REPORT TO: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON 24 OCTOBER 2017**

SUBJECT: **DIGITAL PUBLIC SERVICES – PROGRESS UPDATE**

BY: **ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The reason for this report is to provide an overview of the progress to date for the Digital Public Services project.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (B)(42) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to information technology.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee considers and notes:-

(i) general progress for the period to September 2017;

(ii) the risks being managed by the Digital Public Services Working Group and actions being taken to mitigate these risks; and

(iii) the progress against targets to deliver the digital services project.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Digital Public Services project was approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 14 April 2015 and contained within it a series of aims and objectives which are contained in a single summarised document (**Appendix 1**).

3.2 The programme of work is being delivered across five key themes targeting eight customer groups:

3.3 The five key themes are:

a) Channel Shift: moving from the traditional face-to-face channel to increase use of telephony, email and web. Digital services may not be appropriate for all scenarios but there is a need to identify opportunities for channel shift, determine how extensively these should be promoted

and to ensure these services are designed around the needs of our customers.

b)   Citizen Account: the concept of the Citizen Account is to provide a method for maintaining a "trusted" single view of the customer which feeds into or updates other systems to ensure currency and consistency of information. Once this single view is achieved it can be used to provide improved services to the public.

c)   Data Sharing: this will involve identifying the data held, the services that wish to share the data, obtaining the relevant permission to share this data and using the data appropriately and in compliance with relevant legislation.

d)   Better use of data: analysing data could enable the prediction of how chains of transactions operate or making people aware of entitlements. This could aid consistent, fair and proactive service delivery as well as improved communication with customers about issues that are relevant to them.

e)   Digital Awareness: Council staff need to be familiar with and use technology to their advantage and to the benefit of the public. To ensure the digital services project is successful it will be necessary to review the training provided to staff to ensure familiarity with the digital services project, how to use the various tools and be encouraged to participate in the development of digital services.

3.4   Although the project started with nine customer groups the final two groups were considered smaller and as a result the working group agreed to merge these groups resulting in eight target groups. These are:

a)   Council Householders
b)   Environmental / Infrastructure
c)   Wider Householder group
d)   Parent /Guardian / Pupil
e)   Social Care Client / Prospective Client
f)   Leisure
g)   Business / Agents / Organisations / Charities
h)   Council / Internal / Other
i)   Visitors / Non Residents

4.   PROGRESS UPDATE APRIL 2017 - SEPTEMBER 2017

4.1   A set of milestones were identified for the project earlier this year and progress is reported below against each of them.

4.2   Parent/Guardian/Pupil web content and basic forms (Target: Jul 2017)

4.2.1   The web site is the first impression customers have of the Moray Council online presence and therefore a significant component of the project. The

web site was redesigned in the first year of the project and thereafter the content has been under review in line with the eight customer group phases identified above. The content review of the Parent, Guardian and Pupil target group is now complete.

4.2.2 To assist with the development of digital services for schools 2 administration staff were seconded to the project. This expert knowledge has been invaluable to the project assisting with the consultation process with parents, administration staff, head teachers and the national Improvement Service to ensure the identified priorities are promoted within the project. The consultation process resulted in the following priorities being agreed.

a) Online payments solution for primary school meals
b) General school payments such as uniforms and school trips
c) Parents appointments
d) Absence reporting
e) Pupil enrolment
f) Emergency contact and related data capture
g) School transport

4.2.3 The first 4 of these priorities are being taken forward under the schools administration heading below while the last 3 are being undertaken as forms development. The enrolment and emergency contact forms have been consolidated into a single online form and is now available for testing by the project team. The transport form is also under development.

4.2.4 Although the web content is completed the form development aspect of this task is behind the planned target. However, the benefit of consulting with all stakeholders has provided a set of agreed priorities and the enrolment form will be available for the main enrolment period in January 2018.

4.3 Leisure bookings solution implementation (Target: Oct 2017)

4.3.1 Leisure bookings were previously identified as a high volume transaction service that would benefit from online service provision. A module from the supplier of the existing system was procured to enable online bookings for a number of leisure services ranging from classes, pitches, rooms and other activities including those provided by sports development and active schools. Configuration of the solution has started and the plan is to allow staff within the centres to familiarise themselves with the new system by offering a small number of classes to be available to book at the customer desk initially in middle of October and thereafter online in November. With the core system configuration complete the service will be responsible for rolling out further bookings types.

4.3.2 With respect to a risk previously reported, the leisure bookings solution will not be delivered using the council's personal account developed by the Improvement Service with all councils. Until the direction for the management arrangements of the council's leisure services is known the solution being implemented will utilise the suppliers own customer portal to avoid any

potential duplication of effort. If the decision is taken to continue the operation of leisure services under council control this will be incorporated into the council's secure personal account.

4.3.2   This deliverable is running slightly behind schedule due to an extended solution evaluation period and consideration of the options around the secure personal account.

