

## Finance Committee

**Monday, 09 May 2022 at 10:30**

County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

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### AGENDA

- |   |  |         |
|---|--|---------|
| 1 | Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 March 2022  | 3 - 6   |
| 2 | Apologies for Absence  |         |
| 3 | Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below)<br>(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests<br>(b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) |         |
| 4 | East Midlands Development Corporation - Year 1 Update  | 7 - 18  |
| 5 | Digital Strategy   | 19 - 48 |

### Notes

- (1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.
- (2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

- (3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Peter Barker (Tel. 0115 977 4416) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

- (4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.
- (5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx>

Meeting	FINANCE COMMITTEE
Date	21 March 2022 (commencing at 10.30am)

**Membership**

Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

**COUNCILLORS**

Richard Jackson (Chair)  
Roger Jackson (Vice Chair)

Reg Adair	Bruce Laughton
Andre Camilleri	Mike Pringle
John Clarke MBE - Apologies	Mike Quigley MBE - Apologies
Jim Creamer - Apologies	Lee Waters
Tom Hollis	

**SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Chris Barnfather for Mike Quigley MBE  
Anne Callaghan for John Clarke MBE  
Sybil Fielding for Jim Creamer

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Mick Allen	Group Manager, Place Commissioning
Pete Barker	Democratic Services Officer
Phil Berrill	Team Manager, Property Commissioning
Lorraine Dennis	Category Manager, Chief Execs & Place
Kaj Ghattaora	Group Manager, Procurement
Paul Martin	Head of Technology and Digital
Nigel Stevenson	Service Director, Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement

**1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2022**

The minutes of the meeting, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed, and were signed by the Chair.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Quigley (Other County Council business), Councillor John Clarke MBE (Other reasons) and Councillor Creamer (Other reasons).

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT PERIOD 10 2021-22**

**RESOLVED: 2022/013**

- 1) That the additional contingency requests be approved.
- 2) That the capital variations be approved.

### **5. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) PROGRAMME – LATEST ESTIMATED COSTS**

**RESOLVED: 2022/014**

- 1) That the Latest Estimated Costs for the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Programme be approved
- 2) That approval be given for the projects to proceed to the construction phase based on these estimated costs.

### **6. ICT OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE Q3 2021-22**

**RESOLVED: 2022/015**

That a report on performance in the next quarter be presented to a future meeting of the relevant forum.

### **7. ICT STRATEGY ANNUAL WORKPLAN 2022-23**

**RESOLVED: 2022/016**

- 1) That the ICT Annual Workplan as outlined in the report be approved.
- 2) That the ICT Annual Workplan be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis to monitor progress.

### **8. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) – RESOURCE IN RESPONSE TO COVID 19**

**RESOLVED: 2022/17**

- 1) That a three month transition period between April – June 2022 be approved to support the effective transition and decommissioning of the current operation.
- 2) That the extension of the posts listed in Table 1 of the report be approved until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

## **9. PROCUREMENT STAFFING UPDATE – D2N2 CONTRACTS OFFICER**

**RESOLVED: 2022/18**

That the hosting of the D2N2 Contracts Officer post within Corporate Procurement be approved.

## **10. PLACE – SMART TICKETING PLATFORM**

**RESOLVED: 2022/19**

That update reports be brought to the appropriate forum as necessary.

## **11. WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED: 2022/20**

That the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 11.19am

CHAIR





**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVEMENT**

**EAST MIDLANDS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION – YEAR 1 UPDATE**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on the work undertaken by EM Dev Co Ltd in its first year of operation.
2. To request approval of the year 2 NCC contribution of £500k.
3. To request approval for the payment of £1.62m of grants for EM Dev Co Ltd received by NCC from Government.
4. To inform Members of EM Dev Co Ltd plans for year 2 and beyond.

**Information  
Background**

5. Policy Committee approved the establishment of an interim vehicle, EM Dev Co Ltd, to progress the plans for an East Midlands Development Corporation at the meeting held on 9 December 2020. In addition, Policy Committee approved the NCC contribution of £1.5m over 3 years, with £0.5m allocations for 2022/23 and 2023/24 subject to annual reviews by the relevant Committee at the end of year 1 and 2 against progress and relevant milestones in the Company's Business Plan.
6. This report provides the update and also requests approval to the payment to EM Dev Co Ltd of £1.62m of external grant funding.

**Update on 2021/22**

7. Last year Nottinghamshire County Council agreed to host a Company Limited by Guarantee on behalf of five member local authorities to focus on plans for the co-ordinated delivery of development and infrastructure at Toton & Chetwynd; Ratcliffe Power Station and East Midlands Airport Area. The Council is represented by the Leader of the Council in an Oversight Authority and the Deputy Chief Executive/Director for Place represents the Council as a Director on the skills-based Board. The first meeting of the Oversight Authority met in April 2021 to agree the annual business plan and budget and the company was formally incorporated in May 2021. Since then, a small team has been established including a Managing Director, Richard Carr. The following progress has been made during 2021/22:

*Governance*

8. EM DevCo Ltd has been set up to mirror the structure of the Locally-Led Urban Development Corporation (LLUDC) model with an Oversight Authority (comprising elected members from the five local authorities), Board of Directors (comprising senior officer representatives from each of the five local authorities, five independent non-executive directors, and an independent chair) and an Executive Team. This structure was also developed with consideration of Public Interest Reports into local authority-owned companies in order to avoid facing the same issues seen in other recent high-profile cases.
9. The first formal meeting of the Oversight Authority took place in April 2021 where the business plan and budget for 2021/22 were agreed. This budget is predicated on an annual combined contribution of £1.5million from the five founding authorities, with the county councils each contributing £0.5million and the three district & borough councils collectively contributing £0.5million.
10. The EM DevCo Business Plan identified a range of deliverables for 2021/22. As with the formation of any complex business entity, the activity of the company during the large part of Year 1 has been on positioning and establishing the company through a range of corporate deliverables as per the business plan. These include all the legal requirements of setting up the company, several key appointments, and further planning. A Board of Directors comprising an Independent Chair - Sir Chris Haworth - and five local authority representatives will be joined by a further five independent private sector non-executive directors. A small Executive team is led by a newly appointed Managing Director with the support of a Programme Director and a support team.
11. As mentioned above, Sir Chris Haworth Bt was appointed as Independent Chair of the EM DevCo Board in January 2022 following a competitive process that identified a number of strong candidates with interest in the EM DevCo project. Sir Chris has direct experience of the sector gained from a 40-year career in commercial property consultancy and is ideally placed to accelerate the company's activity ahead of formal funding and powers being granted by Government.
12. In February 2022, the EM DevCo Board formally agreed to progress the recruitment of the five remaining non-executive directors. This process is ongoing and is expected to conclude in April 2022. A number of key themes were identified to ensure the appropriate skills and sectors to guide the selection of directors and to maximise the skill base of EM DevCo. These included development expertise; infrastructure; design and creative (place making); environmental; industrial; and finance/banking.

### *Engagement with Government*

13. A key corporate objective during the year has been to maintain positive discussions with senior government officials and Ministers during the pandemic with a view to maintain the government's continued support including match funding for the local authority members. Positive discussions have been maintained between EM DevCo and Government, which culminated in the receipt of £1.5m match funding for 2021/22 being received on 18 March 2022 and subject to specific consideration as part of this report alongside the £120,000 Design Coding Pathfinder funding secured separately and highlighted further below.



14. The grant award provides greater certainty of funding to progress key elements of the programme and in particular the commissioning of a commercial partner (see below). It also provides confirmation of the government's continued support. This sends a clear message to stakeholders and to the market and builds on the direct references set out in the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands which refers to accelerating the delivery vehicle. The match funding of £1.5m for 2021/22 is without prejudice to future years' requests for match funding including during the current financial year 2022/23.
15. EM DevCo continues to engage with Government to pursue the interests of partners through legislation including working towards legislative change as necessary whether this be associated with the progression of a Levelling Up Bill or as part of planning reform.
16. EM DevCo are actively engaged with Department for Transport (DfT) officials in relation to preparations for advancing plans and engagement with HS2 and the IRP teams and any associated HS2 Growth Strategy Review. This includes negotiations to secure additional resources for that review. The EM DevCo team have played a pivotal role in developing and positioning a costed proposal for the HS2 Growth Strategy review ahead of its consideration at Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM) and the HS2 Executive Board and submission to Government. It is anticipated that EM DevCo will play a key role in its implementation for the benefit of the three sites and the wider region, building also on close working relationships with other HS2 station locations and through the inclusive nature of the Connectivity Working Group.
17. Finally, as mentioned above, in September 2021 EM DevCo applied for Design Pilot status on behalf of the five authorities. The bid for EM DevCo was one of 25 areas announced for Design Pathfinder status on 11 March 2022 and a 12-month programme will be progressed with the benefit of £120,000 funding from DHLUC.

