## Appendix 1 - Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

| SCRUTINY MONITORING – PROGRESS UPDATE | |
|---|---|
| **Review:** | **Digital Optimisation** |
| **Link Officer/s:** | **Lorraine Dixon** |
| **Action Plan Agreed:** | **March 2019** |

Updates on the progress of actions in relation to agreed recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews are required approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan. Progress updates must be detailed, evidencing what has taken place regarding each recommendation – a grade assessing progress should then be given (see end of document for grading explanation).

| Recommendation 1: | A review of *My Stockton* with regards content and layout be undertaken. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon | | |
| Date: | April 2019 | September 2019 | September 2019 |
| Agreed Action: | Review strengths / weaknesses identified by customer views from *My Stockton* Survey. | Consider and define content for *My Stockton* at Digital Services Group taking account of next phase online development opportunities. | Consider and define revised *My Stockton* design and layout. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Customer views are understood. | *My Stockton* is designed to provide customers with personalised access to key services. | The new design of *My Stockton* is complete taking account of customer views from the *My Stockton* survey and ready to be implemented. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | The survey of customer views of my Stockton has been summarised to inform design decisions.<br><br>*The survey results are included in **Appendix 1*** | In December 2019 Council purchased a new Digital Development Platform (GOSS) which provides us with the tools to redesign and redevelop the Council website, including My Stockton and customer self-serve solutions. Development work will begin in April 2020 and go live is expected to be during 2021. | The design of My Stockton will take account of customer views derived from the survey with particular emphasis on the customer experience in logging and monitoring service requests. |
| Assessment of Progress | 1 | 3 | 3 |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **(March 2020):**<br>(include explanation if required) | | The decision to replace the Council website using the GOSS Digital platform was taken to ensure compliance with required accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA) and to improve the customer experience. My Stockton replacement is included in this work. | The redesign is included in the replacement of the Council website. |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | N/A (Fully Achieved) | Design of new website in progress and prototype in development. Content redesign to start December 20 with the new Website due to be launched December 2021 – March 2022. Replacement for My Stockton included in this work. | The redesign is included in the replacement of the Council website. |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020):<br>(include explanation if required) | N/A (Fully Achieved) | 3<br>Slipped against the original plan due to the procurement of GOSS and replacement website. | 3<br>Slipped against the original plan due to the procurement of GOSS and replacement website. |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Recommendation 2:** | **Work be undertaken to understand why too few of the Borough's residents are using the Council's digital services (in line with the Local Government Digital Service Standard).** |
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon |
| Date: | June 2019 |
| Agreed Action: | Conduct a resident's survey to understand the barriers to digital engagement. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Resident's views and circumstances are understood and used to inform digital delivery decisions. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | To gain interest into why some residents of the Borough are not using digital services and understand the main barriers to digital engagement, we conducted a residents survey targeting customers contacting us by telephone or visiting one of our 3 Customer Service centres.<br><br>110 surveys were completed. |

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*Graphical representation of the results are included in **Appendix 2 (Graph A)***

*51 residents stated they had used our online services previously, 59 stated they had not.*

Of those 51 residents who had used them before 35 residents stated they would be happy to use them again.

15 residents said they would not use them again, the main reason given were:
- *Tried but too difficult*
- Were unable to find what they were looking for.
  **(Graph B)**

We will take on board these comments when developing the website and self-serve solutions and include user research and evaluation in the process.

Of the 59 residents who stated they had never used our online services, the main reasons they gave were:
- don't have access to the internet
- rely on family and friends to access online services on their behalf.
  **(Graph C)**

We also considered the information in Customer Experian Profiles to show the respective Experian Household Groups and their likely behaviours/usage in terms of:
- Social Media
- Internet Speed
- Channel Preference
- Technology
- Contact Preference (when making contact)

**<u>Ward Profile 2019</u>**

The overall breakdown of Experian Household Groups within Stockton on Tees shows the number, proportion and ranking of all households in terms of Experian within the Borough.

