POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

11 JULY 2017

REPORT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

DIGITAL STRATEGY ROADMAP

1.0   PURPOSE

1.1   Following on from the approval in principle of the Phase 1 Digital Strategy in April 2017 this report considers a more detailed roadmap and resourcing plan for this phase.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1   Approve the Phase 1 Digital Strategy at Appendix A;

2.2   Approve the Phase 1 Digital Strategy Roadmap and Resource Plan at Appendix B; and

2.3   Approve an initial one-off budget of £40K to be funded from the Corporate Priority Reserve and note that any annual costs will need to be built in as growth items as part of the budget setting process.

3.0   KEY ISSUES

3.1   The digital revolution that is affecting much of our everyday lives continues apace and at the April meeting of this Committee members resolved to approve in principle a Phase 1 Digital Strategy (see Appendix 1). It was further resolved that a further report should be brought back to this meeting with a detailed roadmap and resourcing plan.

3.2   One of the key things that the Council will need to achieve with this Phase 1 Digital Strategy is to rapidly embrace and implement a more digital culture across the whole organisation from senior leaders through to junior staff. The Council will only be able to make the most of digital technology if it is able to change and move away from the normal ways of doing things.

3.3   A report outlining the more detailed digital roadmap for Phase 1 has been developed and is attached at Appendix 2. This report covers the key issues for this initial phase which are: -
   • Support a digital workforce for Melton Borough Council;
   • Support people in the Borough to be more digitally included and independent;
   • Promote an excellent digital infrastructure for the whole Borough; and
   • Adopt the Local Government Digital Standard for Council services

4.0   POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Digital has the potential to impact significantly on all aspects of how the Council works.

5.0   FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1   In relation to the significant staff development issues the intention at this stage is to seek to address these from within the existing training budget. However, given that there will continue to be normal pressures on this budget this will need to be kept under review.

5.2   At the present time the Council does not have adequate test systems to meet the requirements within the Local Government Digital Standard. This can have a detrimental impact on user experiences of digital services. The cost of implementing an appropriate test environment is estimated to be £10K per annum and this is needed to ensure that adequate testing is carried out before changes are released into a live environment.

5.3   When the Council started to build a more transactional website in 2014, it was initially kept relatively low key to try and ensure that services became robust and reliable before any wider scale marketing was carried out. It is now considered to be a more appropriate time to look at promoting the use of the website more broadly, as suggested in the Local Government Digital Standard. In order to do this a one off marketing budget of £20K is suggested, which would allow for communication with every household.

5.4   In order to develop some initiatives that will start to encourage digital skillsets amongst residents, particularly for older people, it is suggested that a budget allocation of £10K is allocated to develop some different initiatives in some of our older persons accommodation.

5.5   Overall, it is important to realise that as well as meeting rising customer expectations, a successful approach to digital will offer further opportunities to realise savings and generate additional income for the Council in the future. Reducing demand and improving processes will ensure that the Council will continue to remain relevant in an increasingly digital world.

6.0   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1   There may be legal issues that will need to be addressed as part of implementation, such as security of data.

7.0   COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1   The use of digital is likely to have a revolutionary impact upon how the Council and partners will tackle community safety issues in the future, quite possibly in ways that are currently difficult to envisage or imagine.

8.0   EQUALITIES

8.1   There will be particular challenges to ensure that digital benefits everyone and that is the overriding spirit of developing this Digital Strategy. An EIA will be developed at the earliest opportunity.

9.0   RISKS

9.1   Failure to adopt and implement a digital strategy could have severe detrimental impacts on both the organisation and the community.

10.0   CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1   Digital developments could have significant environmental benefits, such as reducing the need for journeys.

11.0   CONSULTATION

11.1   Strategic Management Team and appropriate internal staff.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards are affected.

Contact Officer:	K Aubrey
Date:	30 March 2017
Appendices:	Appendix A – Digital Strategy Phase 1 Appendix B – Roadmap and Resource Plan
Background Papers:	
Reference:	X: C'tees, Council & Sub-C'tees/PFA/2016-17/12-04-17KA-Digital Strategy