### *Commercial Partner Appointment*

18. A priority for EM DevCo in Q4 2021/22 was the onboarding of a 'commercial partner' - a major developer with a track record of delivering transformational places – with a view to commissioning them in an advisory capacity to develop the vision and ambition for the EM DevCo sites in a way that provides credibility and confidence for investors including government and providing greater certainty of deliverability.
19. Proceeding with the commission was dependent on funding and in particular the £1.5m additional Government match funding. This commission was let following confirmation of funding, resulting in the appointment of a team led by Areli Developments and including MurrayTwohig; Benoy; Montagu Evans; Buro Happold; Urban Delivery; CBRE; Pragma Consulting; Trowers & Hamlins LLP and Gardiner & Theobald.
20. The commercial approach being adopted will look at how EM DevCo can assist the local authority members in realising optimum social, environmental, and economic value from the delivery of integrated development and infrastructure. Concurrently, it will explore the best and most appropriate means of capturing that value for local benefit whilst ensuring the schemes are optimally attractive to private sector investors. This goes to the heart of the EM DevCo project which exists to deliver a scale of opportunity that the market could not deliver on its own. The work of the commercial partner will form a major part of the programme for 2022/23 (see below).

21. The core EM DevCo team will be working closely with the Commercial Partner to ensure that the Design Code Pathfinder work is integrated and complements their thinking. Both the work of the commercial partner and the design coding activity will have relevance to the site-specific deliverables during 2022/23.

#### *Progress on Site-Specific Deliverables*

22. The overall ambition of EM DevCo is to supercharge growth for the regional economy. This will be achieved initially on the three sites in focus i.e., Toton & Chetwynd Barracks, Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station, and the East Midlands Airport Area – that build on the potential of HS2, the region's status as a major trade and logistics gateway, and its historic strengths in research & development and industrial innovation. The commentary that follows focusses on the sites in Nottinghamshire.

23. Now that the IRP has been published, the team are preparing to take forward the next stages of the residual DfT grant for **Toton & Chetwynd**. Specifically, this involves the appointment of transport planners and modelers to bring forward specific transport proposals alongside business case economists.

24. EM DevCo administers the residual Department for Transport (DfT) funding for Toton & Chetwynd. This has continued to progress, with EM DevCo overseeing commissions with Arup and Mott MacDonald to prepare a Masterplan and draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) alongside Broxtowe Borough Council planning officers.

25. The draft SPD was approved for public consultation at a meeting of the Broxtowe Borough Council's Jobs and Economy Committee on 10 June 2021. The consultation formally started on 1 November 2021 and ran through to 14 January 2022. The work undertaken also includes a study of the Erewash Valley with consultants at The Environment Partnership. Regular update reports have been provided to East Midlands Councils' HS2 Strategic Board.

26. With the SPD on the verge of adoption to provide a more robust policy framework, attention in 2022/23 will turn to first phase enabling infrastructure to unlock early development stages. Arup have been appointed as the transport planning team to work up detailed access proposals with the benefit of DfT funding support.

27. The team will continue to work closely with planning officers at Broxtowe Borough Council, Nottinghamshire County Council Highways, other statutory agencies including National Highways, and the Toton & Chilwell Neighbourhood Forum.

28. In relation to **Ratcliffe Power Station**, EM DevCo's Executive Team have held extensive discussions with the senior management of Uniper in light of a number of opportunities at Ratcliffe including the development of the East Midlands Freeport and the establishment of East Midlands Parkway as an interchange station for HS2.

29. Work continues with Rushcliffe Borough Council on the preparation of a Local Development Order (LDO) to advance planning policy for the site. The initial stages have involved

engagement with the Rushcliffe Member Working Group and Parish Councils. A period of formal consultation ran from Monday 29 November 2021 until Monday 10 January 2022.

30. Concurrently, through the work of the EM DevCo Project Zero Working Group (described further below), collaboration across the Universities is generating new ideas for energy generation, storage and use that can be applied across the sites.
31. During 2022/23, a significant amount of work will be undertaken to take forward plans linked to the IRP and for HS2 stopping services at East Midlands Parkway. It is anticipated that further consultant support through EM DevCo will provide additional capacity for this to support Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council where this could add value – for example, in programme management, urban design & coding expertise, and transport planning.
32. EM DevCo has been working closely with Homes England to explore areas of common interest across all three of the EM DevCo areas. This includes East Midlands Airport Area.

#### *Progress on associated themes - Connectivity*

33. The headline outcome of the IRP for the region is that HS2 trains will now serve East Midlands Parkway, Nottingham, Derby, and Chesterfield; with connecting services to a new Network Rail station at Toton. There are several key aspects to the IRP including electrification of the Midlands Mainline in full and commitment to a new HS2 Line from the Birmingham to East Midlands Parkway in Rushcliffe, where increased interchange with regional services could be anticipated and improved local connections delivered including to the East Midlands Airport Area.
34. The IRP also includes a commitment to consider the acceleration of transport improvements at Toton, such as a Network Rail station for local and regional services. Finally, it refers to accelerating plans for an East Midlands Delivery Vehicle to regenerate the three large opportunity areas nearby, including Toton and Chetwynd Barracks, which are currently being advanced through EM DevCo Ltd. In addition to transport, it is anticipated that the remit of the EM DevCo 'Connectivity Working Group' linked to this theme will be broadened to consider digital & utilities connectivity - especially energy which, along with access to skills, are understood to be specific concerns of our current and future business communities.

#### *Progress on associated themes – Freeport*

35. EM DevCo & EM Freeport are complementary programmes supported by Government to boost economic growth in the region. These programmes involve a number of mutual stakeholders including local authorities, landowners, and government agencies.
36. It was agreed that both organisations be represented on each other's Board in an observing capacity. Richard Carr, Managing Director of EM DevCo, has sat as a non-voting member on the EM Freeport Board throughout the development of the Freeport's Business Case. Likewise, Penny Coates has joined the EM DevCo Board as an affiliate (non-voting) member.

37. Work is ongoing to develop the principles through which Retained Business Rates are used by both EM DevCo & EM Freeport to ensure that opportunities for the region are maximised.

*Progress on associated themes – Project Zero & Natural Capital Net Gains*

38. EM DevCo facilitates a number of critical working groups that bring together a range of key stakeholders who are collaborating on key themes with a view to tackling some of the more significant issues facing society and the environment. These include Connectivity (noted above), Project Zero (which brings together our university partners with industry links), and Natural Capital Net Gains (which involves our Local Authority experts, the Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, and the NGO sector).

39. This approach is proving catalytic, with a clear emerging vision for ‘Project ZERO,’ with specific proposals emerging that will be relevant for all the sites in the EM DevCo area with a view to creating an innovation ecosystem around scalable demonstrators in models for living & working, making, and moving.

40. Specific proposals including a future factory translation centre linked to electrification and aero propulsion and a hydrogen skills academy linked to the Institute of Technology, which is creating a specific innovation and skills content to the Freeport FBC. This has benefitted from strong leadership from Loughborough University and the University of Derby in collaboration with universities affiliate to Project Zero.

41. Other ideas will include scaling up technologies currently being applied at the Trent Basins development in Nottingham which include community energy and data twinning and the potential application of modern methods of construction at scale. In the natural capital arena, the team are developing an approach to net gains. This will benefit from work being developed in the catchment of the River Trent and its tributaries including the River Erewash and River Soar. The work of the groups, alongside that of the commercial partner, will help shape the design code pathfinder work.

