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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 19th April, 2017 at 5.30 pm
Cowdray & Goodwood Room, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham

Councillors:
Leonard Crosbie (Chairman)
David Coldwell (Vice-Chairman)

Toni Bradnum	Tim Lloyd
Alan Britten	Brian O'Connell
Paul Clarke	David Skipp
Roger Clarke	Ben Staines
Jonathan Dancer	Michael Willett
Matthew French	Tricia Youtan
Nigel Jupp	

You are summoned to the meeting to transact the following business

Tom Crowley
Chief Executive

Agenda

		Page No.
1.	**Apologies for absence**	
2.	**Minutes**	3 - 12
	To approve as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2017.	
3.	**Declarations of Members' Interests**	
	To receive any declarations of interest from Members of the Committee	
4.	**Announcements**	
	To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Committee or the Chief Executive	
5.	**Call-In of the Cabinet Decision to Adopt the Technology Strategy**	13 - 24

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee
3 APRIL 2017

Present: Councillors: Leonard Crosbie (Chairman), David Coldwell (Vice-Chairman), Toni Bradnum, Alan Britten, Paul Clarke, Matthew French, Nigel Jupp, Tim Lloyd, Brian O'Connell, David Skipp, Ben Staines, Michael Willett and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Roger Clarke and Jonathan Dancer

Also Present: Councillors: Brian Donnelly and Gordon Lindsay

SO/55   **MINUTES**

The Committee agreed two addendums to the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2017 item SO/48 Review of the proposed Council Budget:

a) The Budget's proposed expansion of the Council's real estate investment/non-operational portfolio by £3million per annum from 2017/18 to 2020/21 (detailed in the report to Cabinet on 26th January 2017 Appendix E(i)) would be financed solely by the Council's sale of assets, yet to be identified, that provided minimal or nil financial return
b) The Council's Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement (Report to Cabinet on 26th January 2017 Appendix G) provides for the Council's 2016/17 current external borrowings of £4million, to be repaid by 2019/20 and that no additional external borrowing would take place before 2019/20

SO/56   **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

SO/57   **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

SO/58   **CABINET MEMBER INTERVIEW**

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy was invited to the meeting of the Committee to answer a number of questions prepared by Committee Members in relation to his portfolio, he was also asked to present his portfolio summary.

1. *Strategy for tourism: I note that there are several references to a strategy for tourism through HDC documents. Can the Cabinet Member advise just how such a strategy can be implemented and if there are*

discussions with neighbouring councils and National Park to develop a coordinated approach tourism? Councillor Coldwell

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

The work of Acorn Tourism will produce a Visitor Economy Strategy for the District. As part of the development of the strategy they will be talking to WSCC, Coast to Capital and the National Park to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach. Our neighbouring authorities have a mixture of leisure strategies, visitor guides, cultural strategies. There is also work progressing across Coastal West Sussex to promote the Visitor Economy. We are already liaising with CWS to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach. The work will also look at visitor accommodation.

The second part of Acorn's commission is to establish a new Partnership, which will need to involve our visitor economy businesses. The Partnership will be primarily responsible for implementing the new Strategy.

2. *In the MTFS 2017-21 there appears to be no allocation of Resources for Economic Strategy objectives. This despite the following conclusions presented to Cabinet on 14th January in the Horsham District Economic Strategy- Employment Land: 1.4 "Resources need to be focused to identify new employment opportunities and secure economic growth" Resources Consequences 7.1 "A review of the Economic Development Team has taken place and the necessary resources will be in place to deliver the new strategy." Councillor Crosbie*

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

Clare Mangan was appointed Economic Development Manager in 2015 and we are in the process of hiring a research assistant to develop and maintain a business sites DB and to update the web site which at the moment looks more like a visitor's web site. We will also produce improved economic reports.

