REPORT TO:	ELT – 16 January 2019
SUBJECT:	Digital Strategy update
LEAD OFFICER:	Neil Williams - Chief Digital Officer

1. Executive Summary

Following the appointment of a Chief Digital Officer to lead the digital transformation of the council and borough, we now need to set out a high-level strategy to guide and communicate this work.

Digital is critical enabler to deliver both our Corporate Plan and the related Workforce Strategy. As such, it touches every part of the council's activities, and it's therefore vital that we have a clear vision and plan for how digital transformation will support our ambitions. A strategy is needed to provide clear direction to the newly formed Croydon Digital Service, and all related digital, data and technology activity across the council

This short paper sets out a proposed timeline for producing the strategy by Q2 2019/20, including consultation, communications and clearance, and initial thoughts on structure and content.

ELT are asked to feedback on this plan before work starts in earnest.

2. Background

The Council does not currently have a live strategy that articulates the vision and plans for ICT, digital services or Smart Cities. The previously published relevant documents are as follows (and the proposed new strategy will supersede all these documents):

- ICT strategy 2009- 2014
- ICT Sourcing Strategy
- Information management strategy
- Smart Cities programme (Dec 2017 paper)
- Delivering the Croydon Growth Zone (Oct 2018 – brief mention of Smart Cities)

At the October 15 Cabinet update on the Growth Zone, we agreed to bring a plan for Smart Cities in c.6 months. Rather than produce a paper for just one aspect of our digital agenda, we since agreed at ELT on 14 Nov 2018 and in discussion with Cllrs Hall and Shahul-Hameed to set Smart Cities in context of wider digital plans, within a unifying Digital Strategy, in early summer.

Specific challenges to be addressed through creation of a strategy include:

- How corporate technology services, the transformation of digital services for residents, and Smart Cities initiatives support the Corporate Plan and the Workforce Strategy
- Clarity over governance of technology across the council (combatting 'shadow IT')
- The vision for our technical architecture and digital services, to ensure coherent decision making in building/buying technical solutions
- A coherent vision for the Smart Cities agenda, both in the Growth Zone and beyond
- Clarity over the role we intend to play in supporting the local tech sector, ensuring digital inclusion, and developing digital skills across the borough

3. Initial thoughts on structure and content

We propose to keep the strategy short and high level, setting out the ambition and vision for digital transformation from now to 2022 (aligning with the Corporate Plan timeframe). It will describe the long-term outcomes we wish to achieve, the ways in which we propose to move towards them from where we are now, and how we will measure progress along the way.

Supporting details will be kept out of the strategy and covered in separate assets as follows:

- A digital delivery roadmap, to be launched alongside the strategy, setting out deliverables and timescales for up to 9 months ahead. Rather than a static document, this will be a live, online roadmap that is kept continually up to date as we progress, learn and reprioritise. See for example the GLA Smart London Together [strategy paper](#) and [live roadmap](#).
- A Croydon Digital Service "playbook", setting out the principles and practices we and our vendors will follow, guiding ourselves and informing council colleagues on how we'll deliver the strategy. See for example playbooks from the [US digital service](#), [Hackney](#) and [dxw](#).

Currently, we expect the shape of the main strategy paper to be broadly as follows:

- A top line strategic vision statement for the digital agenda as a whole
- Strategic objectives, setting out 'where we are', 'where we're going' and 'how we will get there' under 3 headings of:
  - **Digital workforce –** *optimising how the council uses digital, data and technology to work efficiently, collaborate and innovate*
  - **Digital services -** *transforming the relationship between residents and the council by providing online services so good people prefer to use them*
  - **Digital place -** *maximising opportunities for digital, data and technology to enhance quality of life and economic growth in our borough*
- Underpinning themes that support all 3 objectives, such as data, digital skills and infrastructure.
- Impact assessments outlining how evidence will be used to measure the effects of the digital strategy on the local economy, environment and society.

4. Consultation and engagement

Given the content of the strategy, and the wider corporate desire to engage more meaningfully with our communities digitally, we plan to run an exemplar consultation exercise to ensure the strategy meets the needs of both the local community and the Council, and represents the highest standard of practice in digital government.

To this end we propose the following consultation activity, to inform the strategy drafting process and to validate the final draft.

Audience	Activity	Purpose
General public.	Blog post on croydon.digital and online survey.	Gather views on the themes and ideas that people care about the most.
Smart city experts	In person workshop	Gather ideas for digital place theme

Croydon digital stakeholders, including local businesses	In person workshop(s)	Gather ideas for digital place theme and how other themes can be supported
Young people in Croydon	Engagement to be co-designed with Young Croydon	To gain the opinions and support of younger people in the area
Service users	In person workshop(s)	To gain insight into views on Croydon digital services
Wider local government digital leaders	Share draft strategy for comment	To ensure we are meeting the highest standards with our strategy
Cross-sectoral digital leaders	Share draft strategy for comment	To ensure we are meeting the highest standards with our strategy
General audience	Share the entire draft strategy online in a commentable form	Provide an opportunity for anyone to have their say on what we are proposing
Internal Council steering group	In person workshops.	To crowdsource ideas and receive feedback on ideas.
ELT	Monthly progress reports	As part of regular CDO session at ELT, activity and progress will be shared for feedback.
CLT	Presentation to away day	To raise awareness and receive feedback
Cllr Hall and Shahul-Hameed	Portfolio holder engagement through CDO's regular one to ones.	Ensure the strategy meets the requirements of the political leadership of the Council
Leader of the Council	Discuss at Leader's weekly strategy meeting	Ensure the strategy meets the requirements of the political leadership of the Council

Many of these consultation activities can be run in parallel, ensuring we can meet our proposed timescales outlined below.

4. Timeline

The following timeline has been put together working backwards from a proposed date for the Strategy to go to Cabinet for member sign off in July 2019.

Following each meeting feedback will be incorporated into the draft before being taken forward to the next meeting.

Date	Activity
28 May	Resources DLT
12 June	ELT
Late June*	Officer pre-agenda
Mid July*	Informal Cabinet
Late July*	Cabinet

* exact dates to be confirmed in new municipal year.

5. Next steps

ELT are asked for feedback on the proposed approach and to encourage all staff to engage fully with the process at every opportunity.