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MEETING:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thriving & Vibrant Economy Workstream
DATE:	Tuesday, 4 February 2020
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Meeting Room 11, Barnsley Town Hall

AGENDA

Thriving & Vibrant Economy Workstream

Councillors Clarke, Ennis, Gollick, Green, Hand-Davis, Hunt, Lofts, Noble, Pickering, Richardson, Smith, and Sumner.

Administrative and Governance Issues for the Committee

1 **Apologies for Absence - Parent Governor Representatives**

To receive apologies for absence in accordance with Regulation 7 (6) of the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

2 **Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest**

To invite Members of the Committee to make any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest in connection with the items on this agenda.

3 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 3 - 10*)

To note the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 7th January, 2020 (Item 3 attached).

Overview and Scrutiny Issues for the Committee

4 **Barnsley Council's Digital First Programme** (*Pages 11 - 20*)

To consider a report of the Executive Director Core Services in respect of Barnsley Council's Digital First Programme (Item 4 attached).

5 **Barnsley - Digital as a Place** (*Pages 21 - 30*)

To consider a report of the Executive Director Core Services and the Executive Director Place in respect of Barnsley being Digital as a place (Item 5 attached).

Enquiries to Anna Marshall, Scrutiny Officer

Email scrutiny@barnsley.gov.uk

To: Chair and Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee:-

Councillors Ennis OBE (Chair), Bowler, Carr, T. Cave, Clarke, Felton, Fielding, Frost, Gollick, Green, Daniel Griffin, Hand-Davis, Hayward, Higginbottom, Hunt, W. Johnson, Leech, Lodge, Lofts, Makinson, McCarthy, Mitchell, Newing, Noble, Phillips, Pickering, Richardson, Smith, Stowe, Sumner, Tattersall, Williams, Wilson and Wraith MBE together with co-opted Members and Statutory Co-opted Member Ms. G Carter (Parent Governor Representative)

Electronic Copies Circulated for Information

Sarah Norman, Chief Executive

Andrew Frosdick, Executive Director Core Services

Rob Winter, Head of Internal Audit and Risk Management

Michael Potter, Service Director, Business Improvement and Communications

Martin McCarthy, Service Director, Governance, Members and Business Support
Press

Witnesses

Item 4 (2:00pm)

Andrew Frosdick, Executive Director – Core Services

Dave Robinson, Service Director, Customer Information & Digital Services

Kay Deacey-Coulton, Head of IT Service Improvement

Cllr Alan Gardiner, Cabinet Spokesperson – Core Services

Item 5 (2:45pm)

David Shepherd, Service Director, Economic Regeneration, Place Directorate

Paul Clifford, Head of Service, Economic Development, Place Directorate

Tracey Johnson, Business Incubation Strategy Centre Manager, Place Directorate

Tom Smith, Head of Employment & Skills, Place Directorate

Dave Robinson, Service Director, Customer Information & Digital Services

Cllr Tim Cheetham, Cabinet Spokesperson – Regeneration & Culture

MEETING:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Full Meeting
DATE:	Tuesday, 7 January 2020
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Ennis OBE (Chair), Bowler, Carr, T. Cave, Clarke, Felton, Fielding, Gollick, Green, Daniel Griffin, Hand-Davis, Hayward, Higginbottom, Hunt, W. Johnson, Leech, Lodge, Lofts, Makinson, McCarthy, Mitchell, Newing, Noble, Richardson, Smith, Stowe, Sumner, Tattersall and Williams together with co-opted members and Ms. G Carter

12 Apologies for Absence - Parent Governor Representatives

No apologies for absence were received in accordance with Regulation 7(6) of the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

13 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

Ms Gemma Carter declared a non-pecuniary interest in connection with Minute No. 15 due to her being a Director of an alternative education provider.

Councillor Lodge declared a non-pecuniary interest in connection with Minute Nos. 15 and 18 due to his membership of the Schools Forum and his work with care leavers.

Councillor Newing declared a non-pecuniary interest in connection with Minute Nos. 15 and 18 as she is employed by the NHS.

14 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be approved as a true and correct record:

- (i) Full Committee, held on 10th September, 2019
- (ii) Thriving and Vibrant Economy, held on 1st October 2019
- (iii) People Achieving Their Potential, held on 5th November
- (iv) Strong & Resilient Communities, held on 3rd December 2019

15 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Outcome and Actions

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:

- Sarah Norman, Chief Executive of Barnsley Council
- Julia Burrows, Director of Public Health
- Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director - People
- Andrew Frosdick, Executive Director - Core Services

- Matt Gladstone, Executive Director - Place
- Wendy Lowder, Executive Director - Communities
- Neil Copley, Service Director - Finance
- Michael Potter, Service Director - Business Improvement, HR & Communications
- Cllr Stephen Houghton, Leader of Barnsley Council
- Cllr Robin Franklin, Cabinet Support Member - Core Services

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided with a report outlining the key findings arising from the Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) together with an update on the progress of the Action Plan developed in response to the recommendations of the final report received in April 2019.

In the ensuing discussion, and in response to detailed questioning and challenge, the following issues were highlighted:

The Peer Review had highlighted concerns that the retirement of the previous Chief Executive had heightened anxiety for some staff who were concerned that the direction and ethos of the Council would change and that the upcoming retirement of two more longstanding Executive Officers would cause further concern. Members were reassured that Mel John-Ross had been appointed to the post of Executive Director (Children's Services) from May 2020. Although this is still a significant change, Mel John-Ross is already well known to staff and this will provide continuity. The Executive Director (Core) will be an external appointment but the postholder will undergo a 'back to the floor' induction similar to that followed by the new Chief Executive. Recruitment to both Executive Officer posts involved front line staff to ensure that the successful candidates are well received.

There is some disparity of services across Area Councils, which is to be expected as an inevitable consequence of local democracy and the uniqueness and differing priorities of individual areas. On some issues it makes sense for Area Councils to work together – for example on advice services where a more 'joined-up' approach might be beneficial. What is essential is that Area Councils continue to explore innovative solutions to tricky problems and share good practice with each other, as a great idea which has been successful is generally replicated. Members were reminded that core services are Borough wide and haven't been separated out as this has caused problems in other areas.

Members expressed concern that the reduction in workforce may have an adverse impact on staff health and wellbeing and in particular their mental health. The Council has an in-house Occupational Health Unit and counselling service but recognises the need to continue to do more to promote the wellbeing of staff, which is included in the Investors in People process. A staff workplace health assessment was sent out to all staff which provided rich data and which will be used to develop targeted support for staff around mental health and emotional wellbeing. The Trade Unions are also involved with this.

A Customer Services Charter is being developed to ensure consistency of approach and clarity in terms of access to services, building on the Digital First agenda. It was acknowledged however that there may be some customers who are unable to access services via electronic/digital means.

In terms of risk management, the Council faces a number of risks, such as financial uncertainty around future government funding arrangements; the impact of BREXIT; the Council's reputation and decision making; management of significant events that impact on the community; demographic changes associated with an ageing population; climate change and data protection/ information security. Members were reassured that the Council closely monitors these and other risks which filter down the organisation and has robust processes and systems in place to respond to them. The Risk Management Framework is lean and coherent and is shared with the Audit Committee as part of the Annual Governance Statement.

Financial uncertainty can never be removed, but robust, sensible and affordable plans are in place to address any eventuality. This is the case with all Local Authorities across the country. The Government's focus on using business rates to fund services is a particular concern for Barnsley. It would be a struggle to fund services from Council Tax and Business Rates alone; therefore lobbying is taking place to counteract this.

It was reiterated that the peer review was a very positive report, identifying Barnsley as a 'high performing' Council. Considerable progress has already been made on the action plan, which is deliverable, affordable and the benefits of which outweigh the costs. There are many aspects within the peer review report to be proud of but first and foremost it is about delivering against the ambition to make life better for people of Barnsley and improving their quality of life, which includes social care and educational achievement to name but a few.

There is now a need to work with partners to take stock of Barnsley's priorities for the next decade and develop a strong place-based vision to inform what work the Council needs to do next to deliver the Barnsley 2030 vision. The 2030 consultation will identify needs and aspirations of local people and the Council and partners will be organised to deliver against that vision. Members can help with the 2030 vision, attending 'talkabouts' and using the toolkit in their own areas to have an honest dialogue with the public.

