

# Warwick District Council

## ICT & Digital Strategy 2015-19



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### Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

<b>Title</b>
ICT Steering Group
Senior Management Team
Executive

### Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

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## 1 Management Summary

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### **Governments Digital Strategy:**

The government's digital strategy is to provide "digital services which are so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded".

Warwick District Council's Digital Strategy seeks builds on this and provides a framework for the council's future service delivery and engagement with customers using digital technologies.

The last four years has brought significant changes across the public sector and this is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The shape and size of the council is likely to change but the need to provide high levels of service to our citizens will remain and be set against a backdrop of reduced budgets. These new challenges will present new opportunities for ICT to enable the Council to achieve efficiencies and to keep pace with citizens' changing needs and expectations.

Corporately the Council has responded to these challenges by developing 'Fit for the Future'. Fit for the Future is a Programme of change which will enable us to provide high quality services which our customers value, improve the way we develop as an organisation and balance our budget.

Throughout the period of this strategy, ICT will underpin and support these strategic objectives.

We live in a digital age. Demand for public services and expectations of levels of service are ever increasing. Citizens and businesses expect the same levels of access, ease of use and customer service that they see online from large private sector organisations such as Amazon and Tesco. They expect to be able to access their services from multiple locations and in ways that suit them. In recognition of this, this strategy represents the transition from a traditional ICT strategy to a combined ICT and Digital Strategy.

Many of the council's services rely on third parties for their ultimate delivery. When redesigning the council's processes for efficiency and improved customer service the entire transaction needs to be considered. This may require our contractors to embrace digital and new ways of working, or we will need to work collaboratively to share technology.

Internally, our programme of embracing modern working practices (Different Ways of Working), rationalising office accommodation, eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and administration, and supporting community based service delivery will drive efficiencies.

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The digital age will also provide new opportunities for citizens to communicate with the council through social media and to shape council decisions through online consultations. Elected members will require the right tools to engage with citizens, lead in the change to digital and to access services and information.

We can see from the statements above that ICT is no longer just a support service; it has become a critical service. If it is unavailable, the organisation cannot operate and we are unable to deliver to our customers. It has the ability to transform the way services are organised and delivered. It has a fundamental role to play in improving efficiency, reducing cost across the organisation and underpinning the organisational change programme.

Finally, this strategy highlights the importance of a digital infrastructure in Warwick District – broadband, electronic services, access and skills. A strong digital infrastructure is a key factor in promoting business growth, regardless of location, and this in turn helps to support strong local economies and sustainable communities.

To embrace all these themes, and to place them in a digital context, the council will deliver five workstreams:

- Digital Customer
- Digital Workforce
- Digital Warwick
- Digital Collaboration
- Digital Members

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## 2 Purpose

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This strategy outlines the approach that Warwick District Council will take to develop and deploy digital technologies that support service delivery, ensuring that these solutions work for our customers. It defines our vision, key themes and overall direction of travel for ICT and Digital services.

This new approach seeks to place ICT and Digital services in line with the broader aspirations of the Council. It will ensure ICT and Digital Services become an enabler and act as a launch pad for transformation across the Council, by improving outcomes for customers and adding value to their contact with the Council.

As the digital strategy continues to develop and we focus more on what we deliver than how we deliver it, then the technology requirements will increasingly become part of ICT Services' Team Operational Plan.

## 3 Background

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Digital delivery of public services has been an ambition for the UK for some time. In 1999, the Modernising Government White Paper set out a vision for an 'information age government' that relied on 'new delivery channels like the Internet'. Since then, huge advances have been made in the private sector by companies like Amazon, Apple, Google, Twitter and a host of other household names, many of which did not exist 15 years ago.

This 'digital revolution' is transforming the way that many people live their lives, from the way we purchase goods and services to the way we communicate with others. It also represents a significant opportunity for local authorities to harness new and emerging technologies to redesign public services in a way which meets the expectations of customers.

Despite this opportunity, Warwick DC simply does not have the resources of large private sector companies that can harness cutting edge technology to deliver services. In addition to this, we are faced with a number of other challenges, including: a 'digital skills gap' in our workforce, the need to adhere to strict data security standards and, most significantly, unprecedented cuts to in the council's budget.