*Broader Collaboration*

42. As the interim vehicle builds its capacity and credibility, so too will we start to build our partnerships and collaborations with key delivery partners. This is demonstrated ably through our work with Homes England, who have sponsored essential work to bring definition to the East Midlands Airport Area and the opportunities presented there. The Chairman of Homes England has engaged in discussions with EM DevCo for exploratory talks on next steps.

43. Similarly, the team are liaising with local authorities across the region following the publication of the IRP in November to assist in the co-ordination of a new IRP Growth Strategy. The integration of development and physical, social, and environmental infrastructure to delivery inclusive growth through the IRP Growth Strategy will involve working closely with regional stakeholders including Midlands Connect and TfEM through to DfT and its national bodies including HS2, Network Rail, and National Highways. This will build on our origins as EM DevCo is a delivery vehicle that emerged to facilitate the original HS2 Growth Strategy ambitions for the heart of the region.

44. Together with EM DevCo's four Working Groups (Communications & Engagement, Connectivity, Natural Capital net Gains, and Project ZERO), EM DevCo has been able to progress these workstreams and draw together colleagues from across sectors and traditional boundaries to maximise benefits for the region and – importantly – ensure that partners remain involved throughout. All associated projects and initiatives will involve extensive engagement with our locally authorities and communities.

## **Business Plan 2022/23**

### *Establishing EM DevCo Board including appointment of NED's*

45. The appointment of experienced and specialist Non-Executive Directors is nearing completion at the time of writing with an independent Chair, Sir Chris Haworth, appointed in January 2022. Sir Chris will be joined by a further five independent Non-Executive Directors who will work alongside the five Local Authority Directors on the skills-based Board.

### *Engagement with Government – advancing toward a LLUDC*

46. EM DevCo will continue to develop the legal tests for statutory designation, working with Government to support the legal process of establishing a LLUDC arising from the Levelling Up White Paper as well as proposed legislation on development corporation reform. This remains core to the EM DevCo proposition, and the company will work with Government and partner authorities to ensure that EM DevCo meets the requirements set out by Government to achieve statutory status.

47. The Executive Team of EM DevCo has an active dialogue with Government on the legislative pathway to establish an LLUDC and is in regular contact with officials from the Cities & Local Growth Unit of the Department of Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC). It is anticipated that further guidance from Government will be forthcoming in early 2022/23, including a provisional timetable for legislation. Progressing this will require specialist legal advice to ensure that EM DevCo prepares for the appropriate tests.

48. EM DevCo will continue to work with Government and its agencies in support of the region's work on the HS2 Growth Strategy review as follows.

### *IRP & HS2 Growth Strategy*

49. EM DevCo will help support, integrate and co-ordinate work associated with the Government's Integrated Rail Plan including revised Growth Strategy evidence base by aligning various related development and infrastructure studies. This is subject to a separate costed proposal for £1m per annum for 2022/23 and 23/24 (£2m total). EM DevCo will also continue to manage any residual DfT grant specifically earmarked for Toton and Chetwynd including funding to explore the relocation of existing rail operations in the area – subject to DfT approval.

### *Commercial Partner*

50. This £1.5m commission will be a key priority for EM DevCo during 2022/23 and will help establish a commercial approach to delivery assisted by a developer with a track record of transformation acting in a consultancy capacity. The work will be undertaken in two tranches as follows:

- Tranche 1 (April to June 2022) – will involve the developer and team undertaking research and engaging key stakeholders with a view to establishing core commercial principles with initial observations and recommended actions.
- Tranche 2 (July 22 to March 23) – will further develop the core principles and deliver a clear approach to delivery and funding. This will be aligned with outline development and infrastructure briefs for the sites.

51. This work programme is likely to lead to early collaboration discussions with key stakeholders and promoters to establish commercial positions with a view to realising benefits and capturing commercial, social, and environmental value across each of the three key growth areas.

52. In short, EM DevCo will explore mechanisms of how best it might take an interest in sites and capture the uplift in land values where appropriate to deliver the maximum value to communities and our partners. This will result in a Vision and Framework which defines specific investment, funding opportunities, delivery routes to market, and enabling infrastructure that are deliverable and commercially viable.

#### *Design Code Pathfinder*

53. With the benefit of £120,000 of funding from DLUHC a multi-disciplinary team will be appointed to lead the development of a design code across the three EM DevCo sites as part of this national pathfinder initiative and one of 25 areas in the UK.

#### *Support for local planning initiatives*

54. EM DevCo will continue to provide a resource to support Local Plan review processes in addition to site-specific policy considerations such as SPD and LDO document preparation as appropriate.

#### *Building Capacity*

55. With the advent of £1.5m Government match funding and grants, the scale of the EM DevCo project has increased significantly since Y1. In order to properly manage the workstreams detailed in this paper, it is expected that additional programme management support will be required, in addition to further appointments to the company's core team of officers and procured team of consultants. This match funding further allows EM DevCo to appoint additional commercial, professional, and technical expertise to meet the accelerated demands in progressing planning allocations, planning permissions, funding, statutory status and powers, development delivery mechanisms and development partners. These additional

appointments will ensure that EM DevCo is able to deliver the enhanced programme of work required to meet the region's ambition.

### *Business Case Refresh*

56. All of the above actions will provide critical inputs to the ongoing refresh of the business case for the new LLUDC model for the East Midlands.
57. In order to maximise the potential for EM DevCo to secure long-term Government support, the company's development and infrastructure proposition will continue to be finessed through work such as that to be undertaken by the Commercial Partner. This will set out a plan to take the work forward to the next level in collaboration with Government and a range of public and private sector investors in a way that can align the various associated initiatives across the three sites.
58. This will ensure that the EM DevCo business case is as coherent and ambitious as possible and maximise the funding and opportunity available across the EM DevCo sites and beyond.

### **Grant Funding**

59. NCC have received amounts of £1.62m of Section 31 grant on behalf of EM Dev Co Ltd. The grant determination letter states that, "This funding will further support the EM DevCo to continue to build upon its existing work to realise the significant regeneration opportunities across the three identified sites within the East Midlands; and contributing to this government's ambitions for 'Levelling Up' across all of the UK's regions."
60. In accordance with Financial Regulations approval is required to set up a budget for this income and for the corresponding cost budget to make the payment to EM Dev Co Ltd. The net impact of this is nil.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

61. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) To review the year 1 update and confirm if any further information is required.
- 2) To approve the year 2 NCC contribution of £500k.
- 3) To approve the payment of the £1.62m grant allocation received from Government.
- 4) To comment on the year 2 plans.

## **Nigel Stevenson Service Director – Finance, Infrastructure and Improvement**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:  
Keith Palframan - Group Manager, Financial Services

### **Constitutional Comments (CEH 28/04/2022)**

The recommendations fall within the remit of the Finance Committee.

### **Financial Comments (KP 12/04/2022)**

62. The NCC annual contribution of £500k is included in the budget for 2022/23. The grant funding of £1.62m has already been paid to NCC to be passed on to EM Dev Co Ltd.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All







**REPORT OF HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S  
DEPARTMENT**

**DIGITAL STRATEGY**

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1) To seek approval of the Digital Strategy

**Information and Advice**

- 2) The term Digital tends to be associated with technology however, it is much broader than that, and in this strategy, it is referring to the principles by which systems and products are developed within the council for use by its users, both internally and externally.
- 3) This Digital Strategy has been drawn up to agree a set of principles by which, the Authority will develop new services and associated systems by taking the users' needs as the driver for how systems and services are developed within the Authority and its partners. This will enable services to be developed and enhanced in a manner that facilitates joined up working and supports the digital declaration that the Authority has committed to. These principles will also apply to services where there are significant changes to be undertaken.
- 4) Historically services are developed in a client commissioner manner; this results in a specification being produced and agreed, issued to the supplier (internal or external), and a product being developed. The point at which the product is seen can be months after the specification is signed off. The delivered product does not always match the expectation because the consequence of certain decisions was not clear at the point at which they were made in the development of the specification. This can result in a sub-optimal delivery and significant re-work to get the product to function in a manner that was envisaged. This is also because expectations shift over time, and the agreed deliverables may no longer meet the expectations because they themselves have shifted.
- 5) The consequence from the above can result in great frustration and massive effort in trying to retro fit remediation into systems that have already been deployed. Rework does follow which creates a massive amount of effort and uncertainty while trying to establish why the situation arose, meanwhile service users must deal with the consequences of sub-optimal systems and services.