There is a need to develop a more inclusive economy through joined-up working across Directorates and partner agencies to understand what poverty looks and feels like. Initiatives such as volunteering and supporting those with a learning disability need to be further developed alongside better transport options (particularly rail); access to housing (including affordable housing) and improving educational opportunities whilst taking into account the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). The Local Plan opens up a huge amount of land for growth, particularly at Junction 36/37. The Employer Pledge has already been signed by more than 150 businesses and will put more back into the local economy. Barnsley College has been heavily involved in providing career inspiration for young people, connecting with digital companies to redesign course content. Adult Education is a good way to tackle poverty in the Borough as it provides life skills, increases employability and can make a real difference in communities. In some areas the Community Shop provides adult and community learning. There is a need to persuade Sheffield City Region (SCR) and Central Government to increase funding for this.

Witnesses were congratulated on attaining such a positive result from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and for their attendance and contribution.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

16 Provisional Education Outcomes in Barnsley 2019

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:

- Nick Bowen, Executive Principal of Horizon Community College and Joint Chair of Barnsley Alliance
- Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director - People, BMBC
- Nina Sleight, Service Director, Education, Early Start & Prevention, People Directorate, BMBC
- Richard Lynch, Head of Barnsley Schools' Alliance, People Directorate, BMBC
- Jane Allen, Service Manager, Pupil Inclusion, Attendance & Education Welfare, People Directorate, BMBC
- Liz Gibson, Virtual School Headteacher for Children Looked After (CLA), People Directorate, BMBC
- Councillor Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were provided with a report detailing the provisional education outcomes for children and young people in the borough at each stage of the National Curriculum, from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (age 4/5) to Key Stage 5 (A-level) for 2019, including Children Looked After (CLA) and those with Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND).

In the ensuing discussion, and in response to detailed questioning and challenge, the following issues were highlighted:

The Early Years sector has worked closely with children from deprived backgrounds for many years. There is a forensic analysis of data locally so that children are targeted individually for intervention as well as within cohorts. Comparisons are also made with national results and how they relate to Barnsley. Robust partnership arrangements are in place, working closely with families to ensure settings support children in the best possible way. Pupil Premium is used to deliver educational outcomes of those children who are most vulnerable, in attachment-friendly settings to enable a child to be ready to learn when they start school.

Barnsley should be particularly proud of its Key Stage 4 outcomes, good buildings and strong leadership. Barnsley schools are no longer at the bottom of the league tables and are now well above average, ahead of Rotherham, Doncaster and Sheffield, in some areas, which is a huge shift. There is still improvement to be made in terms of Progress 8 and Attainment 8, although performance on the latter is now close to the national average. Disadvantaged students are achieving higher results in Barnsley than non-disadvantaged students elsewhere. Out of 10 secondary schools in Barnsley, 8 are at average or above, with just 2 below average. The latter will be supported by the Barnsley Schools Alliance (BSA), which offers tailored support for schools who need help in making progress and in realising their ambitions using data to identify areas for improvement. Stronger schools will work with the leadership team, sharing good practice and challenging how the schools are

run. There is an ambition that wherever you live in Barnsley you will be guaranteed a good school.

Although English and Maths are important, the new OFSTED framework now focuses on a broader and more balanced curriculum, which is more appropriate for some students. In some instances in Barnsley, those schools with a broad and balanced curriculum are now performing better than those with a narrow focus on English and Maths.

Performance data suggests that girls perform better than boys, which is in line with national data. The reasons for this are unclear and are multi-faceted: they could relate to a poor start in life; pre-school/nursery experience; the pace of the curriculum; family expectations and parental education. What is crucial is that all children receive learning and support tailored to their needs.

Early Years outcomes and school attendance are Alliance priorities as they make such a difference to future lives. Another area of focus is the attainment of children with additional needs and inclusion. This includes attitudes around poor behaviour and how it is dealt with to ensure standards and attainment are high.

Members were reassured that the previous increase in fixed term exclusions is not linked to academisation. In fact, there has been a significant reduction in fixed term exclusions and academies have made significant progress along with other schools. There are a number of workable and helpful alternatives to excluding pupils such as an on-site wellbeing centre, nurture provision etc to ensure students' needs are met in school. Provision for excluded pupils depends on the individual circumstances of the pupil. When a child is excluded there is a statutory responsibility to ensure the pupil has 25 hours of education in place by day 6 of the exclusion. Wellspring Trust is commissioned to provide this. In addition, a Fair Access Panel meets every month to find excluded pupils an alternative place. Each case is examined in detail and tracked to make it fair. Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) placements are also commissioned around the Borough. It was pointed out that some pupils may be unable to attend school for physical reasons or refuse to attend due to anxiety issues.

Academies have been an overwhelming success in Barnsley and have taken school performance to a new height, which is not the case in other areas. All academies are part of the Barnsley Schools Alliance, are fully engaged and carry the expectation of challenge and support. All schools go through the same process regardless of their status. This partnership approach is the envy of other areas and demonstrates the strength of a sector led approach.

The Barnsley Schools Alliance works with individual schools to develop a package of tailored support for head teachers and other staff which is based on individual circumstances. New Headteachers are supported with their professional development. This is also the same with the Early Years service and includes childminders and Nursery settings.

The complexities of Elective Home Education (EHE) and how it works was explained to Members. When parents decide to home educate they must notify the school that they wish to remove their child from school. An advisor visits parents at home to explain how it works and what is expected. If the level of education provided is not of

a good standard, the advisor will work with parents to improve standards or look at supporting a move back in to mainstream education. An unhealthy culture is springing up around EHE, with unofficial Facebook pages offering advice to parents. There are many reasons given by parents as to why they wish to educate their children at home. Information as to the reasons are always recorded but they do vary. In some instances it is because of dissatisfaction around the current school. Efforts are always made to try to dissuade parents from this course of action.

The number of children in residential care refusing to attend school has fallen from a significant number around 4 years ago to just single children here and there. The Looked After Children Engagement Mentor works out of Springwell to encourage children back into the school setting. Pupil premium is also used to enable the child to engage. In the case of anxious and phobic children, the PRU within school is often used. School attendance of every Looked After Child is monitored daily and is improving year on year. Problems with non- Barnsley children are passed to the placing authority .

Transition from primary to secondary school is an area of concern, particularly for children with an EHCP in place. There is a need to ensure that for these children their plan is up to date to support the child effectively through transition. However, some schools are developing excellent practice, especially in the Dearne, where a SENCO has been recruited from the primary sector for pupils moving up to secondary school which helps to break down barriers between primary/secondary and change perceptions. Many children struggle when moving from a small primary school to a much bigger secondary school. This transition is part of the journey to independence and adulthood, with some children unable to cope and needing better support systems in place from an earlier age to ensure an easy transition. It is essential that although schools may do things differently, there is good engagement between primary and secondary schools and good practice is always shared. Services for children needing emotional and mental health support are provided by the CCG. Waiting times for treatment are reducing but still require further improvement.

The Chair congratulated witnesses on the performance of Barnsley schools and the role of the Barnsley Schools Alliance in driving forward performance and achieving better things for Barnsley children.

RESOLVED that witnesses be thanked for their attendance and contribution.

17 Referral to Sheffield City Region (SCR) Mayoral Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Regarding Transport in Barnsley - Item For Information Only

Members were provided with an update report regarding the referral made by this Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SCROSC) regarding transport in Barnsley, highlighting the opportunity for Barnsley OSC members to share further comments with Cllr Ennis to shape this work prior to his meeting on 25th January with Clive Betts MP who is chairing a review of transport in the region.

RESOLVED that

(i) Members note the report, and

(ii) Contact the OSC Chair by email with any concerns they have regarding transport so that they can be raised with Clive Betts MP at the forthcoming meeting.

18 Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

19 Children's Social Care Performance

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:

- Mel John-Ross, Service Director, Children's Social Care & Safeguarding, BMBC
- Cllr Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Spokesperson – Children's Services (formerly People - Safeguarding)

The Chair congratulated Mel John-Ross on her recent appointment to the post of Executive Director, Children's Services.

The Service Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, introduced this item and provided Members with the monthly children's social care report, which contained an overview of the major performance indicators for children's safeguarding and social care for Quarter 2 (2019/20). The report included a summary section with an overview of performance, using RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings and direction of travel for most indicators. Barnsley's historical performance and comparisons with other local authorities were also included.

Issues discussed included re-referral rates, the Neglect Strategy, the Graded Care Profile, adoption timescales, agency workers, recruitment and increased social worker caseloads. Implementation of the Neglect Strategy has seen over 900 practitioners trained, increased awareness of the impact of neglect and more cases being referred.

