

Our Vision

#DigitalDorset



Dorset
Council

Our Digital Vision #DigitalDorset

Foreword

Cllr Peter Wharf

Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development & Change

Digital as a way of working is not just about the technology; it is always first and foremost about people. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the value that digital can bring to our lives.

Our challenge as a council is to continue to think innovatively about how we use technology, taking a fresh look at how we deliver services listening to what our customers need, saving us all time and money.

The 5G project is a great example of our commitment and provides an exciting opportunity for Dorset to be at the forefront of next generation technology. Creating a smart rural place is about using data and technology to promote economic growth, protect our unique environment and improve the lives of peoples living and working in Dorset.

Digital has a key enabling role for our transformation and COVID-19 recovery work. We will continue to work collaboratively with our partners, councillors, employees, residents and businesses to realise our corporate vision and make Dorset a great place to live, work and visit.



Matt Prosser

Chief Executive Dorset Council

Having the privilege of creating a new Council has allowed us in Dorset to put digital ways of working at the heart of what we do and to deliver our corporate vision. We want to enable the majority of people or those acting on their behalf to access our services via digital means, ensuring our offer doesn't disappoint by putting the customer at the heart of our service design.

As a council we also provide many universal services to all, and there are some people and some groups in Dorset that cannot currently use digital services directly. Often these are some of the most vulnerable in our society.

Using the efficiency gained from digital service delivery, means that we can invest more time in supporting those who are vulnerable or in need, both to ensure they get the services they require and wherever possible ensure, with support, they can access as much help and support digitally as is feasible. Our digital champions are an excellent example of this.

Representing our residents, communities and businesses across the Dorset area, we will work tirelessly to ensure the continued investment in the infrastructure needed to keep everyone connected, not a small project in a beautifully rural environment. We are committed to this and in doing so making Dorset the natural place to do business.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document – I hope having done so you will understand what we are doing currently and also what we have plans for, to deliver Dorset's digital future, a great place to live, work and visit.



Introduction

In April 2019 Dorset Council was formed, bringing 6 councils together into one. The business case for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) identified the new council should 'optimise the use of digital to improve services and empower users'.

We want to create a modern, customer focused, 21st century council which operates in a thriving digital place. We were co-signatories of the [Local Digital Declaration](#) to signal our ambition.

Our Economic Growth Strategy has digital running through all five themes. We're developing this strategy at the same time as the Dorset Local Enterprise Partner Local Industrial Strategy which aims to boost productivity by £1bn by 2030. These strategies need innovation, digital skills and technology, all underpinned by cutting-edge digital infrastructure.

Creating a new council provides a fantastic opportunity to embed digital at the heart of the new organisation and do things differently.

For us, digital is a way of thinking and working, designing services around the needs of people, making the most of modern technology, and doing this responding to the urgent climate challenge.

We've started to deliver this vision, we have already:

- introduced a new post 'Corporate Director for Digital and Change'
- created dedicated digital capacity to work alongside ICT Operations, Business Intelligence & Information Governance services
- adopted new tools, techniques and standards to design user-centred end to end services
- engaged businesses in developing our vision and work programme for a smart rural place
- worked with our partners to safely and securely share data to create the Dorset Care Record
- created networks of digital champions in the workforce and the community
- been successful with national funding to deliver local 5G pilots
- launched our digital podcast to run alongside the digital network
- started to use national components GOV.UK Notify and GOV.UK Pay
- adopted a cloud first approach to the council's core technology services

COVID-19 has been a major disruptor. It has forced the whole organisation to change in response. This has demonstrated that we can move quickly and revealed the opportunities of working in different ways and delivering services alongside our communities.

We want to seize the moment, harness our experience and learning, and implement our digital vision and the commitments we made in the [Local Digital Declaration](#) with greater pace.



