

REPORT TO:	CABINET 16 NOVEMBER 2015
AGENDA ITEM:	7
SUBJECT:	GO ON Croydon – Digital inclusion
LEAD OFFICER:	Graham Cadle, Assistant Chief Executive – customer and transformation
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Mark Watson, Cabinet Member, Communities, Safety and Justice
WARDS:	All
<p>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: As part of our approach to Digital inclusion, providing everyone with basic digital skills will support the corporate priorities of Ambitious for Croydon around Growth, Independence and Liveability.</p>	
<p>AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON & WHY ARE WE DOING THIS: This work supports various aspects of the Ambitious for Croydon outcomes but particularly supports Growth by enabling more local people to access a wider range of jobs and enabling people of all ages to reach their potential. It also supports Independence by helping families to be resilient and to maximise their life chances and independence as well as helping them to be more financially resilient</p> <p>In ensuring our residents and local businesses have basic digital skills and are digitally included it will also support our focus on enabling core to be digital by design in meeting the needs of local people.</p>	
<p>FINANCIAL IMPACT</p> <p>There are no financial impacts directly from this work, however it will support various other projects that are focused on improving access, independence and growth whilst meeting the council's current financial challenge</p> <p>The work will most directly support residents to be able to utilise the approach and service access being delivered through the Digital and Enabling project, which is expected to realise the organisation's significant efficiencies through to 2017/18, with £1.2m already committed for the current year (2015/16)</p>	
<p>KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: This is not a key decision</p>	

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet welcomes:

- 1.1 The GO ON Croydon digital inclusion work as the first such program in London.
- 1.2 The Council's commitment to the GO ON UK Digital skills charter.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 As on-line and digital services continue to provide more and more opportunity to individuals, local businesses and third sector organisations, the gap between those able to access those opportunities and those unable grows greater. Often those people missing out are those most in need.
- 2.2 In order to meet the Boroughs ambitions, the council is committed to providing the right support to assist the community to benefit from access to digital services. Ensuring no one is left behind and that opportunities are provided to all.
- 2.3 This report provides a top level overview of the support the GO ON Croydon program will bring to the Borough, providing support, resources and raising awareness of the benefit of basic digital skills for all.

3. DETAIL



- 3.1 The latest research shows that nearly 1 in 4 adults across the UK do not have basic digital skills. Whilst that research suggested London and Croydon are in a much better position, it is currently estimated that the value of digital inclusion for a new user is over £1,000, which increases to over £1,700 for those with advanced skills. Similarly 81% of people over 55 who are online says it makes them feel like part of modern society and less lonely.
- 3.2 Research shows London and Croydon as having a low level of exclusion than other parts of the country with over 80% of adults having all five basic digital skills and 34% using them in the last 3 months but it estimates;
 1. 5.4% of households in Croydon do not receive broadband speeds of at least 2 megabits per second
 2. 10% of adults in Croydon have never been online
- 3.3 Part of the report to Cabinet on 15 December 2014 (Min A114/14) outlined the principles of and approach to ensuring everyone is digitally included through

support in respect of;

- a) **Digital Skills** – being able to use computers and the internet
- b) **Connectivity** – access to the internet and
- c) **Accessibility** – services will be designed to meet all users needs, including those dependent on assistive technology to access digital services.

3.4 GO ON UK have determined a minimum level of skills someone should expect to have to be seen as digitally literate;



Go ON UK – Basic Digital Skills framework					
	Managing information	Communicating	Transacting	Problem-solving	Creating
Description	Find, manage and store digital information and content	Communicate, interact, collaborate, share and connect with others	Purchase and sell goods and services, organise your finances and use digital government services	Increase independence and confidence by solving problems and finding solutions using digital tools	Create basic digital content in order to engage with digital communities and organisations
 Safety	Assess the accuracy of sources of information; use security tools when browsing; regularly update and run virus-checking software; manage parental controls	Understand how to manage your identities; protect yourself from scams; use the right security settings (including parental controls); protect your customer data	Use secure websites for financial transactions; protect your personal data; respect the privacy of others	Use accurate sources of support; avoid malicious websites, scams and pop-up windows	Be aware of copyright law; protect your personal data; respect the privacy of others
 Actions for individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a search engine to find the information you need • Search for deals on comparison websites • Bookmark useful websites and services • Store data on a device or in the cloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep in touch using email, instant messaging, video calls and social media • Post on forums to connect with communities • Communicate with organisations about their products and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and use marketplaces to buy and sell • Order your shopping • Book your travel • Manage your bank account • Set up and manage a Universal Credit account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach yourself simple tasks using tutorials • Use feedback from other internet users to solve common problems • Access support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a social media post • Create a text document such as a CV • Create and share a photo album • Create and share feedback about products and services
 Actions for organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store digital information on suppliers and customers • Search for new suppliers to find the best deals • Understand who uses your website • Discover potential growth opportunities for your business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain customer and client relationships • Use social media to promote your business and connect with new customers • Improve your customer service by providing accessible product information and answers to frequently asked questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise your selling potential through a website • Save time by applying for government business permits and licences • Manage invoices and accounts • Receive payments or donations • Protect yourself from fraud or scams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save on business travel and be more efficient by using video conferencing • Quickly understand which products and services work based on online feedback • Interpret simple analytics to improve website performance • Get solutions to problems from safe, accurate sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an informational or e-commerce website • Create content (pictures, logos, text) to promote your organisation and reach customers • Use social media and create communities to engage with customers • Create resources to improve employee skill levels

3.5 Croydon have already made good progress in supporting access to its own on-line services, with over 120,000 sign-ups to its MyAccount service and over 7,000 downloads of its mobile app. However to both further develop access through these methods and to ensure all residents, small businesses and community organisations have the opportunity to benefit more widely it is progressing a number of activities to improve access further.

