(Draft) Digital Strategy

Buckinghamshire LEP
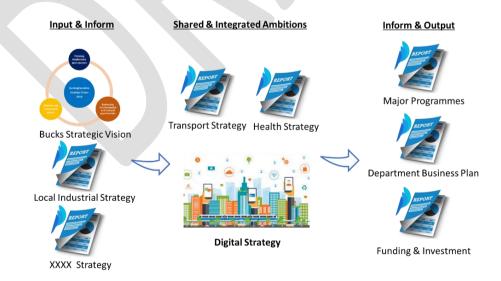
January 2021

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Foreword

- Context
    - Highlighting why such a strategy is needed and why digital services are as vital as all other major utilities
    - Build on Local Industrial Strategy commitment and operational delivery strategy
    - Needs to include reference to COVID and the significant changes this has affected in the economy and workplace culture, as well as throughout society.
    - The impact and opportunities for a digitally enabled and supported society and this risks for areas that are left behind including Cyber Security issues.

- Purpose of this Strategy
    - Update on Buckinghamshire's strategies and what they have provided compared to what this document provides (i.e. purpose)
        - This is to assist with funding and inward investment bids and will provide the framework for a detailed delivery plan
        - Needs to align with wider strategies and aims of Buckinghamshire's Growth Vision, and with the digital aspirations of partners and central government
    - Discuss the draft future Digital Roadmap, structure and scheme/investment recommendations (5 years)
    - Timeframe for document (5 years) – fit with central government goals and speed of change in the digital space
    - Outline who it the strategy is for (Audience) and why?

- High level plan on a page (infographic)

- A fully integrated Digital Strategy (infographic)
    - Example:

The Buckinghamshire Vision

By 2050

The Buckinghamshire Visions states that:

> *Buckinghamshire will grow as a thriving, resilient and successful county; where our residents and businesses can reach their best potential, growth is delivered sustainably and environmental enhancement is achieved to support a high quality of life for our communities.*

Our commitment to help fulfil this vision is that:

> *We will harness the potential of digital design, data and technology to work efficiently, transform the relationship between residents, businesses, the council and its partners, and make Buckinghamshire a leading destination for growth, opportunity and quality of life.*

The Challenges

We are a thriving county but like many other places within the UK, we also face challenges. The triple impacts of climate change, the COVID-19 crisis and the post-Brexit transition bring with them a level of uncertainty for all; but there are also many specific challenges we need to address which are constraining our future economic growth and prosperity. These include from a Digital and Connectivity perspective:

- Poor digital connectivity, especially in rural areas, with 16.9% gigabit-capable broadband coverage, compared to a 37.6% average in the UK
- A shortage and availability of skills and labour in our key growth sectors
- Challenges of an ageing population on public services and labour market with 10% more residents over 90 years old than the national average and an expected growth of 147% in this age group by 2038
- High levels of traffic congestion with Aylesbury ranked as the 8th highest for hours lost to congestion in the UK in 2019 by Inrix
- To improve the opportunities for all young people in Buckinghamshire, particularly those not in Grammar school education
- Pressures on our natural environment and an increasing requirement to ensure more resilient nature based and clean growth solutions to economic growth

Parts of our county are fast-changing; demographically, economically, environmentally and culturally. Our population is forecast to continue to grow, including the older population, putting even more focus on our need to grow our infrastructure in a sustainable way, whilst also maintaining a high living quality for all of our residents. We recognise that without significant long-term investment in infrastructure and services, this growth cannot be achieved sustainably.

The need for businesses, public services and individuals to be able to utilise technology to maximum effect has been brought into sharp focus as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. To ensure our economy and residents are not left behind, we need to ensure universal access to high quality digital

infrastructure and easy routes through which to upskill at all levels, from basic digital literacy through to specialist digital skills.

Delivering the Vision

> *Digital is not about technology, it is about changing the way people live, connect and work. We will ensure that the conditions are in place through the appropriate infrastructure and investment to enable our communities and businesses to operate in the way that they want to without technological limitations .*

We need to balance competing interests and use a collaborative approach to planning for the future of Buckinghamshire so that we can deliver the following outcomes:

- Economic opportunities for all so that people can prosper and reach their potential
- Infrastructure is strategically planned and delivered
- Our places, businesses and cultural attractions can thrive from improved digital connectivity
- Our natural and historic environment is not only protected but enhanced, valued, better connected and managed
- Existing communities reap the benefits of growth as well as new communities
- Health inequalities are reduced, and physical and mental health and wellbeing is improved
- People have the choice of active travel modes and sustainable transport options
- People can engage in a range of cultural activities at a local level
- Future growth is accommodated in well-connected sustainable locations, providing high-quality, low-carbon and affordable homes
- Support businesses with high value potential, exploiting 'Smart City' concepts linked to Garden Town Developments

These Strategic Ambitions are set into four key Digital Themes:

1. **Connected Communities**
2. **Connected Economy**
3. **Connected Buckinghamshire**
4. **Connected Council**

Connected Communities (WIP)

- Ensuring that we can empower communities to connect, thrive, innovate and succeed through improved digital services and infrastructure.