Despite these challenges, digital technology has the potential to enable Warwick District Council and our partners to deliver services in a more efficient, productive and cost-effective way. However, in order to effect the change required, digital technology needs to be fully embraced by all service areas across the council and harnessed effectively for our customers.

Owing to the pace of the digital revolution, not everyone in Warwick district is prepared for the changes that are taking place. While we must increase our digital

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offering to keep up with the pace of change and stimulate growth in the district, we will do this in an inclusive way and support all customers to adopt the new way of accessing WDC services.

## **4 Why do we need a digital strategy?**

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Warwick DC needs a digital strategy because digital technology has the potential to transform the district and the lives of residents while generating long-term savings.

Central government has identified that services where transactions are completed using digital channels generally cost much less - for example, booking a driving test costs £6.62 by post, £4.11 by telephone, but just £0.22 online.

Warwick is already responding to this challenge through two major transformation programmes for which digital technologies are a critical enabler – Different Ways of Working (DWoW) and Digital Transformation. However, to fully realise the benefits that digital technology can bring, we need to dramatically increase the scope and, in some areas, the pace of our work.

This digital strategy sets out the council's approach to the required changes and sets out a bold vision in which we:

- Provide transactional services and information online in a user-friendly and inclusive way closer to that seen in the private sector.
- Use technology to change the way traditional face-to-face services are delivered, enabling us to deliver effective and efficient services for our customers
- Create a digital workforce which is agile, mobile and using the most appropriate technologies to support service delivery
- Support our residents to use digital technology and enable access to technology for those that do not have it
- Support our businesses to compete in the digital economy
- Use digital technology to work and collaborate with our partners seamlessly, including the effective sharing and use of data

## **5 Vision**

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<b>To focus on understanding our customers' needs in order to deliver outcomes that matter to them.</b>
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### **5.1 Where we are now?**

During, and since the council's original Implementing E-Government (IEG) programme, considerable investment has been made in ICT across the council. Consequently there is no pressure to replace large numbers of critical line-of-business

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applications, although there are opportunities to harness more value from this investment.

However, although the line-of-business applications meet our back-office requirements, many of them do not offer customer self-service solutions and this will to be addressed by this strategy. Similarly these systems lack mobile solutions to assist officers in delivering efficient services when operating outside the office. To rectify this, the council has adopted TotalMobile as its corporate mobile solution.

Prior to September 2015 the council prioritised face-to-face contact and the telephone in the delivery of its channel strategy. This has been reflected in the council's investment and use of successive Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technologies supporting our Customer Service Centre and One Stop Shops. In looking forward to how customers will want to access services in the future, the council has decided to cease its investment in CRM technologies and to divert resources to a broader digital programme which is described in this strategy.

The council's Internet mapping solution was no longer fit-for-purpose at a time when there is a growing expectation that maps will be integrated intuitively on websites and that mobile devices will be location-aware. Consequently a modern Intranet/Internet mapping solution has been purchased for use by customers and officers.

The council's website receives 150,000 visits per month (a web visit being the equivalent to a phone call) with usage increasing year on year since 2005. In 2015 the Society of Information technology Managers (SOCITM) reported that 25% of local residents use our website, the 2nd highest percentage for a district/borough council in the UK

However, there has been a significant change in the way that citizens are accessing our website. In 2010-2011 93% of our website access was from a desktop pc, while in 2014-15 56% of citizens accessed the website from a mobile device, which includes 28% from a mobile phone.

The website structure and design is a result of applying industry best practice principles; it is based on real user testing, with local customers, customer data and research rather than internal preference or opinion. User testing is carried out on a continuous basis. This user centred approach has led to customer satisfaction ratings 10+% higher than the average for councils and a top 20, 4-star ranking in the 2015 SOCITM Better Connected report – a report we do well in annually.

The website's strength lies in its access to information based pages and those self-serve applications that have been user tested. However the provision of online self-service options is patchy. Some existing online tasks are difficult for the customer and for some tasks there is no online option at all. Many other online services amount to the customer sending an untracked email to the back office via a website form. Officers must manually process thousands of these requests per year and then handle follow up contacts and failure demand.



