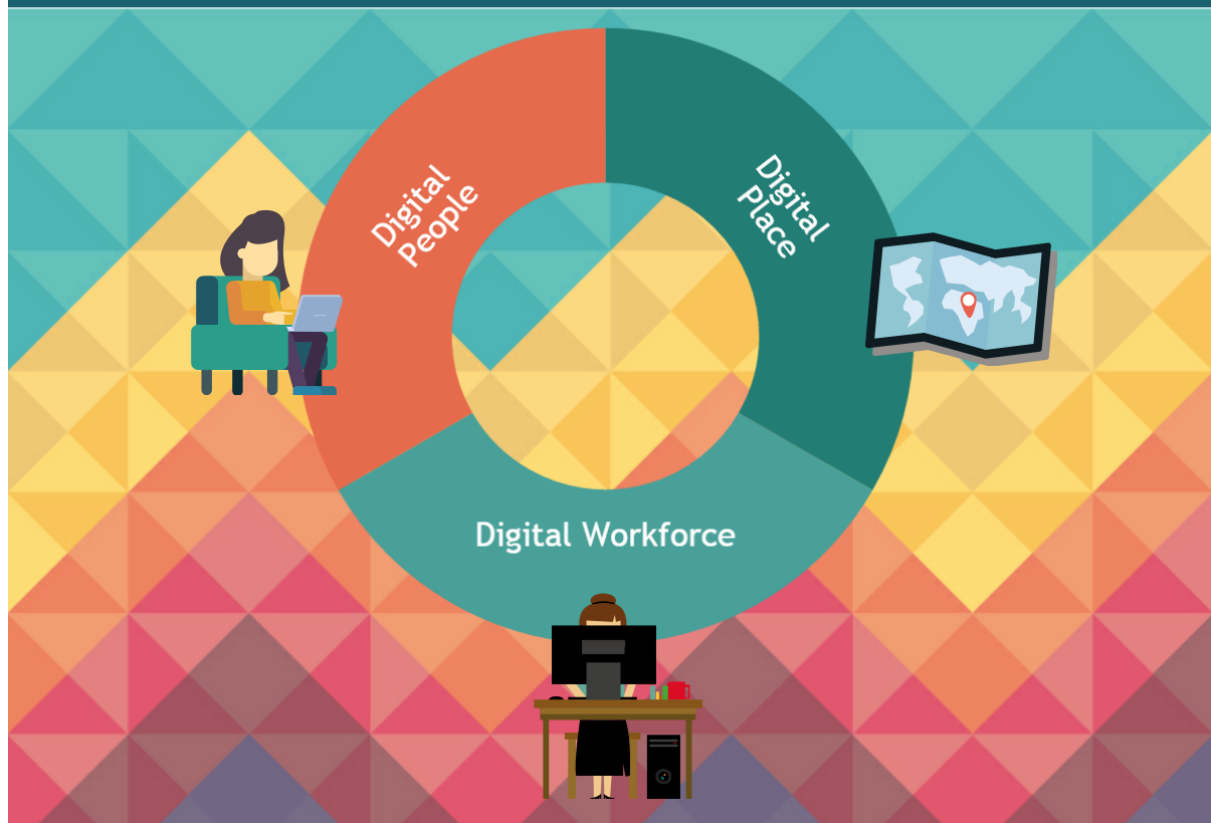


Future Proof

All services will continuously be reviewed to ensure that customer feedback is considered and new technology can be harnessed to improve your online experience.

What will success look like? – Melton Digital Future

What does Digital Melton Borough Council look like?



Digital People

Will have the skills and knowledge to access the council services that they need through the most appropriate channel to them.

Transactions that are done on a routine basis will be done via a self serve option including online or through automated telephone services.

Customers will access their own tailored "services account" to carry out specific tasks and track the progress of their communications with the council.

Digital Place

Local businesses will engage with the council and will be forthcoming in attending free digital workshops to support better use of digital platforms.

The council will promote and encourage the uptake of super fast broadband to help cover the shortage of internet access in rural communities.

The council will engage and support "key influencers" in the community to provide assistance and access points to citizens struggling with the digital move.

Digital Workforce

Customers will be supported by our staff who have the access and skills to use technology to find the information they need.

All internal stakeholders will harness new technology to automate as much routine and transactional activity as possible, allowing staff to focus their resources on actions that add value to Melton and its residents.

Staff will embrace the changes that "digital by default" will bring and as a result embrace new ways of working.

Strategy Roadmap – 12 months

Digital Work force

Training, development and empowerment

Staff will be aware of the suite of technology that the council have adopted and will be provided with training and guidance where necessary. Back office staff and customer insight will form a large part of the procurement process when investing in new technology to warrant a holistic approach to product selection and a guarantee the technology is fit for purpose for both staff and the customer. We will have knowledge and consideration for other systems that will need to be linked into new products.