3.6 One of those activities is the subject of this report. The UK digital skills charity GO ON UK, founded in 2012 by its chair, Martha Lane Fox actively seek out and work with partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors to identify opportunities and develop programs that improve digital skills among people and organization across the UK.

3.7 To date the work they have undertaken in specific geographic areas has been in the north of the country. However they have now selected Croydon as their first London Borough and a year long program of activity was launched on 9th

November.

- 3.8 Working with a number of their National partners including Lloyds Bank, Age UK, Argos, Post Office, BBC, Sage and Talktalk alongside local organisations such as Amicus Housing, CVA, various faith groups, and Croydon Tech city a number of opportunities will be provided to the local community
- 3.9 These include the provision of a number of Digital Zones across the Borough, providing advice and support to anyone who wishes to attend or drop in. Partners will support and encourage Digital Champions to assist individuals, to support organisations and to encourage and drive further commitments from all sectors across Croydon to improving Basic Digital Skills. The program will also provide a number of “deep dive” projects testing the approach to various digital services - providing details analysis and evaluation for each in order to understand how they can be utilized going forward.
- 3.10 Overall the program will facilitate organisations and individuals to provide and or receive training and advice to raise digital the skills across the Borough. It will provide a detailed baseline of skills and key gaps and allow us to monitor progress and activity to influence future requirements.
- 3.11 As part of this the Council has signed up to the digital charter (below) and is encouraging other partners and local authorities to do the same



- 3.12 The outcome of the program which will run for a year will be an increase in skills as well as a detailed baseline as to where further work is required, what types of approach have worked and a number of legacy partnerships to continue to take the work forward.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 None required. The approach to the project will be to work in partnership with local organisations and individuals to develop appropriate local support

5. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, although this work will directly support the delivery of the Digital and Enabling program which is expected to provide significant efficiency to the organisation by assisting residents to be able to utilise more efficient and effective customer contact and reporting systems. £1.2m savings are committed for 2015/16 for this project.

Approved by – Lisa Taylor – Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Council Solicitor comments that there are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor, Head of Corporate Law on behalf of the Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 There are no immediate HR considerations that arise from the recommendations of this report for HR staff.

Michael Pichamuthu, HRBP on behalf of Heather Daley, Director of HR

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 The Go On Croydon project provides the Council with an opportunity to provide resources and support to raise awareness of the benefit of basic digital skills for all. As on-line and digital services continue to provide more and more opportunity to individuals, local businesses and third sector organisations, the gap between those able to access those opportunities and those unable grows greater. Often those people missing out are those most in need. 81% of people over 55 who are online says it makes them feel like part of modern society and less lonely.
- 8.2 The program will work with a number of local organisations such as Age UK, Croydon Voluntary Action, Registered Social Landlords, Religious and community groups to ensure support and resources are developed for all. The challenge / key risk that we face in this is to ensure that the project is tailored to the varied access needs of our diverse customers so that automation does not increase or create barriers to access or lead to potential disadvantage or exclusion for certain groups that share a “protected characteristic”..
- 8.3 In order to mitigate the above mentioned risk an initial equality analysis will be undertaken by the end of January 2016. It will include the use of existing and new (if needed) research and consultation with customers to assess whether the Go On Croydon project is likely to any adverse impact in reach out to individuals / equality groups who share a protected characteristic and those who do not so that any mitigating actions can be considered where they are needed.

8.4 The equality analysis will help the Council and its partners ensure that the proposed service is accessible and inclusive. It will also enable the Council to ensure “due regard” to the need to advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations between people who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not and take action to eliminate the potential of disadvantage in the provision or procurement of services.

8.5 The Go On Croydon project supports the following priorities that are set out in the Council’s Equality and Inclusion Policy:

- Make Croydon a place of opportunity and fairness by tackling inequality, disadvantage and exclusion
- Promote financial and digital inclusion by supporting local people, families and communities, to be resilient and independent

8.6 Go On Project approach supports various aspects of the Ambitious for Croydon outcomes but particularly supports growth by enabling more local people to access a wider range of jobs and enabling people of all ages to reach their potential. It also supports Independence by helping families to be resilient and to maximise their life chances and independence as well as helping them to be more financially resilient

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

9.1 None

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

10.1 None

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

11.1 This report is for information only.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 This report is for information only.

CONTACT OFFICER: Graham Cadle, Assistant Chief Executive – customer and transformation

BACKGROUND PAPERS -

None