Manchester City Council
Report for Information

Report to: Executive – 14th March 2012

Subject: Digital Manchester

Report of: Chief Executive

Summary

This report proposes a strategic direction for a Digital Manchester.

Recommendations

1.   That the proposals for a new Digital Manchester strategy set out in this report be approved and a more detailed action plan bought back for Executive approval.

2.   That the Chief Executive be requested to provide a further report to a future meeting of the Executive with a detailed action plan, governance structure and delivery model to progress implementation.

Wards Affected: All

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	Supporting business and resident access to fast/er broadband and Wi-Fi and use of digital to enable engagement, reform and growth. Stimulating growth of the digital and creative media sector.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	Supporting skills and education in digital areas from schools and universities in computer science to capitalise on the growing job opportunities and skill gaps in this area to educating residents and SME's on the value and power of digital connectivity to help individuals and business grow and reach their full potential.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	Placed based engagement and use of digital to reform services and enable residents and communities to communicate and connect with each other and public services. A more social City.

Neighbourhoods of Choice	Ensure all neighbourhoods have equal access to broadband and Wi-Fi, all citizens and businesses can utilise the opportunities of connectivity/ better connectivity and create a truly digital place.

Financial Consequences

Point 5 and 6 of the strategy will be prioritised from the Digital Communications and Customer Services CRM budget but more detailed work is required to understand what further resources are required.

The Urban Broadband Bid, if successful will provide up to £12m to support infrastructure in the City and match funding from ERDF to support access and education. This resource will support 1-3 of the ten point plan.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Implementing the Manchester Digital Strategy, Executive Report 12 March 2008
- Link to NY Roadmap - http://www.nyc.gov/html/mome/digital/html/roadmap/roadmap.shtml
- Urban Broadband Bid, February 2012
- SOCITM – Better connected 2012 – summary of Local Authority websites - http://www.socitm.net/news/article/116/better_connected_2012-out_now

1.0   Introduction

1.1   The purpose of this paper is to brief the Executive on a Digital Strategy for Manchester and seek approval to progress the strategic direction.

1.2   The aim is to position Manchester as a digital City over the next three to five years and maintain and continue to grow the competitive advantage this will bring residents and businesses to promote economic growth.

1.3   Manchester's ambition is to become one of the world's most digital cities by 2020. Ultrafast broadband connectivity is an essential part of the inward investment strategy for attracting new businesses and jobs to the City and supporting major regeneration projects such as the Manchester Airport City Enterprise Zone. The City's Digital Strategy will need to ensure that Manchester residents have the skills needed to access employment in and contribute to the growth of the digital sector. It will need to increase the number of Manchester residents online and deliver information and public services in new and more effective ways.

2.0   Background

2.1   Manchester has a long tradition of being a prime mover in the digital world. The world's first real computer "the baby" was invented in Manchester in 1948. More recent pioneering initiatives include: the launch of the Manchester Host in 1991, the Electronic Village Halls in 1992 and the Manchester Community Information Network (MCIN, now Peoples Voice Media) in 1994 through to the Telecities network in 1993 and the Living Labs network in 2006. Manchester is a founder member of the European Smart Cities network. The network has fed into the new Digital Agenda for Europe which focuses on "smart, inclusive and sustainable growth".

2.2   The Manchester Digital Strategy adopted in 2008 centred on four key themes:
*   sustaining economic growth, especially through the digital/creative sector, new micro-businesses, digital social enterprises and creating e-traders;
*   promoting digital inclusion, ensuring that all residents can access the on-line services, technologies and applications that they need;
*   continuing to transform public services through innovative uses of digital technologies;
*   promoting inclusive sustainability where digital technologies are used more innovatively to support sustainable energy communities, intelligent buildings, teleworking, improved mobility, telecare and a greater quality of life generally.

2.3   There has been progress against all four key themes. Manchester has the largest and most dynamic cluster of creative and digital businesses outside of London, with significant growth across Greater Manchester with the relocation of the BBC and expansion of Media City in Salford Quays. The Corridor Digitisation Project is a test bed for providing very high speed "Next Generation Access" (NGA) digital infrastructure fibre, wireless and networks,

More Manchester residents are connected to and using the internet with for example Libraries offering free open access to the internet. The private sector is making significant investment in ultrafast digital infrastructure.

2.4   However, if the City is to develop and retain competitive digital advantage, there is a need to develop a more comprehensive digital strategy and brand for the City building on global exemplars. The City of New York, through its Digital Roadmap has outlined a Digital City Index (DCI) that Manchester can use to evaluate the digital progress against metropolitan areas.

2.5   The initial core criteria within the DCI are as follows:
        Access: Broadband Internet Adoption;
        Open Government: Application Programme Interface (API*) – enabled public data;
        Engagement: Individuals using Digital Services; and
        Industry: A Business Innovation Index

        *An API is an "Application Programming Interface" a language and message format used by an application to communicate with another application or a computer's operating system. In simple terms APIs are set of protocols which allow computer programs to speak to each other.