Enabling Communities

- Better design for independent living and supported care homes, through the facilitation of lifetime neighbourhoods, healthy and inclusive streets, and enhanced digital infrastructure and technology
- Tackle social exclusion, health inequalities and the pockets of deprivation within our communities by enhancing digital and physical connectivity, linking businesses, education and housing, and creating places which sustain healthy behaviours
- To work directly with communities that wish to improve their digital connectivity through Community Fibre Partnerships, creating bespoke solutions for individual areas.
- To create a locally funded and dedicated voucher system for residents and businesses to bid into in order to support connectivity-improvement costs for their premises.
- To create a digital-connectivity tool for businesses and residents to access, providing information on whether their specific premise is scheduled to have its connectivity improved within the coming two years; based on data collected from annual Open Market Reviews with broadband suppliers.
- Home, Community and Residential care providers using technology to change the way services are delivered, improving efficiency and reducing errors, travel time and risks. Secure Wi-Fi across the estates that will enable staff to get the information they need wherever they work.
- Work with Community Boards to identify locally needed digital investment ambitions.
- Digital services enabling high quality care and support from a more productive, capable and confident workforce and care sector.

Skills and Lifelong Learning (Requires input from BBF)

- Overview of the different skills levels (and that these will be picked up as part of the SAP skills papers)
- Highlight digital enablement for education at all levels (can be seen in recent work to get laptops to school students)
- To work with the Skills Advisory Panel to establish a digital skills matrix, to better understand the skills of needs of different groups outlined in this section and match these to known skills needs and gaps in the county.
- To engage with external suppliers to develop skill training solutions accessible across Buckinghamshire to engage communities in improving digital literacy levels.
- To work with local businesses, universities and research institutes to ensure that lifelong learning opportunities are available to the workforce through a variety of qualifications and learning methods.

Health and Wellbeing (Awaiting NHS/Health Trust colleague input)

- Overview of the work that can be unlocked in the health area due to improved digital work and its importance to support the NHS and independence
- Use and work collaboratively with our high-quality educational facilities to ensure people are training in the right skills to support our growing sectors and attain employment in Buckinghamshire
- Assistive Technology that works with our systems to discreetly monitor vulnerable, frail and elderly people so they have the confidence needed to remain independent whilst providing alerts and updates when needed to those involved in their care and support or in the event of an emergency.
- Digital services that are tailored to an individual patients needs and securely share their information with others involved in their care, so they do not have to repeat their stories.
- Online services that intelligently advise and guide their care and service enquiries and involve them in decisions about the planning and management of their care.
- "To help people to achieve the best possible health and well-being outcomes, living independent and fulfilling lives in their own homes and communities by using digital innovation and technology for people of all ages in the organisation and delivery of care and support". We have high expectation that taking advantage of digital technology can help us address some of the challenges the care system faces. Whether the challenge be workforce recruitment, retention and development issues, or assist in tackling loneliness and social isolation or indeed, enabling better approaches to prevention and planning early by people with care and support needs."

Connected Economy (WIP)

We aim to establish Buckinghamshire as a recognised innovation playground, ensuring that our Enterprise Zones and business parks are equipped with the technological capacity and coverage to allow all businesses to innovate and deliver new models and ideas and that all homes have the capacity to enable flexible working when required.

Buckinghamshire The Innovation Playground

- Buckinghamshire to become an area where business come to trial and expand new ideas and facilitate innovation in all industries through the DISC services, and innovation spaces across the Enterprise Zones
- To ensure that new and innovative solutions which are developed through the support of Enterprise Zones and business parks and first trialled within Buckinghamshire.
- Actively promote our willingness in supporting innovative approaches being tested, commercialised and implemented in our county

