TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	6 April 2016
Subject:	Digital Strategy
Report of:	Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager
Corporate Lead:	Mike Dawson, Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor M Dean
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

Digital technology is changing our customers' expectations – people want services that are instant, available 24/7 and accessible no matter where they are. At the same time, we continue to face unprecedented financial challenge while still delivering quality front line services.

This Strategy sets out the direction for our digital journey, and makes it clear that before we embark on making big changes to the way we do things, we need to map out our digital requirements and ensure we achieve digital solutions in a joined up and worthwhile way.

Recommendation:

To APPROVE the Digital Strategy.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Digital technology has the potential to transform our Council services and the lives of our residents, while also generating savings and reducing pressure on Council taxpayers.

Resource Implications:

None directly resulting from this report.

Legal Implications:

None directly resulting from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If we do not keep updated with digital options for our customers, there is a significant risk to our reputation.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Delivery of the policy is monitored by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six monthly basis.

Environmental Implications:
None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 As a Council, we already offer our customers the opportunity to carry out some of our services online. However, we have implemented these in an ad-hoc way with no coordinated approach to delivery. In addition, we have not considered the impact these changes will have to our customers the staff delivering these services.

1.2 The Digital Strategy, attached at Appendix A, sets out the way in which we plan to meet the changing expectations of our customers using digital technology in a way which is joined up and worthwhile. The complexities in achieving this should not be underestimated – while there is a vast range of digital opportunities available, the implementation may not always be an easy or comfortable process because of the scale of change that it may introduce.

1.3 That said we cannot be left behind in a world which is changing at an unprecedented speed. Councils that can grasp appropriate digital opportunities will be at a major advantage in terms of remaining sustainable for the future – and we want to be one of those.

1.4 This Strategy will be complemented by an IT Strategy, which will provide the technical support to deliver the key actions. The IT Strategy will be developed following the approval of this one, to ensure our technological solutions reflect our digital requirements.

2.0 DIGITAL STRATEGY APPROACH

2.1 To reflect our customers' demands and expectations, this Digital Strategy outlines our vision for making our services digital, and sets out our approach for making this happen.

2.2 The digital vision is:

We want our customers to be able to access our services when and where they need them, we want to join up with our partners to make access to our services easier, and we want our staff to be equipped with the technology and skills to be able to work effectively in a digital environment.

2.3 Reflecting this vision, the Strategy introduces three digital priorities based around our Council Plan values:
1. <u>Digital services</u> – developing excellent digital services enabling our customers to get the information they need online.

2. <u>Joining up with our partners</u> – using technology to tackle complex issues and working together seamlessly with our partners to open up access to our services for our communities.

3. <u>Developing a digital workforce</u> – giving staff the digital tools and skills required to deliver services effectively and efficiently.

Underneath these three priorities, the Strategy sets out what we are doing now, where we want to be and the key actions needed to deliver this.

2.4 To ensure our digital approach is inclusive, effective and pushes us ahead of the game the Strategy introduces five principles underpinning each of our priorities, and these can be found on Page No. 3 of the Strategy.

2.5 It is important to note that, in line with our Customer Care Strategy, we will continue to deliver traditional contact methods for our residents who need it. Indeed, by moving those people who can online, we are freeing up our front line customer services staff to deal with those who cannot.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 None.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 The Council Plan and Customer Care Standards.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 None directly.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

8.1 None.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

9.1 None.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background papers:	None.
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Appendices:	Digital Strategy.