IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Proposal 9: Modernising Citizen Journeys
Lead Portfolio: Reform and Governance

1.0 Summary of proposals

1.1 Digital services are cheaper, faster and available around the clock. They allow on-going contact and updates to be provided, giving confidence that issues are being dealt with, as well as greater access to information so that citizens can find what they want, and in many cases resolve queries themselves.

1.2 The Digital by Design Phase 2 saving proposal is a continuation of the programme agreed by the Cabinet in July 2017 and received approval for delivery within 2019/20. The proposals target saving is £0.650m (increased from £0.500m) in addition to the £1m saving that has been delivered during 2018/19.

1.3 As the programme progresses into 2019/20 it is shaping up its areas of focus. Initial analysis has identified that a holistic digital redesign of financial processes has the opportunity to significantly impact upon customer experience, income generation and efficiency. This review will look at processes across the organisation and utilise investment identified within the report last year for Corporate and Support Services. In line with our approach to date updates on the progress of this will be shared with Scrutiny through annual benefit updates but also quarterly performance reporting.

1.4 This proposal also incorporates information, advice and guidance to businesses. The Council currently supports businesses in a number of ways including through online information, facilitation of key networking and strategic meetings and bespoke officer support. The proposal would be to review our current offer to digitise and improve information advice and guidance for businesses to ensure members of the business community are able to access self-directed support as far as possible.

2.0 Proposal Update

2.1 The area of focus for year 2 is the Council's financial landscape and how services deal with financial transactions, which is a complex fusion of systems, processes and stakeholders. The current landscape needs a full review of how money enters the council, how it moves around the council and how it leaves the council. Initiatives will consider improving the experience of residents who make payments, how services interact with customers and our back office systems for managing this. For example from our investigations to date, we already know that in last year alone (full year 2017/18) spent £19,000 on

postage, sending out invoices and reminders. Innovation across all of these key areas will drive change and allow the Council to meet the outlined Vision.

2.2   All areas of the Council need an efficient way to make and receive payments. It is therefore anticipated that as the benefits are realised they will be felt across the Council and all services and as such all areas will be expected to deliver contributions to this proposal.

2.3   Key initial areas of focus include:

- Prompt payment of suppliers – work has been initiated working with STAR authorities to identify commonly used digital platforms and mechanisms to secure financial benefits from the prompt payment of suppliers which returns a discount to the Council;
- Receipting of income – work has commenced to transition and enhance the current receipting system to a new provider which will enable a significant improvement to the systems and work flow currently in place;
- Improving payment options for customers – the council does not currently offer residents and customers the ability to automate and streamline payment in all service areas. The focus will be ensuring residents and customers are more able to use direct debit, re-occuring card payments, payment in advance of service provision, telephone and on-line payments with the aim to reduce the number of paper invoices and time spent reconciling and receiving payments. This proposal has direct links to the balancing the cost of services proposal;
- Improving the internal financial processes and management within the Council utilising improvements in capacity and capability within the Council's Business Intelligence service through use of data warehousing, data extraction techniques and data visualisation and reporting;
- Further improving the digital capabilities and equipment within the contact centre and building on the work progressed to date;
- Improving the financial and data interactions between different systems e.g. Adult and Children's social care, the financial information system and charging systems.

2.4   The Growth Team in the Place Directorate is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance to support businesses with a range of needs and issues that they need to resolve in order to grow and thrive. Under the Council's digital by design approach, a digital offer is being developed to provide this kind of support to businesses through a digital channel, in a similar way to the approach taken to providing information to residents.

2.5   As this idea has been developing, a number of vacant posts in the Growth Team have not been recruited to and the savings from these posts will be used to deliver the savings target. These arrangements have been further augmented by restructuring three teams from across the Council, who were all doing activity that related to business support, into a single Economy, Work and Skills team. The restructure has provided coherence and an improved offer to

businesses in Stockport and, in combination with the new digital offer being developed, will allow the savings to be made.

3.0 Scope

3.1 The initial scope is outlined above and in line with the agreed approach to DbD Phase 2, implementation will be phased throughout the year so that value can be released at the earliest possible moment. The scope will involve all services across the Council where payments are made, received and have financial processes.