Our digital future



Through discussion with our employee forum and people across the organisation, we want our council to be a place where we:

- have access to devices/technology that work and make it simple
- can work in different locations including more home working, reducing travel and improving work life balance
- have a different kind of office space that is shared, flexible, and makes it easier to collaborate and be creative
- have fewer face-to-face meetings and more virtual meetings or online collaboration
- feel safe and confident to try something new and can experiment with the latest technology
- use technology to remove administration overheads and for mundane tasks
- have safe, secure systems and the knowledge to prevent cyber-crime incidents
- work with partners to deliver joined up services and develop good working relationships
- let customers choose how they access services, how we communicate with them and make it easy to interact with us
- share our customer data across teams and services to deliver better services
- deliver services around outcomes and people, rather than our internal structures

- use technology to engage young people in service delivery
- make the democratic process more accessible
- have access to relevant good quality real time data to help us understand and make decisions
- produce trustworthy records and preserve the archives that are historically and culturally important
- have time to learn and develop our knowledge and skills

We've been talking to businesses, the voluntary sector and residents through our future Dorset engagement work. This work has generated ideas and priorities for Dorset. We want Dorset to be a place where we:

- have good connectivity, where and when people need it
- can attract investment and stimulate our economy
- attract and retain talent
- can support new business models and ways of working
- can utilise the latest technology
- include everyone and reduce isolation
- provide opportunity by developing people's skills and knowledge
- use technology to help reduce our impact on the environment
- have communities, public services and businesses working together
- share spaces to enable collaboration, innovation and reduce cost
- are transparent, ethical and secure in our use of data and respect people's privacy

About digital

The word digital is understood and interpreted in lots of ways. We use this definition in the public sector to describe what we mean by digital:

"Digital means applying the culture, processes, business models & technologies of the internet era to respond to people's raised expectations"

Tom Loosemore – Co-founder of the Government Digital Service

Our new behaviours framework and people strategy will help to create an enabling culture for digital and makes clear digital skills are for all.

"A truly digital council will be more connected and integrated, using digital to reimagine service delivery that is user-centric and meets users' needs – with citizens, communities and businesses reaping the benefits."

Council of the Future: A digital guide for councillors – Tech UK 2018



We see digital as not being about technology but what we do with it, led by user-centred design, to make a difference to people's lives.

Digital is about moving away from silo working to working together with a focus on people and their needs. It is about working in an open way, sharing data, information and knowledge. It is about developing new skills and delivering new customer experiences and reducing our impact on the environment when designing and delivering services.

The vision supports our council values:

- we are an advocate for Dorset on a local, national and global stage
- we work together with our communities and our partners to make things happen
- we put people first and design services around their needs now and in future
- we are open, accessible and accountable
- we use time and money wisely
- we value people and build on their strengths



Vision

Our vision is to become a digital council in a digital place, putting people and their needs first using design and modern technology to improve people's lives.

We aim to become a council with a digital mindset across the whole organisation from the political and officer's leadership through to the frontline. We will be absolutely focused on users' needs and climate conscious in the decisions we make when designing services.

We will constantly challenge ourselves to improve and consider new ways to deliver services, making sure we are doing the right things in the right way. We will establish the behaviours and leadership to create the right conditions so that creativity and innovation become the norm.

We will provide digital leadership across Dorset to set community aspirations. We will develop and support relationships with digital leaders, businesses and investors to promote culture change.

This vision will help us create a vibrant, safe, healthy and prosperous Dorset supporting delivery of our council plan.

We will do this by focusing on the two themes:

Becoming a digital council

We will:

- design end to end services based on understanding people's needs and involving them throughout
- deliver online services that are so good people prefer to use them, enabling us to deal with those people who need more support
- use technology to become more efficient and productive, automating processes and using assistive technology
- use data and intelligence to support decision making, understand need, target our efforts, and to manage and prevent demand



- change how we think and behave, to become more creative, innovative and adaptable
- demonstrate digital leadership across the organisation and wider local public sector