2.6   Manchester will use this index to measure its progress and success at achieving its aim to be a more digital City.

2.7   Benchmarking Manchester's current position highlights the City is not starting at the bottom of any "Digital City League" and we have a solid platform to build on across these four indices however there are areas we can make rapid progress to help us improve the City's DCI ratings.

2.8   Manchester is proposing a ten point plan to help drive the Council's priorities and also achieve positive ratings against the DCI. The action plan covers access and connectivity, engagement, industry and growth, collective leadership and governance. At the heart of the plan is a single focus for a place-based digital strategy, this will move the City forward in a rapid manner that should command the respect of international, national and local stakeholders. The key objectives of the plan are:-

Access and Connectivity
1. CONNECTED CITIZENS – 100% Broadband Coverage: • Wi-Fi in all public spaces and high speed wireless across Manchester • Superfast and where available Ultrafast Broadband
2. CONNECTED BUSINESSES - All businesses have access to fast broadband services and are supported with advice to best exploit it and/or financial assistance in accessing even better/faster services.
3. CONNECTED MANCHESTER – public and private sector better connected. Lead and deliver a more coordinated partnership to drive improvements and market the city as a successful digital place to attract new business.

Engagement
4. DIGITAL SKILLS – from officers and members; primary school children; Academies and Universities; to adult education we need excellence at all ages to provide the best digital education and further education to support people today to get the skills needed for future jobs. Digital Championing of knowledge transfer about the benefits of 'Going Digital'. This includes use of digital technology but more importantly design, research and development.
5. SOCIAL CITY – an open and transparent, digital embracing City Council and Marketing Board. Accelerate social media and engagement, advance our website and web advertising focus, enrich content, maximise offline digital advertising, fully utilise e-opportunities (e.g. e-zines/e-bulletins), Embrace growth in mobile by increasing mobile content, mobile advertising and mobile apps. The development of a Manchester super app (Mapp) is one opportunity, the delivery of many consolidated into a New York-style hub is another. Work with the private sector to support fast progress and crowd sourcing with a hackathon, fully exploit GIS mapping utilisation etc.
6. DIGITAL REFORM – encourage and enable more people to become self-service customers, use CRM integration to deliver reform and efficiencies. By providing continued focus on key digital platform excellence, openness, tools, fast accessible connectivity and skills to citizens and business we will allow people to become self-sufficient and help them achieve their full potential.
Industry
7. ECONOMIC GROWTH -stimulate and grow the creative and digital sector. As one of our three most important areas of job creation we have to support, encourage and instigate growth from skill development from an early age, inward investment, procurement to maximising global opportunities of our home-grown talent.
Place
8. DIGITAL PLACE – the City's digital landscape supports the vision of Digital Manchester – from advertising options to wayfinding, real time tram information to digital tourism – Microsoft surface maps, interactive tours etc. Digital Master planning should be considered at the same time as physical infrastructure and should fundamentally be led by the needs of the digital resident. Providing a joined up voice to drive coordinated development is vital.
Leadership
9. DIGITAL INVESTMENT / RESOURCES – exploit new investment opportunities, public and private, that can help accelerate the delivery of our ambitions.
10. DIGITAL LEADERSHIP – digital at the heart of Manchester strategies to promote a truly digital city in all we do from transport to health, education to public services. Consolidate and coordinate approaches to development based on need – not multiple people trying to achieve the same end via different methods. Think digital first and lead the way**.

2.9 The Urban Broadband Bid for Manchester Digital City who as submitted on 10 February asking for £12m from the Government connected cities initiative. If

successful, this will provide all residents and businesses with access to the internet at high speeds both in their premises and wirelessly across the City, thus delivering key elements of the Access and Connectivity points 1-3 above. An action plan to address the other objectives of the action plan will be completed to be bought back to the Executive.

2.10   In addition to the bid, digital leadership for the City is critical to ensure a coordinated and collaborative public and private body of senior players within the "Digital" sector who are based in the City to lead, guide, direct and deliver this strategy for Manchester with the explicit objective of ensuring that the City would score highly on the "Digital City Index" or any significant equivalent measure.

3.0   Contributing to the Community Strategy

(a) Performance of the economy of the region and sub region

3.1   Manchester has a very strong and diverse digital sector at the core of the conurbation making a significant and growing contribution to the City Region's GVA. However, there are issues with the supply of skilled labour, appropriate pathways for the development of digital skills and access to finance to better support the potential and success of this sector.

3.2   5% of GM employment is categorised as creative and digital, employing over seventy-three thousand (2010) generating £2.7bn of GVA (6% of total GM) with the sector being more productive than the average. Forecast of around 40k new job opportunities are possible within this sector between 2010 and 2015 and an average growth of 2.8% per annum in GVA over the next decade. This digital strategy has to support or enhance this growth expectation.