4.0 Financial Summary

4.1 The project needs to reduce the budget by £0.850m by 2020/2021, with £0.525m of this reduction realised in 2019/20 with the remained achieved ahead of 2020/21.

4.2 The financial savings that could be achieved by the proposal is shown in the table below.

Table 1

Saving Name	2018/19 Cash Limit Budget £000	Full Year Saving £000	Revised Cash Limit £000	Phasing	
				2019/20 £000	Cumulative 2020/21 £000
DbD Phase 2 Part 2 – Financial Landscape	Various*	(650)	various	(325)	(650)
Implementation of Information, Advice and Guidance: Phase 3 - business	603	(200)	403	(200)	(200)
Total	**various**	**(850)**	**various**	**(525)**	**(850)**

*See 2.2

5.0 Key Timescales

5.1 The Digital by Design programme delivers an on-going pipeline of transformation on an agile basis. Improvements and new service models are implemented as soon as possible with any associated staffing reductions handled in line with existing workforce reductions policy.

6.0 Consultation and Engagement

6.1 The outputs from this proposal will become clearer as the analysis work continues and some changes may not require detailed consultation and engagement.

7.0 Interdependencies, Constraints, and Risks

7.1 The Digital Inclusion Alliance and Council Information Advice and Guidance core offer will be central to ensuring all residents have the skills and opportunity to access digital services, with support where necessary.

7.2 It is important too that our own staff have access to the information and training they need to do their job to the best of their abilities. Support and development for managers who will need to manage their new digital services and processes will be required.

7.3 In line with our adopted Agile standards, delivery and risk will continue to be managed on a daily basis. Goals will be set, progress shared and reviewed, and performance, budget, benefits, communication and other key programme issues monitored jointly with services in a formal weekly Benefits Realisation Board. The Deputy Chief Executive will continue to act as Senior Responsible Officer for the programme, primarily discharging this role through regular briefings with the Strategic Head of Policy and Information Services and other relevant Senior Managers.

7.4 Detailed programme and budget updates will continue to be brought to CRMG, alongside reports about the benefits of the programme to mainstream services that will be reported to all Committees.

8.0 Equality Impact Assessment

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">**Equality Impact Assessment**</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">**Modernising Citizen Journeys**</td><td>**December 2018**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Stage**: Final</td></tr>
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Stage 1: Do you need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

The area of focus for year 2 Digital by Design is the Council's financial landscape and how services deal with financial transactions. The current landscape needs a full review of how money enters the council, how it moves around the council and how it leaves the council. It is therefore likely that the scope will involve changes for both internal and external customers.

The outputs from this review are currently being fully scoped out and some changes may not require an EIA. An EIA will only take place where the Council intends to change a service as a result of a digital proposal.

Stage 2: What do you know?

Analysis may be required in relation to service uptake and service users to determine the protected characteristics affected by these proposals. The type of

information required will become clearer as our proposals develop, but it is likely to include:
- Data analytics from current financial systems
- Staffing Information
- Service demographics / usage data
- User insight from user research

In addition, consideration will also be given regarding:
- Borough wide demographics and needs
- Consultation and engagement feedback.

Stage 2a: Further data and consultation

Once specific service changes have been identified consultation may be required to take place. This will be reflected in any specific assessments on equality implications.

Stage 3: Results and Measures

Digital by Design will build on the user-centred design practices that have already been established and proved successful during earlier project phases. This involves gathering data and discussing with residents and representative groups to understand the current customer journeys and any impact to the citizen experience from any changes brought about by this piece of work. The intention of this engagement is to understand the needs of our users and to simplify and improve customer journeys for them wherever possible.

The work already underway as part of the Digital Inclusion Alliance (DigiKnow) should assist by reaching out to those residents who would otherwise be at risk of being left behind as a result of increasing digital channels and helping them to build confidence in using the basic digital skills required to access services.

Stage 4: Decision Stage

This EIA is accompanying the overall modernising citizen delivery updated implementation plan.