4.4   Public engagement subscription and alerting solution (Target: Oct 2017)

4.4.1   A subscription service has been developed and is undergoing testing by the project team in preparation for being available towards the end of October. This solution will allow those who have registered for an account with Moray Council to subscribe to specific alerting services such as school closures, Tenants Voice newsletter, web casts, digital services updates or any other alerting service the council wish to provide to the public.

4.5   Online payments solution implementation (Target: Nov 2017)

4.5.1   An income management solution was procured to enhance the online payments provision for all online services. In addition to replacing the existing online payments processing solution this will provide opportunities to extend online payments in other areas such as leisure bookings, payments associated with school trips, uniforms or similar and in other areas such as paying online for copy certificates from the registrars. Go live is scheduled for the end of October as a "like-for-like" replacement for our existing solution and thereafter other areas will be introduced as required.

4.6   Social Care web content and basic forms (Target: Nov 2017)

4.6.1   Although the review of content for this area has started the scale of the exercise and the potential opportunities may be extensive due to the wider implications of the Integrated Health and Social Care initiatives.

4.6.2   The work in this area will now extend beyond the target date of November and the intention is to utilise the recent appointment to the web team to work alongside the digital services team. This will add to the resource available for the content review in the other target customer groups and maintain progress in this area.

4.7   Schools administration services online (Target: Dec 2017)

4.7.1   As documented above this area has been the subject of extensive consultation with all stakeholders to ensure the project delivers the key priorities relevant to them. The project team have been working with the Improvement Service and the supplier of the schools management information system to ensure our digital services project dovetails with the national deliverables and there is no duplication of effort.

4.7.2 While the council will benefit from national work being undertaken in relation to secure authentication of parent and child relationships through the "linked child" activity, the project team are progressing with the other priorities that can be delivered locally at this time. The team are in the process of finalising a procurement process to deliver the following.

   a)   Online payments solution for primary school meals
   b)   General school payments such as uniforms and school trips
   c)   Parents appointments
   d)   Absence reporting

4.7.3 Implementation of this solution will be achieved before the end of December but the roll out to all schools may extend beyond December depending upon activities within schools at that time of the year.

4.8   General appointments bookings (Target: Dec 2017)

4.8.1 The project team are in discussions with one of our existing suppliers to utilise their solution to allow members of the public to book appointments with officers of the council online. Currently officers from housing, planning, trading standards, social work and a number of others meet members of the public and it should be possible to allow members of the public book these appointments online. The plan is to start introducing this solution by the end of the calendar year.

4.9   Develop and publish open data sets (Target: Jan 2018)

4.9.1 A number of data sets are now available to view or download from the council web site. Data sets currently include:

   a)   Car parks
   b)   Cemeteries
   c)   Play parks
   d)   Recycling centres
   e)   Recycling points
   f)   Election polling stations
   g)   Primary school catchment areas
   h)   Secondary school catchment areas

4.9.2 While it is difficult to know how some of these data sets will be used by members of the public, the team will continue to provide additional data sets to enhance the services currently available.

4.10   Leisure web content and basic forms (Target: Feb 2018)

4.10.1 No progress planned for the last period.

4.11   Online repairs bookings (Target Feb 2018)

4.11.1 This will utilise the same solution as the general appointments solution and will follow the implementation of that solution.

4.12   Revenues & benefits online services (Target: Apr 2018)

4.12.1 Members of the public report change of circumstances relating to council tax by form, in person or in some cases by telephone. This includes a variety of manual data entry processes which are time consuming. The project team have been working with the supplier of the council tax system during this last period to develop a solution enabling members of the public to submit changes online and for these changes to be automatically uploaded into the council tax system. Initially this will go live within the contact centre to prove the product in a telephone environment before opening this solution up to the general public as an online service.

4.12.2 A similar solution is in the process of being configured to allow members of the public to request council tax bills electronically. Somewhere in the region of 40,000 council tax bills are issued in bulk in March with a similar number issued throughout the year as changes impact on individual bills.

4.13   Business web content and basic forms (Target: May 2018)

4.13.1 No progress planned for the last period.

4.14   Council, Internal & Visitor content and basic forms (Target: Aug 2018)

4.14.1 No progress planned for the last period.

5.   MAJOR RISKS AND ISSUES

5.1   Single sign on – Making all online services accessible within the personal account using a single user code and password, rather than having to remember multiple user codes and passwords, meets a number of the aims of the project. Experience now indicates that a number of suppliers are not necessarily able to meet this requirement or possibly, as highlighted in paragraph 4.3.2 above, it may be that a more pragmatic solution is preferable.

5.2   Local/national initiatives – Local and national initiatives such as collaborative or partnership working initiatives may result in changes to the council's service delivery model. An example of this being the national Digital Health and Social Care initiative which is starting to emerge and may impact on the project deliverables where solutions being developed may not be entirely relevant or even redundant in forthcoming national proposals. There is a need to be mindful of these initiatives to ensure the project deliverables and timescales are in harmony.