- 6) Digital ways of working look to resolve this issue and change the way services and systems are developed and governed.
- 7) The first principle is that systems are based around user needs. This activity requires User Researchers and is very similar to co-development that the Authority currently undertakes. While it seems obvious, a lot of systems and services are developed making assumptions on how people will use systems, this principle seeks to avoid that and develop services in a way that makes them easy to use and obvious to the end user.
- 8) Building on the first principle Digital systems and the associated service development requires combined teams of people from the business areas and the supplier (internal or external), who work together and have the authority to make real time decisions on the development of the product or service. This allows clarification to happen all through the project and enables input from the user community to ensure any changes or, nuances that have not been picked up in the original scope, are resolved. All with timely user input throughout the development of the product or, service. It also deals with changes that occur during the development of the product or, service.
- 9) It should be noted that this does not make delivery easier, rather it forces some difficult decisions to be addressed earlier in a project lifecycle so increasing the likelihood of success. As such it is more about de-risking the final deliverable and getting a better usable product or, service. It also drives transparency because of the visibility of the deliverables and any issues enables timely decisions about how address them.
- 10) In this approach the governance is also altered from an oversight model to, a model that has oversight responsibilities but also accountability for facilitating the removal of blockers to progress. This changes the dynamic of the relationship between the Senior Responsible Office and Board members from one of mainly oversight and direction to being active participants engaging in the process of developing the product or, service. This means becoming active participants in the development of the service and/or product.
- 11) The Authority has signed the Digital Declaration, and this effectively commits the Authority to this way of working and the strategy sets out those principles.
- 12) There are also several business capabilities and ways of working that will need to be adopted to support designing services in a Digital manner and these are also set out in the strategy.

### **The Key Themes & Business Drivers**

- 13) The Key Themes & Business Drivers relate to developing systems and services in a way that enables our citizens and staff to have services that work in a way that supports them in their daily life, rather than people having to understand and accommodate the idiosyncrasies of how services and systems are organised.

- 14) The Authority has also signed the Digital Declaration which commits the Authority to developing its services in this way. This allows the Authority to secure some resources from the DLUHC to support Digital ways of working.
- 15) Citizens have come to expect an easier interaction with organisations having been exposed to improved retail experiences online and the Authority needs to respond to that increased level of expectation.
- 16) Joining up services across traditional organisational boundaries to give citizens a better experience such as with the Brokerage which, was developed within the Authority, will increasingly become the norm and Digital ways of working support this.
- 17) There are some common areas between this strategy and the ICT Strategy especially in relation to the following:-
  - A. Speed of change: In addition to that work, it is recognised that the Covid19 pandemic has had a significant impact on Technology and Digital. Some have been positive, such as the speedy adoption of Teams functionality. The associated benefits of enabling people to work from anywhere plus, supporting the estates strategy, would not have occurred at the speed it did had it not been for the situation that faced the Council. While that “critical emergency” pace could not be maintained, there is a desire to build on that level of acceptance of change, to support our citizens in the most effective and efficient manner, while recognising the balance to be made against risk of service outage.
  - B. Technical Debt: There has also been some impact which, relate to the delay in technological upgrades, as ICT focused on maintaining service delivery for front line services. The opportunity should be taken to use Technical Debt as an agent for change rather than just replacing the existing old systems with new. This would involve commissioning reviewing the user journeys from end to end to establish the best interaction for our citizens and staff.
  - C. Council Plan: The deployment of Digital services will be derived from the ICT workplan. This has been constructed from the perspective of supporting the Council plan which includes, reuse and integration to support digital ways of working, and putting the user at the heart of developing services and associated systems.
  - D. Sustainability: All newly developed services and systems will look to be sustainable from an environmental perspective but also from an organisational perspective to reduce the level of technical debt that builds up within the Authority.
- 18) The Digital strategy will define the Target Technical Architecture for the Authority to enable services and systems to be developed in a way that use common

standards to make services more sustainable. In addition, it will define how systems interface with each other to support better integration of data which, should support more timely information to enable timely decisions.

### **Other Considerations**

- 19) There are other elements that are important but capacity dictates that they cannot be undertaken immediately. These are as follows:
  - a. Data mastery will need to be resolved over time to enable a move to a position where data is entered once then used many times. Currently data is duplicated across systems, and this can cause reconciliation issues across systems. As we migrate to new systems, we will take the opportunity to resolve these issues and determine.
  - b. This strategy will be underpinned by the ICT Strategy and will remain distinct and separate to enable the build momentum and skills that will be necessary for the Authority to become a Digital organisation.
  - c. This strategy will seek to align with the Authorities transformational activity to create the maximum opportunity for business change utilising Digital methods.
  - d. There are some Line of Business applications that will need replacing over the next 4 years due to their age, functionality, and multiple support issues. The replacement will be driven by business requirements and will conform to the strategy and seek to use the replacement as an agent for change rather than a direct replacement.
  - e. Recognising that the Council's current financial position will also limit the amount of investment that we can make in any financial year.

### **Reason for Recommendation**

- 20) To set out the commitments and benefits that come with signing up to the Digital Declaration.
- 21) To support the development of systems and services that are easy to use and put the needs of our users at the heart of that development.
- 22) To support the workforce in the move to Digital ways of working.
- 23) To set out the Target Architecture for systems moving forward to ensure consistency and sustainability
- 24) To support the development of a consistent and robust Data strategy to support integration across systems and partners

25) To support the Authority in working across departments and its partners by defining end to end user journeys and making those seamless to our users.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

26) Given central governments push to promote digital and joined up ways of working the strategy will look to build on and adopt common digital standards given the Authority has committed to in the Digital declaration.

27) Implications for Service Users

- Staff – The move to continuous upgrades will mean that an increased need for training which will, as much as possible, be provisioned online. However, it is recognised that for accessibility purposes there will be a need to provide a mix of appropriate training materials. In addition, we will work to include in the workforce strategy the advantages of digitalisation in relation to inefficient processes.
- Citizens – The development of services will be undertaken in a Digital manner and as such will be undertaken from a user perspective, making services user focused for Citizens to use plus, improve the interaction with partners. We will also take into consideration the equipment that has been distributed to citizens as a response to digitisation or Covid-19.
- Partners – The development of an integration platform is being specifically undertaken to enable the passing of relevant data between systems and partners to enable better, joined up services where that is appropriate.

### **Timescales**

Once the Digital strategy is agreed, the Authority will look to adopt the principles, Target Technical Architecture, and the development of a Data strategy.

### **Financial Implications**

28) Any additional demands that are identified as a result of this Digital strategy will follow the normal business planning process with any additional funding coming through a business case being submitted to Finance Committee in the normal manner.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

29) That the Digital Strategy be agreed and adopted from May 2022.

**Paul Martin**

**Head of Technology & Digital, Finance, Infrastructure and Improvement**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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**Constitutional Comments (GMG – 26/04/22)**

30) This matter falls within the remit of the Finance Committee for decision.

**Financial Comments (SES 19/04/2022)**

31) There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

**HR Comments (JP 2704/2022)**

32) Any HR implications are contained in the body of the report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

- See embedded links within the document

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



## 1. Executive Summary

This strategy covers how the Council will adopt Digital and Agile methods to improve its services and the products that underpin those services in conjunction with the council's ambitions.

The document is intended for anyone who is considering replacing or making a significant change to a system or, process that is, or could be, supported by technology. It is meant as a guideline to the standards and principles to be adopted when developing services in a digital way and supports the Digital Charter which, the Authority is a signatory.

Digital ways of working change the way we think about the users of our services; to enable them to easily interact with the systems and processes in place to support the delivery of services and information. It is not about technology which, is a facilitator of Digital ways of working, rather it is changing the way we develop our services to embrace ways of working that make interaction with the council easier while ensuring accessibility is maintained.

The current suite of applications has, in the main, been developed using traditional methods of waterfall development and project approaches. While these systems have derived benefit their development has resulted in systems that are frequently sub-optimal and that create a myriad of work arounds that are "off system" to accommodate inefficiencies and problems created through systems implementation and operation.

