

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	6 February 2024
Title:	Digital Hampshire: Future Strategy
Report From:	Director of Hampshire 2050

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1. The decision:

- 1.1. That Cabinet confirms the County Council's future role and responsibility for Digital, including a creating a greater operational distance between the systems leadership role and the operational ownership and responsibility for infrastructure delivery. The future strategic responsibility is defined as:

Digital Inclusion: A duty to ensure that our residents have the skills, knowledge and confidence to access our services safely online, through providing an improved 'digital front door' and providing an appropriate 'physical front door' to enable people to engage with our digital organisation.

Digital Infrastructure: To enable suppliers to invest in Hampshire's digital infrastructure by facilitating relationships, providing reasonable access to the information we hold and promoting the communications of our partners.

Systems Leadership: To use our influence to convene (and, where appropriate, lead) partnerships to enable collective action on shared strategic priorities.

- 1.2. That Cabinet endorses the County Council's support for the development of a Digital Place Strategy for Hampshire.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. On 12 December 2023 a paper was brought to Cabinet considering Hampshire's previous role in delivering the Superfast Broadband and marking the closure of this phase of activity. The report considered by the Executive Member as part of this decision moves the discussion onwards and looks to the future – noting that what is needed going forward will be different to what was required in the past.

2.2. The paper describes the importance of digital connectivity and inclusion in the context of the future prosperity of Hampshire and the wellbeing of its residents. It considers three key themes: Inclusion, Infrastructure and Systems Leadership; and seeks to articulate Hampshire County Council's role in respect of each.

2.3. The report notes the direct responsibilities of Hampshire County Council, but also recognises that the County Council is just one contributor in a much broader collective of public, charitable and private sector organisations. It therefore resets the County Council's position and clarifies the difference between the direct operational responsibilities of the County Council and our role in terms of systems leadership and partnership working.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

3.1. The County Council could choose not to engage with Digital Place strategy. This would not be in the best interests of Hampshire or its residents.

3.2. Alternatively, the County Council could choose to increase its involvement. This is not in accordance with the agreed financial principles of the County Council (see paragraph 11 of the report).

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:

Date:

6 February 2024

**Chairman of Cabinet
Councillor Rob Humby**