The Experian results are included in **Appendix 3** together with the ward profile information is in **Appendix 4.**

To understand how Stockton residents compare nationally and to consider any additional factors, we used national research, including the following:-

Research into internet access provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Survey results are included in **Appendix 5.**

NHS digital inclusion
- https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/our-work/digital-inclusion/what-digital-inclusion-is
- https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/our-work/digital-inclusion/supporting-digital-inclusion-locally

NHS Practical Steps to Support local digital inclusion

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    o  https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/our-work/digital-inclusion/supporting-digital-inclusion-locally

UK  Digital Strategy

    o  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-digital-strategy/2-digital-skills-and-inclusion-giving-everyone-access-to-the-digital-skills-they-need

    o  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-digital-strategy

.GOV Encouraging people to use online services

    o  https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/encouraging-people-to-use-your-digital-service

    o  https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/making-your-service-accessible-an-introduction

The Government Digital Inclusion Strategy highlights 4 barriers for residents using online services and our findings from our residents survey to understand residents feedback corroborates this, we identified that more than one may affect individuals at any one time:

1. **skills**: the ability to use the internet and online services
2. **confidence**: a fear of crime, lack of trust or not knowing where to start online
3. **motivation:** understanding why using the internet is relevant and helpful

**Key Barriers to Digital Inclusion - Research summary and Action Plan**

We  complied the key findings from these sources of research and developed an action plan to help to address the barriers. See ***Appendix 6.***

**Digital Support to Customers**

To help customers to overcome some of the barriers and to access our online services we created 4 Digital Customer Officer posts,  2 in Stockton Customer Services, 1 in Billingham and 1 in Thornaby. These staff help customers to access services using either their own or Council devices.

Feedback from the public has been very positive; "fantastic help and support and told me other things to help me use online services" and "thank you for helping advise how to book bulky waste", "great service".

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<td>Assessment of Progress (March 2020):<br>(include explanation if required)</td>
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<td>Evidence of Progress (September 2020):</td>
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Provision of support to customers in our face to face settings has been paused due to the COVID Pandemic, however we continue to support customers to get online during telephone contact.

Design of digital services is continuing and improvements to online services are underway using the new GOSS platform and other Council solutions for example Civica for Tax and Benefits.

GOSS Solutions delivered so far, include:-
**COVID Related:**
Booking system for PPMG
Waste bags ordering and Collection
Test and trace for staff and visitors

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|  | COVID welfare assistance<br>COVID Test and Trace £500 support payment<br><br>**Customer Self-Serve Programme**<br>Digital Library Membership<br>Mayors Award<br>Report a Hate Crime<br>Report anti-social behaviour<br>Data Subject Access Request<br>Taxi Driver Knowledge Test<br>Taxi Driver Notification of Convictions<br>Request to advertise on a licensed vehicle<br>Transfer of licensed vehicle<br>Change of license type<br>Taxi license renewals<br>Staff Car Park Barrier pass<br>Staff parking permit |
|---|---|
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): <br>(include explanation if required) | 2 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | Since September 2019 there has been an increased take up of online services. This is partly due to more service availability and partly due to COVID-19 where lockdown encouraged more people to access services online.<br><br>For volumes of customer transactions please see Appendix A. |

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| Recommendation 3: | Digital service options on the Council's home page be made more visible / explicit (e.g. 'sign up for *My Stockton*). | |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Carly Dixon | Carly Dixon |
| Date: | April 2019 / ongoing for changes | March 2020 |
| Agreed Action: | Redesign home page to include key digital options:- | |
| | Include in 'Top Tasks' those services that are providing customers with end to end self-serve options. | Include 'Sign up for *My Stockton*' as an explicit tab (in action 1) once the redesign and redevelopment is complete. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Digital service options are clearly visible to customers from the Council website. | |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Complete | Linked to Website redesign (Recommendation 1) |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 1 | 3 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | N/A (Fully Achieved) | Linked to Website redesign (Recommendation 1) |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | N/A (Fully Achieved) | 3 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | N/A (Fully Achieved) | Current My Stockton users 20,575 an increase of 2,087 since March 20. |

| Recommendation 5: | SBC should ensure that senior management are able to recognise the potential benefits for digital services across all departments and ensure this is reflected in the culture of the Council. | |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Digital Services Group | Lorraine Dixon |
| Date: | March 2021 | Ongoing |
| Agreed Action: | Ensure that senior managers from all Directorates are represented in Digital Services Group and are actively supported to help their colleagues to understand the benefits of digital services. | Ensure that digital options are included as a key factor in service improvement and redesign activities. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | All senior managers are able to identify and deliver service benefits through digital developments. | Plans for service improvements and redesign activities contain success factors delivered through digital methods. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Members of Digital Services Group are helping others to understand the benefits of digital services. | Key projects currently in flight include Revenues and Benefits and Children's Services are in the early stages of major transformation projects where digital solutions are understood to be key enablers to service redesign. |

