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 (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): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	3 Slipped against the original plan due to the procurement of GOSS and replacement website.	3 Slipped against the original plan due to the procurement of GOSS and replacement website.
Evidence of Impact (September 2020):	N/A (Fully Achieved)		
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	*My Stockton* is currently in the build stage which has	The new design of *My Stockton, (renamed My*

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		been designed to provide customers with personalised access to key services. Including pre-populated information, including ward members, bin days and neighbourhood information, eg. NHS info. It will also provide the ability to:- save forms; track requests; access personalised information and services; review bookings; amend marketing preferences. My Stockton will be renamed 'My Council'	*Council)* is incorporated within the new website design and takes account of customer views from the *My Stockton* survey and is compliant with statutory accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA)
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	2	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	The new website, including 'My Council' is on target to go live in March 2022 and will be presented at Members Briefing on 30th November 2021.	The new website, including 'My Council' is on target to go live in March 2022 and will be presented at Members Briefing on 30th November 2021.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	1	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	Complete. The new website was presented at Members Briefing on 30th November and went live on 28 February 2022 as planned. My Council replaced My Stockton and includes a number of new features. Sign up and sign in options are at the top of the home page. https://www.stockton.gov.uk/	Complete. The new website was presented at Members Briefing on 30th November and went live on 28 February 2022 as planned. My Council replaced My Stockton and includes a number of new features. Sign up and sign in options are at the top of the home page. https://www.stockton.gov.uk/

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (September 2020):	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 COVID welfare assistance COVID Test and Trace £500 support payment **Customer Self-Serve Programme** Digital Library Membership Mayors Award Report a Hate Crime Report anti-social behaviour Data Subject Access Request Taxi Driver Knowledge Test Taxi Driver Notification of Convictions Request to advertise on a licensed vehicle Transfer of licensed vehicle Change of license type Taxi license renewals Staff Car Park Barrier pass Staff parking permit
Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (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. For volumes of customer transactions please see Appendix A.
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	Since the last progress review we have continued to make significant progress on the delivery of customer centric online services. This includes new online services

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

	for Council Tax and Benefits through the CIVICA system and a range of services developed by our Digital Delivery Team on our GOSS digital platform. There are currently 130 live GOSS solutions delivering a range of Council Services. This number increases each month as we continue the work on the new website. For a list of the current live GOSS solutions please see Appendix A. In August 2021 we implemented a new 'Contact Us' process for Revenues and Benefits enquiries. This is an online customer form which guides customers to our online services and information where available. If the customer enquiry cannot be resolved online there is the option for them to submit their enquiry online and the contact Centre Staff respond. This submitted enquiry works through our Netcall Contact Centre System and is prioritised along with incoming telephone calls to ensure a timely response. We are working on this approach for other services, such as Care for your Area, Bus Passes, Blue Badges etc. This service will gradually replace the need for incoming email to customer services.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	Since September 2019 there has been an increasing take up of online services. This is in part due to more service availability, however the pandemic has encouraged more people to access services online. For volumes of customer transactions please see Appendix B. The 3 pie charts show the breakdown of customer transactions by access channel for the month of September in 2019; 2020 and 2021 and it is clear that there is a definite shift towards digital channels. The trend graph shows the 4 year gradual shift away from manual channels (telephone and face to face) towards digital channels (online self-serve and emails).
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete. The new website went live on 28 February 2022 and included 150 self-serve solutions. We will continue to develop more processes in line with service developments. Customer take up of digital options continues to increase. For volumes of customer transactions by channel over the past 5 years please see **Appendix A**

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (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.
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	Sign up to 'My Council' is included in the header (top tab) of the design of new website and further encouragement through other services, e.g. Bookings and Service requests.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	The new website, including 'My Council' is on target to go live in March 2022 and will be presented at Members Briefing on 30th November 2021.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	Complete. The new website was presented at Members Briefing on 30th November and went live on 28 February 2022 as planned. My Council replaced My Stockton and includes a number of new features. Sign up and sign in options are at the top of the home page. https://www.stockton.gov.uk/