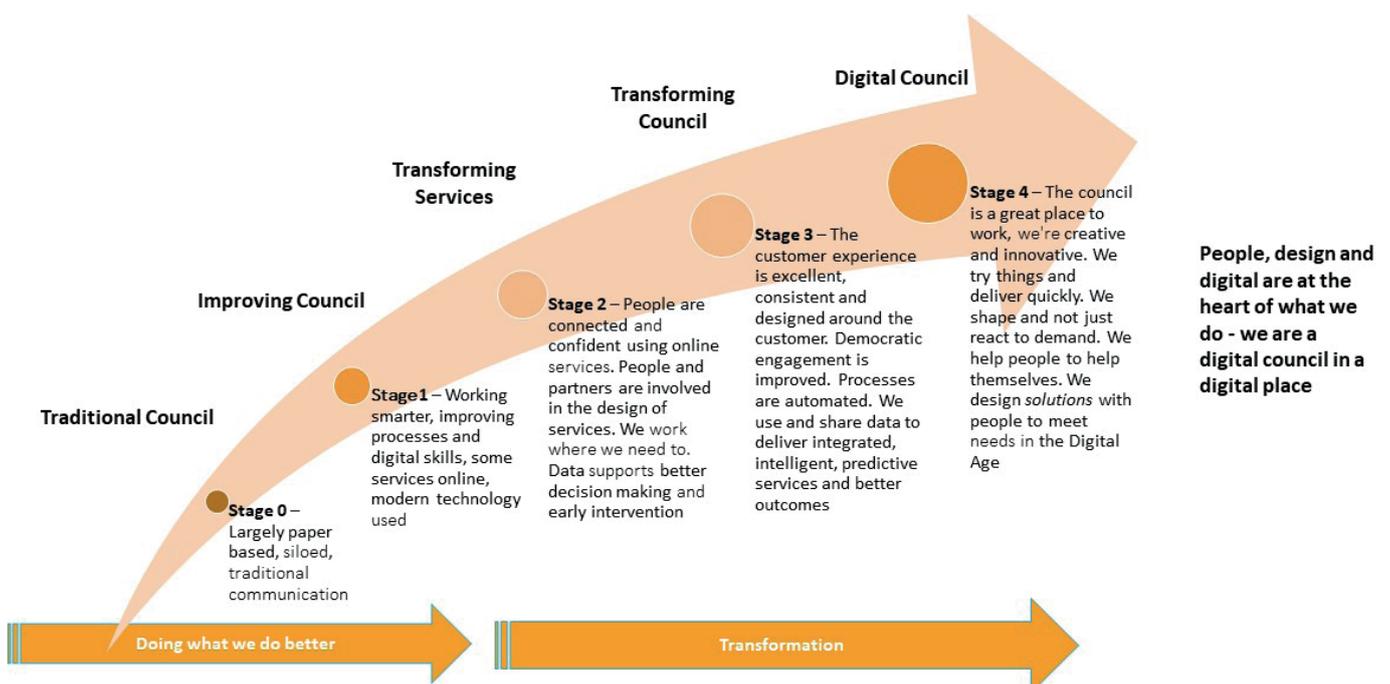
Enable Dorset to be a digital place

We will:

- raise digital skills across businesses and residents to allow them to interact digitally and businesses to have access to people with the digital skills they need
- facilitate a digital infrastructure in the county to connect people and places, where and when they need it, enabling economic growth, and for people and communities to help themselves
- demonstrate digital leadership by setting community aspirations and expectation, creating culture and building capability
- stimulate investment from the private sector
- increase transparency and citizen participation in policy development and decision making
- support businesses, the public sector and residents to use technology to make a real difference to people's lives

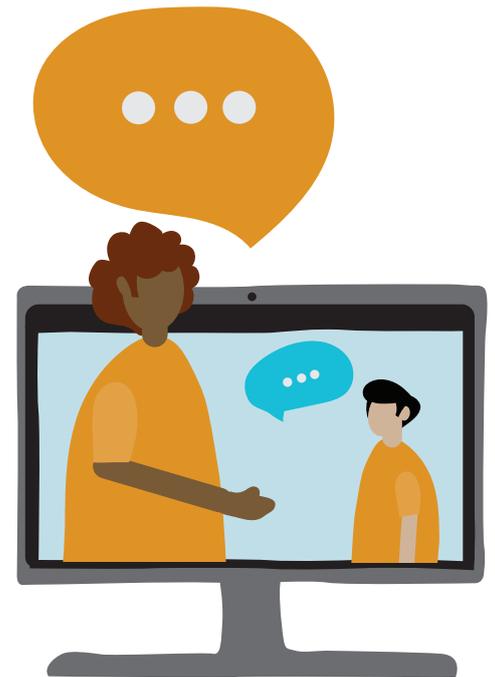
Achieving the vision

We have developed a maturity curve to enable a dialogue with people about our digital vision and think about the opportunities to get started with change. From early workshops we have examples of activity across stages 1-3 with the majority in stage 1.