3. *Currently the Cabinet is evaluating future investment opportunities for the Council including launching a housing company; increasing investment in a property portfolio, amongst others. Are Economic Strategy objectives also included as possible investment options by the Cabinet? Councillor Crosbie*

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

We are currently looking for a suitable site for a Basepoint facility. When we have done this we will prepare a business case.

4. *The Economic Strategy states the following: ....our economic performance has been poor; we are the worst performing authority in West Sussex; we must create conditions that support the local economy;*

the visitor economy generates economic and social activity; the market towns .....face significant challenges, in particular the retail sector. A priority must be to support the market town businesses and enhance the vitality of their High Streets."

The key objective of the Economic Strategy states: "To help retain existing businesses."

In the light of these clear statements can the Cabinet Member please explain how he believes that the introduction of car parking charges in the rural communities is going to: help retain existing businesses, enhance the vitality of the rural High Streets, create a condition that supports the local rural economies, value the rural towns within HD and support them in evolving as modern economic locations and to encourage visitors to spend their leisure time in the local area? Could the cabinet member also let the committee know what his proposals are to develop the rural economies further than the broad outline of the Economic Strategy, which is lacking in substance and ideas and, what plans he has should the introduction of car parking charges be found to reduce the number of visitors and consequently damages the rural local economies? Councillor Lloyd

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

The introduction of rural car parking charges will generate income which will be used to improve monitoring of car parks and to improve car parks and make them a bit more welcoming for visitors. Given that the main users of the car parks are Horsham District residents and that the very low cost disc can be used in all district rural car parks this may incentivise people to visit other car parks in the district.

One of the most important actions to improve rural economies is to identify more rural sites for economic development. In addition we have to make our HDPF more business friendly. For example policy 10 on rural economic development requires developments to "result in substantial environmental improvement." This has resulted in planners over emphasising landscaping requirements thus making it very difficult for small businesses to expand.

In developing the rural car parking proposals significant consideration was given to how new proposals could support the rural economy. These included:

- *Feedback from local businesses was that the current system was confusing, clunky and not user friendly and discouraged visitors.*
- *We have introduced pay and display machines which are straightforward and familiar to all car owners.*

- *We have considered users and customers that frequent our market towns regularly and given that nearly 90% of the users surveyed last summer were local people, we developed a disc systems which is easy to use, requires a small one off purchase and can be used in all the rural car parks. The one off charge also encourages loyalty and customers wanting to get value for money out of their parking disc. Whilst we could have gone down the use of pay and display machines for every visit, as many market town areas do, we considered that this did not encourage convenience and loyalty.*

- *We have taken into consideration the needs of market town businesses understanding that they and their employees need places to park with convenience knowing they can get to work on time. We have considered local needs and demands of local employers to provide a sufficient number of long term season tickets in all of our market towns.*

- *We have also set the maximum parking times to reflect and encourage 'churn' and freeing up of spaces. Some areas are limited to 2 hours to ensure cars are not occupying spaces all day or for long periods which prevents customers using them.*

5. *In the HDC Business Survey (2016) firms identified "Business Support" as their 3rd Priority.*
   Surely the launch of Horsham as a WI FI Town would offer significant support to businesses all types.
   Also the project would be excellent PR for the Council and the Local Economy. Councillor Crosbie

   The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

   The Town Centres and Events Manager is currently working on this. Good Wi-Fi networks need to be managed and we have to ensure there is a sound business case. I don't think it necessarily should be assumed that a Wi-Fi network is beneficial to town traders so we have to determine whether they would support such a project.

6. *There is much made of migration of young people out of the District. This is surely to be expected as many will go to university or colleges of higher education gain qualifications and obtain jobs worldwide.*

   There is however a shift in that many cannot afford or do not wish to move on after school or college.