Culture

The digitisation of the council will be delivered from the top down ensuring leadership is the driving force for change and is communicated as a key factor in everyday working. Digital transformation work is prioritised and head of services will support and be actively part of service redesigns.

Different ways of working

Staff will embrace new ways of working by becoming suitably skilled, sustainable, multidisciplinary teams led by senior service managers with decision making responsibility, can design, build and improve the service.

Digital People

Skills

The residents of Melton Borough will have the skills and confidence to access our services online. To compliment online services we will still provide traditional contact to deal with complex circumstances and ensure we are not excluding our more vulnerable citizens.

Educate

Citizens will have access to information on how to stay safe on the internet. Support will be given at the council offices and other internet access points to citizens who are concerned about data sharing and financial information – giving them the confidence to self-serve in a safe environment.

Empowerment

We will harness digital technologies to crowd source ideas, develop policies and enable citizens to deliberate on options and proposals.

Digital Place

Economic growth

We will place the citizens at the heart of the local problem solving and decision making to ensure that finances and resources are targeted in ways which reflect local needs and preferences.

Melton Mowbray will be a place which supports new business start-ups and growth opportunities for existing businesses through providing an exceptional digital infrastructure, helping spur the local economy.

Melton Borough Council will implement digital methods of procurement which will open up opportunities for high growth small businesses.

Joint working

Partnership working will ensure that we provide citizens with a holistic service which isn't restrictive to specific service areas.

All systems will "talk to each other" to enable greater transparency and knowledge of customers across all platforms, meaning less dual keying and duplication of information.

Data sharing

Data will be shared internally and externally to support the "one truth of the customer" ideology so services and partnerships have a better understand of the customer. This will also result in effective Partnership working to ensure intervention at earlier stages of complex cases.

The Digital Strategy in Detail

Accessible

The approach to process redesign will be digital by default. This will be achieved through new ways of working to deliver services through channels that customers and businesses want to use and are most appropriate to their enquiry – this could be a combination of options. For the majority of transactional contact - self-service options will be available. Throughout the design process we will follow and implement the latest accessibility standards and guidelines so that our services are inclusive to people of all abilities.

Our online services will reduce the need for contact with the council, creating capacity for our more vulnerable citizens to be supported as needed. Consideration will be given to the end-to-end customer journey to identify when and why a customer contacts us, acknowledging that different people have different needs. We will still ensure to tackle digital exclusion by providing offline services to complement our online services.

Our digital services will be designed to be intuitive, easy to access, readily available and formed around the service users needs. This means that Internet connectivity across the borough is important. With the implementation and promotion of the SuperFast Broadband Leicestershire programme we will tackle some of the internet connectivity issues in the rural areas of the Borough.

By moving services to a “digital by default” design we will introduce the idea that the council is a 24/7 service, therefore helping the local economy through connectivity, speed of service with readily available information delivered in an inclusive way. We will maintain our online platforms through streamlined procedures for writing and publishing content plus following corporate website standards and style guides.

What we will do

- Understand user needs. Research to develop deep knowledge of who the service users are and what that means for the design of the service.
- Follow the latest accessibility standards and guidelines to ensure our digital platforms are usable for people of all abilities and disabilities including older audiences, and those with visual, hearing and cognitive or motor impairments.
- Use open standards, existing authoritative data and registers, and where possible make source code and service data open and reusable under appropriate licences.
- Make certain the service is simple enough that users succeed first time unaided.
- Follow the corporate website guideline and style guide to guarantee all digital content is tailored and inclusive to all of our customers.
- Joint work with Leicestershire County Council will encourage take-up of faster broadband connection in outer rural areas to develop wider reach and access to our digital services.

Reliable

We will move to open/wider-integrated systems resulting in the rationalisation of applications and streamlining of key data sets.

We will continually evaluate a move to alternative delivery options, which will include cloud based platforms, off site hosting and in-house development therefore giving a more simplified and resilient IT infrastructure.

Our online services will be designed in a way which will guarantee consistent performance and a quality experience. As an outcome our citizens will have a positive user journey and will start to trust our self serve platforms and processes.

What we will do

- Invest in a testing environment so we are able to test the end-to-end service in an environment similar to that of the live version, including all common browsers and devices.
- Plan for the event of a digital service being taken temporarily offline, and regularly test.
- Identify performance indicators for the service, incorporating existing indicators and publishing to a performance platform, if appropriate.
- Reduce and consolidate IT systems within the council therefore saving costs, simplifying support and improving information sharing capability.
- Explore collaboration opportunities with other public sector bodies to ensure resilience and further develop business continuity across the council.
- Support changes needed for a new model of operation, back office staff will be retrained and reskilled to support new ways of working.