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In short, whilst the website performs better than many council websites, in some areas it lags behind other sectors. Customer satisfaction with all council websites is falling as expectations rise, however WDC customer satisfaction with the WDC website is remaining steady. This is largely due to our approach of consulting and testing with local residents.

## **5.2 Where do we need to be?**

Having made a substantial investment in ICT, significant progress has been made in exploiting the technology to deliver more with less. This has been recognised by the Audit Commission in its assessments. However, we cannot be complacent and we need to be doing the following:

- Exploiting what we've got
- Realising demonstrable benefits
- Identifying and realising savings
- Investing wisely to deliver important outcomes
- Resisting the lure of technology for its own sake
- Ensuring good communication with members and other stakeholders

In parallel to the above we must ensure that:

- ICT investment is business led
- New services are customer focused and evidence based.
- ICT resources are allocated and prioritised based on business and customer benefits
- Where applicable, ICT investments enable shared and collaborative working
- Risk is reduced by managing project scope and, if necessary, prototyping solutions prior to committing significant resources.
- Staff are well trained and empowered to suggest how to use technology to deliver an improved service with greater efficiency.

A new model for digital customer service delivery needs to be developed that states, where possible that:

- services should be delivered through customer self-service
- structured, intelligent web-forms should be used for requests ensuring the correct information is captured at the first point of contact.
- where possible web-forms should validate requests prior to sending to the back-office for action, reducing unnecessary or invalid demand
- web-forms should be integrated into back-office systems
- unnecessary back-office handling should be removed such as manually allocating of tasks to contractors
- end-to-end performance data should be captured
- service fulfilment should be completed on-line

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- service failure should be identified and proactively communicated to the customer to ensure the customer is aware of the status of their request and unnecessary contact is avoided.

By improving the customer experience and expanding mobile accessibility we will need to ensure that the website becomes our customers' first choice when interacting with the council.

### **5.3 How do we get there?**

#### **Technical Governance:**

- The ICT Steering Group will prioritise developments based on customer demand and savings in the back office. For each development there will be a clear specification.
- The ICT Steering Group will proactively engage with service areas to provide online services where they are lacking and continually improve existing services that need to.
- The council will acquire and develop appropriate technical solutions for example
  - A product that allows for the development and maintenance of dynamic, mobile responsive forms that integrate with back office systems and keep the customer informed on the progress of their request.
  - Maps that are user friendly, mobile responsive and that can be integrated.
- All new developments will be user tested, building this process into all online projects.
- Testing, data, best practice and research will be used to continually fine tune the content, navigation and search already on the website, ensuring that we use evidence not opinion.
- Accessibility testing will be conducted with external organisations.
- Service areas acknowledge that the website is the most popular customer channel and adhere to industry best practice.
  - Provide staff with the necessary time and resource to maintain and improve the site.
  - Work with suppliers to improve existing online systems when issues are identified.
  - Prioritise content and services customers want/need rather than content officers wish to promote or store online.
  - Follow the writing guide for website authors.
- Online services will be actively promoted via various channels, highlighting an easy to use, 24/7 service.
- Staff are trained to ensure their skills meet the digital challenge and can support our customers

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## Culture Change

Successful achievement of the digital strategy will require considerable changes in corporate culture, involving acceptance that:

- Customer service is at the centre of everything the council does
- Process redesign and simplification are not optional
- The council's approach to service delivery is to optimise use of digital technologies
- The website is a key element of service delivery, not an optional extra

These changes in corporate culture will not be achieved without strong leadership, championing of the strategy by senior managers, and actively embedding the strategy into council and service plans. It will be important to work with individual service areas to ensure there is good understanding of the concepts behind the digital strategy, and to ensure there is buy-in amongst the Senior Leadership Team and staff.