Since then we have responded to COVID-19 and we have:

- had 2500 employees working from home using technology to connect and collaborate as a workforce
- used a variety of communication methods with the public to meet different needs
- responded as an organisation with agility and pace
- set up new online services
- provided devices to connect the most vulnerable in our communities
- used data and intelligence for community shield
- improved senior leadership communication and engagement with employees
- helped democratic meetings to operate virtually
- found creative and innovative solutions to problems
- all worked as #onecouncil to deliver services absolutely focused on the needs of users



We feel that we have made a greater shift into stage 2. We want to seize the opportunity to retain the positive learning and further inspire the workforce around the potential of digital to think differently about how we deliver services.

To deliver our vision we have identified five cross cutting enablers:

Digital skills and inclusion.

Designing future services.

Technology and infrastructure.

Data and intelligence.

Culture and leadership.



Digital skills and inclusion

Citizens Online reported that the council has made outstanding progress in many areas to support digital inclusion (May 2019). But there is more work to do to close the gap working with partners across Dorset and addressing specific areas of need.

Nationally, 54% of the population uses the internet to work, yet the Lloyds Bank Digital Consumer Index 2019 found that more than half of UK employees (53%) do not have the digital skills they need for work. A Dorset Chamber of Commerce and Industry survey last year showed almost half Dorset businesses need help with business skills.

We have a network of 75 digital champions in the community and 175 in the workplace to support the development of digital skills. In the council we have deployed O365 and MS Teams. In a recent staff survey the confidence in using MS teams was 78%, we want to increase this.

There is a national shortage of engineers to build the full fibre network which the government proposes will be complete in 2025. Openreach has developed fibre training facilities but this will not meet the national need or provide engineers for other network providers.

Developing digital skills and ensuring maximum digital inclusion is a clear priority for us. We will:

- continue our 'Routes to Inclusion' work with communities to help people develop digital skills and facilitate access to devices and get online to reduce digital exclusion.
- we will help people to use new online services and create embedded digital champions across the public sector workforce as per recommendations from Citizens Online.
- supercharge our employee and councillor digital champions working with Changing Social and 365TRIBE, to redefine the role, raise its importance, and develop a more rounded set of skills to cascade knowledge. This will help the adoption of technology across the whole council as part of our Dorset Workplace Programme.
- develop cohorts of 'design champions' across the organisation to enable employees to continually improve services focused on user needs, using data and customer insight as evidence.
- work with NHS colleagues, businesses and the education sector to establish a Digital Academy in Dorset that provides knowledge and skills in design, agile, latest technologies, and digital leadership.
- develop our technical skills to fully exploit our core technology platforms to provide modern digital services, developing excellence by using professional skills frameworks to ensure technical roles keep pace with future needs.

Designing future services

Over the last 12 months we have had 2.76m people use the council's website, with the contact centre handling 330,000 enquiries. We have a range of online services available for people to self-serve 24/7, from quite simple contact forms through to complex end to end services that are automated as much as possible. The top 10 online services have an average usage of 70%, reducing demand on services and the contact centre.

We want to be a strong, customer-led and delivery focussed council, making best use of our resources, our people and ever mindful that we must do better with less to protect the public purse. We want people and communities to be able to help themselves, maintaining independence.

We need to be an organisation who delivers the services that our customers want and need, irrespective of any challenges we may face now and in the future. Our emerging Customer Access Strategy supported by our customer delivery model will detail how we do this.

We will:

- challenge ourselves to deliver services differently, supporting our ambition for transformation. We will work in multi-disciplinary, agile teams to design end to end services based on data and user research to understand customer's needs acting as #onecouncil.
- develop our customer engagement strategy to include those not online, target our communication messages using data and knowledge of our customers, and nudge behaviour change to encourage greater use of online channels.
- move our existing websites and portals onto the new customer platform to improve accessibility and a more consistent and personalised experience, providing a single access point online for customers to deal with



the council and track progress of service interactions.