3.3   Many of the City's digital businesses are Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) or micro businesses. Although they have leading edge connectivity needs, only 10% of SME's currently use high speed services mainly due to the upfront connection costs. In some parts of the City, there is limited access to or use of landlines and many residents even if they have access to broadband or wireless are not online e.g. 45% of those living in social housing are not utilising broadband provision. This digital strategy needs to not only improve access for all residents and businesses it needs to encourage adoption of high speed services to enable growth.

(b) Reaching full potential in education and employment

3.4   Technology can play a vital role in education and this strategy outlines an ambition to improve ICT skills in primary, secondary and further education so the vacancies in the digital sector can be filled by Manchester residents and Manchester residents can contribute to the innovation and growth of the digital sector in the City.

3.5   Other countries like Israel, Korea, Singapore and Finland teach coding as a

compulsory subject. With BT and Microsoft as sponsors of two of the City's Academies and one of the best Universities in the country this strategy seeks to use this as a platform to better educate the next generation. There is a need to ensure that the City's digital businesses are able to tap into the "talent" through internships, graduate recruitment, apprenticeships and links with schools. All of the City's residents will need to be equipped with the skills needed to access and make use of online services. This is particularly important for the large numbers of social housing tenants not currently online as that is where there are the greatest concentrations of residents who are not working.

3.6   Residents' lack of skills in basic ICT is inhibiting their job chances and businesses aren't full by utilising digital technology to grow and hence aren't reaching their potential to create more employment. This strategy aims to remove these barriers.

(c) Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect

3.7   The Council needs to ensure its data is open for all to utilise and transparent and easy to navigate so business and residents can get the maximum use from information they require. The Council needs to utilise digital platforms to become more 'social' and engage with residents helping communities and digital audiences to transact online, get to know their neighbourhood and what's on, understand the public services on their doorstep and easy access to information that can help them to help themselves from jobs, skills and education to benefit support and paying their bills.

3.8   The focus at the Council has been on the main engine of the website, aligning digital customer journeys and enhancing placed-based pages such as 'My Area', More personalisation is planned by April with 'My Account" allowing digital audiences to transact without having to re-key their details and enabling tracking of their requests so they can see the progress and monitor service delivery. The main social channels such as Twitter, Facebook, Vimeo and Flickr have grown considerably over the past year and despite having more twitter followers than New York the development of social media and apps are currently under utilised and the Council seeks to engage private and personal developers in a crowdsourcing event or 'Hackathon' in the summer to stimulate the use of the City's available data and grow the economy.

3.9   Digital can play a significant role in shaping services and reforming the way we deliver and interact with residents and businesses. This strategy will fully explore and exploit how digital enhancement can drive change and efficiency as well as making it easier to support the requirements of complex families.

(d) Neighbourhoods of Choice

3.10   Currently only 74% of residents have access to broadband and this strategy needs to address wider availability of high speed broadband and wireless opportunities in the home, in work places and in public spaces. Areas in East Manchester and Wythenshawe are currently at a disadvantaged as a result of

poor connectivity as shown in the map of 'white' areas that have no broadband provision. (Appendix 1)

3.11   Master planning in regenerating Manchester needs to include the technological infrastructure to ensure digital is supported within the fabric of the City and spaces. A digitalised public realm from way finding, advertising, bus stops, real time tram information, highways signage, interactive tours to support digital tourism are all part of the digital landscape referred to by point 8 of the strategy.

4.0   Next Steps

4.1   Engage partners to produce a delivery plan that will drive the outcomes and gain 'sign up' of an influential board to monitor delivery.

4.2   Await the outcome of the Urban Broadband Bid and review resourcing requirements and alignment of funds to help support delivery.

4.3   Provide Executive with a detailed delivery update.

5.0   Conclusion

5.1   Manchester has much strength in digital and these will be built on to achieve at pace the ambition outlined in this strategy. For example, the Council's website over the last year has gone from a three star to a four star website (the highest rating) by the national governing body (SOCITM) making it one of the top twenty developed local authority sites in the UK and Manchester is the fourth best rated Council for use of twitter.

5.2   The Council is spearheading innovation with the success of The Sharp Project being just one example acting as an incubator of technology and Manchester has the largest cluster of digital and creative businesses outside of London all supporting jobs and growth.

5.3   However, the need for better connectivity via infrastructure, improved skills and the use of digital in neighbourhoods to drive reform are imperative to help enable future regeneration of the City and the Council's priority of continued growth.

5.4   Manchester is ambitious in terms of developing a Digital place and becoming one of the world's foremost digital cities by 2020. This is important to deliver its priorities on economic growth and ensuring that Manchester residents benefit from the employment created. It is also essential that the City delivers public services and engages residents and businesses in more effective and relevant ways. The ten-point plan set out in this report builds on successes, provides the framework for taking Manchester's digital strategy and brand to a globally competitive position and sustains and accelerates economic growth and job creation.

Appendix 1 – map of broadband access in the City.