## 6 Strategic Themes

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Theme	What it means
Digital Customer	<b>Enabling customers to get the services and information they need online.</b> This means providing services and information online to residents and businesses in a user friendly way similar to that seen in the private sector
Digital Workforce	<b>Staff will have the digital tools and skills required to deliver services effectively and efficiently.</b> This means delivering positive outcomes for our customers by giving staff access to the data and the most appropriate technology, ensuring they have the skills to use it effectively through rigorous recruitment and on-going training.
Digital Warwick	<b>Working together with businesses and residents of Warwick to maximise the opportunities for inward investment.</b> This means enabling residents and businesses within the district to access digital services through the provision of high speed broadband services.
Digital Collaboration	<b>Digital technology will enable the council and its partners to tackle complex issues and work together seamlessly.</b> This means ensuring the council provides data in a timely, accurate and secure manner to our partners/contractors and receiving updates back which can be used to proactively monitor service delivery on behalf of our customers.
Digital Members	<b>Providing ICT equipment and services required to meet members' needs in a modern council.</b>

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	This means delivering positive outcomes for constituents by ensuring Members have easy access to council information via appropriate technology and supporting them to develop the skills to exploit it.
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## **6.1 Digital Customer**

In order to lower the cost of service provision there is a need to accelerate the shift towards a 'digital by default' approach, exploiting the consumerisation of technology and putting the customer first. To do so means knowing customer's needs, anticipating their expectations with regard to excellent online customer care, developing universally acceptable and easy to use service offerings and then marketing the capability to ensure that customers change their behaviours

The recent revamp the Council Web site, including providing the ability to render itself automatically to a mobile device is a major advance in targeting the wider audience. There is now a need to add more capacity and resilience to ensure that it is able to cope with future demand; develop more intuitive online information, signposting and services and improve the integration with core back-office systems to remove the need for manual intervention, thus delivering greater efficiencies.

For many customers face-to-face contact or the use of the telephone were the preferred channels when contacting the council. However, the council now believes that a tipping point has been reached and moving forward the web and digital services will be the preferred method for interacting and transacting with the council. Therefore after 15 years of investing in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, the council will no longer support this technology but will focus on investing in digital self-service technologies. This change of approach will enhance the provision of council services, reduce costs and extend the availability of services beyond the time constraints that could be reasonably expected of a face-to-face or telephone service.

Of equal importance is the council's commitment to support initiatives in the district which aim to enable low-income or vulnerable residents to access the Internet to fulfil their personal and professional goals.

## **6.2 Digital Workforce**

Changing workforce demands, linked to the Council's 'Different Ways of Working' project, and the need to improve workspace utilisation will mean equipping the modern worker with a higher degree of technology in the future and enabling more services to be delivered at point of need, unconstrained by the office environment. Whilst this will increase initial deployment costs, the benefit of having greater mobility within the workforce will pay dividends elsewhere in terms of productivity gains and reduced accommodation costs.

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A dispersed and flexible workforce will significantly impact organisational culture, changing behaviours and expectations in relation to communication, collaboration, distance management and trust. Meeting these demands will require greater insight into job functions and work-styles of the future in order to deploy a tailored but consistent and effective technology solution that is highly resilient.

This will result in fewer fixed workstations and more laptop or tablet devices being deployed, breaking the link between employee and workspace. Where workstations are still required, the Council will continue to exploit its investment in Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to provide intra-office desktop mobility. In fact where people sit will be irrelevant. Increasing the number of portable devices in circulation will change the way ICT support is provided and make effective mobile device management critical in order to keep devices and data safe and secure.

The adoption of TotalMobile, which is device agnostic, as a corporate application mobility solution, will allow more options for using technology in customer situations and for previously isolated tasks to be joined up and delivered by peripatetic multi skilled workers, working across organisational boundaries.

New emphasis will be placed on the digitisation of remaining paper documents, white mail and case files so that they can be easily accessed from anywhere, bringing the paperless office closer to reality.

Staff will have access to the devices and software they need to deliver a high level of service and will be equipped with the skills to use them. The council's recruitment process will ensure new employees have an appropriate level of ICT skills to use the changing technology and embrace the future challenge. Councillors will be equally enabled to work in a mobile and efficient way.

### **6.3 Digital Warwick**

A strong digital infrastructure is essential for Warwick DC's growing economy to prosper. The benefits of the district's environment, high standards of living and strategic transport connections must be matched by powerful digital advantages to maintain its position as a great place to live, work and visit.

Businesses need a strong digital infrastructure and an IT literate workforce to locate and grow in the district. Technology enables businesses to reduce costs, to automate processes and to manage supply chains. Fast Internet links provide access to specialist services and remote working which can reduce travel costs, improve productivity and increase business agility. The Internet opens up global markets to both large and small employers.

