

Environment and Sustainability Assessment

Birmingham City Council is required to assess any positive or negative impacts that any policy/strategy/ decision/development proposal is likely to have on the environment. This assessment must be completed for CLT and Cabinet reports where appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Service Director signing off the report to ensure that the assessment is complete.

To complete the assessment, you should consider whether the proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on each of the key themes by placing a (√) for positive, (x) for negative and (?) for unclear impact, and (N/A) for non-applicable impact. Further guidance on the completion of the template is available on page 3 below.

Project Title:	Digital Strategy 2022-2025 and Delivery Plan 2023			
Directorate:	Team: Digital & Customer Services		Person Responsible for assessment: Nicola Bryant	
Date of assessment:	Is it a new or existing proposal? New			
Brief description of the proposal: The strategy provides a framework and sets of key priorities and delivery for how we create a truly digital Council to serve our citizens and businesses better. It sets out how we will take a consistent digital approach across the Council to how we re-imagine, design, deliver and operate our services to achieve greatest value and impact where it is needed most in support of the Council's priority outcomes, addressing inequalities and striving for continuous improvement that will accelerate our ambition to be the best digital Council.				
Potential impacts of the policy/development/ decision on:	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Specific Impact	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative, how can it be mitigated, what action will be taken?
Natural Resources - including water, soil, air	√			A positive impact on the environment through a reduction in the use of paper and associated services like postage through the shift to more effective, easy to use and seamless online digital services for citizens, business and staff
Energy use and CO ₂ emissions	√			Joined up sharing of data and access to this across the

				<p>council will support better evidence-based decisions by managers that will include aspects of environmental impact. The technology roadmap and the platform agile + approach is taking into account requirements to simplify our technology estate, reduce carbon footprint and help make the council more sustainable. The re-use of technology platforms instead of procuring new systems is reducing reliance on costly proprietary solutions</p> <p>It supports more agile working providing for example technology platforms that will enable field based staff to work more effectively and efficiently and helping to reduce admin time and unnecessary travel into the office to access systems. Robotic automation of manual processes is reducing burden on staff time and improving operational efficiency</p>
Quality of environment			N/A	No direct impact. However, the strategy is grounded in taking a user centred approach to the design and operation of all Council services making sure that the customer is at the heart of what we do and is focused on delivering the Council priorities to achieve better outcomes as set out in the corporate plan - the digital strategy builds on that plan
Impact on local green and open spaces and biodiversity			N/A	No direct impact. However, the strategy is grounded in taking a user centred approach to the design and operation of all Council services making sure that the customer is at the heart of what we do. It is focused on delivering the Council priorities to achieve better outcomes as set out in the corporate plan - the digital strategy builds on that plan
Use of sustainable products and equipment	√			We will make use of cloud collaboration technologies to collaborate, safely share and store information to support more efficient and effective working anytime, anywhere. Where possible platforms and systems will be re-used rather than duplicate systems created / procured.
Minimising waste	√			Online services for staff, citizens and businesses will be

				designed to be easy to use, seamless end to end minimising waste of resources and staff admin time to resolve issues
Council plan priority: a city that takes a leading role in tackling climate change	√			It is focused on delivering the Council priorities to achieve better outcomes as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26 and the digital strategy builds on that plan. We will actively explore test and trial new emerging technologies to take advantage of potential benefits and efficiencies these offer to the delivery of services and in respect of helping to meet our climate change commitments
Overall conclusion on the environmental and sustainability impacts of the proposal	<p>The digital strategy and delivery plan impact positively with regards the environment and sustainability. The priorities centre on taking a user centred focus in delivery of services for citizens, businesses and staff, being data driven and working collaboratively to make services seamless, accessible and available online. This will deliver efficiencies and savings as we adopt more agile ways of working, create joined up end to end services that minimise waste and re-use platforms and systems where possible. The technology estate will be simplified, and the new roadmap and technology investment will favour those technologies that support our climate change commitments. The digital strategy works alongside other programmes of change such as Early Intervention and Prevention; Customer programme and Data Programme Phase 3 to make sure that we maximise all the opportunities at our disposal to contribute to meeting the Council's priorities as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26.</p>			

Guidance for completing the template

Theme	Example
Natural Resources - Impact on natural resources including water, soil, air.	<p>Does the decision increase water use?</p> <p>Does the decision have an impact on air quality?</p> <p>Does the decision discourage the use of the most polluting vehicles (private and public) and promote sustainable modes of transport or working from home to reduce air pollution?</p> <p>Does the decision impact on soil?</p> <p>For example, development will typically use water for carrying out various operations and, once complete, water will be needed to service the development. Providing water to development and treating affluent water requires energy and contributes to climate change. Some of the activities including construction or disposal of waste may lead to soil pollution. The decisions may lead to more journeys thereby deteriorating air quality and thus contribution to climate change and greenhouse gases.</p>
Energy use and CO ₂ emissions.	<p>Will the decision have an impact on energy use?</p> <p>Will the decision impact on carbon emissions?</p> <p>Most day-to-day activities use energy. The main environmental impact of producing and using energy such as electricity, gas, and fuel (unless it is from a renewable source) is the emission of carbon dioxide.</p>
Quality of environment.	<p>Does the decision impact on the overall quality of the built environment?</p> <p>Decisions may have an impact on the overall setting, character and distinctiveness in the area. For example, if development involves ground digging and excavations etc. it may have an impact on the local archaeology.</p>
Impact on local green and open spaces and biodiversity	<p>The proposal may lead to localised impacts on the local green and open spaces which may have an impact on local biodiversity, trees and other vegetation in the area.</p> <p>Will the proposal lead to loss (or creation) of green and blue infrastructure?</p> <p>For example, selling an open space may reduce access to open space within an area and lead to a loss of biodiversity. However, creating a new open space would have positive effects.</p>
Use of environmentally sustainable products, equipment and packaging'	<p>Will the decision present opportunities to incorporate the use of environmentally sustainable products (such as compostable bags, paper straws etc.), recycled materials (i.e. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Timber/wood), non-polluting vehicles, avoid the use of single use plastics and packaging.</p>
Minimising waste	<p>Will the decision minimise waste creation and the maximise recycling during the construction and operation</p>

	of the development/programme/project? Will the decision provide opportunities to improve recycling? For example, if the proposal involves the demolition of a building or a structure, could some of the construction materials be reused in the new development or recycled back into the construction industry for use on another project?
Council plan priority: a city that takes a leading role in tackling climate change and deliver Route to Zero.	How does the proposal or decision contribute to tackling and showing leadership in tackling climate change and deliver Route to Zero aspirations?

If you require further assistance with completing this template, please contact: ESAGuidance@birmingham.gov.uk