To adopt Digital working practices and comply with the Digital Declaration which, the council has signed up to, then there are principles and processes that need to be adopted as part of the governance of Digital work. This strategy outlines what these are and what the council will adopt to enable it to become a Digital organisation.

As Digital and Agile ways of working are adopted the need for a separate Digital strategy should disappear as any project or, programme-based work, will adopt this way of working as a matter of course. Overtime there will be no need to preface any particular piece of work with the word "Digital" as this will become second nature and it will be the way the council works when developing services or systems.

The ICT strategy will form a key foundation for the Digital strategy as it will provide the technology guiderails upon which services will be developed. The ICT strategy will also highlight areas of technical debt that need to be addressed prior to a significant system or, service upgrade/implementation otherwise there would be a risk of developing services that are immediately unsustainable.

## 2. Demand

### 2.1 Business Context

The council has the stated aim of being “Ambitious for our future” which includes, “A forward-looking and resilient Council”. This was expanded further, “Our staff stepped up during the pandemic and worked hard to adapt services and protect the most vulnerable. We want to continue to support them by giving them the skills and knowledge they need and providing a positive, inclusive culture. We'll also continue to develop new and innovative ways of working, including some which came out of the pandemic, like hybrid home/office working, and using 'virtual visits' to connect social care staff and residents. We're always looking to make services more efficient and sustainable and better meet people's needs, and will carry on looking at ways to develop our services and change the way we work in the future”

The Applications that underpin all the processes within the council sit on the Council's ICT infrastructure.

Currently most of those Applications, Systems and Processes, that are supported within the council have been developed in traditional ways; that is gathering business requirements and commissioning a provider (internal or external), to configure and implement a solution with little or no user involvement throughout the development process. This has meant that systems were implemented that did not always meet the expectations of the users. A number of these systems are now aged, life expired or, becoming unsupportable and creating process bottlenecks plus, significant technical debt. This gives us an opportunity to rethink how we approach developing these systems and processes.

The Council has started to adopt Agile ways of working which, has brought benefits in the products developed, in that they are developed in conjunction with the users of those systems with user feedback and prioritisation of features. This results in products that are performant plus, they match users expectations. An example is the Brokerage in Adults which, the Mosaic software supplier recognizes as best practise. This approach to work now needs to be scaled, but not at the expense of a working quality product which means, prioritising this activity across the council to facilitate the allocation of sufficient resource.

This can only be achieved by a change in the way we develop services and the underpinning applications and systems for the future. To this end Digital methods will be adopted in conjunction with Agile ways of working to support user centred design and develop and/or replace systems and processes from end to end, so moving towards more integrated interactions with its citizens and staff. This way of working will support the Authorities commitment to the Digital Declaration.

The council also has several transformation programmes and the work to underpin those programmes will need to be prioritised across the council, taking into consideration the availability of resources.

This strategy will seek to provide the guidelines within which, Digital approaches can be adopted by utilising the current debt pile of life expired systems and technical debt, not just to prioritise replacement of like with like systems, but to take the opportunity, wherever possible, to rethink how those processes work from an end-to-end perspective. Putting the user at the heart of the design of those systems and services while integrating with partners where that makes the user experience better.

We will also look to utilise technologies to capture data in an ethical manner to help interventions which support our service users and minimise the disruption of their lives. Where appropriate this technology will automatically update systems to provide a holistic view of our service users and trigger helpful interventions to support citizens.

The combination of looking at systems and services from an end-to-end perspective and automating the interactions across the council will also drive out efficiencies in the way the council functions and enable professional staff to focus on their users.

## 2.2 Business Success

To meet the council's ambitions, digital services will aim to achieve a single user contact, to initiate delivery of the service or, information to that user, with all the complexity across the council and its partners automated and the user interface being intuitive and easy to use.

If the service being requested is transactional then this should be online as the primary method of interaction however, currently most are not intuitive and many involve phone calls or, multiple interactions with people plus several hand offs between functions/ business areas and repeat requests for the same or, similar information. A good current example of this would be colleagues who wish to transition gender. Currently the systems and processes in place to alter all references to an employee to reference the new gender make this challenging and frustrating for those colleagues transitioning, such that we are seeking ways to make this administrative process simpler so removing an unnecessary stress.

There is also significant benefit to be derived through the ethical use of data and technologies that can support the monitoring and interaction of users in a way that prevents injury or harm plus, can promote proactive interaction for better wellbeing. An example of this would be technology deployed in people's home to prevent falls and monitor activity so that people can continue to live at home safely. As we progress through our journey of using more sophisticated toolsets on our data this will start to reveal ways in which that data can be interrogated for the benefit of our users.

Of course, to achieve that ability there is a need to map the current data landscape plus, give an understanding of the ownership of the data across the council and its mastery. Who owns the data and the primary source of data will need to be quantified to achieve the benefits of any new technologies that are deployed. This will also enable "store once use many times" to prevent inconsistencies and support better reporting.

This activity will be informed by the Data Strategy work which will set out the principles by which the Authority wants to govern and share data.

## 2.3 Business Capabilities

To achieve Digital transformation the traditional ways of developing systems and services need bolstering to support the principle of user centered design. Digital and Agile methods will need to be deployed to support the necessary change in the way systems and services are developed, configured, and implemented. These methods demand greater input from the users of the system and concentrate on, 1) Business Value and 2) Usability. There are other factors however, these are the two over-riding aspects. This means different business capabilities are required to enable Digital services to be developed.

Those capabilities are:-

A move to using the artefacts produced from Digital and Agile methods. That means that the traditional hierarchical approach being turned on its head. The project structure looks to support the delivery rather than being a control/reporting mechanism. Projects with large ICT elements traditionally are difficult to quantify therefore they overrun and do not deliver what was expected. To prevent this the ownership needs to be across the governance structure, managing the uncertainty and the blockers that exist within these types of projects and making timely decisions to maintain the cadence of the delivery. This means working from different artifacts such as, \*backlogs, burn downs and burn up charts to manage delivery as opposed to Highlight reports. These are new ways of working and will require learning and embedding. Cost control and planning are integral parts of delivery, and this way of working gives significantly more visibility than traditional methods however, it demands quick decision making to address blockers to progress. This means the traditional board structure will not work because it is not frequent enough; it can supplement Agile approaches as an additional governance layer to give oversight but, is not enough in itself.

There are specific roles necessary to the successful delivery of Agile and Digital Projects: User Researcher (UR) – someone who works with the User community to establish how a system and/or process should work to make the users experience seamless and straight-forward such that digital interaction becomes the way of doing business.

User eXperience (UX) – The front-end interface and usability to make sure the user experience on the device and transaction being undertaken is seamless – this can be combined with the User Researcher where an Application is being deployed.

Service Owner (SO)- someone who owns the end-to-end service and can make priority decisions on how the service develops plus, support any business case development, associated resourcing and, negotiation around process ownership.

Service Designer – would typically map out the entire service design and work with the Service Owners, Product Owners and User Researchers and the business areas to design the service from an End-to-End perspective. If a package solution is being procured with built in workflows then the Product Owner can work with the Service Owner to achieve the same outcome.

Product Owner (PO)- someone who takes ownership of the product that will be delivered to the Service Owner. They work with the Scrum team(s) daily and set the priorities. To do this the Service Manager needs to delegate the responsibility for the daily decision making that keep the team delivering. These two roles (Service and Product Owners) are key to success as they determine the priority in terms of what is developed and are key to unblocking any issues that are hampering delivery.

Scrum Masters (SM) and Developers (Devs) are two other capabilities that are critical to success, the Scrum master works hand in glove with the product owner to manage the backlog and seeks to unblock elements that prevent the developers from progressing. It is helpful if the scrum master comes from a technical background but not critical.

Developers will configure and write the code to build the systems and integrations however, their level of expertise varies depending on what is being implemented package, Software as a Service (SaaS), Bespoke development. They are critical to the success of any implementation.

For the council to be successful in producing digital services there will be a need to have these capabilities available at the appropriate times to support timely delivery. Without the capabilities itemized above then delivery will be hampered and is likely to be sub-optimal.

There is also a significant requirement for skills that do exist within the Authority but possibly not in the volumes necessary such as Business Analysts, Technical Architects, and Developers. These will need to be bolstered to support this way of working.