Technology also has a part in sustaining local economies, especially areas of under-performance, disadvantage or rural isolation. For example, commuter villages are often abandoned during the day because of the lack of local broadband, making it more difficult to sustain local shops, businesses and services. Good digital

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infrastructure can promote rural economies and compensate for limited public transport. It can also stimulate tourism and local investment in new enterprises.

Locally the vision of bringing an improved broadband infrastructure to the district, including superfast broadband, is being delivered by the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Superfast Broadband Partnership:

As of March 2015 the council has invested £132,000 in the partnership to improve broadband speed and coverage in areas where it was not commercially viable for suppliers to do so. This investment has also attracted contributions from Warwickshire CC, Broadband UK (BDUK) and BT. This combined investment totals £757,000. As of October 2015 59,875 of the district's 64,383 premises can now access superfast broadband.

In addition, the council's emerging Local Plan says that residential developments of over 5 dwellings or employment development of over 500sq. m are required to provide on-site infrastructure, including open access ducting to industry standards, to enable all premises and homes to be directly served by fibre optic broadband technology. Exceptions will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that making such provision would render the development unviable.

## **6.4 Digital Collaboration**

The Council is becoming more complex and this is likely to increase as the government continues to mandate local agencies working together to deal with complex challenges.

This growing reliance on external relationships, either inter-agency or Council to business/contractors is demanding a more collaborative approach to delivering outcomes for customers. Working together to maximise the benefits of co-operation, either in monetary, relationship or productivity terms, cannot be achieved through traditional channels alone. Consequently there is an ever growing need for electronic communication, data exchange and performance measurement of contract services. This will require greater technical interoperability of the Council's IT, improved data quality standards and enhanced levels of data security.

## **6.5 Digital Members**

Local democracy has never been more important as the emphasis shifts from central government control to devolved power and freedoms to local authorities with accountability to local people.

Elected members are increasingly mobile and require reliable access to performance or signposting information to services. Although elected members sit outside of the corporate network there is a need to provide ICT services that are secure, resilient and appreciate the subtle difference in access needs compared to direct employees.

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The formation of an ICT working party consisting of officers from ICT, democratic services and elected members will be used to shape the delivery of the ICT equipment and services required to meet members' needs in a modern council.

## **7 Governance**

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The ICT & Digital Strategy will be owned by the Senior Management Team.

### **Senior Management Team**

- To ensure appropriate resources are allocated to deliver digital projects
- To provide leadership to embed this approach and to challenge the business process re-design to ensure the best possible outcomes for customers.
- To champion digital transformation projects in their own service areas

### **ICT Steering Group**

- To ensure that projects are aligned with the council's business objectives and Fit for the Future
- To receive digital project proposals and to evaluate and prioritise based on agreed criteria.
- To own any risks associated with the Digital Strategy
- To drive culture change
- To seek digital transformation proposals from Service Areas
- To use data to initiate digital transformation projects
- To create, maintain and update the council's Digital Transformation Design Principles
- To ensure consistency of approach and use of technology
- To develop and implement a communication plan for new digital services to ensure customers embrace the digital solutions offered
- To act as the customer services champion when designing new digital services

## **8 Information Security and Assurance**

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ICT Services is in the uniquely difficult position of ensuring that the Council can transact its business in a safe and secure environment, while not inhibiting the development of digital services. This is set against the ever increasing pace of technology change, greater expectations from citizens in the way they wish to access services and evolving service delivery models – collaborative and partnership working.

The need to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information has traditionally been perceived as a factor that blocks the delivery of digital services. Effective digital services have protection that proportionately mitigates the risks and threats posed against them.

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The council will adopt a pragmatic balance of information governance and risk, with emphasis placed on how to enable and support the business. The shift in focus towards appropriate information assurance will allow the council to successfully unlock the potential of digital whilst maintaining an appropriate level of data protection.

Nevertheless the council will continue to consult and collaborate with appropriate external bodies (for example CESG, PCI DSS) and Internal/External Audit to ensure that both the technical and behavioural aspects of information security are addressed in a co-ordinated and systematic way to reflect the changing needs of the Council.