- continue to adopt standards to provide service directories and good information and advice working with the voluntary sector. Encourage the use of accredited self-enabled care apps through our work with ORCHA, supporting people to help themselves.
- consider how we can use technology to build on the strength and assets in communities and neighbourhoods to connect and support each other, learning from our work during COVID-19.
- demonstrate how new technology can enable business growth and new service delivery models through pilots in, but not limited to aquaculture, increasing visitors to sensitive coastal areas, connected care homes and ambulances.

Technology and infrastructure

'Digital connectivity plays a key role in both improving productivity and addressing environmental challenges. The impact of Covid-19 has demonstrated the absolute necessity to have reliable, resilient and up-to-date digital infrastructure to support economic activity and provide community services. The infrastructure and ability to exploit its potential are essential to enable inclusive growth and prosperity and realise the vision for clean economic growth.' **Dorset Council's Economic Growth Strategy, 2020**

- **Superfast:** current coverage in Dorset is: 96% (nationally 97.2%)¹. At the conclusion of the Superfast Dorset contract with Openreach at the end of 2021 we expect this to have risen by an additional 1.2% - this still leaves many thousands of homes and businesses with poor, unreliable broadband.
- **Gigabit** capable networks (usually described as full fibre) are the next generation of connectivity. Dorset's current gigabit coverage is 6.6%, compared with a national figure of 36.5%.²
- **Mobile** coverage in Dorset is poor, only 42.6% of A and B roads in Dorset have what Ofcom deem to be an acceptable signal on all the 2G mobile networks. Less than 66% of premises in Dorset have 4G coverage from all four mobile operators.³

Dorset needs good connectivity to attract entrepreneurial talent looking to move from the south east. Our existing businesses and communities need to keep up to date as new technologies are rolled out.

Central government has set the aspiration of 100% gigabit connectivity by the end of 2025 (revised January 2020 to 85% by 2025 and an aspiration to go further); this will be achieved by a combination of commercial deployment and in rural and other high-cost areas through government intervention, the 'gigabit' or 'outside-in' programme.

The first (of 1,500 planned) contracts nationally are likely to begin deployment mid-2022. Although it is not currently known when Dorset will begin to benefit, Dorset Council is working with Government to agree the strategy for Dorset and the pipeline of work. A range of interventions will be required.

We continue to converge our legacy council infrastructure, applications and devices to enable us to operate as a single organisation following local government reorganisation. We currently have:

- 5,839 network users,
- 6,077 corporately issued devices (laptops, PCs, tablets and smartphones)
- 239 network connections going into sites

To connect people and places and exploit technologies across Dorset and within the council we will:

- complete the superfast programme by 2022 and work with the Government to define and deliver the next 'Gigabit programme' to deliver full fibre broadband to the final 20%.
- stimulate investment from the private sector through creating conditions that encourage and facilitate commercial network deployment

- deliver the current 5GDorset test bed and trial programme and explore further mobile infrastructure and 5G opportunities.
- identify opportunities to use new and emerging technologies such as robotic process automation and machine learning, to free up officer time for frontline services and help us meet increasing demand. We will continue to explore robotics in care and widen our collaboration with others such as the NHS, sharing our learning to influence our peers.
- implement a digital platform that will help us use, build and share re-usable components to develop service interactions, join up our data, and use open standards to enable integration of new technologies such as Internet of Things (voice, sensors), to monitor and trigger proactive service delivery. The platform will be flexible and scalable beyond the boundaries of the council, providing a solid foundation to build on.
- put in place assurance processes to meet the [Government Service Standard](#) and re-use common design patterns to give us the agility and pace we need when delivering digital work.
- make sure all changes to the application and website landscape support the business objectives and move us from siloed instances of change. Where we cannot replace line of business applications by common components in the digital platform any future selection must be done in alignment with the [Technology Code of Practice](#).
- make sure our technology services are safe and secure and achieve appropriate compliance accreditation to provide assurance to our communities and partners that we can be trusted to handle personal data. We will develop our capability to identify and mitigate security risks and conduct regular exercises to make sure we are able to respond effectively to emerging threats.
- provide converged and flexible technology platforms that remove the friction from adopting new ways of working; focusing on delivering better user experience, improving the availability of technology services, maintaining and driving value from the application portfolio.
- supporting dispersed working and collaboration, removing the need for paper and printing, applying appropriate record retention and destruction policies understanding and managing our information assets.