   Has a survey of young people been undertaken in the area as to what employment they are looking for, what sort of numbers make up this cohort? How many apprenticeships are available in the district?
   It is encouraging to see aspiration for more liaison with businesses and colleges could we be given a timeline as to when and where events will

be held? Who assesses the outcomes and where is the information published? Councillor Skipp

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

The Economic Development Officer is developing some specific actions around apprenticeships. We partnered with WSCC in relation to an apprenticeship fair on 28th March and undertook a survey of attendees who might be interested in taking up an apprenticeship with HDC and the subject areas. Under the new levy, HDC will be developing 11 apprenticeship opportunities. The model we develop can then be used in our conversations with businesses to help them set up their own apprenticeships. Under the LEAP scheme we provided funding for 3 apprenticeships and have c4 other businesses interested in setting up new apprenticeships.
The Economic Development Officer is starting to work on this year's job fair.
In terms of results we have published outcomes in the ED bulletin as well as press releases following events.
The developing action plan is looking at whether we need to set up an Education Business Partnership and how we can help to co-ordinate careers fairs with our schools and colleges. I am currently updating the action plan in relation to outcomes and the timelines.

7. *Budget 2016/17 shows the gross expenditure of Economic Development Departmental costs as: £472,365.*
   An additional sum of at least 25-50% should be set aside to support the ambitious objectives identified in the Strategy Report. Councillor Crosbie

   The Cabinet Member for Local Economy replied as follows:

   Additional resources can be bid for once there are specific business cases e.g acquisition of land to facilitate a business hub. A more critical area is regarding the need to find matched funding to secure external funding. Again, where there is a business case established re the outcomes, a bid can be made to existing HDC resources. One priority area for us is in drawing up such business cases and having the resources to submit bids.

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy was asked to comment on his portfolio summary, also presented to the Committee. He addressed the Corporate Plan Priorities and the updates on the position at February 2017.

Members went on to question the Cabinet Member on rural car parking strategy which had been implemented and whether this had had an adverse effect on the villages. Steyning was in the process of producing its business review report which would provide feedback on how the businesses had been affected. Also the Cabinet Member would review the progress of the strategy in approximately six months.

In relation to the Billingshurst Village Centre SPD, Members suggested that another progress meeting be held following approval from Cabinet later in April. The Cabinet Member agreed to this.

The Committee discussed briefly some other aspects of the Cabinet Member's portfolio, such as a lack of expansion sites in the District for business parks and concern regarding the lack of affordable housing for young people in Horsham. The Cabinet Member was asked when the Council's apprenticeship scheme was due to progress and he agreed to report back on this.

The Chairman concluded that the Horsham District Economic Strategy was very ambitious, covering the whole of the District, there were many challenges in the Strategy and a large agenda for the Cabinet Member and officers to deliver. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would continue to observe progress made under the Strategy and how the objectives were met.

SO/59   **STORRINGTON AIR POLLUTION NOTE**

A report on Storrington Air Pollution was provided for the Committee by the Environmental and Licensing Manager after concerns were raised by Councillor Ben Staines at a previous meeting.

A recent monitoring exercise had recorded Storrington with having the highest levels of air pollution. The Council was working with West Sussex County Council to address this issue and reduce emissions from traffic, as the main cause of the pollution in Storrington was traffic related.

Members of the Committee questioned whether the traffic problems should be included in the upcoming review of the Horsham District Planning Framework, before further development in Storrington and the surrounding area.

However it was noted that this was a far larger problem which due to a lack of infrastructure to support the development and problems with the roads, it also related to housing and businesses.

SO/60   **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELF EVALUATION EXERCISE - REPORT TO DATE**

Councillor David Coldwell, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Self-Evaluation Project Group, presented a report on progress to date.

The Committee was asked to approve the recommendations presented in the report.

The Chairman of the Project Group talked the Committee through the report and the work which had been undertaken so far and the next steps.

The Group had concluded that the Overview and Scrutiny training sessions had been inadequate, more work needed to be done in relation to work programming, the Scrutiny Guide was a valuable document which should be recirculated to Members of the Committee.