In addition, the governance structures need to alter from being predominantly about command and control to being about facilitating delivery and oversight. This changes the dynamic of the participants and will require a cultural change in approach.

\*See Glossary

## 2.4 IT Contribution to Business Success

Currently, in the main, services are developed in a very traditional way whereby a specification is produced at the beginning of a project and the supplier, internal or external, takes that document and builds what they think is meant by that specification. Project reporting happens on a regular basis outlining progress however, the visibility of what is being produced is generally opaque until testing, at which point what is delivered does not usually reflect what the user expectation was. Also, the level of user engagement and ownership is limited, and this can drive an unhelpful working relationship which, becomes contractual and confrontational. This does not help the delivery of a useable, elegant product to our users; indeed, it can aggravate all parties and normally ends up in sub-optimal products being deployed.

By using Digital and Agile methods of delivery there is a need to have an input and ownership from across the user / supplier divide. The Service and Product Owners are key to the success of this way of working as they see what is being produced and understand the business and can make decisions quickly on how systems and processes should be developed and configured. This means that the governance needs to support the Service and Product owners by empowering them to make decisions on a day-to-day basis. In addition, the traditional Board structure needs to adapt to the ceremonies and artefacts that are produced from Digital and Agile ways of working. This means attending stand-ups and having a different role; rather than overseeing they will be unblocking items that are preventing delivery. They will also need to respond at a much faster cadence than traditional boards operate, and this will take some time to achieve this cultural change.

The benefit is simple, the products and services produced are easy to use for our citizens and staff plus, they are joined up across service and partner boundaries, removing artificial organisational constructs and making our services more efficient and effective.

## 3. Control

### 3.1 Digital Principles

The UK Government have a set of 10 digital principles which are detailed below. These apply to government services when they are under development. Therefore, it is appropriate that the Authority adopts these given they are in line with current government thinking and are underpinned by Agile principles (ANNEX 1). They are then checked at specific points by an assessor using the GDS Service Standards. The Digital principles are as follows and each one includes links as examples and to support the principles:

#### 1) Start with User Needs

Service design starts with identifying user needs. If you don't know what the user needs are, you won't build the right thing. Do research, analyse data, talk to users. Don't make assumptions. Have empathy for users and remember that what they ask for isn't always what they need.

- [Why we care more about effectiveness than efficiency or satisfaction](#) by John Waterworth
- [10 tips for working with your user researcher](#) by Kieron Kirkland

#### 2) Do less

Government should only do what only government can do. If we've found a way of doing something that works, we should make it reusable and shareable instead of reinventing the wheel every time. This means building platforms and registers others can build upon, providing resources (like APIs) that others can use, and linking to the work of others. We should concentrate on the irreducible core.

- [Adapting the GOV.UK Design System for the NHS](#) by Tim Paul and Dean Vipond
- [GOV.UK: a journey in scaling agile](#) by Jen Allum, Nick Tait and Alan Wright

#### 3) Design with Data

In most cases, we can learn from real world behaviour by looking at how existing services are used. Let data drive decision-making, not hunches or guesswork. Keep doing that after taking your service live, prototyping and testing with users then iterating in response. Analytics should be built-in, always on and easy to read. They're an essential tool.

- [Mixing methods: a recipe for research success](#) by Haur Kang and Louise Petre
- [How to use data in user research when you have no web analytics](#) by Louise Petre

#### 4) Do the hard work to make it simple

Making something look simple is easy. Making something simple to use is much harder - especially when the underlying systems are complex - but that's what we should be doing.

Don't take "It's always been that way" for an answer. It's usually more and harder work to make things simple, but it's the right thing to do.

- [Building a better GOV.UK, step by step](#) by Gabrielle Acosta and Sam Dub
- [Start taking payments in one day with GOV.UK Pay](#) by Katie Bates, Lewis Dunne and Till Wirth

#### 5) Iterate and then iterate again

The best way to build good services is to start small and iterate wildly. Release [minimum viable products](#) early, test them with actual users, move from [alpha](#) to [beta](#) to live adding features, deleting things that don't work and making refinements based on feedback. Iteration reduces risk. It makes big failures unlikely and turns small failures into lessons. If a prototype isn't working, don't be afraid to scrap it and start again.

- [Things to consider when designing in alpha](#) by Chris Thomas
- [Using A/B testing to measurably improve common user journeys](#) by Mark Mcleod

#### 6) This is for everyone

Accessible design is good design. Everything we build should be as inclusive, legible, and readable as possible. If we must sacrifice elegance - so be it. We're building for needs, not audiences. We're designing for the whole country, not just the ones who are used to using the web. The people who most need our services are often the people who find them hardest to use. Let's think about those people from the start.

- [Using persona profiles to test accessibility](#) by Anika Henke
- [What we found when we tested tools on the world's least accessible webpage](#) by Mehmet Duran

#### 7) Understand context

We're not designing for a screen, we're designing for people. We need to think hard about the context in which they're using our services. Are they in a library? Are they on a phone? Are they only really familiar with Facebook? Have they never used the web before?

- [Researching in context](#) by Amy Everett
- [Hey GOV.UK, what are you doing about voice?](#) by Sam Dub and Mark Hurrell

#### 8) Build digital services, not websites

A service is something that helps people to do something. Our job is to uncover user needs and build the service that meets those needs. Of course, much of that will be pages on the web, but we're not here to build websites. The digital world must connect to the real world, so we have to think about all aspects of a service, and make sure they add up to something that meets user needs.

- [What do we mean when we talk about services?](#) by Stephanie Marsh
- [How we approached service mapping](#) by Gabrielle Acosta and James Butler

## 9) Be consistent, not uniform

We should use the same language and the same design patterns wherever possible. This helps people get familiar with our services, but when this is not possible, we should make sure our approach is consistent.

This isn't a straitjacket or a rule book. Every circumstance is different. When we find patterns that work, we should share them, and talk about why we use them. But that shouldn't stop us from improving or changing them in the future when we find better ways of doing things or the needs of users change.

- [Introducing a simpler, data-informed publishing experience](#) by Rob Rockstroh
- [Introducing the GOV.UK Design System](#) by Amy Hupe and Alice Noakes

## 10) Make things open: it makes things better

We should share what we're doing whenever we can. With colleagues, with users, with the world. Share code, share designs, share ideas, share intentions, share failures. The more eyes there are on a service the better it gets - howlers are spotted, better alternatives are pointed out, the bar is raised.

Much of what we're doing is only possible because of open-source code and the generosity of the web design community. We should pay that back.

- [Opening up the GOV.UK Design System for contributions](#) by Ignacia Orellana and Amy Hupe
- [Doing the hard work to make things open](#) by Paul Smith



### 3.2 Digital Governance

The control mechanisms are outlined in the benefits above. For Digital and Agile methods to work there is a need to alter the governance to support these ways of working and empower staff to make local, quick decisions. As defined in Agile principles “Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project”

For the governance to be successful the board needs to be able to react faster than a traditional board and will need to adapt to accommodate this way of working. In addition, the board becomes a facilitator of the project/programme, so while it has its traditional governance hat on for oversight, it is also accountable for removing any blockers to progress.

This means that the stakeholders will need to embrace the Agile methodology and attend retrospectives and “Show & Tell” sessions to gain insight into what is being developed. To delegate this to other officers does not offset accountability for the product and/or service development as that will be implicit within the role of the senior stakeholder(s).

Agile shall be the preferred method of delivery for digital projects and programmes, recognizing that this will need to be modified depending on the type of delivery and the phases are recognized by Government Digital Services (GDS) will be adopted. Those being Discovery, Alpha, Private Beta, Public Beta, and Live. This together with the GDS Service Standards (ANNEX 2), will support and guide the development of systems and services in a way that supports the production of good customer focused services.

It should also be recognized that Minimum Viable Service (MVS) is just that, and it is likely that an equal amount of time and resource will be required after that point to reach a fully mature service.

In terms of planning a service the governance constructs will need to accommodate, the development lifecycle of the service. Once MVS is reached there will need to be a careful management of resource to enable the parallel activities of Business as Usual (BAU) and development to take place. This should form one backlog and the Product and Service Owners will need to prioritise carefully sustainability and new features otherwise significant technical debt will be created and the service is likely to be unreliable.