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (September 2020):	Meetings stalled during COVID response work. Projects picked up during July and August and meetings started again in September.	**Key Projects:-** **Microsoft 365 Teams** to enable effective Homeworking **Parking System** went live March 2020, delivering greater automation and modern technology platform. **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. We will be implementing other new features in the coming months including social media, email and chat. **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

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		communicate, meet and collaborate, which has enabled business to continue and also provided a platform to help staff to feel less isolated at home. 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 positive feedback from customers so far.
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):		Digital Services Group continues to work with service managers to support the introduction of digital solutions and redesigned services. In the past year Digital Services Group has overseen 113 projects of various sizes, including the following examples:- **Microsoft 365 Teams.** The 365 implementation is continuing with the introduction of OneDrive and Teams for file storage. **Civica Revenues and Benefits** project Phase 1 was delivered in October 20 October 20 to enable efficiency of document management and processing. Phase 2 has delivered a range of customer self-serve solutions and in the coming months this will include a customer portal and e-billing. **Netcall Omnichannel Contact Centre** Since the system went live in September 2020 work has continued, including configuration of new features and extending the use of the system to other council teams, for example Housing Solutions and OneCall.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)		2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):		MS Teams continues to enable staff to work remotely from the office. The Revenues and Benefits project has provided an improved self-serve offer to customers (these services contribute to the figures in Appendix A)

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		Netcall has provided us with the flexibility to respond to new and changing service requirements. This has been of huge benefit during the COVID pandemic. As an example; during surge testing we were able to configure the system to allow us to quickly respond to customers to offer advice and book tests. This included our homeworking customer services officers logging in after normal working hours to deal with unexpected levels of demand.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete / Established in practice. 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. The group is now well established and the processes and support for digital developments is embedded in service practice.	Complete / Established in practice. Digital options are included as a key factor in service improvement and redesign activities. Members of Digital Services group actively support services to evaluate digital solutions and options during service review activities and service developments.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (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.
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	The delays during the pandemic has impacted on the work of the digital champions, however it is included as part of the MS365 programme and over the coming months we will be involving Digital Champions in the implementation of OneDrive and MS Teams for file storage.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	3
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	Digital skills continue to improve generally due to the use of technology to support homeworking during the pandemic. In the next phase of MS365 implementation they will be enhanced to include the efficient and effective storage and sharing of files and documents.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)		1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):		Complete / Established in practice. Digital skills continue to improve generally due to the increase in digital services. The next phase of MS365 implementation is underway which includes training and support to

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		enable the use of MS365 to improve service practices.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

Recommendation 7:	SBC embraces the iDEA concept, both within the Council itself, and for residents young and old.		
	For Community		
Responsibility:	Craig Taylor	Mark Freeman	Carly Dixon
Date:	October 2019	October 2019	October 2019
Agreed Action:	Market and promote to Adult learners. 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. 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 (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. However, existing learners who were already enrolled and utilising the iDEA modules continued to learn and complete badges. Based on the findings from the pilot within	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. iDEA to be promoted via library social media for Get Online Week 19-25 Oct. Official iDEA promotional material was due to be updated. Increased take up of ebook/e-audio offer. Digi Team Tips sessions on Facebook encouraged people to	To be included in the redesign of the website (currently in progress) and to include case studies from Adult Learning and Libraries.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