Going forward, the Group would be considering the role of the sub-committees and whether task and finish groups would be more appropriate.

The Chairman of the Group asked for support for the Project Group to present their findings to a wider group of Members in a seminar style discussion later in April, this was supported by the Committee.

The Committee discussed the report and the functions of the Committee in terms of its "overview" role and its "scrutiny" role. Members felt that the Council was more transparent in terms of decision making, there was better access to information and therefore the scrutinising role was not required to the extent that it had been in the past.

The Members also discussed the Policy Development Advisory Groups and were keen to ensure that the Committee did not duplicate the work undertaken by these but were reminded that the role of these were different to that of the sub-committees.

The Committee was reminded that scrutiny was established when the Cabinet system was introduced by the Local Government Act in 2000 and decisions were no longer made at full Council.

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report and agreed that it was a timely and comprehensive report and supported the proposal to set up a seminar to discuss the final report in a wider forum.

The Scrutiny Guide would be circulated to all Councillors.

RECOMMEDED

That the Committee:

(i)   Endorse and support the progress of the self-evaluation project group
(ii)   Note the next steps identified in section 4 of the report and participate in a member seminar in April.

REASON

To enact Overview and Scrutiny Committee minute reference SO/53 by participating in the nationally recognised self-evaluation framework for overview and scrutiny, in order to prepare for the function for the forthcoming municipal year.

SO/61   **SUB-COMMITTEES - CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

a) The Chairman of the Business Improvement Sub-Committee updated the Committee, the next meeting of the Sub-Committee was on 2nd May 2017 when the Members would review the S106 funding report before presenting it to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

b) The Chairman of the Finance and Performance Sub-Committee explained that there had been an informal briefing with the Cabinet Members regarding CenSus Revenues and Benefits, and the reduction in subsidy for Horsham District Council in relation to housing benefits. The Chairman confirmed that a report would be presented to a future Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

c) The Chairman of the Health and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee explained that Members had met with the doctors from the CCG at the last meeting.

d) The Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee was not present at the meeting, but the Chairman thanked him for his work over the course of the year as he was stepping down as to become Chairman of the Council for the forthcoming year.

SO/62   **TO RECEIVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

Two suggestions had been raised for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme:

1. To examine, with a view towards solving, traffic issues, access issues and other problems at primary schools in the District.

    This arose at a meeting with the local member and Upper Beeding Parish Council, however it was considered a district wide problem. Traffic issues around the schools in the residential areas lead to antisocial parking and antisocial behaviour. It was suggested that a sub-committee be set up to look at the particular problems in the village then hopefully, by working with West Sussex County Council, find a solution which could be applied to all schools.

    Members noted that some work had already being undertaken by the CLC, so it was suggested that this be looked at in conjunction with this review.

    It was noted that this was a nation wide problem.

2. The second suggestion for the work programme was to review the position to date in terms of the Business Transformation Programme, for

example how it delivered, current staff levels and whether financial targets had been achieved.

It was suggested that task and finish groups could be set up to look at these suggestions.

The Committee approved the two suggestions for the work programme.

SO/63 **REPLIES FROM CABINET/COUNCIL REGARDING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were no replies from Cabinet or Council.

SO/64 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.32 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm

CHAIRMAN

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Report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

19th April 2017

By the Lead Scrutiny & Committee Support Officer

DECISION REQUIRED

Not Exempt

Call-In of the Cabinet Decision on the Adoption of the Technology Strategy

Executive Summary

On 7th April 2017 the Cabinet decision to develop a Technology Strategy was called in by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Horsham District Council's call-in procedures, as set out in the Constitution.

This report sets out the call-in and format for the call-in meeting in accordance with the Council Constitution.

Recommendations

After considering the evidence presented to the meeting the Committee is recommended:

i)   to take no further action, in which case the decision will take effect immediately;

or,

ii)   to refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration, setting out the nature of the Committee's concerns; Cabinet must then re-consider the matter within a further 10 working days, taking into account the concerns of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, before making a final decision;

or,

iii)   to refer the matter to Full Council, in which case paragraph 23 of the Constitution will apply.