### 3.3 IT Financial Management

Each Product and/or Service will have to produce their own business case to justify the expense of any new delivery that demands additional resource above that which is already allocated. Some developments may fall within existing resources agreed at the beginning of the financial year and these will be agreed at the Digital Board as this will be the mechanism of prioritisation.

The benefits

Each year the prioritisation will be undertaken to determine what work can be contained under existing resources, following that exercise additional activity will need to provide a business case to justify the expenditure. The business case will need to cover the ongoing running costs as well as the direct project costs.

## 4.0 Enterprise Architecture

This Digital strategy will set the principles and identify a target ICT Technical Architecture for 3 years from 2021. It is split into different areas of the infrastructure and will define a direction based on information available at the date of writing along with any longer-term predictions by the industry while taking into account the strategic direction Nottinghamshire County Council in order to support the wider authority in delivering efficiencies and help the move to digital.

ICT Achievements 2020

Within the difficult year of 2020 and early 2021 ICT have enabled and expanded a number of the Infrastructure technologies to help ensure the Authority could continue to deliver its services while maintaining the safety of the workforce. The main elements of which were the major work done around delivery of the Microsoft M365 Office and Teams products along with the network complexities to support the working from home environment ensuring the workforce could access their usual applications. These along with setting up further elements for Cloud Services have built a strong foundation for the future Architecture.

Architecture Elements

The following elements of the ICT Architecture ICT strategy will be covered:

Compute Architecture

This includes any physical and cloud-based devices used for processing and storage along with the network components for the delivery of data and voice communications within the Authority and beyond.

Storage

This includes the elements that make up an application both within the cloud and on-premise but not the individual applications functionality. Typically, this consists of a database with an application along with an access element, usually a PC or Web browser.

Network Architecture

This includes any physical and cloud-based devices used for processing and storage along with the network components for the delivery of data and voice communications within the Authority and beyond.

#### Microsoft Cloud Services M365

As we move to cloud based services more of our information will be stored in the cloud. Along with the Microsoft 365 suite and associated services we will need to ensure this covers our requirements and take advantage of opportunities to leverage the technology to make efficiencies in the organisation.

#### Security Architecture

The Security Architecture and policies allow us to keep our information safe and ensure none authorised access is reduced and monitored. The Security Architecture is built to industry standards and is checked yearly to identify any weaknesses and ensure we meet those standards.

#### Access Channels and Devices

This area covers the mechanisms and devices used to access our systems and data whether on the local network, remotely from home or out and about.

#### Data

A separate Data Strategy is currently being constructed. Once that has been agreed the physical implementation of that will be considered alongside the strategy. However, the general principle of data being entered once and used many times will apply and be reflected in any principles created.

A more detailed document that expands on most of the elements above is included in Annex (3).

## 4.1 People

The capabilities listed above in section 2.3, only exist in limited numbers within the Authority. There will be some significant training needs that will need to be addressed and it is proposed that a training needs analysis is undertaken at the start of any project to highlight those costs.

The costs of the training would then be incorporated into the business case for the service or system that is being developed.

## 4.2 Sourcing

It is likely that additional resources will be required to bolster the current capacity when undertaking project related work that does not fit within the current resource availability. This will need to be considered at the business case stage of the project to determine if the value created outweighs any associated costs.

When undertaking this type of procurement, the Council's Commercial function will be engaged to direct the use of appropriate frameworks to secure the resource while complying with procurement regulations.

Appropriate standards and requirements will be included in any procurement.

## 5. Risks

- 1) The main risk will be that the authority continues to develop services in a way that does not support digital ways of working. This will lead to the continuation of sub-optimal services that do not operate in a manner that supports integrated responses to our citizens.  
The mitigation is to introduce GDS Service Standards (ANNEX 2) to put in stage gates at each significant stage of a project.
- 2) The staff do not gain the skills to support the development of digital services.  
The mitigation will be to identify the staff training required as we embark on any new piece of work. Department for Leveling Up Housing and Communities (DLUPHC) will supply training to Local Authorities who have signed the Digital Declaration. Nottinghamshire has already signed the Digital Declaration and as such can leverage that training to give staff the training. Within our planning, time will need to be built in to enable staff to get up to speed as they become familiar with the techniques.
- 3) The priorities overwhelm the available resource to undertake digital work.  
Mitigation – A single Digital Board has been created to prioritise the Digital work that the Council undertakes. This will identify where the demands outstrips the Councils capacity and enable decisions to be made about if additional work should be funded. These decisions being made in light of the maximum capacity of the Council to sustain change.

## 6. Annexes

# ANNEX 1

## Agile Principles

### What are the Agile Principles?

There are 12 agile principles outlined in The Agile Manifesto in addition to the 4 agile values. These 12 principles for agile software development help establish the tenets of the agile mindset. They are not a set of rules for practicing agile, but a handful of principles to help instill agile thinking.

Below we will review each of the 12 agile principles and describe how they may be practiced.

#### Agile Principle 1

“Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.”

The best ways to ensure you make customers happy while continuously delivering valuable software are to ship early, iterate frequently, and listen to your market continually.

Unlike traditional approaches to product development, which have notoriously long development cycles, agile principles encourage minimizing the time between ideation and launch. The idea is to get a working product in the hands of customers as soon as possible. Doing this successfully means product managers are able to quickly get a minimum viable product (MVP) out and into the world and use it to get feedback from real customers. This feedback is then fed back into the product development process and used to inform future releases.

How it looks in practice:

- Product teams use minimum viable products and rapid experimentation to test hypothesis and validate ideas.
- Frequent releases help fuel a continuous feedback cycle between customer and product.
- Shipped and done are not the same thing. Instead of releasing a “finished” product, iterations continue to make incremental improvements to product based on customer and market feedback.

#### Agile Principle 2

“Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer’s competitive advantage.”

In the world around us, change is the only constant. Agile principles and values support responding to these changes rather than moving forward in spite of them. Previous approaches to product development were often change adverse; detailed, well-documented

plans were made before development began and were set in stone regardless of new findings. Agile principles support observing changing markets, customer needs, and competitive threats and changing course when necessary.

How it looks in practice:

- Product teams are guided by high-level strategic goals and perhaps even themes below those goals. The product department's success is measured against progress toward those strategic goals rather than by delivery of a predefined feature set.
- Product constantly has its ear to the ground monitoring the market, customer feedback, and other factors which could influence product direction. When actionable insight is uncovered, plans are adjusted to better serve customer and business needs.
- Product strategy and tactical plans are reviewed, adjusted, and shared on a regular cadence to reflect changes and new findings. As such, product needs to manage the expectations of executive stakeholders appropriately and ensure they understand the *why* behind changes.

### Agile Principle 3

“Deliver working product frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.”

Agile philosophy favours breaking a product's development into smaller components and “shipping” those components frequently. Using an agile approach, therefore—and building in more frequent mini-releases of your product—can speed the product's overall development.

This agile approach, with short-term development cycles of smaller portions of the product, results in less time spent drafting and poring over the large amounts of documentation that characterizes Waterfall product development. More importantly, this frequent-release approach creates more opportunities for you and your teams to validate your product ideas and strategies from the qualified constituencies who see each new release.

How it looks in practice:

- Agile development cycles, often called “sprints” or “iterations” break down product initiatives into smaller chunks that can be completed in a set timeframe. Often this timeframe is between 2 and 4 weeks which truly is a sprint if you consider the marathon-like development cycles waterfall teams often follow.
- Another popular alternative to agile sprints is continuous deployment. This method of shipping software/product frequently works less in terms of predetermined time boxes and more in terms of simply deciding what to do and doing it.

### Agile Principle 4

“Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.”

Communication is a critical component of any project or team's success, and agile principles essentially mandate that it's a daily event. It takes a village to raise a child they say, and that applies to product as well.

A successful product requires insight from the business and technical sides of an organization which can only happen if these two teams work together consistently. Regular communication between business people and developers helps improve alignment across the organization by building trust and transparency.

How it looks in practice:

- Cross-functional agile product development teams include product people. This means that product is represented on the development team and bridges the gap between technical and business aspects of the product.
- Daily update meetings, or standups, are one technique many agile teams use to put this principle in practice and keep everyone connected.