	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. 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. 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."	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% would continue to use it in their own time rather		New website currently in development. Please see Recommendation 1.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

	than purely in the classroom. 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. 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.		
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	During the 20/21 academic year, Covid restrictions led to significantly reduced classroom capacities which resulted in lower uptake in digital programmes. Further turbulence was faced during the year with government guidance issued to cease face-to-face delivery in the months of November, January, February and March. This resulted in contingency measures being instigated with tutors focusing on supporting learners to ensure they were retained on their course and achieve their learning aims rather than iDEA badges. Apprentices however continued to work towards iDEA badges to improve their digital skills which was subsequently recorded on their e-portfolio as	Digital support not available between November 20 – July 21 Fully opened in July 21 and all digital support reinstated. Continue to promote iDEA along with other Digital Services and tools.	To be included in Digital Support through Libraries pages of new website which is currently in development, on target to go live March 2022.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

	evidence for assessment.		
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	1	1	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	Complete, promotion established in working practice.	Complete, promotion established in working practice.	New website on target to go live March 2022.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1	1	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete, promotion established in working practice.	Complete, promotion established in working practice.	Complete. The new website went live on 28 February 2022.

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 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 Digital Transformation and Customer Services and staff are in place.	Initial staff training and development needs are understood (Mar 19)	Digital skills development included within service developments, digital projects and staff	Digital Services Group establish and maintain an oversight of workforce development and provide advice

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		Training programme in place to meet short and medium term needs (Apr 19 – Apr 21)	development plans.	and guidance to services.
Evidence of Progress (September 2020)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	Goss training delivered for 15 staff. Confidence in the use of the product is growing. Netcall training for 70 staff including Contact Centre and Care Call staff. 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
Assessment of Progress (September 2020): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	2	2	3
Evidence of Impact (September 2020):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	GOSS Platform established. Team working well and confidence is growing. Website design in progress. Netcall live and working well.		
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	Digital Delivery Team established and working well, over 140 GOSS solutions have been delivered to date and a full programme of work is ongoing.	Learning and development is included in all Digital projects and guided by DSG.	Learning and development is included in DSG terms of reference. The MS 365 programme will incorporate

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		Web Strategy and Development Team established and development of new website in progress.		departmental champions.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	1	1	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	The teams with the competence and confidence to design, develop and implement digital services are established and delivering high quality digital solutions.	The mechanism for ensuring Learning and Development is considered and included is in place. Ensuring that skills are developed is ongoing in practice.	Good progress made, the training programme for MS 365 will embed the model in service practice.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	N/A (Fully Achieved)	1	1	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	N/A (Fully Achieved)	The teams with the competence and confidence to design, develop and implement digital services are established and delivering high quality digital solutions.	The mechanism for ensuring Learning and Development is considered and included is in place. Ensuring that skills are developed is ongoing in practice.	Complete / Established in practice. Digital skills continue to improve generally due to the increase in digital services. The next phase of MS365 implementation is underway which includes training and support to enable the use of MS365 to improve service practices.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (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):		
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	New Learning Management System in February will include appraisal module. Digital skills will be considered within the new appraisal framework.	Training will follow the implementation of the new appraisal framework.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	2	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	N/A this will be evaluated following the implementation of the new Learning Management system	N/A this will be evaluated following the implementation of the new Learning Management system
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete. The new LMS launched in May 2022. This is an online personalised learning portal which is digital in its own right and also includes modules for the development of Digital Skills.	Complete. The development of Digital skills is now included in the Managers guide to appraisals sections 2 and 3.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (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):		
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	2	2
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	Liquid Logic case management system is now live in both Adults and Children's Services. Liquid Logic Early Help module in progress in Children's Services.	The Digital Delivery Team have been involved in the implementation of Liquid Logic and as a result have a greater understanding of service delivery.
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	The systems have resulted in new working practices involving automation of processes and information. This improves efficiency by reducing manual processes and provides practitioners with timely and accurate caseload information.	The Digital Team are actively engaged with the other LAs particularly through the GOSS Local Authority Community to identify opportunities for good practice. The mechanisms are in place for ongoing development as opportunities arise.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1	1