Data & intelligence

We want to be a council that uses data and intelligence to drive informed, transparent, decision-making, moving away from retrospective performance reporting. We want to move towards the use of predictive analytics and ultimately prescriptive analytics to improve outcomes.

We want to join up our data to have one version of the truth that is available to the wider organisation to use, and develop a culture of embedding the use of data and insight into strategic and operational management practice and designing better public services.

The council collects significant amounts of diverse data, for example:

- social care for vulnerable children
- waste collection, procurement
- Council Tax collection
- planning applications

This 'big data' offers an opportunity for greater understanding and analysis to provide better insight for decision making.

We continue to use data analytics to try to predict events from drug abuse to the likeliest locations for house fires, to school children most at risk of not completing their education. These insights help to equip us with the enhanced ability to take a preventative approach, putting in place interventions to try and stop problems rather



than providing costly services in response.

Data and geographical location will play a key role in delivering a 'smart rural Dorset', where internet of things devices capture and send data to help us understand what is happening. Using technologies like machine learning, artificial intelligence and data visualization will help understand and improve areas such as carbon emissions, asset management and traffic flow.

We will do this by:

- growing our capability and skills in the insight and intelligence function, including technical systems knowledge, data knowledge, business intelligence and development of new data scientist roles.
- improving the quality of our data and educating the workforce on the importance of data and geographical location, what it's telling us and the questions that come from the data. We will explore the idea of performance champions across the Council to help us do this.
- educating and reassuring our customers how their data will be used making sure the rights of individuals privacy are maintained and to provide partner organisations with the confidence that information is shared appropriately, working with our corporate information governance group.
- merging data sources and reporting capabilities into a common approach to ensure consistency of performance reporting and enable evidence-based decision making, with the development of interactive dashboarding solutions for end users where required.
- establishing a common approach for business intelligence utilising data warehousing, enabling the combination of data sets to better target resources and earlier intervention. This will allow for deeper population level analysis and provide frontline professionals access to a more comprehensive picture of the people receiving their services.
- continuing to work with health colleagues to develop the Dorset intelligence and insight service (DiiS), a data service linking health and social care data across the system, aiming to create a shared data pool which will automatically combine data and provide end users with intuitive and clear self-serve solutions, supported by information sharing agreements underpinned by the Dorset Information Sharing Charter.
- starting to publish data openly where possible in reusable formats in the most appropriate places for our users and continuing to develop our use of geographical information systems.

Culture and leadership

COVID-19 has demonstrated the benefits of agile governance and that services focused on the needs of our customer lead to increased customer satisfaction and a workforce that is proud to work for the council. It has shown that we can be innovative, outcome focused and deliver at pace.

Establishing the right culture and leadership is fundamental to delivering our digital vision and enabling the organisation to innovate. We need to embed our council values and behaviours to enable this, we will:

- continue to take a [design-led](#) and [agile approach](#), embedding it at the heart of our transformation approach and service improvement work. This will help us to deal with uncertainty and constant change, stimulate innovation and continuous improvement, and empower people to fail fast, learn and move on. We will adopt the following principles, to:
 - work as multi-disciplinary teams
 - start with user needs and discovery
 - identify worthwhile problems to unlock greater impact and savings
 - allow time to explore the art of possible