#### Agile Principle 5

“Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.”

A key part of the agile philosophy is empowering individuals and teams through trust and autonomy. The agile team needs to be carefully built to include the right people and skill sets to get the job done, and responsibilities need to be clearly defined before the beginning of a project. Once the work has begun, however, there’s no place in agile for micromanagement or hand holding.

How it looks in practice:

- Product must clearly ensure engineering understands strategy and requirements before development starts. This means not only sharing user stories with the cross-functional team but also the bigger picture outlined in the product roadmap.
- Product is not responsible for explaining “how” something should be built. They need to share what and why, but it’s the delivery team’s job to determine the how. Furthermore, during sprints product does not micromanage outcome, instead they make themselves available to answer questions and provide support as needed.

#### Agile Principle 6

“The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.”

With so many distributed or remote development teams these days, this principle gets a bit of critique. But at the root of it, effective communication with developers means getting these conversations out of Slack and email and favoring more human interaction (even if done by video conference calls). The overall objective behind this principle is to encourage product people and developers to truly communicate in real time about the product, requirements, and the high-level strategy driving those things.

How it looks in practice:

- Daily standup meetings
- Collaborative backlog grooming sessions

- Sprint planning meetings
- Frequent demos
- Pair-programming

#### Agile Principle 7

“Working software is the primary measure of progress.”

Proponents of the agile philosophy are quick to remind us that we’re in the business of building software, and that’s where our time should be spent. Perfect, detailed documentation is secondary to working software. This mentality pushes to get products to the market quickly rather than let documentation or an “it’s not done until it’s perfect” mentality become a bottleneck. The ultimate measure for success is a working product that customers love.

How it looks in practice:

- Designing and releasing “Minimum Viable Features” rather than fully-developed feature sets means thinking first and foremost about the smallest things we can ship to start getting customer feedback and validate as we continue to build software.
- A fail fast mentality means moving forward even in times of uncertainty and testing ideas rapidly.
- Ship software often: a useful product now is better than a perfect one later.

#### Agile Principle 8

“Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.”

Keeping up with a demanding, rapid release schedule can be taxing on a team. Especially if expectations are set too high. Agile principles encourage us to be mindful of this and set realistic, clear expectations. The idea is to keep morale high and improve work-life balance to prevent burnout and turnover among members of cross functional teams.

How it looks in practice:

- Before every sprint, careful consideration of the amount of work that can be committed to is made. Development teams don’t over promise on what they can and cannot deliver. Effort estimations are a common practice in setting output expectations for development teams.
- Everyone agrees on what will get done during a sprint. Once a sprint has begun, no additional tasks are to be added except in rare cases.
- Product managers should act as gatekeepers to reduce the noise from other stakeholders and to avoid squeezing in additional unplanned work during an ongoing sprint.
- Product people should do their part in promoting a sense of psychological safety across the cross-functional team that encourages open communication and freely flowing feedback.



## Agile Principle 9

“Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.”

While the agile philosophy encourages shorter cycles and frequent releases, it also puts emphasis on the importance of keeping things neat and tidy so they don't cause problems in the future. Product managers often forget about this aspect of development because they mostly don't spend their days wading through their products' codebases, but it is still of the utmost importance to them.

How it looks in practice:

- The team needs to be cognizant of technical debt and the technical debt implications of any new features or initiatives added to the backlog. Developers and product need to work together to understand if and when technical debt is acceptable.
- On a regular basis, product will need to allocate development resources to refactoring efforts. Refactoring cannot be an afterthought, it needs to be an ongoing consideration.

## Agile Principle 10

“Simplicity—the art of maximizing the amount of work not done—is essential.”

You've probably heard of the 80/20 rule—the concept that you can usually get 80% of your intended results with just 20% of the work. Agile principles encourage thinking this way; doing the things that can have the most impact. In a product management context this means having a laser sharp focus on organizational objectives and making some cutthroat prioritization decisions. Agile principles discourage building merely for the sake of building by emphasizing the importance of being strategic and building with purpose.

How it looks in practice:

- Product managers need to make very focused product decisions and closely align product strategy with organizational goals while being extremely picky about what user stories and features actually make the cut. Using prioritization techniques to prioritize initiatives by effort and predicted impact is one way product teams can apply this agile principle to product development.
- The short sprints that agile is characterized by present many opportunities for rapid testing and experimentation which can help reduce uncertainty around whether initiatives will truly have the predicted impact. Using experiments to validate ideas before building them up to spec is a great way to weed out bad ideas and identify good ones.

## Agile Principle 11

“The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.”

In traditional software development methodologies, you'll often see pyramid shaped teams where management makes key decisions for contributors. Agile principles suggest the use of self-organizing teams which work with a more “flat” management style where decisions are made as a group rather than by a singular manager or management team. The concept ties

into agile's value of teams and interactions over processes and tools, and the intent behind the concept is to empower teams to work together as they need to.

How it looks in practice:

- Self-organizing teams are autonomous groups within the organization who take control and responsibility over their respective projects and have ownership of those areas. Different organizations practice this principle differently. Spotify, for example uses “product squads” to practice this.

Learn more about managing complex requirements in an agile world in the webinar below.

#### Agile Principle 12

“At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.”

If you're truly living by agile principles, there is no place for “we can't change because we've always done it this way.” Just like we're always learning new things about our customers and markets, we're also learning from the processes we're using to learn those things. Agile is not about following a strictly-defined process for every sprint and release, it's about continuous improvement. And that continuous improvement must also extend to processes and teams.

How it looks in practice:

- Experimentation and testing is not limited to the product only. Agile teams are encouraged to experiment with their processes. You may think you're already doing something well only to experiment with a revised version of the process and discover an even more effective method. Experimenting with your process and team is just as important as experimenting with the software you're building.
- Regular retrospectives are opportunities for the team to discuss what went well, what didn't go so well, and where the process can be tweaked to improve things in the future. They're an excellent place for product managers and product owners to learn if they are communicating effectively with developers and giving them the support they need before, during, and after sprints.
- Another consideration to make regarding this agile principle is that in order to practice it effectively you need to create a culture of trust and transparency that encourages openness and frequent sharing of feedback.

## ANNEX 2

This is a series of links to the Government Digital Services website that shows the service standards upon which any service should be assessed.

### **1. Understand users and their needs**

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[Read more about point 1](#)

### **2. Solve a whole problem for users**

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[Read more about point 2](#)

### **3. Provide a joined up experience across all channels**

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[Read more about point 3](#)

### **4. Make the service simple to use**

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[Read more about point 4](#)

### **5. Make sure everyone can use the service**

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[Read more about point 5](#)

### **6. Have a multidisciplinary team**

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[Read more about point 6](#)

**7. Use agile ways of working**

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[Read more about point 7](#)

**8. Iterate and improve frequently**

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[Read more about point 8](#)

**9. Create a secure service which protects users' privacy**

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[Read more about point 9](#)

**10. Define what success looks like and publish performance data**

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[Read more about point 10](#)

**11. Choose the right tools and technology**

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[Read more about point 11](#)

**12. Make new source code open**

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[Read more about point 12](#)

**13. Use and contribute to open standards, common components and patterns**

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[Read more about point 13](#)

## **14. Operate a reliable service**

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[Read more about point 14](#)

## ANNEX 3

This document is designed to be used as a stand-alone document to inform the Design Authority of the technical architectural guidrails that the Authority has adopted.



ICT Architecture  
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## Glossary of Agile Terms

**Backlog** - A product backlog is a list of the new features, changes to existing features, bug fixes, infrastructure changes or other activities that a team may deliver in order to achieve a specific outcome.

The product backlog is the single authoritative source for things that a team works on. That means that nothing gets done that isn't on the product backlog. Conversely, the presence of a product backlog item on a product backlog does not guarantee that it will be delivered. It represents an option the team has for delivering a specific outcome rather than a commitment.

It should be cheap and fast to add a product backlog item to the product backlog, and it should be equally as easy to remove a product backlog item that does not result in direct progress to achieving the desired outcome or enable progress toward the outcome.

**Burn downs/up** - Burndown charts and burnup charts track the amount of output (in terms of hours, story points, or backlog items) a team has completed across an iteration or a project. ([see more](#))