Members were reassured that decision making is sound whilst acknowledging that poverty is complex and multi-faceted. It was also highlighted that re-referral rates for this period have come down and are now below benchmarking targets.

RESOLVED that: Members note the update and witnesses be thanked for their attendance and contribution

Chair

Item 4

Report of the Executive Director Core Services to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) on 4 February 2020

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Digital First Programme

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the reasons for establishing the Council's Digital First programme; the structure and governance of the programme; and the progress of the workstreams so far.
- 1.2 In addition, the report details the future activities and next steps that will be taken along the digital improvement journey.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The IT service in Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) was outsourced in large parts between 2006 and 2015 through a contract with Bull.
- 2.2 During 2015/16, the acquisition of Bull by Mouchelle triggered a termination clause which saw the service brought back to the council. As a result, a combination of removing the profit element of the contract and rationalising staff numbers realised £3M per annum in efficiencies for the council.
- 2.3 In 2017, the appointment of a new Service Director for IT saw a fundamental review undertaken of the service with regards to its capacity to deliver IT development to the organisation. Key among the findings of this review were:
 - a serious lack of investment by previous partners in the underlying IT infrastructure of the council
 - an overly complex system of applications caused by a lack of strategic management of IT
 - the majority of capacity within the department (approx. 80%) absorbed by maintenance and fixing of hardware and software rather than deploying new functionality
 - a lack of engagement with other Business Units leading to frustration with the IT Service and lack of understanding of Business Plan priorities
 - No transparency of the IT Service workload leading to a perception of the service not delivering on important pieces of work
 - an overall lack of a digital culture
- 2.4 These findings are against a backdrop of an increasingly digital world where the majority of our workforce, partners and customers expect to be able to interact online with the council from a variety of devices and locations.
- 2.5 Following on from the review, the business case for the Digital First programme was created to start to address these deficiencies in the council's digital offer. The vision is to "fundamentally change the way that the council 'does digital' with a disruptive approach to introducing improved technology solutions, business processes and governance arrangements across the council."

Digital First

- 2.6 The business case for Digital First sought investment of approximately £2.5M, over a three year period, across a number of workstreams. These workstreams and their vision statements are shown below:

Business Intelligence

Intelligence First: Using information to make better and more informed decisions



Contracts and Commissioning

Value First: Supporting you to achieve the best value from contracts



Data Management

Data First: Providing accurate and open data



Digital Customer Services

Customers First: Easy to use digital access to council services



Digital Skills

Skills First: Supporting you to develop your digital skills



Enabling Technology

Technology First: Providing modern technology to support our digital future



ITIL Processes

Quality First: Delivering high quality digital services for our customers



Networks and Connectivity

Connectivity First: Providing a high speed, secure wireless network to support your work



Paperless Office

Digital First: Creating an efficient and modern working environment



SAP Modernisation

SAP First: Making our SAP systems work for you



- 2.7 The business case and programme structure was approved by the Senior Management Team (SMT) on 6 February 2018 and the Digital Leadership Team (DLT) was formed to oversee progress and provide digital leadership to the council.
- 2.8 The Digital Leadership Team (DLT) consists of representatives from across the council, Berneslai Homes and Norfolk Property Services (NPS) Barnsley. DLT members hold senior leadership roles and have sufficient authority to make strategic decisions, allocate resources and lead culture change within their own business area and wider organisation.
- 2.9 Its overall purpose is to be collectively responsible for effective strategic leadership of the digital agenda, through effective decision making; driving forward digital initiatives and leading & championing culture change both within the organisation and to our customers, businesses and the community.

- 2.10 The basic premise of the Digital First programme is to use digital technology as an enabler for transformation of the organisation. Projects within the programme are subject to individual business cases which must be approved by DLT before their commencement. To date, 16 business cases have been approved.
- 2.11 Of equal importance has been the support provided by a comprehensive communications plan and, more recently, Change Management Officers, all of which seeks to address the culture changes required to ensure the benefits outlined in business cases are realised.
- 2.12 Although the programme has a net financing requirement of c£2.5M, there have been additional funding requirements as a consequence of higher than anticipated costs of projects relating to SAP (see para 3.27) and higher than anticipated costs of Microsoft implementation since the original business case was drafted in 2017/18.

3.0 Current Position

- 3.1 Work is progressing against all of the workstreams identified above, in line with the business cases submitted to the DLT. A summary is provided for each workstream in the following paragraphs:

Business Intelligence – Using Information to Make Better & More Informed Decisions

- 3.2 The Business Intelligence (BI) workstream seeks to assist in the implementation and rollout of business intelligence tools and processes to assist the council in decision making. This is based not only on the vast wealth of data it holds in its own core systems but, perhaps more importantly, data from partners and other sources. Appropriate use of business intelligence allows not only a retrospective view of performance and metrics but also detailed trend analysis and, increasingly, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to allow predictive analytics to be layered to data. The speed of processing and the amount of data that can be processed helps in pinpointing potential areas of concern and potentially changing the way the council deploys its resources.
- 3.3 The project is marked as ‘delivered’ within the programme as interactive data dashboards that show performance data (Power BI) are now deployed for use across the organisation and processes are in place to prioritise information which will be published. The project was delivered within its budget and ahead of plan. As with most Digital First projects the initial work is based on providing enabling tools. Work will be ongoing via the Business Improvement & Intelligence Team to ensure that business intelligence is embedded in the organisation.

Data Management – Providing Accurate & Open Data

- 3.4 The Data Management workstream was one of the earliest parts of the programme to conclude and was a prerequisite to the Business Intelligence workstream. The premise of the programme was to introduce processes to enhance stewardship of our data, elevating it to being treated as a valuable resource. As such, datasets have been cleansed to improve the quality of the data held by the organisation, and made fit for purpose by the Business Intelligence processes outlined above.
- 3.5 Processes have been designed and approved by the Information Governance Board, including introducing the concept of data being made available to the public wherever possible via an open data website. This means that the public can access and use council data. As such, the default for our data is that it should be made freely available, with owners justifying reasons for this not being the case. A small number of our datasets have been made available via a publicly accessible website called Data Mill North, the subscription to which was a key part of the business case. More data will be made available in due course as more datasets are managed through our framework.

Digital Skills – Supporting You to Develop Your Digital Skills

- 3.6 The digital skills workstream was established in recognition of the fact that without addressing gaps in our workforce's digital skills, investments in technology run a much higher risk of not realising their business benefits. The investment centred on extending the temporary contracts of Digital Champions to ensure that capacity is retained in the council, with work ongoing to map the council's extensive range of skills training to requirements.
- 3.7 An important part of the project has been to seek to derive a baseline of digital skills for the council, undertaken as part of the employee Talkabout sessions in May 2018 and direct engagement with services. The UK Basic Digital Skills Framework, introduced by the government to upskill adults, was used as this was deemed an inclusive approach, setting out five categories of 'Essential Digital Skills' for life and work:
- communicating
 - handling information and content
 - transacting
 - problem solving
 - being safe and legal online
- 3.8 A total of 1,204 employees, representing approximately 40% of the workforce, and 29 Elected Members completed the survey which identified three key areas where results indicated skills or confidence were less than the UK average and required targeted support to raise employees' competence and confidence. As a result, the Spotlight on Digital Skills SharePoint site was launched to provide handy hints, tips and 'how to' videos, as well as various digital skills sharing campaigns; digital support clinics and on tour digital support clinics. New courses were also introduced to support the use of Microsoft OneNote - a digital notebook, and the wall mounted Tango touchscreens.

ITIL Processes – Delivering High Quality Digital Services to Customers

- 3.9 Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is a set of detailed practices for IT service management that focus on aligning IT services with the needs of business. The workstream in this instance seeks to implement industry standard practice across the IT service in order to improve productivity and prepare the service for reconfiguration in 2021/22.
- 3.10 The workstream also implemented a new 'Digital Hub' as a new means of logging calls with the IT Service Desk, tracking performance and showing areas that are appropriate for automation and process redesign. As a workstream reporting to DLT the project is marked as closed but now forms an integral part of the 'business as usual' activities in the service.

Paperless Office – Creating an Efficient & Modern Working Environment

- 3.11 The first deliverable of the Paperless Office workstream was the move of the organisation's paper archives from leased and staffed premises at Shortwood. By rationalising the archive and moving the residue to an outsourced provider, savings of £230,000 per annum have been realised. The archives are now kept in suitable conditions and retrieval managed under contract.
- 3.12 The SharePoint Documents and Records Management (DRM) programme of work brings about a significant change in how we store and think about our information. The programme will help people understand the key difference between documents and records and how we should store such types of information to ensure we are compliant under regulations, such as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It will also introduce new structure to how we store information, making it easier to find, report on and ensure everything is in the right place for when it's needed. As part of this work, we will cleanse information, removing that which is no longer required or should no longer be held by us, again making information easier to find and reduce our risk of fines from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the organisation tasked with ensuring that businesses within the UK are compliant with strict data protection principles.