- build on local capability & strength
- think big, start small
- backup hypothesis with evidence and insights
- work in the open
- develop campaigns and challenges to encourage and nurture ideas and creativity, provide the support they need and help share learning. This will inspire people about how others are delivering services very differently to encourage cross-fertilisation of ideas.
- work with partners across the [Health and Care system](#) to identify gaps in our current Digital Offer making sure we focus on real-life problems and support innovation. This will take the form of a 'Living Lab' approach being led by the CCG and will see academia and developers working on the things that matter to the people that need support. Working in this way will create the environment necessary to truly collaborate.
- integrate digital aspects into the Leadership and Management development programmes that are being developed. This will enable managers to model behaviours, practice virtual leadership and have confidence to experiment and lead on digital across the wider system of Dorset.
- talk about our work on Yammer, the intranet and through our external Digital Dorset brand. Share our learning of what's worked and what's not, open show & shares virtually, and increase our blogging.
- continue to nurture the digital network and actively develop and support relationships with digital leaders, businesses and investors to understand and promote culture change.
- make the most of national funding opportunities to enable investment and innovation in Digital in Dorset.

Conclusion

This is an ambitious vision. The response to COVID-19 has shown that when we work as #oneteam and deliver services around the needs of our users, we achieve increased customer satisfaction, improved staff morale and pride in the council. We need to make sure we retain this and build on it.

To deliver the vision, digital activity will be governed either by the Senior Leadership team or the digital place programme board to make sure it has the leadership it needs to drive it forward at pace.

We will develop a single prioritised pipeline of work across the organisation to ensure the right resources are focused on the right work. We will adopt a design-led and agile approach to enable us to deliver incrementally, respond to change and focus on people's needs.

This is the moment for us to exploit digital to drive opportunity across Dorset.

Measuring success

Quantitative

- increase in percentage of premises within Dorset Council contracts that can access gigabit-capable (full fibre) broadband
- increase in percentage of premises with Dorset Council contracts that can access superfast broadband services
- increase in percentage of A&B roads in Dorset have acceptable signal on all the 2G mobile networks
- reduction in the number of people who are digital excluded in Dorset

- increase in confidence of workforce using O365/MS Teams
- increase in the adoption of O365 & Teams across the workforce improving productivity
- increase in the use of online services by residents and businesses reducing demand over the phone and face to face
- reduced paper usage and postal costs, helping to meet the council's climate commitments

Qualitative

- Increased customer satisfaction through improved experience
- Increased staff satisfaction better experience and use of technology

Key statistics

Online Services – 2019 figures

- 230,000 visitors to the council website average per month, 55% by mobile device
- Contact centre handled 330,000 enquiries over the last 12 months
 - 250,000 telephony
 - 32,800 emails
 - 20,500 face to face
 - 16,900 social media
 - 9,800 webchats
 - 70% of contact for services available in the contact centre is completed online



Digital skills – as at June 2020

- 175 employee digital champions
- staff confidence in using MS Teams average 78%
- Feb 2020 team's usage = 900 active users, June 2020 = 3400 active users
- 75 digital champions in the community
- 30,000 people completely offline in Dorset (3.9%)
- 75,000 digitally excluded (this includes the completely offline and those who lack all basic digital skills)



Infrastructure



- 5,839 Dorset Council network users
- 4,377 Dorset Council devices (laptop or PC)
- 1,700 mobile devices (smartphone or tablet)
- 239 network connects into sites as part of the council network
- £2m employee travel costs
- 95.1% of premises within Dorset Council contracts can access superfast broadband, 4.89% of premises within Dorset Council contracts can access full fibre
- less than 66% of premises have 4G coverage from all 4 major mobile operators

Dorset Council Residents Survey 2019

- 14% of residents identified improving digital connectivity as mattering most
- 62% of residents use social media platforms, with Facebook ranking highest
- 49% of residents prefer to access council information through the website, 25% through a Google search

Dorset Council Residents Survey 2020

- 94% of respondents use the internet. However as 70% of surveys were completed online, the actual proportion of Dorset residents who do not use the internet may be higher than 6%. Of the respondents who completed the survey as a telephone interview, 18% do not use the internet.
- The most common reason for not using the internet was not being interested, with 72% giving this reason. 22% were prevented from using the internet due to not having equipment and 16% due to lack of skill.
- Of the respondents who use the internet, 88% have a smartphone or mobile phone that connects to the internet. 76% have a laptop and 69% have a tablet or an iPad.