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## Appendix 1 - Digital Transformation Design Principles

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These design principles have been created to provide a consistent approach to developing and improving access to WDC services via the council's digital channels. In the current climate, they will enable us to prioritise 'which service first' with a data driven approach based on financial and customer benefits.

Above these sits a single guiding principle:

**Investment in ICT and Digital Transformation by the Council must add value to the customer; whether a local resident, a business, or a partner organisation or other service within the Council.**

- Digital services will be prioritised based on transaction data and customer feedback. The council should not seek to deliver 100% of services electronically. Digital services will only be implemented where the benefits outweigh the development, support and maintenance costs. Resources should be focused on services with high transaction volumes, high delivery costs and/or customer demand.
- Services will be redesigned for digital, removing the need for face-to-face contact, hard copy ID checks or other verification documentation unless absolutely necessary.
- The 80/20 rule will be applied to all digital services to reduce delivery times and improve benefits realisation. If the solution is appropriate for 80% of the target audience and/or will deal with 80% of the anticipated transactions, the service will be considered fit for initial deployment.
- The entire transaction will form part of the service scope from the digital interaction to service fulfilment. For transactions with lengthy fulfilment periods, notifications and self-service status checking will be included by default. Where possible market leading best practice, such as that adopted by Amazon, will be used to benchmark our approach to keeping the customer informed.
- All designs must be user tested prior to launch. This means testing real tasks with real citizens. Customers will not use solutions that are not usable/user-friendly - leading to more complaints and failure demand.
- With all solutions we will adopt an approach of continuous improvement, not launch and leave. We will use data, testing and feedback to fine-tune solutions.
- Off the shelf solutions which meet the 80/20 rule will be utilised where possible, providing a suitable business case can be provided
- All solutions must be responsive so that they detect the user's screen size and orientation, changing the solution's layout accordingly.
- The use of customer facing generic email accounts will be replaced with on-line forms. This will facilitate the structured collection of data based on request type, will improve service handling of the data, support electronic integration and reduce follow up calls requesting additional data.

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- The ability to make payments for council services on-line should be extended and must be supported on mobile devices.
  - Services must be designed to reduce paper handling at inception, processing and fulfilment.
  - All digital services must maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the data, with decisions based on data classification. Risk and security controls should be balanced according to business objectives – security controls should be proportionate to risk. In addition, security should be user transparent and not cause users undue extra effort.
  - Further work will need to be carried out to understand the impact and opportunities afforded by social media to inform, transact and comment on council services.

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## Appendix 2 - Customer Access Channels

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### 1. Access Channels

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A variety of different access channels exist for WDC customers to request services:

- Face-to-face at Warwickshire Direct One Stop Shops
- Telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre
- Direct dial telephone calls to back office staff
- Letters sent to Riverside House
- Paper application forms
- Unstructured web forms
- Structured web forms
- Emails

Many service requests are made using the more expensive access channels (face-to-face, telephone), or are made in free-text form (letters, unstructured web forms, emails) with the result that they have to be re-keyed into back-end systems, often lack necessary information, and require further contact with the customer before they can be addressed.

As the improved website is developed, rationalisation of other customer access and communication channels will be undertaken over a period of 12 to 24 months, with the eventual removal of some access channels. This will occur on a task by task basis, as and when the website, including relevant structured web forms, and end-to-end digital service delivery are fully developed, and their use has been optimised. In the meantime, all existing channels will remain available, in order that channel shift can be measured.

#### 1.1 For customers requiring information:

Channel	Present arrangements	Digital optimisation
Leaflets	Paper leaflets are designed and printed, with information on the website	The website will be the primary source of information. With the information provided being clear, succinct and easy to find, available to be printed out as needed  The use of electronic mailing systems will be developed to deliver the information
Telephone	Staff answer queries over the telephone in a customer service centre	All calls will be answered in the appropriate service area, putting the expert as close to the customer as possible to resolve the enquiry at the first point of contact.  A recorded message will promote use of the website, and there will be limited use of IVR to