- 3.13 The next phase of the Paperless Office workstream is to implement measures across the council to drastically reduce our printing, stationery and postage costs. Through simple measures such as limiting colour printing, ensuring appropriate print requests are sent to the central print room and reducing the number of printers in operation in our buildings, savings can be realised for zero investment. This is a prime example of the overall programme's desire to challenge cultural norms and move us close to a #Digital First culture.

Contracts & Commissioning – Supporting You to Achieve the Best Value from Contracts

- 3.14 The Contracts and Commissioning workstream was established to ensure a rigorous process around management of IT contracts was established and became 'business as usual'. This initial activity was concluded relatively early in the programme's life and IT contracts are now subject to robust management arrangements.
- 3.15 The aim of the Contracts & Commissioning workstream is to:
- realise efficiencies
 - reduce the number of suppliers
 - comply with both the Council and Government rules and regulations
 - change our relationship with suppliers to being partners rather than simple contractual arrangements
- 3.16 The workstream has been resurrected to report to DLT on progress being made towards the Service's aspiration to rationalise the council's licensing through 2020/21 and 2021/22, which will also contribute to required efficiencies. The programme is funded, in part, by savings realised from the rationalisation of existing IT systems, assisted by other workstreams such as SAP Modernisation and Enabling Technology. However, as the start dates for some major projects have slipped, there is a greater risk that software savings will not be realised in line with the programme end. DLT will be kept apprised of the situation in detail via the Contracts and Commissioning workstream.

Digital Customer Services – Easy to Use Digital Access to Council Services

- 3.17 The Digital Customer Services workstream was established in order to transform the way that our customers interact with us when using our on-line services. By providing easy to use digital access to information and transactions the council can maximise the number of customers who interact on-line, contributing to our corporate 'channel shift' key performance indicator. By allowing easy on-line access we will release capacity in our voice and face-to-face channels to be able to deal with complex cases or more vulnerable customers, or those who simply cannot use on-line services.
- 3.18 As a local authority we provide more than 600 different services for our customers. Some of these can be accessed via digital channels which remove the need for more traditional phone calls, paper forms and officers having to double key details into our business systems. However, for many of our services we don't currently have a digital contact option and in the past the effort of building each new one has been a lengthy process consuming a great deal of our IT software developer resources which are in short supply.
- 3.19 A different approach was needed to remove our continued reliance on limited resources and to enable us to make significant progress in developing our digital customer service offer. Our in-house IT development team have been building our new Digital Customer Services Platform (DCSP), a user-friendly tool giving non-technical officers the ability to independently design, build and deploy new processes on digital channels. It will also introduce new digital access channels including support for voice assistants (Amazon Echo, Google Home etc.), automated chat bots, social media interactions and a customer portal offering status updates and tracking capabilities.

Enabling Technology – Providing Modern Technology to Support Our Digital Future

- 3.20 Enabling Technology will build the foundations for a range of Digital First services that will not only delight our citizens but also empower our teams and make the most effective use of our resources. All staff will get the latest Microsoft productivity software (primarily 'office suite' of Word, Excel, PowerPoint) which includes collaboration tools such as 'Teams' to enable much more efficient working; and servers and core software will be modernised, making it less susceptible to security risks and more economic to run. We will establish our 'cloud' presence which means in the future we will be less susceptible to outages and loss of data, our IT services will be more resilient and employees and Elected Members will be able to securely work in a flexible and mobile manner.

Networks & Connectivity – Providing a High Speed Wireless Network to Support Your Work

- 3.21 Projects within the Networks and Connectivity theme are fundamental to the success of other Digital First themes.
- 3.22 As the Council is regenerating its public service delivery across the borough with the new Glassworks retail area, new markets and Library @ the Lightbox, the opportunity exists to include digital regeneration as part of this development. Our network needs updating to give us the tools to become a more modern and agile organisation. The redesign will:
- improve and increase wireless network access for all employees, making it easier for them to work when and where they need, to support a fully mobilised workforce
 - provide a better response to our customers and reduce timescales in providing networks to support our business needs
 - allow for better control of our network; and support our compliance with security standards that we are assessed and measured against - including things such as card payments
 - support wider partnership working and data sharing across different networks
 - reduce power consumption currently supporting the network
 - improved security and resilience of internet connection
- 3.23 There are two work packages to this theme; Enabling Digital Mobility and Digital Links. The Enabling Digital Mobility work package will deliver new and upgraded Wi-Fi access to replace equipment and processes that are now out of date and no longer compliant with regulatory requirements. Digital Link enhances this concept by delivering it to the council's satellite sites where connectivity has traditionally been poor, putting them on an even footing with the main town centre office buildings and ensuring that internet services provided by Enabling Technology can be accessed effectively.

SAP Modernisation – Making Our SAP Systems Work for You

- 3.24 SAP is a major component within the council's core systems. It is accessed by the entire workforce for purposes ranging from raising orders for goods to booking leave and reporting sickness absence. The system was first implemented in 2005 and has not been subject to a significant 'look and feel' upgrade throughout this time.
- 3.25 The SAP Modernisation workstream is designed to modernise our workforce's experience of interacting with the council through major upgrades to expense claiming and Human Resources (HR) systems. Much of this will be cloud based which gives resilience and reduces the internal workload associated with maintaining systems, as well as removing the need to upgrade hardware.
- 3.26 The workstream has already delivered the 'Concur' expenses claim package which has transformed not only the way that expenses are claimed but has also meant that expenses are repaid within three days of being approved. The solution also gives far greater transparency of claims and has highlighted areas where the council can seek to reduce its costs.

- 3.27 The work package to upgrade HR functionality to SAP Success Factors will start the delivery phases of the project in January 2020. Success Factors will transform employee interactions with a modern 'look and feel' and access from anywhere with a network connection. It will also rationalise several systems and reduce the number of passwords required.
- 3.28 This will leave components of SAP on legacy systems which will be subject to review within the next 12 – 18 months and the overall design of the system finalised. The objective though is to remove as much physical infrastructure as possible, minimising maintenance costs moving forward.

Measuring Success

- 3.29 The Digital First programme has been designed around a significant number of business cases, all of which detailed benefits arising from the work packages described. DLT will move to analysing the benefits realisation through the latter stages of the initial programme and report back on success measured against these described benefits.

Programme Legacy

- 3.30 All workstreams deploy processes or technology which will have a significant 'shelf life' in the council. Perhaps more importantly the desired culture shift can be seen to be taking place with many more employees engaged and interested in all things digital.
- 3.31 In addition, as part of the programme, Change Management was introduced to the council as a discipline for the first time, with the employment of two Change Management Officers. Despite their small number, the impact of the Change Management function has been huge, especially in terms of measuring readiness for change and preparing for change.

4.0 Future Plans & Challenges

- 4.1 The Digital First programme was designed to 'kick start' a digital transformation in the council by raising the profile of digital and deploying enabling technologies to all areas of the business. While its success can be measured to a certain extent during the life of the programme, the real challenge comes in ensuring that the momentum created is maintained.
- 4.2 The existing governance structures will therefore be tasked with continuing to ensure that the benefits identified in agreed business cases have been and continue to be realised.
- 4.3 Although the Digital Leadership Team was initially created to oversee the Digital First Programme it does not need to cease to exist when projects are completed. The emphasis of the Board will change from programme governance to oversight of the organisation's digital journey and playing a role in prioritising IT resources to ensure that the service delivers in line with corporate priorities.
- 4.4 A part of this will be to ensure that tools that are available / have been deployed are utilised effectively and ways of working are changed to suit. As a simple example, the vast majority of the workforce will be mobile enabled. If we fail to ensure our ways of working reflect this we will not realise the benefits outlined in not only the Digital First Programme but also associated programmes of work such as asset rationalisation and smart working.
- 4.5 A priority for the Business Unit will be to effectively implement new ways of working and workforce structures to support the new technology deployed and allow IT to operate as efficiently as possible. To continue our digital journey, capacity must be maintained in order to develop new solutions, which gives the challenge of balancing these requirements.
- 4.6 These internal changes can, however, be facilitated through utilising tools deployed and new technologies such as Robotic Process Automation (RPA) and Chatbots. By using these to perform repetitive tasks the Business Unit can ensure that its human resource is adding value to the organisation.

