

Pendle Council Digital Strategy 2020-2023

Vision

We want Pendle to be

"... a place where quality of life continues to improve and where people respect one another and their neighbourhoods. We want Pendle to be a place where everyone aspires to reach their full potential.

We want to be recognised locally, regionally and nationally as a great area to live, learn, work, play and visit."

Why Digital?

The case for change is compelling. We face the challenge of providing improved services, whilst coping with reduced funding and changes in expectations and demands. The full benefits of digital transformation will materialise over time.

We want to harness the power of digital to help us to achieve our vision, and to support our five Strategic Objectives:

- Working with partners and the community to sustain services of good value (Strong Services)
- Helping to create and sustain jobs with strong economic and housing growth (Strong Economy)
- Help to create and sustain resilient communities (Strong Communities)
- Maintaining a sustainable, resilient and efficient organisation which is digital by default (Strong Organisation)
- Delivering our COVID19 response and recovery whilst working towards rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating our communities (Strong Response and Recovery)

How has the Coronavirus pandemic affected the way customers access our services?

Visits to our website have exploded across the period, and the number of those who are new visitors has also increased significantly.

From 31,500 users in January 2020, we now regularly achieve over 80,000 users each month.

The number of completed web forms across March/April/May/June of 2020 showed an increase of 137% on the same period last year.

COVID-19 has provided us with an opportunity to make significant progress with our Digital Transformation journey. This is an opportunity we should not pass up.

During this period, very few customers have approached us to tell us that they can't access our services online.

We've had a remarkably low number of complaints, and the disadvantaged groups that we may have expected to complain have not come forward. They have accepted that they need to go online and found ways to do this.

This suggests that we could be bolder about our Digital Transformation Journey.

Our two Digital themes

Digital Council

1. Digital Workforce

Aim: To develop a workforce that is able to work from anywhere, work collaboratively and is digitally skilled to deliver the Council's strategy and transformation projects.

2. Digital Services including Website

Aim: To make online services so good they are the natural choice for citizens to transact with the Council unaided. To put user centred design at the heart of all we do. To make sure our website is easy to use and understand. To make sure that most of our customers find the website the easiest way to transact with the Council and the services we provide

Digital Community

1. Digital Support

Aim: To ensure that no citizen or household is left behind and therefore disadvantaged in receiving services from the Council.

2. Digital Communications

Aim: To communicate with our communities and create a cultural change in customer behaviour towards digital services. To do this while recognising that not all in those communities can access services digitally.

3. Digital Engagement

Aim: To ensure that residents can easily engage with the Council's democratic processes, including being able to find information about decisions, policies and consultations

4. Digital Business

Aim: To ensure that business organisations see Pendle as an area with good business infrastructure, excellent access to the UK motorway network and a supportive Council.

By delivering against all these themes we will become digital inside and out, maximising the opportunities for our council and borough in partnership with organisations across the system.

Delivery and Monitoring progress of the objectives in the Strategy

The objectives in this Strategy will be driven by the officer Transformation Board which reports to the Management Team. A full set of performance indicators and other metrics will be developed to ensure that we succeed in driving change within the organisation. The key performance indicators will be reported regularly to the Policy and Resources Committee.

IT infrastructure

All of this work will be underpinned by a digital infrastructure that is agile enough to meet future challenges in an increasingly mobile 24/7 world. This infrastructure will be delivered through our ICT Strategy 2020-23.

DIGITAL COUNCIL

Digital Workforce

Strategic lead	Jane McDonnell
Aims	A workforce that is able to work from anywhere, work collaboratively and is digitally skilled to deliver the council's strategy and associated transformation projects.
Current position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All desk based staff have a good level of skill on Microsoft packages and the specialist applications they need for their roles • 60% of staff able to work from home or from a mobile location
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All HR and Payroll functions to be accessed and delivered digitally • Increase the percentage of staff who are able to work in an agile way • Maximise organisational productivity and flexibility using technology All staff responsible for delivering projects to have had appropriate project management training • Staff responsible for delivering projects to have had appropriate project management training
Key Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff given access to HR and Payroll self-service options • Improved digitised processes for all HR and employee management functions eg sickness absence and return to work, new starter/leaver process • Digital inclusion training for front line staff • Facilitating eLearning platforms • Utilise apprentice levy for Business Improvement and project management training for appropriate staff • Promote and optimise digital platforms including the intranet, social media and Teams for staff communication, software user guidance, staff forums etc

Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of staff able to work either from home or mobile location • 75% of HR and Payroll functions carried out digitally • All frontline staff have basic digital skills • 80% of staff responsible for delivering projects have undergone appropriate project management training
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Digital Services including Website

Strategic lead	Philip Mousdale and Kathryn Halton
Aims	Putting user centred design at the heart of all we do. Making sure our website is easy to use and understand. Making online services so good they are the natural choice for citizens and customers to transact with us.
Current position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website rated 4* under the old SOCITIM rating methodology Website currently scores 91/100 for Accessibility in the Silktide's Accessibility of Council Websites Index. The breakdown of the score (marked against the WCAG 2.1 standard) is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level A – 98.1% compliant Level AA – 92.2% compliant Level AAA – 71.6% compliant 15,388 people signed up for a MyAccount 31,315 forms electronic forms completed in Q1 and Q2 of 2020/2021 Some web content reviewed every year to check that the customer journey is clear and that plain language is used Northgate Citizens Access for online Council Tax and Benefits information Landlords Portal – 72% landlords signed up Implemented Jadu as our replacement CRM system. 23 processes have now been redeveloped in Jadu CXM, some with calendar integration, some with payment integration all with workflow, escalations, alerts. All of these processes went through Business Process Re-engineering before they were built, sometimes changing the way we worked. Some of the processes we now have online: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulky waste collections – 60% of these now booked and paid for online Garden Waste subscription scheme – 60% customers subscribe online Reporting a missed bin or ordering a new one – both at 46% digital Pest Control system with bookable time slots morning or afternoon – up until the COVID-19 pandemic, we were at 54% of customers doing it online Only 31% of customers are making online payments independently

Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a Transformation Board to supersede the Jadu Implementation Board to be responsible for driving and prioritising change across the Council • Services that can be, will be delivered Digital First • Increase the number of customers accessing and transacting via the Council's online services • Non-digital access channels used only by the most vulnerable • Of those services offered online, 80% are rated good or excellent • All service area calls to be routed route through Contact Centre • Increase the number of customers making payments independently via the website • Increase the number of people signing up for a MyAccount • Increase the number of people taking advantage of BrowseAloud to translate content or to have it read out loud • Ensure that the website is 100% compliant with Level AA, meeting the Government's legislation for accessibility • Ensure that every piece of content is checked every year to make sure it meets the standards in our Content Strategy • Reduce avoidable contact by providing the right information at the right time • Ensure that web content and services are accessible to customers who speak other languages
Key Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map the top 50 end to end processes from the customer's perspective and implement an improvement plan for each where necessary • Remove e-mail as a customer contact channel and replace this with an online form or access to a portal • Carry out a review of the Council's Customer Service Standards • Create a group of service area digital champions • Ensure that there are no PDF forms left on the website • Promote BrowseAloud and its benefits • Create a timetable for content review that is achievable • As part of that content review, ensure that all content meets the standards set out in our Content Strategy, achieving a Hemingway readability score of 5 or 6 • Review and action if necessary every piece of website feedback that comes in • Review the 900 PDF documents that accessibility legislation requires us to fix, and make a plan to either delete them or make them accessible • Continue to use Hotjar and Google analytics to understand how citizens interact with the council online services • Provide support where necessary for Phase II of the Jadu CXM Project • Review the drop-out rates of online forms and achieve less than 10% drop out rate • Review of our SiteImprove Accessibility Report, and an Accessibility Action Plan drawn up

