

Digital Strategy 2018-23



Introduction

This strategy outlines how Herefordshire Council will make the most of digital technology to deliver services. The council is a complex and diverse organisation which is, along with other councils, in a period of significant change resulting in a fundamental shift in the way the council operates internally and - even more importantly - how services relate to customers, local businesses, other public service providers and national government.

Digital technology, in the form of software, hardware and infrastructure, makes a major contribution in providing services which can offer the residents and businesses choices regarding better value, lower costs and improved response. Also, information technology is a tool supporting the council to carry out its role efficiently, effectively and securely.

This strategy is key in providing the framework for decisions for service delivery and IT purchases.

The approach outlined in this document is to ensure coordination across the council in the deployment of digital services and infrastructure to meet priorities of the Corporate Plan, namely:

- Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives
- Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life
- Support the growth of the economy
- Secure better services, quality of life and value for money.

The strategy specifically supports achieving the council's ambition 'to have further embraced digital technology to save costs, to improve mobile-working and to offer residents 24/7 access on-line services'.

The strategy links closely to other key plans being part of a combined framework to deliver the council's goals. This includes the Fastershire Broadband Strategy and associated activity in the deployment of broadband infrastructure across the county and digital inclusion.

Objectives and Principles

The digital revolution has transformed how people interact and access information; has fundamentally changed the world of work and leisure; and in turn raised expectation by customer and employees in the use of technology by organisations including councils. Herefordshire Council has embraced the opportunities digital services can bring whilst also recognising the risks.

Based on these opportunities and risks, and focussed on achievement of the council's ambition, the objectives for the digital strategy are:

- **Customer access** – to enable users to access council services with ease by maximising digital technology.
- **Empowered workforce** – to utilise digital technology for staff and councillors to work flexibly, responsively and making the most of the technology to deliver services.
- **Innovation and efficiency** – for digital technology to support transformation of services whilst creating efficient ways of working including with partners.
- **Protected and planned** – to ensure the systems, policies and procedures are put in place to protect the council from cyber-attacks, keep information secure and plan for future delivery.



To deliver these objectives an agreed set of principles will guide strategic decision making in the designing, sourcing and implementation of digital technology at Herefordshire Council.

- **Principle 1 – Digital by default**
To make it as easy as possible for the customer to interact with the council on-line, supporting digital contact as first choice. By default for staff and members to use self-service IT programmes to do their work to specifically reduce the ‘paper based’ ways of working, associated print and post as a way of being more responsive and lower cost.
- **Principle 2 – One Council, One Herefordshire**
To take a whole council approach to digital services; this will include implementation of technology tools (PC, phones and software) without duplication. To also collaborate with key strategic partners to enable data sharing, joint working and scaled efficiency.
- **Principle 3 – Data centre first**
To host applications and infrastructure through the council’s own data centre reducing reliance on independent and often more costly outsourced hosting. To shift to the cloud when this is the most cost-effective option that delivers business requirements ensuring we leverage the value of the investments made in the infrastructure.
- **Principle 4 – Standards and data sharing**
Software and hardware will conform to defined standards that promote integration of data, applications and technology in order to provide a consistent user experience. Appropriate information sharing protocols and technology will be used to enable delivery of services safely, efficiently and effectively.
- **Principle 5 - Innovative and agile**
Have an appetite for innovation supported by an agile approach to implementation. Look to exploit existing systems to their fullest extent and integrate new products and services where they can be shown to add real value and efficiency.
- **Principle 6 - Business Continuity**
For the digital network to support business continuity to keep the council operating in all circumstances, with security controls in place to keep the organisation and the public safe. All key elements of the infrastructure designed to be resilient enabling staff to continue working and services delivered in the event of a localised disaster.
- **Principle 7 – Digital Inclusion**
To recognise that not all people will be able or willing to access information on line. Though this is not the majority of people it is not the plan or intent to exclude people, and alternative access methods are in place that addresses equality of opportunity for people to access council services.

Key Deliverables 2018-23 and Result

Customer access – to enable users to access council services with ease by maximising digital technology.

- Deliver next phase of the council website including integrated account functions.
- Instigate an app or refined mobile format for “report it” and “pay it” functions.
- Make the most of social media to relay proactive messages.
- Continue to improve the transactional capability of the website.
- Review the systems to support the children’s education modernisation programme with potential replacements.
- Ensure hot-spots for wifi access, specifically at libraries and where possible other public places.
- Deliver the superfast broadband programme to homes and businesses in Herefordshire through the Fastershire project.
- Business support and community programmes to enable digital inclusions with more people making the most of internet interaction.

Empowered workforce – to utilise digital technology for staff and councillors to work flexibly, responsively and making the most of the technology to deliver services.

Support mobile and flexible working as part of the workforce strategy.

- Plan and implement upgrades to the core data network, including the Wide Area Network (WAN) and wireless capability in key sites.
- Instigate new desk phone operation.
- Support e-learning for council staff and IT training for new systems.
- Enhance the hot desk and mobile working offer.
- Upgrade and replacement programme for PC’s and laptops.
- Upgrade the intranet offer as a management and communication tool.



Innovation and efficiency – for digital technology to support transformation of services whilst creating efficient ways of working including with partners.

- Implement web portal solutions with social care for adults and children services.
- Where appropriate integrate health systems with the children’s social care and education management systems as part of the NHS Local Digital Roadmap.
- Work with partners on data sharing with legal framework to support outcome for individuals and wider community benefit.
- Support areas of work such as project management and data management through IT systems.
- Review the portfolio of applications with a view to rationalisation.
- Renegotiate IT contracts to enable further savings to be achieved.
- Review of photocopier / printer with the intention of reduce their use.