- 4.7 As digital moves at an increasing speed there will be a necessary building of capacity in the areas of robotics, artificial intelligence, analytics and cloud compute. The reconfigured service must reflect these newly required capabilities. In addition, we should look to the future and become more proactive in the management of our IT assets.
- 4.8 We must also recognise that digital moves at perhaps an even faster pace for our customers. The challenge here is to keep our offer current while ensuring that we do not leave people behind. The Customer Experience Service within the Business Unit will continue to keep this at the forefront when developing solutions and will improve the way it involves end-users in these developments. A task and finish group is established to look at making our customer experience consistent, and is working on a customer charter to outline what a customer should expect when they contact us. Our digital solutions will be designed to appeal to those who are capable of using them. A shift by our customers to more digital transactions means capacity is made available to deal with more complex queries and those who are unable to use our digital offerings.
- 4.9 Future plans can therefore be summarised as:
- Monitor benefits realisation from the Digital First programme
 - Maintain governance over our digital ambitions
 - Reconfigure the IT service to support the council using Digital First tools and meet its required efficiencies
 - Enhance our horizon scanning capabilities
 - Automate internal processes and use our experiences to roll automation out to the wider council
 - Improve and further digitise our customer offer while giving due to consideration to the excluded

5.0 Implications for Local People

- 5.1 A digital council will inevitably be a more efficient council and this helps to ensure that the organisation continues to be a high performer by giving us the ability to re-target resources, or remove repetitive / low value tasks and change the emphasis of our valuable human resources' work.
- 5.2 Our residents will increasingly expect the ability to transact with the council online and the tools developed and currently being deployed will enable this across a far greater range of services.
- 5.3 Digital exclusion is an issue for Barnsley, and the council must seek to minimise it by ensuring the right people are involved in changes and developments. This will also include ensuring service designs take into account excluded residents.
- 5.4 We must be mindful, though, that increasingly external organisations are offering digital only ways of contacting and transacting with them. There is a role for the council to play in supporting individuals along their digital journey. This may be our own workforce or our customers through sessions in libraries or with digital champions.
- 5.5 While a drive to digital has benefits to the organisation we shouldn't forget that there is a cashable benefit to people who make the move 'online', giving even more motive to assist people in their journey.

6.0 Invited Witnesses

- 6.1 The following witnesses have been invited to attend today's meeting to answer questions from the committee:
- Andrew Frosdick, Executive Director – Core Services
 - Dave Robinson, Service Director, Customer Information & Digital Services
 - Kay Deacey-Coulton, Head of IT Service Improvement
 - Cllr Alan Gardiner, Cabinet Spokesperson – Core Services

7.0 Possible Areas for Investigation

7.1 Members may wish to ask questions around the following areas:-

- What are the drivers of success and what success stories have been achieved from the programme so far?
- What risks are associated with the programme and what are the implications for the organisation if the programme is not completed?
- What lessons have been learned to carry forward to future projects?
- How do you ensure that the programme is flexible to accommodate all sections of the organisation and that no-one is left behind, including Elected Members?
- How do you assess whether the projects are achievable, affordable and value for money?
- What are the barriers to the success of the programme?
- What other systems or areas of work have had to be put on hold in order to ensure the success of the Digital First programme?
- How do we compare digitally with other local authorities and are there any areas of good practice that could be replicated?
- What work has been done to ensure we will be safe from cyber security threats in the future, especially when using new technology such as the cloud?
- How have you measured the quality of the projects that have already been delivered?
- What can Members do to support the Digital First Programme?

8.0 Background Papers and Useful Links

8.1 Digital First Communications & Engagement Strategy available upon request

Department for Education - Essential Digital Skills Framework:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/essential-digital-skills-framework/essential-digital-skills-framework#introduction>

9.0 Glossary

Blog	A regularly updated website or webpage, typically one run by an individual or small group, that is written in an informal or conversational style
Business Intelligence	The infrastructure that collects, stores, and analyses the data produced by a company's activities
Change Management	The process, tools and techniques to manage the people-side of change to achieve the required business outcome
Chatbots	A computer program designed to simulate conversation with human users, especially over the Internet but increasingly via voice over telephone
Cloud Computing	Using a network of remote servers hosted on the Internet to store, manage, and process data, rather than a local server or a personal computer
DCSP (Digital Customer Services Platform)	Solution built by our internal development team to enhance our customers' experience when transacting with the council online. The aspiration is that ultimately it will be the 'one stop shop' for our customers dealing with the organisation

Digital Champions	The council team that support the process of digital inclusion. This is generally considered at a very practical level: that of showing a person how to do something online, in a way that helps them increase their skills and confidence
DLT (Digital Leadership Team)	The 'programme board' for Digital First, the purpose of which is to oversee progress towards the programme's objectives as stated through various business cases
DRM (Document & Record Management)	The supervision and administration of digital or paper records, regardless of format
Employee Talkabout Sessions	Regular update sessions available for all BMBC workforce to attend
GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)	A legal framework that sets guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information from individuals who live in the European Union (EU)
ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library)	A set of detailed practices for IT service management (ITSM) that focuses on aligning IT services with the needs of business
Open Data	Data that can be freely used, re-used and redistributed by anyone
Predictive Analytics	The practice of extracting information from existing data sets in order to determine patterns and predict future outcomes and trends
Productivity Software	Software used to produce information, and designed to increase productivity
RPA (Robotic Process Automation)	Refers to software that can be easily programmed to do basic tasks across applications just as human workers do. The software robot can be taught a workflow with multiple steps and applications, such as checking a form for completeness, filing the form in a folder and updating a spreadsheet with the name of the form. RPA software is designed to reduce the burden of repetitive, simple tasks on employees
SAP	The Council's Enterprise Resource Planning System, primarily used for Financial, Works Management and Human Resources purposes
SharePoint	A web-based collaborative platform that integrates with Microsoft Office. Used primarily as a document management and storage system but highly configurable and used by the council for Intranet and collaboration purposes
Smart Working	A business and people focussed approach to flexible working. It is a way of organising our work styles that aims to improve performance and outcomes through a combination of flexibility, autonomy and collaboration, using a range of practices, technologies and working environments

10.0 Officer Contact

Anna Marshall, Overview & Scrutiny Officer
27 January 2020

Item 5

Report of the Executive Director Core Services
and the Executive Director Place
to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)
on 4 February 2020

Barnsley – Digital as a Place

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an overview of Barnsley as a 'digital place'. The report is intended to compliment the 'Digital First' update and describes the local picture in relation to business; infrastructure; partnership working and the digital skills of people. Where possible, the report includes comparisons to national and regional data.
- 1.2 The review by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the various strands of activity which are either in delivery or development is welcomed as this future agenda takes shape.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Digital is driving major changes to the way we live, work and communicate and will lead to much greater digitisation across all our lives moving forward. It is therefore essential that Barnsley becomes a 'Digital Place' which embraces and harnesses the potential that exists through technology to positively transform the lives of everyone within the borough and grow our economy.

3.0 Digital Business Analysis

- 3.1 An analysis of the existing digital business base within Barnsley has been carried out in order to understand the current landscape. The analysis covers jobs, pay and growth and is supported by data provided by the Office for National Statistics.

Number of Jobs

- 3.2 The overall number of employee jobs in the borough has dramatically increased (5.1%) over the past year and currently stands at 82,000. Barnsley has not only recorded the highest level of growth in Yorkshire & the Humber (Y&H) but has also recorded a level of increase which is greater than the increases recorded at both a regional (0.7%) and national (0.7%) level. The main driver for the growth is attributed to the continual (4.0%) growth in private sector employment.
- 3.3 A substantial part of this growth is attributed to the emergence of digital jobs in the borough. It is encouraging to see that for the first time in five years that the digital sector in Barnsley is growing (40%) and now accounts for 2.1% of all employee jobs, (1,750 jobs), which can be attributed to advances in telecommunications; computer programming; consultancy; data processing; hosting and web portals. However, in comparison, we are still behind the regional (3.5%) and national (4.8%) digital employee job levels.