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up a plan of action to transfer the remaining Council payments that are still delivered through Civica e-store onto the Jadu CXM
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All PDF forms have been removed by December 2021 • 100% compliance with WCAG 2.1 Level A by December 2021 • 100% compliance with WCAG 2.1 Level AA by the end of March 2022 • To achieve a drop-out rate of less than 10% for customers completing online forms • Ensure all web content is reviewed a minimum of once per year • All PDFs remaining on the website created after 23 September 2018 to meet accessibility legislation • To create a Trello Board Accessibility Roadmap by the end of March 2021 • 75% of payments made online by the customer • 10% increase of Green Garden Waste subscribers year on year • 65% of council taxpayers signed up for direct debit • 30% of households registered for paperless billing • 65% of all transactions made online • 75% of services that can be offered online, are available online • 20% reduction in the number of visitors to Contact Centre

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Digital Support

Strategic lead	Liberata Customer Services
Aims	In an increasingly digital world, we have to ensure that no citizen is disadvantaged when accessing services from the Council.
Current position	<p>Demographic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2018, the percentage of people who were non-internet users in the North West was 10.8% (Source: Office for National Statistics - Internet Users, Labour Force Survey (LFS)) • The same report showed that the percentage of the population in the North West classed as having zero basic digital skills is 10% • The ethnicity gap in internet usage has decreased over time as the proportion of non-internet users has declined <p>Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an increase in monthly visitors to our website from an average of around 30,000 a month to an average of 75,000 a month • Completed online forms increased by 137% over the period March to June 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 • 15,388 people signed up to a MyAccount with the website • Current accessibility score is 92/100 – rated Excellent • 58,000 customers made use of BrowseAloud to either translate web content into another language or to have it read out loud from May to September 2020 <p>Customer Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services running digital workshops in local libraries across Pendle (until the start of the Coronavirus pandemic) • Customer Services offering in-person support to customers at Number One Market Street (until the start of the Coronavirus pandemic)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Services currently using their Link Me Up module to provide customers who ring up with email links to specific parts of the website, allowing them to access online services easily
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of customers accessing and transacting via the Council's online services. • Increase the number of customers using BrowseAloud to help them to understand web content • Continue to increase the accessibility of the website in line with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 to ensure that everyone can use our website • Increase the use of LinkMeUp • Continue to promote the directory of organisations who can provide help to customers who want to transact online • Identify any non-digital communities in Pendle
Key Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out research on why some people avoid accessing digital channels • Develop an action plan to promote digital channels within non-digital communities • Continue to build a directory of organisations who offer support to digitally vulnerable residents
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To complete a review of broadband infrastructure within Pendle (not-spots) • Increase the number of people using BrowseAloud to access digital services • 10% reduction in visitors to customer services who need support to access online services

Digital Communications

Strategic lead	Alice Barnett
Aims	Communicating with our communities to change customer behaviour towards digital services, while recognising that not all in those communities are able to access services digitally, is key to the cultural change needed both internally and externally to make Pendle a Digital Council.
Current position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 537 customers registered to receive our business e-newsletter • Over 100,000 emails sent by comms team between April 2019 and March 2020 • Almost 7,000 contacts regularly receive e-news (with more than 24,000 contacts in total) • 6,939 Facebook followers • 10,000 Twitter followers • 731 LinkedIn followers • 317 Instagram followers • Regular campaigns promoting digital services in the last 12 months • At least 3,000 Facebook and Twitter posts every quarter • Council Tax and benefits documents reviewed to improve content and meet plain English guidelines • Implemented a new social media plan which shifts the way we handle customer service enquiries on Facebook and Twitter
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure people can access easy to understand information about Covid-19, how they are impacted by local or national restrictions and what help and support is available • Improved standard letters, emails and site notices to reduce queries and encourage channel shift. • Even more people sign up to receive our e-news via Dotmailer in line with GDPR • Services and opportunities regularly promoted to local people • A consistent approach to communications to internal and external audiences through corporate communications standards including the Council's approach to Plain English and communication via social media • More residents self-serving using our online services and take-up of paid for services • Improved standard letters, emails and signs in Plain English to reduce calls to Contact Pendle