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| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Meetings stalled during COVID response work. Projects picked up during July and August and meetings started again in September. | **Key Projects:-**<br>**Microsoft 365 Teams** to enable effective Homeworking<br><br>**Parking System** went live March 2020, delivering greater automation and modern technology platform.<br><br>**Netcall Omnichannel Contact Centre** Solution went live in September 2020 delivering a number of benefits including reduced wait times for customers telephoning the contact centre. Improved experience through the option for a call back.<br>We will be implementing other new features in the coming months including social media, email and chat.<br><br>**Civica Revenues and Benefits** project in progress, key benefits will be automation of processing and customer online self-serve. Phase 1 due for completion October 20 to enable efficiency of document management and processing. Phases 2 will follow to provide customer self-serve solutions. These will rolled out gradually over the coming months. |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | | Microsoft Teams has enabled the Council to continue to work during the COVID pandemic. It has provided the tools to enable homeworking staff to communicate, meet and collaborate, which has enabled business to continue and also provided a platform to help staff to feel less isolated at home.<br><br>The Netcall Contact Centre solution is in the early stages of live running, however it is already demonstrating benefits. Customers now have the option of a call back which holds their position in the telephone queue until an operator is free. We have received very |

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| | | positive feedback from customers so far. |
|---|---|---|

| Recommendation 6: | Consideration be given to expanding the role of the Council's Digital Services Group to develop SBC Digital Champions within each directorate and to engage with the community. | |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Digital Services Group | |
| Date: | July 2019 | |
| Agreed Action: | Revise the Terms of Reference for Digital Services Group to include developing Digital Champions and engagement with the community. | Identify Digital Champions across the Council's services. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Digital Services Group terms of reference are updated and relevant agenda items included. | Digital Champions are in place and understand their role. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Complete<br><br>Terms of reference amended to include responsibility for Digital Champions, see **Appendix 7.** | Champions identified within Digital Services group, work is continuing to expand across the Council. A training programme is planned for staff to provide them with the relevant digital skills and expected to be implemented from May 2020 for 50 staff. |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 1 | 2 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | N/A (Fully Achieved) | Stalled due to COVID and delayed until next Spring. |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | N/A (Fully Achieved) | 3 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | N/A (Fully Achieved) | Digital skills have improved due to the use of technology to support homeworking during the pandemic. |

| Recommendation 7: | SBC embraces the iDEA (The Duke of York Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award) concept, both within the Council itself, and for residents young and old. |
|---|---|
| | **For Council Staff** |
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon / Liz Purdy |
| Date: | September 2019 |
| Agreed Action: | Incorporate within the Council's workforce development plan. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | The Council is signed up as an organisation to iDEA and managers and staff are aware of the development opportunities. |

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| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | The Council has signed up as an organisation.<br>Included in training and development programme.<br>Actively promoting through KYIT. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020):<br>(include explanation if required) | 2 | | |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | All Digital Transformation and Customer Service staff (57) have completed bronze level medals and have plans to progress to silver. | | |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020):<br>(include explanation if required) | 2 | | |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | | | |
| | **For Community** | | |
| Responsibility: | Craig Taylor | Mark Freeman | Carly Dixon |
| Date: | October 2019 | October 2019 | October 2019 |
| Agreed Action: | Market and promote to Adult learners.<br><br>Incorporate within the Community Learning curriculum. | Library service to promote and support residents to engage with the programme. | Promote via Stockton website and Stockton News. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Adult learners are aware of how to sign up and the benefits of the iDEA award.<br><br>Adult learners actively engage in the online learning opportunities and awards. | Library visitors are aware of how to sign up and the benefits of the iDEA award. | Residents are aware of how to sign up and the benefits of the iDEA award. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | The iDEA programme has been piloted during the 19/20 academic year within ICT programmes. Approximately 40 learners have been utilising the resources within term 1 and an additional 40 learners are forecast to utilise the resources within term 2.<br><br>The iDEA programme has provided additional learning resources within teaching programmes and has supported learners to | Display has been put up at Stockton Central Library on how to access iDEA courses.<br><br>Library Universal Digital Offer continues to develop offering access to new technology in the Innovation and Imagination Stations.<br><br>One to One tutor support for devices and programmes available at selected libraries. | To be included in the redesign of the website and to include case studies from Adult Learning and Libraries. |