Weekly Pay

- 3.4 The average full-time weekly pay in Barnsley has started to increase (+4.3%) once more following last year's decrease and currently stands at £544.50. Part of this can be attributed to a quarter of all jobs in the economy are now in the professional sectors and is also driven by the continual growth of Advanced Manufacturing (3.1%) and Advanced Logistic (25%) jobs. A key driver behind the growth of jobs within these sectors has been inward investment (bringing new business and investment into Barnsley), and the business support provided to existing companies within the borough. Within the Digital Sector, average weekly salaries fall within a slightly higher range of £530 to £595 per week illustrating that the creation of employment opportunities in this area can have a positive impact on raising pay and earnings within Barnsley.

Number of Businesses

- 3.5 The number of businesses in the borough has also increased (1.7% +105 businesses) over the past year, following a slight contraction last year. Barnsley has recorded the sixth highest increase in Y&H, but also recording a level of increase which is greater than the increase recorded at a regional (1.4%) level, and only just slightly below the national (1.8%) increase recorded.
- 3.6 The main driver for the return to growth is attributed to the strong (10.5%) growth in the number of medium-sized business (upto 250 employees). It is also encouraging to see a return to growth (2.4%) in the number of small business (upto 50 employees), which again is above both regional and national averages. Such increases have been fuelled by significant (3.4%) increase in the number of Ltd companies which remains encouraging.
- 3.7 It is however concerning to see the digital sector contract and record no overall growth for the last two years. Despite this, the digital sector now accounts for 4.2% (270 businesses) within Barnsley. Barnsley is currently behind both regional (5.9%) and national (9.0%) digital business stock levels which indicates that there is untapped growth potential to be realised.

Unlocking Growth in Business Through Digital

- 3.8 The expansion of knowledge-driven growth sectors including 'Digital' is important in helping the borough create more and better jobs for its residents but what can't be ignored is the need for all businesses to adopt new digital processes to help address the productivity gap in the borough.
- 3.9 Past employee growth over recent years has not been matched by higher productivity growth. With a number of significant local employers now working at maximum employment output, there is now an increased demand for companies to adopt SMART technologies, to not only help support future trends in the sector but to also help to ensure they remain competitive. It is important that consideration is given to developing the business support products within Barnsley that enable businesses to visualise the growth potential through digitisation and that support/capacity is provided to enable them to drive change forward within their organisations.
- 3.10 Looking at productivity across sectors in Barnsley, many are less productive than the English average. In particular three sectors stand out for being relatively large employers and significantly contributing to the region's productivity deficit: manufacturing, office administration, and retail and wholesale. Therefore, to ensure these sectors can become more productive and competitive whilst creating more and better jobs in the borough, it is imperative that Barnsley can embed digital skills and provide the dedicated advice and resources which will help businesses address the productivity challenge.

3.11 Key Messages

- Barnsley has seen good growth in digital jobs, yet those levels remain below the regional and national averages.
- The growth in new digital businesses has contracted over the last year and therefore it is critical that the right conditions are established to facilitate future growth.
- This agenda is not just isolated to digital businesses and jobs. There are significant growth and productivity opportunities within the non-tech Barnsley business base which can be unlocked through digitisation of process.

4.0 Digital Media Campus (DMC), County Way, Barnsley

- 4.1 Work on the Digital Media Campus has actively commenced with the acquisition and the refurbishment of the former Core Building to establish DMC 2. The scheme is scheduled to complete in early summer 2020 and the refurbished building will replicate the look and feel of DMC 1 providing over 15,000 sqft of business grow-on space. DMC 2 will also contain a 1,000 sqft maker space or innovation lab which will provide a practical creation space available for businesses and wider users of the facility. DMC 2 will predominately be used to accommodate expanding businesses currently based in DMC 1 and to target bringing new digital businesses into Barnsley.

Businesses relocating from DMC 1 will in turn provide the capacity to bring new-start digital and creative businesses into the campus.

- 4.2 A key challenge around the delivery of DMC 2 will be occupancy across the two assets. As DMC 2 by its nature is grow-on space for existing businesses, then it is likely that current businesses will vacate DMC 1 and relocate into the new facility. This will in turn result in a need to look at backfilling space with DMC 1.
- 4.3 The wider physical development of the Digital Media Campus is also in progress. A new plot-based development plan is being developed for the site. Identifying plots and specific uses within associated locations will not only help to quantify enabling infrastructure works but will also enable individual elements to be brought forward. A procurement exercise is currently in progress to appoint a partner organisation who will assist with the creation of a development plan. It is envisaged that the development plan and infrastructure needs will be in place late 2020.
- 4.4 It has been recognised that a key requirement of the Digital Media Campus is to have a clear brand and supporting communication strategy which articulates the offer effectively to all stakeholders.
- 4.5 Following a procurement exercise and the subsequent appointment of Hemingway Design, initial concepts and values have been agreed for a 'Digital Media Campus' brand and a refresh of the DMC identities to DMC 1 and DMC 2. We will lose the use of the Digital Media Centre name and apply a more flexible and engaging approach to using the letters such as 'Do Make Create'. A further iteration of the brand is due imminently and once this is agreed, final brand guidelines will be provided alongside some initial literature and tools (leaflet, website, templates). Branding work will be concluded in the main by the end of February and in full by the end of March. There is scope to explore using a new Digital Media Campus website as a more interactive tool to support a range of related functions such as digital skills assessments, support pathways and venue bookings.
- 4.6 The work we have undertaken with Hemingway Design to date has helped to direct the Campus evolution and focus on telling our collective digital story. It has enabled us to identify the values that underpin our work and ensure that our communications reflect what's special about Barnsley. Hemingway's have also helped us to understand our brand positioning and equity, and research with customers and stakeholders has provided a better understanding of our market position.
- 4.7 Key Messages
- The DMC 2 project is currently on track with refurbishment works scheduled to be completed May 2020 and the building opening summer 2020.
 - Work is progressing in relation to the physical development of the wider Digital Media Campus site.
 - A key element of success around the Digital Media Campus will be to have a clear brand and communication strategy that is understood and reaches all stakeholders.

5.0 Digital Partnerships

- 5.1 In Barnsley, despite significant impact from a range of business support programmes such as Enterprising Barnsley and the Digital Media Centre, there remains a gap between economic performance and where we need to be to meet the jobs and business deficit.
- 5.2 We have seen job and business growth, however too many of the jobs that are available tend to be low-skilled and low paid and increasing workplace automation is a threat to the workforce. There is also a lack of people with the right experience to fill higher-skilled roles. This is especially the case with digital talent. Without the skills and talent supply it is hard to meet demand from the existing digital business base and harder still to attract new companies to the area, for whom access to talent is a high priority.
- 5.3 With this in mind, in 2015 Barnsley applied to lead an URBACT European-funded exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development to focus on what small and medium-sized cities could do to address digital job and business growth. Barnsley was successful and has

led a TechTown Action Planning Network. This has been done via the Digital Media Centre and Enterprising Barnsley Team for the last 5 years. This network comprises 11 small and medium-sized cities from across Europe, all of whom want to develop action plans to grow digital jobs and businesses. This has been done through a series of transnational learning events where the whole network has explored their local challenges in growing digital jobs and businesses. This programme has been critical and has resulted in helping to provide Barnsley with an international presence and reputation within the digital sector.

- 5.4 The URBACT method also requires a local group of stakeholders to be formed, to co-create an integrated action plan. This is not a top down approach and the Council engaged an external facilitator to ensure we were participants not leaders. We brought together a range of stakeholders from digital and creative businesses (local and beyond); relevant Council departments; education (a local Further Education provider as well as Council leads on school engagement and adult education); community groups; 'citizens'; as well as regional level partners. This local TechTown group has become a source of action and energy for Barnsley's ambitious plans to develop more digital jobs and businesses.
- 5.5 The local TechTown project group is closely aligned with the Digital Media Centre. This gives a focus for the group and they meet at the DMC, get involved in activities and help drive it forward. The group has contributed to the significant success of the DMC which is now oversubscribed. The work of the group has driven a connection between developing 'soft' infrastructure of people and programmes, and the 'hard' infrastructure of acquiring a building to create DMC 2.
- 5.6 Through the local TechTown group, we have been able to test a number of 'pilot' actions to explore new ideas and projects. The group would explore ideas, workshop these ideas into workable pilots or actions, test the idea and report back into the group. This resulted in the development of an Action Plan for Barnsley that will deliver real growth in the digital economy. One of the most significant projects under development is the new 4 hectare Digital Media Campus outlined in section 4 of this report. This is to move the town from 'Coal to Code' supporting bigger and quicker growth in digital jobs and businesses.
- 5.7 This is an organic and ongoing process. Through TechTown, members of the group have started to collaborate and explore new partnerships and opportunities. This group has committed time, energy, passion and creativity to develop and trial ideas focused on skills at all levels.