Key Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree 12 month marketing schedule for digital services • Communicate in a proactive way so customers need to contact the Council less • Promote Get Connected via all comms channels to encourage more people to sign up • Promote regular help and support for residents and businesses affected by Covid-19 • Create local community campaigns that address local community aspirations and needs • Develop campaigns to provide information for families that promote health and well-being • Create an environmental 'Green Challenge' campaign to address climate change through local initiatives.
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% increase YOY of business customers subscribed to receiving Pendle e-business newsletter • 10% increase YOY of residents subscribed to receiving Pendle's e-newsletter • 10% increase YOY of Facebook followers • 10% increase YOY of Twitter followers • 10% increase YOY of Instagram followers • Minimum of 5 campaigns per year promoting digital services

Digital Engagement

Strategic lead	Jane Watson/Philip Mousdale
Aims	Residents are able to easily engage with the Council's democratic processes, including being able to find information about decisions, policies and consultations.
Current position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most meetings open to the public- the new facility for remote meetings due to the pandemic has led to meetings being streamed and recorded on Youtube. • Councillor contact details on website. • Members of public can speak on agenda items including at remote meetings. • Public question time at most meetings including at remote meetings. • Agendas, reports and minutes are on the website. • An increasing number of public consultations via the website. • Applications to go on electoral register and apply for absent votes via gov.uk • 2020 electoral register canvass undertaken with increased facility for digital responses.
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer partnership working with other local authorities, Town and Parish Councils, the Third Sector and Volunteers to maintain local facilities and the delivery of local services. • Web pages developed to provide fuller explanation of the Council's democratic processes and how citizens can engage with them • Online feature of important recent decisions by the Council developed • Members fully adept at participating in remote/hybrid meetings. • Increased public participation in streamed meetings. • Greater feedback from online consultations. • Facility for local groups and organisations to undertake their own consultations on Council website.
Key Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with other local authorities, Town and Parish Councils, the Third Sector and Volunteers to maintain local facilities and the delivery of key local services. • Work with Councillors to develop their digital skills and understanding of the Digital by Default approach • Explore further the possibilities of remote meetings, including hybrid meetings. • Move to paperless meetings. • Make provision for electronic voting at meetings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage greater feedback from online consultations via social media etc. • Work with local communities to develop their own consultations that could be undertaken and promoted via the Council website. • Work with the Cabinet Office, the Electoral Commission and other councils on further improving access to electoral services.
Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to Policy and Resources Committee in June 2021 on progress and further opportunities.

Digital Business

Strategic lead	Neil Watson
Aims	Business organisations view Pendle as an area with good business infrastructure, excellent access to the UK motorway network and a supportive Council
Current position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online property search available • Business web pages regularly updated • Business Week offers digitally focussed seminars and workshops • Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership. • Expanded use of Evolutive client management database (e.g. tracking grant projects and requests from local businesses) • Working with schools and colleges in Pendle to ensure that students have the relevant skills to succeed • Visitpendle.com and downloadable guides etc. interactive board, remote access. • Assistance and financial support to businesses in dealing with COVID 19 issues and pressures
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help businesses to become digital ready • Attract the right skills to the area • Assist in making sure potential employees have the relevant digital skills, by encouraging skill development from an early age • Provide support to enable business to exploit new technologies, ensuring increased productivity and job creation through partner organisations • Tourism – increased digital footprint and visibility. • Encourage the growth of digital industries, by creating a digital hub/network (Landmark in Burnley, Strawberry Fields in Chorley) • Investigate funding opportunities to work with BT to introduce Super-Fast Broadband across the Borough

Key Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a small business breakfast club to encourage small businesses to network and support each other • Investigate how we can use digital processes to attract new businesses • Cross-selling income generating Council services to businesses • Continue to identify support from partner organisations to ensure businesses are digital/future ready • Encourage local businesses to tender for local authority work • Provide a hot desk facility for individuals to access an office, the internet and business support while they are starting / developing their business idea • Continue to identify support from partner organisations to ensure businesses are digital/future ready • Support local businesses in their efforts to meet climate change objectives or targets • Continue support businesses in responding to COVID 19 issues and pressures
Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to Policy and Resources Committee in June 2021 on progress and further opportunities.