Enterprise Zones and Business Parks

- Helping promote Enterprise Zones to key industries of high importance to Buckinghamshire
- Redefine the role of business parks and business clusters in a post-COVID world
- Capitalise on our specialisms and economic hubs to grow our economy in MedTech, space, high–tech engineering, creative industries, energy and carbon reduction and food processing
- Nurture the clusters around our economic assets by accelerating the extension and enhancement of Enterprise Zones and explore the opportunities for trade, investment and research hubs in the south of the county
- To create digital solution plans for all Enterprise Zones in Buckinghamshire, highlighting the perceived infrastructure, skills and capacity needs of these areas to sustain and encourage the desired growth.
- To ensure that each Enterprise Zone is enabled with full fibre or gigabit-capable technologies for each business located there.
- To ensure that each Enterprise Zone is enabled with mobile data coverage or an alternative wireless broadband connection, as a secondary system for individual business choice.
- To consider the appropriate investment from retained business rates in to digital infrastructure to help attract more business into the Enterprise Zones and business parks across the county as outlined within the Local Industrial Strategy.

SMEs (Requires input from BBF)

- Ways to further support the work of BBF and partners to ensure that SMEs are able to grow and expand with expert support
- Ensure that all homes in the county are able to support flexible working.
- To ensure that all businesses in Buckinghamshire can access digital innovation and incubation hubs to trial new ideas or use cases for the latest technology.
- To signpost and enable business to easily access the appropriate digital training for their workforce.

Partnerships

- Buckinghamshire standing as its own entity, but also working in partnership across EEH, Thames Valley, the South East .
    o This could be an opportunity to compare statistical data and support collaborative investment where appropriate.
- To create strong links between Enterprise Zones, business parks, research centres and universities to encourage collaborative growth across the region.

Connected Buckinghamshire (WIP)

We will ensure that all major transport and built infrastructure projects integrate digital connectivity as a fundamental part of their development, so that users and customers can immediately benefit from the best possible technology from the outset and to continue to benefit as the new facilities are used.

- Key investment and funding requirement

The Environment and Climate Change (Requires input from BC Climate Change Strategy, in development)

- Pull in the information from the BC/Growth Board Climate Change Strategy and the impact of the Digital Strategy on this work
- Enhance physical and digital connectivity through the county to help create new opportunities, boost productivity, improve our adaptability and unlock infrastructure
- Ensure new and existing growth areas are linked and serviced by sustainable infrastructure and areas of employment to encourage local living
- Support the development of renewable energy generation and the conversion to energy -efficient fuels alongside developing high-quality supporting infrastructure that gives people the opportunity and choice to switch from conventional fuels for vehicles, homes and businesses
- Create a connected countywide network of environmental infrastructure and invest in the protection, enhancement, creation and connection of our biodiversity and natural capital
- Ensuring our housing need is met through the availability of a greater mix of high quality, low-carbon and digitally enabled affordable homes including a range of tenure for all, in the right locations
- Protect and promote our cultural and artistic heritage by ensuring a diverse and responsive range of offerings across the county
- Support the development of the county's cultural infrastructure to build cultural leadership and develop the capacity for change
- Future of Mobility and Clean Growth: Pilot projects: giving priority to a public fleet of e-vehicles in key locations and routes; introducing responsive transport services between major business locations and transport hubs; working with England's Economic Heartland to establish a connected autonomous vehicle testbed (LIS)

Transport and Connectivity (Requires input from Transport Strategy, in development)

- Insert information from original (May 2020) draft, as well as updates on EWR investment etc.
- Support the EEH Ubiquitous Connectivity study to identify priorities for investment within existing transport network.
- Future-proof our local destinations and infrastructure by embracing and leading on the implementation of 'SMART' technology
- Improve the existing, invest in new well-designed places, services and communities that will help to reduce the dependency on private vehicles for short travel distances and need for commuting out of the county to access jobs elsewhere

- Deliver sustainable travel opportunities and infrastructure around the county by making it easy and affordable for everyone to choose active travel and public transport in all locations and for all ages
- To work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport on their plans for establishing a gigabit-capable Britain, and to ensure that Buckinghamshire is prioritised by highlighting the return on previous investment.
- To work with Buckinghamshire Council to ensure that any new transport infrastructure is future-proofed with ducting suitable for digital cables.
- To work with providers of major rail network projects to ensure that broadband elements are incorporated for commuters to benefit from the improved connectivity.

Collaboration and Data (Requires Council IT Strategy)

- Outline the principles that need to be met across Buckinghamshire to facilitate the digital agenda (e.g. open collaboration and data standards)
- This also needs to reflect the ethical goals we wish to live by within the strategy

Connected Council (WIP – Council IT Strategy required)

- Intro (starting with a single-line overview of what this section is about and hopes to achieve)
- Key investment and funding requirement

Our Residents

- Need info from Bucks Council to insert here

Our Council Staff

- Need info from Bucks Council to insert here

Governance, Ethics and Security

- Digital governance can be achieved through a combination of rules, processes and awareness.