		<p>answer popular queries.</p> <p>The option of using intelligent call queuing to prioritise vulnerable callers, and to reduce service standards for other callers, will be explored.</p> <p>Staff will encourage callers to use the website, by sending an email with a link, suggesting the customer “do it online” with support the first time round.</p> <p>If appropriate, staff will answer queries over the telephone or use web chat.</p>
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## 1.2 For customers making service requests:

Channel	Present arrangements	Digital optimisation
<b>Paper forms</b>	<p>Paper forms are available and used.</p> <p>Original copies of related documents have to be provided.</p>	<p>No paper forms will be available – all forms must be completed electronically via the website (digitally) either through self-service or (if required) mediated.</p> <p>Customers will be able to upload required documents electronically, unless there is a clear business reason why the original must be seen by staff.</p> <p>Customers will not be asked to provide copies of documents which were originally supplied by the council (due to joined-up business processes).</p> <p>.pdf and Word forms will be removed from the website.</p>
<b>Face-to-face</b>	<p>Staff deal with issues on behalf of face-to-face customers</p>	<p>Staff will direct customers to the PCs available in Reception areas and libraries and, if necessary, take time to show them how to complete the task on the website (mediated digital)</p> <p>The PC, and other kiosk devices, will provide access to the standard WDC website – in order to encourage future self-service.</p>
<b>Telephone</b>	<p>Staff answer queries over the telephone</p>	<p>A recorded message will encourage use of the website.</p> <p>Staff will encourage callers to use the website, by sending an email with a link and providing details of public access locations.</p> <p>Staff will encourage callers to use the website, by sending an email with a link, suggesting the customer “do it online” with support the first time round.</p> <p>If appropriate, will staff answer queries over</p>

		the telephone.
<b>Letters</b>	Staff encourage customers to write in to the council	Staff will encourage customers to use the website, e.g. by sending a form by email
<b>Emails</b>	Staff respond to service requests made by email	Incoming email addresses, for making service requests, will eventually be withdrawn.
<b>Free text web forms</b>	Staff respond to service requests made by web form	Existing free text web forms which simply generate emails will be replaced with intelligent, structured e-forms which will interface with CRM.  Eventually, generic "contact us" forms will be withdrawn unless there is a clear business need for them to be retained.

### 1.3 For council staff sending out information:

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Present arrangements</b>	<b>Digital optimisation</b>
<b>Customer contact details</b>	Contact details obtained frequently omit the customer's email address, mobile phone number and preferred communication channel	Contact details obtained will include email address, mobile phone number, preferred communication channel and consent to use.
<b>Text and email</b>	Primarily, staff respond to requests for information – though there is some use of email for sending out targeted, personalised information	General information will increasingly be made available proactively, using the website and social media.  Information which is specific to particular groups of customers, or to individuals, will increasingly be sent to them proactively, by text or email (using their preferred channel). For example, to inform them of their next set of swimming lessons, benefit payment, their council tax bill, what's on guides and consultations they may be interested in.
<b>Letters</b>	Staff send out personalised hard copy letters and notifications	Wherever possible, letters, bills and invoices (e.g. council tax billing) will be sent by email.  All hard copy letters and emails will be carefully written to be short, simple, and to contain key information in the opening paragraph.
<b>Council contact details</b>	WDC address and phone numbers are prominently displayed on the website and	WDC contact details will be provided much more unobtrusively.

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	correspondence	
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## **Appendix 3 - Social Media**

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Social media opens up the opportunity for engagement with the council for groups of people who would not otherwise seek such engagement and use of social media channels is growing. The council wants to encourage use of these channels, but is also aware of the reputational risks they present, and is aware of the need to manage users' expectations about how council services are delivered.

Social media will also increasingly be used to promote participation and engagement, and to proactively broadcast generic information to residents, especially in emergency situations (e.g. bad weather), about consultations which are taking place, and to promote use of the self-service on the website. Care will be taken to achieve an appropriate level of contact, avoiding too frequent contact, which can result in customers opting out.

A Social Media policy and guidelines has been produced and, led by the Communications team, a Social Media Group should be set up to provide opportunities for learning, exchange of ideas and development of best practice for social media use throughout the council.

Care will be taken not to overload customers with too-frequent communications.

In order to facilitate effective use of social media, monitoring tools are in place, and being used proactively, and monitored.

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