

**REPORT FROM:** Director of Resources

**TO:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 26 June 2025

**Report Author:** Sarah Astin-Wood, Head of Policy and Commissioning

**Tel. No:** 01282 661782

**E-mail:** [Sarah.astin-wood@pendle.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.astin-wood@pendle.gov.uk)

**Customer and Digital Strategy 2025-28  
and  
ICT Strategy 2025-28**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To bring the newly developed Customer and Digital and ICT Strategies to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for feedback.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) For Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise and assess the two strategies and provide feedback and recommendations to Council.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) To have first sight and comment on these two high priority strategies for the Council over the next three years.

**ISSUE**

**Background**

1. Pendle Borough Council's previous Customer Contact and Digital strategies are now outdated and the ICT Strategy lapsed last year.
2. To progress the development of these two new strategies, Council officers have worked closely with colleagues in our Customer Services and ICT teams, delivered by Liberata.
3. Two workshops have taken place with PBC and Liberata staff, one in January to develop the Customer and Digital strategy and one in March to develop the ICT strategy.
4. A survey took place with staff last year to understand how residents interact different council services, with a view to better understanding and improving our contact channels.

5. The LGA carried out a Digital Peer Review/360 exercise over two days in December last year which gave further valuable insights and resulted in a helpful report with clear recommendations which will be driven by the delivery of the Customer and Digital, and ICT strategies.
6. Furthermore, NWA Research was commissioned and carried out face to face customer surveys in Barnoldswick, Colne and Nelson in January to ascertain the views of residents on accessing council services. Customer satisfaction continues to be a key thread in the Customer and Digital strategy.
7. The findings of all the above engagement exercises have been weaved into the Customer and Digital Strategy and ICT Strategy and will help shape the delivery plans that will follow, to ensure the strategies become actioned.
8. To support this process, the Head of Operational IT (Liberata) attended CMT in April and is in the process of meeting with Heads of Service and Assistant Directors to gain a more in-depth understanding of the needs of council services.

## **Context**

9. At Pendle Borough Council, we recognise the importance of appropriate digital solutions to support service delivery and processes. This is both to make the customer journey as easy as possible, and to maximise staff time and resources at the back end to facilitate efficient service delivery.
10. The two strategies have been developed together to align this development process and in order to strive for continuous improvement.
11. The delivery plans for both strategies will include engaging, upskilling and developing staff and Members on our digital journey, as well as providing support to empower our vulnerable residents, to ensure they are digitally included.
12. By prioritising short, medium and long term actions to deliver on both the Customer and Digital, and ICT Strategies over the next three years, this will help to position staff, Members, the organisation and our communities in the best possible way for Local Government Reorganisation in a fast-paced digital world.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** The Customer and Digital and ICT strategies are key to council policy development.

**Financial:** There are no additional financial implications at this time, although the delivery of the two strategies will likely require some financial support along with staff time.

**Legal:** An updated ICT Strategy will ensure that the Council remains compliant with the latest UK data protection regulations.

**Risk Management:** There is risk of digital exclusion and less efficient service delivery without these strategies being in place and actioned.

**Health and Safety:** There are no immediate health and safety implications.

**Sustainability:** The streamlining of ICT systems and digital processes will have a positive impact on the environment with the reduction in the reliance on paper.

**Community Safety:** There are no immediate community safety implications.

**Equality and Diversity:** Digital inclusion and customer access is a key element of the Customer and Digital strategy.

## **APPENDICES**

Pendle Borough Council Customer and Digital Strategy 2025-28  
Pendle Borough Council ICT Strategy 2025-28

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Digital 360 Peer Review report