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete / Established in practice. The new systems in place are resulting in new working practices involving automation of processes and information. The ongoing identification and implementation of new solutions is well established within the work of the Digital Services Group.	Complete / Established in practice. Networks have been re-established following COVID and Stockton Council staff actively participate.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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:- • Digital Services Group as a mechanism for collaboration across the Council • North East Digital Services Group for regional collaboration • North East SOCITM for regional and national collaboration • 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. The Council is represented in the identified regional and national groups. The Council takes advantage of opportunities for working collaboratively with colleagues in other local authorities.
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.
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	The following have been re-established following COVID:- • Digital Services Group as a mechanism for collaboration across the Council • North East SOCITM for regional and national collaboration • Local Digital Declaration community for national North East Digital Services Group for regional collaboration has yet to reconvene.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	As referenced in previous sections Digital Services Group continues to support a range of projects and initiatives. The COVID work since March 2020 includes many examples of collaboration across the Council in the development of operating process, systems and services to support residents during the pandemic.
Assessment of Progress	1

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

(July 2022): (include explanation if required)	
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete / Established in practice. The ongoing sustainability of the following is established in working practice:- • Digital Services Group as a mechanism for collaboration across the Council • North East Digital Services Group for regional collaboration • North East SOCITM for regional and national collaboration • Local Digital Declaration community for national

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

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 (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:- • The COVID Community Hub; • 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; • Test and Trace recording; • Booking Systems for Preston Park and the HWRC • 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. Successful implementation of GOSS, Netcall and COVID related developments.	**COVID Community Hub** The COVID Community Support Hub was in operation between 30 March and the 14 August when it was transferred to Catalyst. During this the following was achieved:- **3,234** Individual customers have received help through the Hub **10,049** Incoming calls were handled by the COVID Community Hub Helpline **10,612** Cases were raised on Assyst by the Shield Team as a result of

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		proactive outgoing calls to shielded customers **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 **7,595** Requests for support were logged by the COVID Community Hub Helpline and the Shield Hub **The following were fulfilled:** • **3,397** Food Parcels, **1,257** of which were for shielded customers • **3,024** Prescriptions, **1,847** of which were for shielded customers • **936** Shopping requests, **637** of which were for shielded customers **Financial Support for Customers** Using the new digital products, the following applications have been processed:- • **299** Discretionary Business Grants • **642** COVID Assistance Grants (£100 Asda Vouchers) • **540** Test and Trace isolation grant applications
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):		Digital Services group continues to work collaboratively with services to guide the implementation of new solutions and services. There has been extensive collaboration between services involved in COVID related activities in the development and delivery of new solutions and services to respond to the changing demands during the pandemic.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)		**2**
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):		There has been a range of services and solutions developed and delivered collaboratively between Council Services and teams, for example:- GOSS solutions and Contact centre services to support outbreak management, test and trace and vaccinations; collection of waste bags and bookings for services such as the

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

		Household waste and recycling centre.
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete / Established in practice. Digital Services Group is well established in practice, Council services are familiar with the process and well supported to deliver benefits through identified digital initiatives and projects.	Complete / Established in practice. Digital Services Group is well established in practice. There are several examples where members of the group work collaboratively to identify benefits and deliver value to Council services. For example:- GOSS solutions for customer online self-serve; the new Council website; Civica Revenue and Benefits system; Liquid Logic for Adults, Liquid Logic for Children; MS365 have all involved collaboration between members of Digital Services group and service teams.

Progress Update – Review of Digital Optimisation

Recommendation 13:	Bids for funding of digital projects continue to be submitted, where appropriate, to build on the Council's current digital offer.
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 (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)	2
Evidence of Impact (September 2020):	
Evidence of Progress (November 2021):	Due to the extensive Digital work programme for the new website and customer self-serve and the provision of services to support COVID activities, there has been sufficient development and improvement work in progress, therefore, no funding bids have been submitted between September 2020 and 2021.
Assessment of Progress (November 2021): (include explanation if required)	2
Evidence of Impact (November 2021):	N/A
Assessment of Progress (July 2022): (include explanation if required)	1
Evidence of Impact (July 2022):	Complete / Established in practice. We haven't accessed external funding this year, however, we continue to monitor opportunities for funding through Local Gov Digital and other Government initiatives.

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