Strategic Roadmap, Funding & Key Investments (WIP)

- An outline of the core themes of the sections above and how they specifically relate to/fulfil the Bucks Vision (potential infographic)
- Key investment and funding requirement
- Example map:

Bucks Digital Strategy Roadmap	Priority Rating	Funding	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
			SHORT TERM				MEDIUM/LONG TERM		
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES									
Enabling Communities	Essential	Yes (BDUK)	Gigabit Rollout Programme with BDUK						
Skills & Learning	Should do					Digital Skills Learning Programme			
Health & Wellbeing						Assistive Technology			
CONNECTED ECONOMY									
Innovation	Essential		Adept Programme						
Enterprise Zones			Collaborative Growth Programme						
Incubation Hubs	Should do				Creation of trial labs				
CONNECTED BUCKINGHAMSHIRE									
The Environment	Essential		Connected Environmental Infrastructure Programme						
Climate Change			Renewable Energy Programme						
Transport & Connectivity					Digital Infrastructure East/West Rail				
Collaboration & Data	Should do				Develop Open Data Store				
CONNECTED COUNCIL									
Residents	Should do		Online self service Programme						
Council Staff	Essential			Wellbeing support Service					
Governance					Privacy by Design Programme				
Ethics & Security					The Data Security and Protection				
Key:	Ongoing								
	Ambition								
Priority Rating:	Essential								
	Should do								
	Nice to have								

Appendix A – Key Themes Strategic Roadmaps (WIP)

Connected Communities Digital Strategy Roadmap (example)

Connected Communities Digital Strategy Roadmap	Priority Rating	Funding	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
			SHORT TERM				MEDIUM/LONG TERM		
ENABLING COMMUNITIES									
Full Fibre Connectivity	Essential	Yes (BDUK)	Gigabit Rollout Programme with BDUK						
Community Support	Should do				Creation of Public Hubs				
Financial Support	Essential		Voucher system for residents and businesses						
SKILLS & LEARNING									
Training	Should do				Digital Skills Learning Programme				
Digital Skills analysis					Digital Skills Matrix				
HEALTH & WELLBEING									
Ageing Population Support	Essential				Assistive Technology - Discreet monitoring				
Residential Care			Residential Care Secure Wifi						
Qualifications	Should do			Partner engagement Programme					
Triage					Online intelligent advice				
Key:	Ongoing								
	Ambition								
Priority Rating:	Essential								
	Should do								
	Nice to have								

- To be repeated for other themes

Appendix B – Action Plan (WIP)

- More specific action plan, including resourcing and timeframes, split into the core segments above and labelled with which problem statement that they are addressing from the Bucks Vision

Connected Communities

Action	Key Theme	Owner	Timeframe	Resources Available/Required	Outputs
To continue to engage with research centres and partners to ensure that alternative connectivity methods are considered in the hardest-to-reach areas, through satellite and alternative network methods.	Enabling Communities				
To work with suppliers to ensure that all digital infrastructure is created on open access terms in order to encourage more competition in the free market.	Enabling Communities				
To build on the success of the Connected Counties broadband programme, which will have provided over 51,000 superfast broadband connections in areas of market failure within Buckinghamshire at the time of its completion in early 2021	Enabling Communities				
To deliver the Buckinghamshire Rural Business Broadband project, which will provide over 750 gigabit-capable broadband connections to the some of the most rural businesses in the county, as well as their local communities, by December 2021. None of these premises are currently able to access superfast broadband	Enabling Communities				
To work with DCMS to ensure that the final 3.4% of Buckinghamshire premises without superfast connectivity are prioritised for early-gigabit rollout within their Outside-In Programme.	Enabling Communities				

Action	Key Theme				
To work directly with communities that wish to improve their digital connectivity through Community Fibre Partnerships, creating bespoke solutions for individual areas.	Enabling Communities				
To create a locally funded and dedicated voucher system for residents and businesses to bid into in order to support connectivity-improvement costs for their premises.	Enabling Communities				
To work with the Skills Advisory Panel to establish a digital skills matrix, to better understand the skills of the groups outlined in this section and match these to known skills needs and gaps in Buckinghamshire.	Skills and Lifelong Learning				
To ensure that all Buckinghamshire residents can access digital tools and skills opportunities.	Skills and Lifelong Learning				
To work with local businesses, universities, colleges and other training providers together with research institutes to ensure that lifelong learning opportunities are available to the workforce through a variety of qualifications and learning methods.	Skills and Lifelong Learning				
To consult with external suppliers on skill solutions to engage communities in improving digital literacy levels.	Skills and Lifelong Learning				
Home assistive technology	Health and Wellbeing				
Technology improving and supporting home community care	Health and Wellbeing				
Remote consultation and diagnosis	Health and Wellbeing				