Protected and planned – to ensure the systems, policies and procedures are put in place to protect the council from cyber-attacks, keep information secure and plan for future delivery.

- Conduct regular patch testing, backs and checks to protect the organisation and keep information safe.
- Achieve accreditation to external security standards including PSN (public sector network).
- Exploit the benefits of the new data centre to realise its fullest potential to support the current and emerging needs of the council.
- Deploy the latest Microsoft tools (Windows 10 and Office 2016) on the desktop.
- Build additional storage capacity to support increasing demand for Microsoft SharePoint solution.
- Replace data archiving storage solution to support future demand for electronic records and programme of back scanning to store documents.
- Evaluate new technologies that will enable a reduction in the carbon foot print of the IT landscape, including reviewing the use of active power management software and revisiting the paperless office.

Results of the strategy will be measured through key performance measures through the council's reporting mechanisms. These include the below:

Customer Access

- Number of premises in the county accessing superfast broadband
- % of visitors to the website that completed their task
- Number of visitors to the Herefordshire Council website
- WiFi usage at public hotspots – number of users

Innovation and Efficiency

- £ Savings on IT contracts
- £ Savings on print and photocopying
- Increase payments on-line

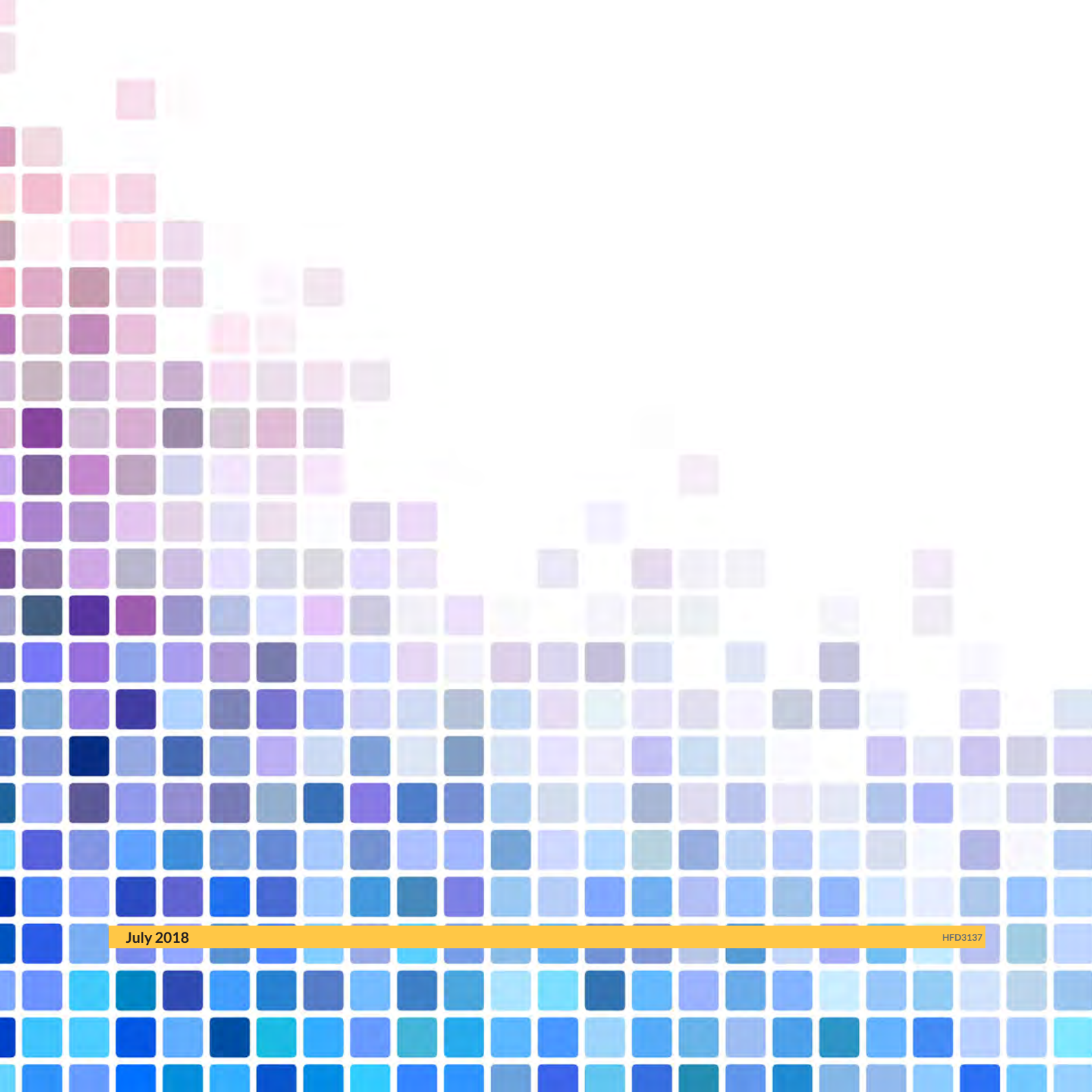
Empowered Workforce

- % of workforce with lap-tops
- Use at multi-agency-offices
- % of staff using the intranet on a regular basis
- Number of WAN connected sites

Protected and Planned

- Back up success rate
- Patch levels, patch audit and penetration test audit results
- IT data breaches upheld by the Information Commissioner's Office (low is better)
- Public sector network (PSN) accreditation achieved





July 2018

HFD3137