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| | access online services whilst modules including e-safety and cyber security have given learners more confidence to use ICT.<br><br>In addition, findings from the pilot have highlighted that the iDEA model will provide additional support to learners within pre-employability courses by developing the digital skills needed to access online resources such as conducting online job searches and submitting job applications. This will be piloted in the remainder of the academic year. | Access to office packages, online information, ebooks and downloadable audio available.<br><br>Staff trained in basic support for customers using library ICT facilities<br><br>Digital offers and services integrated into daily work of the library service.  All staff are encouraged to develop through online training packages and usage of Libraries Connected materials and promotions. | |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Due to the impact of COVID-19, the Service was unable to continue with the roll out of iDEA in new subject areas such as Employability programmes and within the Routes to Work project as originally planned. This was predominantly due to the lack of access to ICT for many learners and the closure of centres such as Newtown Hub for the planned Digital Skills workshop for project clients.<br><br>However, existing learners who were already enrolled and utilising the iDEA modules continued to learn and complete badges. | COVID and closure of libraries in March prevented library users from seeing the promotional displays, all one-to-one support sessions ceased and no public access to IT facilities. All displays were taken down when libraries reopened, to discourage lingering.<br><br>iDEA to be promoted via library social media for Get Online Week 19-25 Oct.<br><br>Official iDEA promotional material was due to be updated.<br><br>Increased take up of ebook/e-audio offer. | To be included in the redesign of the website (currently in progress) and to include case studies from Adult Learning and Libraries. |

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| | Based on the findings from the pilot within 19/20, and following the re-establishment of face-to-face classroom delivery for 20/21, the Service now plans to roll out the iDEA resources beyond ICT learners and continue with the planned roll out into employability programmes and Routes to Work project clients.<br><br>In addition, the Service will now utilise these resources within its Security Industry Awareness (SIA) course to provide learners with the digital skills needed to support their employment prospects.<br><br>In collaboration with Tees Valley Combined Authority, the Service has also be appointed to lead on a pilot course within Tees Valley for the Tech Mums programme, a course specifically aimed at empowering women through technology. As a result, it is forecast that in term 1 up to 60-80 individuals will be able to access and utilise these resources to develop their digital skills." | Digi Team Tips sessions on Facebook encouraged people to ask questions – little take-up. | |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | Feedback gained from this cohort of learners identified that 80% would continue to use iDEA resources again in the future and 50% | | New website currently in development. Please see Recommendation 1. |

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<td>would continue to use it in their own time rather than purely in the classroom.<br><br>Additional feedback from tutors confirm that many of the badges/modules offered through iDEA are closely aligned to existing curriculum activities such as the promotion of e-safety.<br><br>Tutors continue to report that the use of the iDEA resources are more suited to challenge the more able learners and within higher level courses.</td>
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| Recommendation 8: | Appropriate skills be developed and resources prioritised within the Council's workforce to design, progress and implement digital services. | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon | | Digital Services Group | |
| Date: | January 2019 / ongoing | March 2019<br><br>April 2019 – April 2021 | April 2019 – ongoing | April 2019 – ongoing |
| Agreed Action: | New roles established through the review of Digital Transformation and Customer Services team to design and implement digital services. | Deliver staff development needs to address skills requirements for the design and implementation of customer centric digital services. | Digital Services Group to support Council Services to identify learning and development needs resulting from new developments by including a Learning and Development section within Project documents and to provide guidance on learning options. | Digital Services Group to oversee the digital elements of the Council's workforce development activities (to include overseeing the implementation of the iDEA model (Action 7). |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Roles are established within | Initial staff training and | Digital skills development | Digital Services Group establish |

