

# **TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **CABINET**

**10 October 2018**

### **Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation**

#### **Part 1- Public**

#### **Matters for Information**

##### **1 LOCAL DIGITAL DECLARATION**

**A report advising Cabinet of the launch of the Local Digital Declaration, and detail of the Local Digital Fund Prospectus.**

##### **1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 In July this year, the Local Government Minister Rishi Sunak MP launched the initiative known as the 'Local Digital Declaration'. The initiative is about sharing the best innovation across the public sector to benefit residents.

1.1.2 Local authorities are invited to sign up the initiative, effectively committing to use technology to design and deliver public services, share expertise and ensure that residents are able to access services in the ways they wish.

1.1.3 Details can be found at: <https://localdigital.gov.uk/declaration/>

##### **1.2 Strategy and Funding**

1.2.1 I am in the early stages of working on a Digital Strategy alongside colleagues from Central Services. The IT Strategy which Members recommended via the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board in May, highlights the digital 'agenda' as a high priority strand. Once drafted and considered by Management Team, the Digital Strategy will be presented to the Advisory Board for consideration.

1.2.2 In the meantime, I have signed TMBC up for the initiative as not only does it signal our intent, but it also opens up opportunities for seeking funding to support any digital work.

1.2.3 The Minister announced a £7.5 million funding package, available for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20.

1.2.4 The prospectus has just been announced for the first round of funding. Timescales are tight and expressions of interest need to be lodged by 5 October, with full applications (if selected via the expression of interest) being worked up

and submitted by 18 November. Staff are working on an outline project to potentially put forward in the Expression of Interest phase.

### **1.3 Legal Implications**

1.3.1 None

### **1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.4.1 There is no cost to signing up to the Declaration.

1.4.2 Development of digital initiatives will have initial cost implications, although one of the objectives will be to improve efficiency and thereby reduce cost in the longer term.

1.4.3 If we are able to secure funding, this will assist in defraying some of the initial outlay.

### **1.5 Risk Assessment**

1.5.1 There is no risk to signing up to the declaration nor submitting a bid. If additional funds are required to take a project forward, this would need to come via the normal budget cycle route.

### **1.6 Policy Considerations**

1.6.1 Customer Contact

1.6.2 Communications

1.6.3 Community

Background papers:

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Nil

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