Reasons for Recommendations

The Committee has the power to exercise its rights in relation to the call-in procedure as set out in Part 4c Section 20 of the Constitution.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 Technology Strategy Report to Cabinet 30th March 2017

Wards affected: None.

Contact: Daniela Smith, Lead Scrutiny & Committee Support Officer
Daniela.smith@horsham.gov.uk 01403 215138

Background Information

1 Introduction and Background

1.1 A request to call in the Cabinet decision of 30th March 2017 on the Technology Strategy was made and supported by five Councillors, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the request and the Committee will consider the report and make its decision on 19th April 2017.

2 Relevant Council policy

The call-in procedure is detailed in Part 4c Section 20 of the Horsham District Council Constitution.

3 Details

3.1 Councillor Skipp raised his concerns in relation to the decision made by Cabinet on 30th March 2017 on the Technology Strategy.

3.2 Citing Part 4c Section 20 a),b) and g) as his reasons for the request to call the decision in.

3.3 Four other Councillors have supported the request in writing.

3.4 The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the request valid and therefore the Committee is meeting on 19th April 2017 to consider the call-in request.

Decision of the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny

3.5 The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny has considered the call-in request is reasonable.

The reasons given by the Chairman were that

"Cabinet Members are obliged to engage with non-executive Members in their decision making process via the Policy Development Advisory Groups (PDAGs). According to the Constitution the Technology Strategy falls within the functions of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets (at 3.3.3 l) however on this occasion the Strategy was brought forward for decision in a report by the Leader. Clearly the option of taking the Strategy to a PDAG was not available once the Leader assumed responsibility for bringing the Strategy to Cabinet for decision as there is no Policy Development Advisory Group for the Leader. That seems to me to be the main basis for the request for call-in of the decision by Councillors. There was an offer of a seminar, on the Technology Strategy, made to all Members, but due to a lack of response from Members this was cancelled. Seminars are notified to Members regularly and therefore to give the offer of a seminar exclusive significance in this case is a marginal argument to support the argument of non-executive consultation (albeit the seminar was a non-event). Therefore as Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny it is considered that a call-in of the decision is justified."

Matters to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3.6   The following grounds were cited to support the request to call-in the decision:

Part 4c section 15:

a) inadequate consultation with stakeholders prior to decision;

b) the absence of adequate evidence on which to base a decision;

g) the decision is not within the Cabinet's powers or terms of reference or within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member with delegated responsibility who took it.

The following five non-Cabinet Members of the Council have supported the request:

Councillors David Skipp, Christine Costin, Toni Bradnum, Connor Relleen and Godfrey Newman.

Format of the Meeting

3.7   Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers a call-in request, the format of the meeting will be as follows:-

a) After the Chairman opens the meeting the Members who asked for the decision to be called in will be asked to explain their reasons for the request and what they feel should be reviewed.

b) On matters of particular relevance to a particular ward, ward Members who are not signatories to a call-in have the opportunity to make comments on the call-in at the meeting, such speeches not to exceed five minutes each. Ward Members will take no further part in the discussion or vote. Ward Members must register their request to speak by contacting the Monitoring Officer by 12 noon on the day prior to the relevant meeting of the committee.

c) The relevant Cabinet Member (or Members if more than one is relevant) will then be invited to make any comments.

d) The relevant Chief Officer or his representative will advise the Committee on the background and context of the decision and its importance to achieving Service priorities.

e) Committee Members will ask questions of Members and officers in attendance.

f) The Cabinet Member(s) will be invited to make any final comments on the matter.

4   Next Steps

The Committee will agree which course of action it will take as set out in the recommendations.

5 Outcome of Consultations

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny considered the call-in request made by Councillor Skipp and decided that it was in line with the Committee's powers as set out in the constitution.