Well designed

The customers, citizens and businesses will be at the heart of our processes. We need to ensure that the service request is resolved at the first point of contact where possible.

We will continually engage with our residents to ensure that we are responding wherever possible to what the customer needs and not what we think the customer wants; this will mean end-to-end system redesigns that cross the boundaries of service departments and follows the customer journey with the council.

We will accomplish this through the development of new solutions that integrate services across functional and geographical boundaries rather than restricted departmental reach.

Working with the wider business community we will harness the opportunities that arise from location based data to promote local businesses and attractions.

What we will do:

- Use customer insight/business intelligence to focus our service delivery improvement on areas of highest demand therefore using our limited resources on the areas of most impact.
- Have clear outcome focussed projects using the transformation process review procedure to ensure measurement of return on investment and demonstrate strong project management change processes.
- Ensure a suitably skilled, sustainable multidisciplinary team, led by a senior service manager with decision making responsibility, can design, build and improve the service.
- Create a service using the agile, iterative and user-centred methods set out in the Government Service Design manual.
- Build a service consistent with the user experience of government digital services, including using common government platforms and the Government Service Manual design patterns.
- Join up data across our services to develop one version of the truth for property, business and citizen records.
- Establish our citizen My Account portal that gives the user a view of their interactions with the council whilst adopting a “tell us once” principle.
- Focus a move from face to face / telephone contact onto digitally enabled channels.
- Emphasise priority on place based services to allow efficiencies through more integrated services, a robust website, on-line forms, customer portal for the services that are delivered locally.
- Identify opportunities to promote on-line and digital activities across the borough through targeted marketing campaigns and better use of social media.
- Identify how we can better engage with the citizens of Melton to enhance the decision making of the council.

Safe

For service users who are not familiar with using the Internet it can appear unsafe. If users know how to stay safe online then they are more likely to have a good experience. Therefore we need to inform and educate our users about online safety.

We also want to provide staff and citizens with robust information to aid the decision making process as well as answer enquiries. However readily available information can have risks so we will ensure protection of privacy through effective information management and data sharing to protect business and citizens data from threats, loss or misuse.

What we will do

- Evaluate what user data and information the digital service will be providing or storing and address the security level, legal responsibilities, privacy issues and risks associated with the service.
- Evaluate what tools and systems will be used to build, host, operate and measure the service, and how to procure them, looking to reuse existing technology where possible.
- Encourage and signpost “wary” Internet users to educational resources to understand Internet security when using transactional services online.
- Continue to educate our staff around information integrity, use, sharing and online threats.
- Publish an array of readily available information online for citizens to access so they can resolve enquiries independently.
- Ensure compliance with data protection action and freedom of information legislation, including the development of open data.
- Comply with the protective marking of data in line with government policies.
- Invest in security measures to ensure compliance with data and information security standards plus safe process of payments.

Future proof

We need to make sure that we bring our staff along on this digital journey. They need to have easy access to ICT and digital resources, with the appropriate capability and experience who are committed to meeting and exceeding the needs of our customers.

We will guarantee staff development across technology and best practices. The vision for the transformation programme will see work practices changing across the organisation and this will mean changes in the delivery of information, collaboration and the use of services (such as social media) and technology.

Development of an agile workforce can bring service improvements and allow rationalisation of buildings and back office functions and increase productivity through new ways of working.

All key activities and policies will integrate with the “digital by default” ambition of the council, therefore developing digital skills for citizens and businesses is an important part of our digital strategy.

By ensuring that “key influencers” in the community have the skills necessary for the digital challenges that service delivery will bring will help us build a support network for those struggling to adapt and need the support in the move.

What we will do

- Further encourage agile working to improve services to the customer, better utilise technology and support staff with the training need to achieve this.
- Build services that can be iterated and improved in response to user need and make sure there is capacity, resources and technical flexibility to do this.
- Encourage maximum usage of digital services (with assisted digital support if required).
- Implement a process which will allow for ongoing user research, usability testing to continuously seek feedback from users, and collection of performance data to inform future improvement to the service.
- Test the service from beginning to end with appropriate council member or senior manager responsible for it.
- Explore alternative technologies to improve service delivery.
- Reduce print outputs through a move to automated responses, improved website information, development of customer portal and other digital methods.
- Ensure secure information sharing, enabling prompt and safe collaboration with partner agencies.
- Identify and up skill key influencers within the different citizen profiles to build an engaged relationship and support network for other residents struggling to move to digital.
- Reskill unemployed working age residents in to work by increasing the number of adult learners using the Me and My learning programme to ensure on-going development of digital skills.
- Provide free social media workshops to the business sector to make better use of social platforms.
- Use customer insight intelligence to inform the plans above, and support partners.