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| | Digital Transformation and Customer Services and staff are in place. | development needs are understood (Mar 19)<br><br>Training programme in place to meet short and medium term needs (Apr 19 – Apr 21) | included within service developments, digital projects and staff development plans. | and maintain an oversight of workforce development and provide advice and guidance to services. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Complete<br><br>The Digital Transformation and Customer Services functional structure has been in place since January 19. This includes roles focused on the design, development and implementation of Digital Solutions. | Staff in new roles have received training on a range of Digital skills and are currently in the training phase of the new Digital Development platform (GOSS). Competence and confidence is growing and staff are suitably competent to develop digital solutions. | Digital project documentation includes a section to capture workforce development and change management requirements. Please see the DSG Project Document template. ***Appendix 8 – Section 10.*** | Work has started through the identification of training needs for particular projects.<br><br>In May 2020 we will start rolling out training for Digital Champions which will include members of DSG. |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020):<br>(include explanation if required) | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020) | N/A (Fully Achieved) | Goss training delivered for 15 staff. Confidence in the use of the product is growing.<br><br>Netcall training for 70 staff including Contact Centre and Care Call staff.<br><br>Writing for the Web In-House course to ensure content meets accessibility standards (WCAG 2.2 AA) | Ongoing. Included in all project submissions. | Delayed due to COVID response. Planned for Spring 21 |

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| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | N/A (Fully Achieved) | 2 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | | GOSS Platform established. Team working well and confidence is growing. Website design in progress. Netcall live and working well. | | |

| Recommendation 9: | A digital skills development section is included within Council staff appraisals (individual and team requirements). | |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon / Liz Purdy | |
| Date: | April 2020 | January 2020 |
| Agreed Action: | Include relevant objectives and personal development requirements within staff appraisals. | Include reference to digital skills in appraisal training for managers and employees. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Digital skill requirements are reflected within staff appraisals. | Managers and staff are aware of the requirement to explicitly identify digital skills within the appraisal process. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Appraisal form is under review with the intention to include Digital Skills within the development section. | Training will highlight the need to consider and capture digital skills and will be rolled out with the new appraisal form. |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 3 | 3 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Stalled due to COVID response work | Stalled due to COVID response work |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | 3 | 3 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | | |

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| Recommendation 10: | Consideration be given as to how, in addition to those areas with the highest number of customer transactions, further digital solutions can be identified and implemented in those Council services with the greatest spend (Adults and Children's Services). | |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Ian Coxon / Lorraine Dixon | Digital Service Group |
| Date: | March 2021 – ongoing | March 2021 – ongoing |
| Agreed Action: | Ensure that digital options are explored and considered within service improvement and redesign activities within Adults and Children's Services. | Maintain an awareness of new and emerging technologies relevant to Adults and Children's Services. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Digital opportunities are identified, considered and benefits understood at every opportunity for service or system change and captured within plans. | Relevant technological developments are incorporated into digital developments. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | New system (Liquid Logic) went live in Children's services in January 20. transformation programme initiated to redesign services. Adults Services currently planning the implementation of Liquid Logic and reviewing service practices and processes in line with capabilities of the new system. | Ongoing, for example, through our peer groups and the Local Digital Community, we are observing and learning from other Authorities who are in the early stages in the use of new technologies, such as voice recognition (e.g. Alexa). |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Adults Services Liquid Logic project in progress. This will include online customer self-serve options. | COVID has stalled regional and national meetings, however we are still linked into these groups through digital channels. Extensive collaboration with other GOSS users to understand the opportunities of the platform is ongoing as is engagement with GOSS to understand emerging product developments. |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | | |

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| Recommendation 11: | Collaboration between service areas, ICT and communications and web teams continues to ensure a joined-up approach, as well as fostering wider learning through regular liaison and joint working with other Local Authorities, both regionally and nationally. |
|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon |
| Date: | Ongoing |
| Agreed Action: | Ensure the ongoing sustainability of:-<br>• Digital Services Group as a mechanism for collaboration across the Council<br>• North East Digital Services Group for regional collaboration<br>• North East SOCITM for regional and national collaboration<br>• Local Digital Declaration community for national |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Members of Digital Services group work collaboratively on projects and share experiences with the group to provide learning opportunities for colleagues.<br><br>The Council is represented in the identified regional and national groups.<br><br>The Council takes advantage of opportunities for working collaboratively with colleagues in other local authorities. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Collaborative work is continuing internally through Digital Services Group where a number of projects have involved teams from across the Council.<br>Regionally, we have successfully developed an new Van permit process in collaboration with Darlington by commissioning expertise from Newcastle Council.<br>We are also meeting regularly with colleagues in North East Digital Services Group and SOCITM north east to share experiences and expertise. |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Work stalled between March and August due to the priorities of COVID response work. Collaboration has been focused on digital solutions to provide services required for the COVID community hub, test and trace and the delivery of critical services. Digital Services Group re-established meetings in September via Teams and work has been reprogrammed. |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | The COVID Community Hub work is an excellent example of collaboration across Council departments to support the most vulnerable customers. This included the design and development of operating processes, systems and working practices to support the shielded community and those that were isolating and in need of help. |

