Report Title	IT Strategy and Investment progress
Purpose of Report	To update the committee on progress made in terms of the development of a Digital Vision, Digital Strategy & IT Strategy and provide an update on investment in our IT infrastructure, replacing what was the capital projects monitoring report
Decision(s)	**The Committee RESOLVES that:** (a) It notes the report
Legal Implications	This report is intended for noting only and does not in itself give rise to any legal implications. It is presumed that the legal implications of the projects referred to herein will be considered in due course. Mike Wallbank Solicitor Mike.Wallbank@stroud.gov.uk
Financial implications and risk assessment	This report sets out progress made in the development of an IT Strategy and the investment to date in IT infrastructure. The Capital Programme includes a £1.8m capital scheme for IT, and this report updates members on the spend to date. It also indicates that the profiling of the capital scheme will be amended as investment priorities become clearer. The budget setting process in future years will need to assess the ongoing revenue and capital expenditure required on an on-going basis as a result of the £1.8m investment. David Stanley – Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754100 Email: david.stanley@stroud.gov.uk
Consultation and Feedback	An IT workshop took place on 9th August involving members and officers and was which was facilitated by SOCITM. A T&F group has also been set up with whom further discussion of options on the way forward will be undertaken, leading to the completion of a Digital Vision, Digital Strategy & IT Strategy which will be brought to this committee to consider

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Background Papers	SOCITM review of IT, January 2018, presented previously at S&R committee Notes from the IT digital strategy workshop, 9th August, electronic copy sent to committee member's SDC email inbox

BACKGROUND

1.1 A review of our IT by SOCITM in January 2018, led to a number of recommendations supporting improvements in the way we use IT in the future to deliver services to citizens and how we can improve levels of overall Council efficiency, by the application of technology.

1.2 One of these recommendations was the need to ensure that our IT strategy both links with and supports service and corporate objectives and that we have a very clear vision of how we will use technology and apply this in the shaping of service delivery.

1.3 At the S&R committee meeting on 12 July 2018, it was agreed that a T&F group would be set up to look at the issues and options presented to us in the use of IT and to identify a way forward, which will involve the development, with our advisers, SOCITM, of a draft digital vision, digital strategy and an IT strategy.

2.   IT workshop outcomes

2.1 In support of the work to be undertaken by the T&F group, this workshop was convened to look at the issues and options the Council has in regard to an approach to the digital provision of services. From this we will need to agree a view on how we will offer services digitally, which in turn will shape our IT strategy

2.2 As a starting point, the group discussed what our approach as a Council to a digital strategy might consider and looked at an overview of how: we might design services for a digital customer, what a digital Council might look like and what Stroud as a digital place might offer to visitors, businesses and residents?

2.3 An electronic copy of the notes of this meeting will be sent to members of S&R, through your SDC email account

2.4 A summary of some of the key points covered were:

- The need to decide on direction we wish to take in terms of on-line service provision, i.e. self service, automated services, single customer account based service, mobile 'app' services, social media, etc., to identify where efficiencies can be made and how we can improve convenience to customers in terms of easy and any-time access to services, leading to decisions on how far this can replace current channels of access?

- The need to understand the extent to which customers are able to interact with the Council through digital means and their expectations from this

- To understand how the Council can better promote and facilitate an extension to digital services and access to these throughout the district and how we might be able to apply this for the benefit of citizens and to improve services we offer, such as reporting issues, etc.

- The use of digital technology to support local business

- Opportunities presented and where we might wish to be by 2022

3. **Task and Finish Group**

3.1 It was decided at the July S&R committee that a T&F group will steer the development of our approach to the use of IT, which will take the outcome of the working group forward. Diary issues, including the holiday period, had made it difficult to get members and officers together to work on this, but this is now moving forward.

3.2 We will be making use of SOCITM to assist and facilitate at some of these T&F group meetings and understand that this resource will be available from October.

3.3 T&F group meetings have been arranged with the first taking place on 26 September and others following on: 17 October, 7 and 28 November. This leaves time for a draft strategy to be circulated to members of the S&R committee prior to the meeting in January 2019.

4. **Current IT projects and capital investment update**

4.1 The Capital Programme, as approved by Council in January 2018, included a £1.8 million capital scheme for IT improvements. Whilst this has been profiled in fairly equal amounts over the project, there may be a need to front-load costs depending on investment priority. We currently have an allocation of £400K for 2018/19.

4.2 Investment during the current financial year is:

Description	Projected cost	Actual cost	Status
SAN – tier 1 storage	£100K	n/a	Specification being re-developed
Server upgrades –phase 1	£40K	£41K	Completed
Server upgrade – phase 2	£40K	£41K	Completed
Back up server disk array1	£8K	£6K	Completed
Fibre optic links	£2K	£3K	Completed
Cat6 cabling	£5K	£5K	Completed
Server licences	£10K	£13K	Completed
Telephony upgrade	£14K	£12K	Underway
Lease line upgrade	£16K	n/a	Not started
Network replacement	£160K	n/a	Not started
Back up server disk array2	£8K	n/a	Underway
Total	**£403K**	**£121K**	

4.3 The focus of investment so far has been on maintaining and modernising existing systems. These can be built upon later when we develop our IT systems as they become shaped by our digital and IT strategy.

4.4 Current projects include:

4.5 The upgrading of our telephone system - later versions of which will enable more flexible working by offering cost effective telephone options which are not linked to a desk phone, where staff can manage calls from anywhere in the building or beyond.

4.6 Improvements to our business continuity process increasing options and security in the event of a disaster

4.7 A review of on-line form submission (housing benefit, council tax and other applications), to facilitate the delivery of a self serve option emerging from the IT Strategy