6 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected

None.

7 Resource Consequences

None.

8 Legal Consequences

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the powers to exercise its rights in accordance with Part 4c Section 20 of the Constitution.

The original decision was made within the budget and policy framework and therefore it would not be appropriate to refer the matter to Full Council. The decision made is an Executive function and therefore within the powers of the Cabinet. As this is a Strategy document there are no direct implications on the budget.

9 Risk Assessment

9.1 The risks associated with the decision are detailed in the original Cabinet report.

10 Other Considerations

10.1 This will have no direct impact on Crime & Disorder; Human Rights; Equality & Diversity and Sustainability.

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Report to Cabinet

30 March 2017
By the Leader of the Council
DECISION REQUIRED

Not Exempt

Technology Strategy 2017-2020

Executive Summary

The Council does not currently have a technology strategy. This report introduces a new strategy to the Council that focusses on harnessing the benefits of current and future technology to give accessible services to our customers and cost efficiency to the Council.

Recommendations

That the Cabinet is recommended:

i)   To adopt the Technology Strategy at appendix 1 of this report.

Reasons for Recommendations

i)   The Council requires a Technology Strategy to provide strategic direction on the use of technology to deliver services.

Background Papers

None.

Wards affected: All

Contact:

- Jane Eaton, Director of Corporate Resources
- Dave Briggs, (Interim) Head of Technology Services

Background Information

1 Introduction and Background

1.1 The Council does not currently have a strategy document covering IT and other technology matters. Such a document provides a clear strategic direction for the use of technology to support and improves service delivery. For the Council to maximise the opportunity that technology offers, a strategy must be in place.

1.2 Technology can support the ambitions of the Council in two main ways. Firstly it enables us to meet the increasing demands of our customers, by helping them to self-serve online, as they are used to with many retailers and service providers. Secondly, judicious use of technology in the redesign of services means that efficiencies can be realised and costs reduced. Reducing costs where possible is essential for the Council to meet the financial challenges of the next decade.

1.3 The current state of technology delivery at the Council is generally good, with a stable service that is well maintained and supported. However, for strategic, structural, cultural and technological reasons, opportunities for innovation and improvement have been missed, and the adoption and implementation of the Technology Strategy will ensure all opportunities presented by developments in technology can be realised.

2 Relevant Council policy

2.1 The Technology Strategy supports the Council's ambition to provide great value services by introducing digital technology that makes our services cheaper to provide and easier to access.

3 Details

3.1 The Council's Technology Strategy has been developed over the past three months, based upon findings from a short discovery exercise. Whilst technology delivery is generally good at the Council, and is a stable and well maintained service, frustrations have been expressed around the ability of the department to deliver what services require to be able to modernise their approach.

3.2 At the same time, developments within the Census ICT Partnership will see the partnership evolve into a smaller collaboration between the four member councils, focused on a shared cloud-based application and data hosting environment. Staff will all be directly employed by their host council, giving each council the flexibility to design their technology support teams around their own strategies.

3.3 The Technology Strategy has been written with the strategic aim of "enabling innovation and excellence in service delivery". It focuses on technology not as an end in itself but instead as a means for the Council to achieve its desired outcomes by making the most of developments in technology and new working practices around it.

3.4 The objectives of the strategy are:

- To develop the Technology Services division to become a key enabler of innovation and excellence in service delivery at the Council
- To articulate and promote the principles of good technology
- To govern the purchase and development of technology
- To grow the culture and operations of the Technology Services division to meet the technology needs of the Council
- To ensure that members and staff have access to the right tools for them to be able to do their work

3.4   The Strategy is focused on six key principles of good technology, and the means of ensuring that these principles are always met. The principles are:

- **Cloud native -** to ensure all the systems we use are designed for the internet age.
- **Mobile ready -** to ensure all the systems we use can be accessed anywhere, from any device.
- **Interoperable -** to ensure the data our systems use is easily shared between people and applications.
- **Flexible -** to ensure we make good use of shared platforms and capabilities across our services.
- **Enabling customers -** to ensure all the technology we deploy helps our customers enjoy a consistent journey across our services.
- **Proportionately secure -** to ensure that the Council's and our customer's data is as safe as it needs to be to enable us to deliver our best work.