5.8 Key Messages

- Partnership working through programmes such as TechTown has put Barnsley on the map as a digital town. This activity has directly raised the town's reputation on a regional, national and international stage.
- The local Barnsley TechTown group provides a forum for collaboration and engagement. The concept of the Digital Media Campus was identified and driven forward by this group. Consequently, it is critical that this level of engagement is retained as Digital Media Campus plans become a reality.

6.0 Digital Business Support

- 6.1 Through the local Barnsley TechTown, partners have been inspired to work on projects to help contribute to growing the digital sector in Barnsley, including the development of the Digital Media Campus concept, which will aim to bring businesses, skills and business support together in one geographic location.
- 6.2 The group has been a source of support and advice and have helped formulate a number of different digital support initiatives in the borough:-
- A Masterplan and development of a four hectare Digital Campus, bringing together Higher Education (HE), Further Education, businesses, strategic partners and aspirational housing
 - A TechTown Lab event for 11-14 year olds to explore design thinking), places for digital businesses and people

- Learn the Web: a new start up focused on delivering bootcamp style learning to career changers or anyone who doesn't want to take a traditional education route. This will get talent into jobs through a 14 week course with guaranteed interviews at the end for learners
- Skunkworks: an internal Council team of developers and IT staff who are given the space and permission to 'hack' new solutions to Council challenges such as hot-desk monitoring, visitor monitoring and 'smart' city ideas (such as digital monitoring of parking space use)
- Barnsley.io: this pre-existing group of makers and coders has now located into the DMC and will work closely with Skunkworks to share skills and knowledge in an open environment
- Things Network Barnsley: a low power Wi-Fi network to power Internet of Things (IoT) devices run by the digital community utilising real time data to solve life problems. (Existing IoT device examples are remote home-heating controls such as Hive/Nest thermostats).
- Hack the DMC: an event with the digital community to explore solutions to challenges within the DMC building and which will build out to explore smart solutions at a town level
- Connected Lab: a space currently within the DMC that has been given over to the digital community inside and outside of the Council to develop new hardware ideas and solutions and which will grow to be a bigger part of DMC2 and the digital campus

6.3 The local Barnsley TechTown initiative has also provided a digital community foundation for the success of IoT Tribe accelerator, a project scaling up Internet of Things start ups. The TechTown group supported the programme, engaging with the start-ups, attending events and ensuring that it was embedded in a local context and it was only possible to deliver IoT Tribe because of the work and connections of the TechTown team locally and across the international network. Over the last two years, this initiative has seen over 20 businesses from around the world relocating into Barnsley for an intensive period of support to develop their products for market. This activity has again helped to consolidate the reputation of Barnsley as a digital friendly town on the international stage.

6.4 The 'Connected' series was developed in collaboration with partners to help facilitate dialogue with local businesses in the Healthcare or manufacturing sectors to talk about their challenges and opportunities in embracing digitisation of process in those two sectors. The programme also offered the chance for digital technology companies to make new contacts and understand the growing need for their skills.

6.5 More recently, the existing Enterprising Barnsley structure has been realigned to create a dedicated Key Account Manager position aimed at supporting digital and creative businesses with their growth agenda. This has been a positive move as this has created a single point of contact for those businesses with an individual who is able to signpost organisations to both traditional sector specific support as part of their growth journey.

6.6 A key challenge that does exist for digital and creative business is the ability to access finance to help them achieve their growth aspirations. Traditional methods of accessing financial support are often not viable due to the innovative nature of the sector against a perceived level of risk from lenders. This is an area where intervention is going to be required both at a local and regional level.

6.7 Key Messages

- The digital sector by its very nature is fluid and consequently it is critical that Barnsley Digital Media Campus provides a supportive framework that cultivates and supports the growth of initiatives such as Learn the Web, Skunkworks etc.
- The recent realignment of the Enterprising Barnsley account manager structure to create a dedicated Digital Business lead is having a positive impact for business.
- It is critical that initiatives such as IoT Tribe North are supported moving forward in terms of bringing businesses into Barnsley.
- Linked to the Digital Business analysis section, it is likely that further programmes of activity such as 'Connected' may need to be delivered to help to unlock indigenous business growth and productivity through digital.

7.0 Digital Infrastructure

- 7.1 The current Superfast South Yorkshire Broadband (SFSY) Partnership programme is hosted by Barnsley MBC with delivery taking place across South Yorkshire. The programme has made substantial progress in terms of deploying current generation broadband with coverage across the borough at 97% and customer take-up of services at 53%. This provides customers with connection speeds of up to 80Mbps. Similarly, the borough is well served in terms of 4G connectivity with coverage up to 92%.
- 7.2 However, this situation is not as positive when looking at next generation connectivity of full fibre and 5G deployment. Full fibre coverage within Barnsley is currently estimated at just 4% against a national average of 10% with no planned rollout identified in terms of 5G technology. Future demand for full fibre technology which provides speeds of up to 1Gbps (1000Mbps) is predicted to grow substantially with Ofcom estimating that 40% of households will require connections by 2025. Similarly, demand for the businesses is expected to increase at a similar rate and a robust digital infrastructure is deemed to be essential in terms of unlocking future growth.
- 7.3 Unlike the deployment of SFSY which improves the coverage of superfast (30Mbps) broadband, currently there is no government subsidy to deploy gigabit capability and consequently areas identified for deployment are often based on a commercial decision by sector leads. Currently Barnsley appears to be a low priority area for deployment and therefore it is critical that the Council works to create the conditions to drive forward the commercial rollout of full fibre and 5G technologies.
- 7.4 The Council is currently working with a nationally recognised commercial provider on the development of a partnership agreement which will facilitate full fibre deployment at a premise level to a significant proportion of properties within the borough. It is hoped that progressing this opportunity will significantly raise the profile/position of Barnsley with other commercial providers and their associated deployment plans. The deployment of full fibre technology will also provide the infrastructure required to deploy a 5G within the borough in the future.
- 7.5 Nationally, Building Digital UK (BDUK), part of the government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), is delivering superfast broadband and local full fibre networks. The government's plan to achieve a transformation of broadband in the UK includes:-
- supporting investment to provide superfast broadband coverage to as many premises as possible beyond the 95% level achieved in December 2017
 - introducing a Broadband Universal Service Obligation so that from March 2020 everyone across the UK will have a clear, enforceable right to request high speed broadband
 - providing access to basic broadband (2Mbps) for all for those who do not currently have coverage otherwise
 - supporting the stimulation of private investment in full fibre connections through voucher schemes that are currently funded through to March 2021
 - clearing airwaves in the 700MHz spectrum band, currently used for Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and PMSE (Programme Makers and Special Events) services. Once cleared the airwaves will be available for future mobile broadband services (5G)
- 7.6 SFSY heavily promote the two current Government Voucher Schemes. The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS) offers up to £2,500 to help businesses gain access to a 1Gbps capable Internet Service Provider (ISP) connection (such as BT/Vodafone). 16 vouchers have been claimed in Barnsley. By comparison the new Rural Gigabit Connectivity vouchers offer up to £3,500 for SMEs and up to £1,500 for residents. The greater size of the vouchers reflects the higher cost of deployment in rural areas.
- 7.7 Building Digital UK are imminently due to propose a build scenario for the future £5bn state-aid-funded project to roll-out gigabit-capable full fibre (FTTP) broadband with an "outside in" approach, focusing on the final 20% of hardest to reach premises (mostly rural) first, whilst the commercial market is deploying to areas with large populations.

7.8 Key Messages

- The SFSY programme has been highly successful in terms of delivering current generation connectivity across the borough and has helped to drive up take-up of broadband services.
- Currently there is no clear commercial appetite to deliver next generation fibre and 5G infrastructure within Barnsley and consequently it is critical that the Council works to create the conditions that will facilitate delivery in the future and prevent the borough from being left behind.