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| Recommendation 12: | The Council's Digital Services Group provides leadership and opportunities for collaboration for the Council to deliver greater value through digital service delivery. | |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon | Digital Services Group |
| Date: | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Agreed Action: | Ensure digital Services Group continues to provide leadership, support and guidance to Council Services. | Maintain a collaborative approach to digital developments to ensure greater value across Council Services. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Council services are supported to deliver benefits through identified digital initiatives and projects. | Members of Digital Services group work collaboratively to identify benefits and deliver value to Council services. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | Digital Services Group meetings are monthly for the core group and are now every 2 months rather than once a quarter for the wider group and are well represented by Council Services. | Member of Digital Services group are working well together, in showcasing developments, working closer together on projects and learning lessons from one another. |
| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Following the COVID lockdown in March 2020 Digital Services core group shifted the focus towards provision of technology to enable staff to work at home and to develop, deliver and support the systems and processes required for the COVID hub. During this period some of the project work was briefly stalled. However the overall digital objectives of the Council have been accelerated as the majority of the workforce have transitioned into using technology for homeworking and work has continued on the customer self-serve programme and the Omnichannel Contact Centre solution (Netcall). | Following the COVID lockdown in March 2020 the meetings of Digital Services full group were paused and reinstated in September. However members of the group continued to work effectively and collaboratively on a range of COVID related support to customers, including:-<br>• The COVID Community Hub;<br>• Financial Support for Customers in difficulty and development of the application and processing of grant funding for businesses, Council tax support, the £100 COVID assistance grant and the £500 test and trace grant;<br>• Test and Trace recording;<br>• Booking Systems for Preston Park and the HWRC<br>• Digital Library membership |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 | 2 |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | Staff successfully homeworking using Microsoft Teams for collaboration and meetings. | **COVID Community Hub**<br>The COVID Community Support Hub was in operation between 30 March and the 14 August when it was |

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| | Successful implementation of GOSS, Netcall and COVID related developments. | transferred to Catalyst. During this the following was achieved:- <br><br>**3,234** Individual customers have received help through the Hub <br>**10,049** Incoming calls were handled by the COVID Community Hub Helpline <br>**10,612** Cases were raised on Assyst by the Shield Team as a result of proactive outgoing calls to shielded customers <br>**834** Cases were raised on Assyst and assigned to the Shield Team as a result of incoming calls to the Covid helpline from shielded customers <br>**7,595** Requests for support were logged by the COVID Community Hub Helpline and the Shield Hub <br>**The following were fulfilled:** <br>• **3,397** Food Parcels, **1,257** of which were for shielded customers <br>• **3,024** Prescriptions, **1,847** of which were for shielded customers <br>• **936** Shopping requests, **637** of which were for shielded customers <br><br>**Financial Support for Customers** <br>Using the new digital products, the following applications have been processed:- <br>• **299** Discretionary Business Grants <br>• **642** COVID Assistance Grants (£100 Asda Vouchers) <br>• **540** Test and Trace isolation grant applications |
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| Recommendation 13: | **Bids for funding of digital projects continue to be submitted, where appropriate, to build on the Council's current digital offer.** |
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| Responsibility: | Lorraine Dixon |
| Date: | Ongoing |
| Agreed Action: | Identify funding opportunities and submit bids where relevant. |
| Agreed Success Measure: | Attract maximum external funding for digital projects. |
| Evidence of Progress (March 2020): | In September 2019, in partnership with Sunderland and South Tyneside, we submitted a bid to the Local Digital Fund for funding to support work on a recycling project. Unfortunately this was unsuccessful, with only 7 authorities received funding, all in the South of the UK. <br>We will continue to monitor funding opportunities. |

## Appendix 1 - Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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| Assessment of Progress (March 2020): (include explanation if required) | 2 |
| Evidence of Progress (September 2020): | Due to the COVID pandemic, no funding bids submitted between March and October 2020. |
| Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required) | |
| Evidence of Impact (September 2020): | |

| Assessment of Progress Gradings: | 1 Fully Achieved | 2 On-Track | 3 Slipped | 4 Not Achieved |
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