3.5   As well as the principles, the strategy introduces a process through which technology requirements are identified, approved and taken forward. This is to ensure we only invest time and money in the right technology that meets the requirements of the strategy as well as delivering the value identified by the service area making the request. This process is designed to be lightweight and flexible, ensuring that the right decisions are made without holding up our ability to deliver.

3.5   The strategy also outlines the working culture and practices of the Technology Services department and the services they work with. This focuses on three main areas of change:

- **Agile –** adopting an agile approach to project delivery sees large, complicated technology projects broken down into a series of smaller, simpler ones. This significantly reduces the risk profile of a project, and enables regular feedback to be received on the work done so far, resulting in services that more accurately meet the needs of users.
- **User-centred –** taking a user-centred approach puts the customer at the centre of the design process. It involves conducting research into our customers want to interact with us and what their motivations are. The results of this provides us with the evidence we need to develop systems that are more likely to be taken up by users, helping us to deliver on our ambitions to increase levels of online self-service and create other efficiency savings.
- **The Local Government Digital Service Standard –** the standard, which has been developed by Councils themselves, sets out what a good digital service or product looks like. By measuring our systems against the

standard, we can both ensure they are of high quality, and we can benchmark our work against that of other leading digital Councils.

3.6   Finally, the strategy outlines how the Council will support members and staff with technology to enable them to do their work. This has four main elements and they are all explained in detail within the strategy.

- Giving colleagues the right devices to do their work where they need to
- Developing digital skills for everyone
- Training people to manage their information securely
- Encouraging colleagues to experiment with open internet tools

4   Next Steps

4.1   Once the strategy is adopted, work will begin to implement it. This will involve:

- Completing a restructure of the current two team set up, that will integrate the teams into the right shape to deliver the strategy, and make savings included in the medium term financial strategy
- Producing a programme of projects and work to be delivered by Technology Services
- Putting in place the process by which technology investments are approved as being in line with the strategy
- Communication and engagement of the strategy and what it means for all staff and members will be carried out

5   Views of the Policy Development Advisory Group and Outcome of Consultations

5.1   The strategy has been shared and discussed with the current two IT teams, with SLT and all the Council's managers.

5.2   An outline presentation on the strategy has been circulated to all Councillors. Councillors who replied were supportive of the proposed strategy.

5.3   Further work will be done in future to explain the strategy to members and staff.

6   Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected

6.1   Not having a Technology Strategy has not delivered the potential innovations and improvements in ICT that might have been possible in the past. Therefore this option was discounted.

7   Resource Consequences

7.1   The Technology Strategy does not commit the Council to any additional expenditure. It enables a restructure of the current two ICT teams into a single unit to deliver the strategy. This will release £100,000 of savings as outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7.2   As part of the procurement process of any future technology, financial considerations will be a significant element of decisions made, as well as the technology principles set out in the strategy.

8   Legal Consequences

8.1   There are no legal implications from the approval of this strategy.

9   Risk Assessment

9.1   There are no risks associated with approving this strategy. There will be the usual project risks from the work that arises from the strategy and these will be identified and managed according to the Council's usual risk management methodology.

10   Other Considerations

10.1   The Council's strategic preference for cloud based systems has a benefit in terms of our sustainability profile, as we will not have to be running our own data centre and other energy intensive infrastructure.

10.2   Our work to digitise our work will have to consider equalities and diversity in ensuring that what we develop works well for people of all skill levels and abilities. We will ensure that our services are also accessible to those without access to computing devices or the internet.

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