8.0 Digital Skills

- 8.1 Our More and Better Jobs Skills and Employment Strategy continues the focus on the creative and digital sector as one of the areas with a focus point for economic and employment growth. Our approach recognises digital skills as a gateway to the world of work and a way for organisations to increase productivity by the smart application of new skills, capabilities and technology. Increasingly individuals who lack a basic level of digital skill are unable to find employment, even at entry level. As the pace of technical change and automation increases, many people working within low skilled environments will be vulnerable to job losses and those already disconnected to employment and without digital skills will find it increasingly challenging to find and secure employment.
- 8.2 We recognise many of our residents are digitally excluded or have a very low level of digital skills. Support is available through the Council's Adult Skills and Community Learning Service which delivers elements of the digital skills pipeline at the entry to level 2 qualifications through local engagement events, Digital Champions and the Adult Education Budget. We are an active partner in the delivery of the voluntary Sheffield City Region skills support offer (including Pathways, Skills Support for Employment, Skills Support for the Workforce and the Work and Health Programme), in partnership with the European Commission, within which digital skills development up to a Level 4 qualification is embedded.
- 8.3 Digital skills are an essential skill in our lives, but for many the digital world is intimidating. While support is available through a wide number of avenues, many residents are not taking it up; however we are trying new approaches to break down these obstacles. TechSetGo launched this year, which is funded in partnership with DCMS and is delivered Sheffield City Region-wide. TechSetGo targets digitally excluded communities offering a number of interesting opportunities for residents of all ages to engage, through its fun "Super Saturdays" programme. The team offer opportunities for children and young people to learn to programme robots and at the same time engage their parents/carers by providing information, support, advice and guidance on how they can further their own knowledge and skills. This programme is running a targeted event for residents with Autism in January at our Digital Media Centre.
- 8.4 In addition, there are a number of schemes specifically targeting digitally excluded communities commissioned through our Area Council teams, our 3rd Sector and also through JobCentre Plus. This are delivered in a variety of community settings, complementing and feeding into the offer found in our local Colleges (Northern College and Barnsley Colleges). Digital skills development is a core offer through the Employment Support Schemes as it is core to the ability to apply for many jobs, access benefits and support residents into further training. Furthermore, as we move towards Online Banking provision, many of our banks offer digital skills support. Work over the coming year will focus on increasing awareness of the many avenues and benefits of support.
- 8.5 Work has commenced to better understand the existing take up of the digital skills provision and apprenticeship offer within Barnsley. This will be expanded to understand any specialist local training and development, building a strong understanding of the opportunities for our residents, and therefore providing a stronger understanding of the gaps and opportunities to better align to business needs. Working with the South Yorkshire Authorities we are now starting to develop an innovative Digital Skills for the Workforce Programme in response to a live European Funding opportunity and we are currently pulling partners together to design an innovative response to the opportunity which meets employer and community needs.

8.6 Within our Barnsley TechTown Programme, a Digital Skills Task and Finish Group is building on this intelligence and creating a clear “Pathway” to support progression routes into the many employment opportunities for individuals with digital skills. This is not only within the digital sector, but how those skills can be applied to increase productivity across other sectors. We will be working with other providers and stakeholders to develop opportunities at every level to enable those who want to, to engage with, achieve and progress their digital skills. This group is also promoting Digital Skills to businesses through existing engagement activities.

8.7 Key Messages

- A digital skills pathway is currently being developed by the Council and educational partners including Barnsley College and Sheffield Hallam University. The skills pathway must make provision for individuals to enter at the level that is appropriate to their development needs and must also be aligned to the workforce needs of digital businesses.
- Work is needed to encourage more of our residents to develop digital skills and increase take-up of support available. Work will be done over this year to promote opportunities to grow skills of all levels as part of our Digital Pathway focus.

9.0 Sheffield City Region Approach

9.1 Barnsley Council has recently adopted the South Yorkshire Digital Infrastructure strategy which contains the aspiration for Sheffield City Region to have a ‘world class’ digital infrastructure. The strategy contains the following strands of activity:-

- Access for All
- Economic Growth
- Innovation
- Exploit Public Assets
- Enables Wider Benefits

9.2 Within the context of the emerging Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), there is now a recognition of the importance of digital infrastructure in respect of facilitating future economic growth. Sheffield City Region is currently in the process of commissioning a piece of work which seeks to strengthen the Digital Infrastructure Strategy through the provision of a supporting evidence base. This supporting evidence base will in turn help to position the City Region to secure any future potential national funding streams that become available.

9.3 Key Messages

- It is critical that Barnsley continues to shape the SEP and champion the digital agenda within the wider city region specifically around potential funding opportunities and the development of sector specific business support products.

10.0 **Future Plans & Challenges**

10.1 A summary of key priorities for Barnsley as a Digital Place are as follows:-

Delivery Strand	Action
Digital Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued commitment to Internet of Things (IoT) Tribe North • Explore access to finance options at a regional and local level to provide the capital required to enable digital businesses to grow
Digital Media Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of DMC 2 by summer 2020 • Establish a wider DMC physical development plan in 2020

Digital Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the commercial conditions that facilitate the delivery of full fibre and 5G connectivity within Barnsley
Digital Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Barnsley College and Sheffield Hallam University to deliver a digital skills pathway accessible to our residents and aligned to the needs of local business
Sheffield City Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence regional strategy and in particular the emerging Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan to prioritise digital business as a growth sector

11.0 Invited Witnesses

11.1 The following witnesses have been invited to attend today's meeting to answer questions from the committee:-

- David Shepherd, Service Director, Economic Regeneration, Place Directorate
- Paul Clifford, Head of Service, Economic Development, Place Directorate
- Tracey Johnson, Business Incubation Strategy Centre Manager, Place Directorate
- Tom Smith, Head of Employment & Skills, Place Directorate
- Dave Robinson, Service Director, Customer Information & Digital Services
- Cllr Tim Cheetham, Cabinet Spokesperson – Regeneration & Culture

12.0 Possible Areas for Investigation

12.1 Members may wish to ask questions around the following areas:-

- What has been achieved in the last 12 months that you are most proud of?
- What has been learnt as a result of working with small and medium-sized cities from across Europe and how has this influenced our work in Barnsley?
- What are the greatest risks and opportunities in relation to the development of the Digital Media Campus?
- What work is being done with local and regional education institutions to ensure that young people in Barnsley are developing the knowledge, skills and experience to gain the digital jobs of the future?
- What (if any) quick wins would have the greatest impact on supporting Barnsley being digital as a place for a relatively small investment?
- What interventions have been considered to provide financial assistance to digital and creative businesses to help them achieve their growth aspirations?
- What key barriers have been identified which prevent Barnsley residents from learning and improving digital skills and what is being done to remove them?
- Can you give some examples of the most exciting local developments in relation to the Internet of Things (IoT)?
- What are the expected benefits from Barnsley being involved in the development of the Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan?
- What can Members do to support the development of Barnsley being digital as a place?

13.0 Background Papers & Useful Links

- Building Digital UK Government Website:-
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-digital-uk>
- Superfast South Yorkshire Website:-
<http://www.superfastsouthyorkshire.co.uk/>
- BMBC Employment & Skills Strategy:-
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/3063/employment-and-skills-strategy.pdf>

14.0 Glossary

Advanced Logistics	Advanced Logistics management is a supply chain management component that is used to meet customer demands through the planning, control and implementation of the effective movement and storage of related information, goods and services from origin to destination
Advanced Manufacturing	Business focused on the delivery of innovative and sector leading manufacturing processes
DCMS	Government Department for Culture, Media & Sport
Digital Media Campus (DMC)	Digital Media Campus (County Way, Barnsley)
Enterprising Barnsley	The Barnsley Council business support function
Gross Value Added (GVA)	Gross Value Added
Internet of Things (IoT)	Internet of Things is the use of technology to connect every day devices to the internet and enable remote control of them. This could be used for example to monitor river water levels via sensors
Limited Company	A limited company is a type of business structure that has been incorporated at Companies House as a legal 'person'. It is completely separate from its owners; it can enter into contracts in its own name and is responsible for its own actions, finances and liabilities
Knowledge-driven sector	A knowledge-based part of the economy, which typically includes services such as information technology, information-generation and -sharing, social media, and research & development
The Resolution Foundation	An independent think-tank focused on improving living standards for those on low to middle incomes
SCR	Sheffield City Region
SEP	Strategic Economic Plan
Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs)	Small to medium-sized enterprises, is the collective name for companies with no more than 250 employees. A micro business is defined as having less than 10 employees; a small business is less than 50 employees; and a medium-sized business is less than 250 employees
TechTown	TechTown is an URBACT III Action Planning Network of 11 cities which aims to explore how small and medium-sized cities can maximise the job creation potential of the digital economy
URBACT	URBACT is a European Territorial Cooperation programme (ETC) aiming to foster sustainable integrated urban development in cities across Europe. It is an instrument of the Cohesion Policy, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by Member and Partner States. URBACT is not an investment programme

15.0 Officer Contact

Anna Marshall, Overview & Scrutiny Officer
27 January 2020