5.3   Security testing – Security is an extremely important aspect of our online service provision ensuring appropriate measures are in place to protect our customers data. A pro-active test of our online services is currently scheduled every 3-4 months by an independent 3rd party to ensure systems are robust and mitigation actions undertaken for any identified issues.

5.4   Benefits realisation – The digital services project is an enabler for service managers to embrace change and identify savings for the council. As such Service managers are responsible for implementing any changes within their service as a result of the digital services project. It should be noted however that any benefits from introducing online services will be dependent upon the uptake of these services and there may be delays in the benefits being realised by the services through any change programme.

6.   PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS

6.1   A summary of progress against project targets is set out below.

(i)   Increase Moray Council web site sessions by 25% by September 2018
The method for capturing data relating to web site sessions was changed in April 2016. The current data highlights web site sessions have increased by 6% for the period April through September 2017 when compared against the same period in 2016. While this is not hitting the target set for September 2018 a number of services are planned to come on stream over the next few months such as leisure bookings, council tax change of circumstances and the alerting service which will increase the footfall on the council web site.

(ii)   Decrease calls for targeted services within the contact centre by 30% by September 2018
The core services to deliver these changes including council tax and online payments are scheduled to be introduced over the next few months and it is too early to report on this information.

(iii) Decrease face to face contact for targeted services at access points by 20% by September 2018
The core services to deliver these changes including council tax and online payments are scheduled to be introduced over the next few months and it is too early to report on this information.

(iv)   Increase uptake of online payment for service delivery charges by 30% by September 2018
The core service to deliver these changes including online payments for primary schools catering, school trips and uniforms are scheduled to be introduced over the next few months and it is too early to report on this information.

(v) Introduce by January 2018 school on line enrolment and achieve 30% uptake and 60% by January 2019
The enrolment form has now been developed and scheduled for testing prior to discussing the general approach and promotion for use during the enrolment period in January 2018.

(vi) Introduce primary school online meal payment by Jan 2018 and achieve 50% uptake of the facility by September 2018
The project team are in the final stages of the procurement phase and on target for introducing within target timescale.

(vii) Introduce bookings for leisure facilities, sports activities and active schools by Oct 2017 and achieve 40% uptake of these booking types by March 2018
Scheduled to go live with initial bookings in October/November with the service planning further booking types to be rolled out.

(viii) Increase no of registered users of myaccount to 10% of eligible residents by September 2018
Currently 1,600 registered users of myaccount representing approximately 2% of eligible residents but this will increase as other services are introduced over the next few months.

(ix) Introduce fully integrated online booking solution for housing repairs by April 2018 and achieve 20% uptake by Aug 18
Implementation considerations are being discussed with the supplier to implement within target timescales.

(x) Introduce E-billing for council tax by March 2018 and achieve 20% uptake for bills issued for the 2018/19 financial year
The eBilling solution is currently being configured within the system.

(xi) Provide an online subscription and notification facility and have 2000 users registered by June 2018
The subscription and notification facility is scheduled to go live at the end of October.

(xii) To make available 4 Open data sets that support the application process or usage of other services by March 2018
Several data sets are now available online to view or download.

7 **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015-2017:**
The council's corporate plan identifies how it will contribute to Moray 2026. Section D of the corporate plan describes "How we will change to meet the challenges" and the fourth of the five sub-headings in this section recognises that "many services across the public sector could be delivered more personally and more efficiently online".

(b)   Policy and Legal
The Digital Public Services project has the customer at the heart of design. This approach and the necessary compliance with the Data Protection Act will ensure consistency with the customer care policy.

(c)   Financial Implications
The following table summarises the capital approved by Policy & Resources Committee on 14th April 2015 and expenditure to date.

2017/18	Capital
Budget	£352K
Actual	£35K
Balance	£317K

Although there is a significant balance against the capital budget for 2017/18 many of the services being delivered have yet to be completed and therefore expenditure is scheduled over the 2nd half of the financial year.

(d)   Risk Implications
A risk register is being maintained for the project with the major risks reported on a regular basis to the corporate Project Management Office and the Digital Services Working Group. A number of risks are reflected in the body of this report, for example single sign-on, benefits realisation and the impact of local and national initiatives.

(e)   Staffing Implications
There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f)   Property
There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g)   Equalities
The Digital Public Services project will enhance existing service provision by introducing an additional online service delivery channel. The intention to design services around the needs of the customer and involve them in the process should avoid any equalities issues arising from this project.

(h)   Consultations
The Digital Services Working Group have been consulted in the development of this progress report

As the project progresses regular consultation is taking place with customer groups to gather and react to their feedback.

8. <u>**CONCLUSION**</u>

8.1 Generally good progress is being made across the various strands of the project. However, there is some slippage identified above but this is not having a major impact on the delivery of the project targets. Many of the core solutions such as online payments and bookings are well underway and these will be utilised in the final year of the project.

8.2 The secondment of specialist staff from the service area has been extremely valuable for the project and helping to keep the project on track.

8.3 The risks identified within the project are being managed and mitigation actions taken to continue progress against the key deliverables.