Connected Economy

Action	Key Theme	Owner	Timeframe	Resources Required or Available	Outputs

To ensure that all businesses in Buckinghamshire have access to digital innovation and incubation hubs to trial new ideas or use cases for the latest technology through step-out centres.	Buckinghamshire the Innovation Playground				
To ensure that new and innovative solutions which are developed through the support of Enterprise Zones, business parks and the Growth Hub are first trialled within Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire the Innovation Playground				
To work with Mobile Network Operators to ensure that Buckinghamshire residents have access to both cellular coverage and mobile data, and that operators meet the commitment of 95% geographic 4G coverage by 2025 through the Shared Rural Network.	Buckinghamshire the Innovation Playground				
To ensure that each Enterprise Zone and major business park is enabled with full fibre or gigabit-capable technologies for each business located there.	Enterprise Zones and Business Parks				
To ensure that each Enterprise Zone and major business park is enabled with cellular coverage and mobile data coverage, or an alternative wireless broadband connection, as a secondary system for individual business choice.	Enterprise Zones and Business Parks				
To establish secondary networks across core business parks for resilience, either through secondary fixed broadband networks, wireless connections, or through mobile data connectivity.	Enterprise Zones and Business Parks				
To create digital solution plans for all Enterprise Zones and major business parks in Buckinghamshire, highlighting the perceived infrastructure, skills and capacity needs of these areas to sustain and encourage the desired growth.	Enterprise Zones and Business Parks				

To review the business rates associated with the Enterprise Zones and business parks across the county to ensure that these are attracting the businesses outlined within the Local Industrial Strategy.	Enterprise Zones and Business Parks				
To establish each Enterprise Zone as national exemplars of collaboration across the public and private sectors alongside strong support from research centres and universities.	Enterprise Zones and Business Parks				
To ensure that through the Growth Hub's Information, Diagnosis, Brokerage model, all businesses will be signposted to the specialist provisions available to them and will be provided with an overview of grants available to support them, as well as information shared through Digital Summits.	SMEs				
To work with key partners to establish a Digital Skills Action Plan, in order to adequately cover the breadth of digital skills which are needed to support every industry in Buckinghamshire.	SMEs				
To work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport on their plans for establishing a gigabit-capable Britain, and to ensure that Buckinghamshire is prioritised as a key area of economic opportunity.	Partnerships				
Through its strong links with Enterprise Zones, business parks, research centres and universities, for Buckinghamshire Business First to further develop partnerships both locally and regionally to encourage growth across the region.	Partnerships				
To support the Buckinghamshire Growth Hub in promoting and targeting national digital training opportunities to all Buckinghamshire Businesses	Partnerships				

Action	Key Theme				
To oversee the creation of a digital knowledge transfer network between the sites listed above to actively promote collaboration on upcoming projects and open bids for public and private sector funding.	Partnerships				

Connected Buckinghamshire

Action	Key Theme	Owner	Timeframe	Resources Required / Available	Output
To work with Buckinghamshire Council on the establishment of a climate change strategy to ensure that the potential of a digital economy's impact on carbon emissions if fully appreciated and realised through the document.	The Environment and Climate Change				
To work with the Planning Authority to review planning application guidance to ensure that all new developments are created with gigabit-enabled connectivity at the commercial expense of suppliers.	The Environment and Climate Change				
To work with the Highway Authority and Regional Partners, such as England's Economic Heartland, to ensure that any new transport infrastructure elements are created with ducting suitable for digital cables or are otherwise able to improve digital capacity for the area.	Transport and Connectivity				
To directly input into the creation of Local Plans so that digital connectivity is included in any forward planning for Buckinghamshire.	Transport and Connectivity				
To continuing lobbying with central government to ensure that, should HS2 take place, the project will also deliver fibre broadband along the trackside to ensure that all counties along the route can have some benefits from the scheme, rather than solely the ones with stations. The same approach is to be taken with all future rail schemes within Buckinghamshire.	Transport and Connectivity				

To work with suppliers to establish local cyber security guidance for SME businesses across the county as many consider moving more of their operations online.	Collaboration and Data				
To engage with strategic partnership groups, such as the South East Digital Skills Partnership to better understand the roles of key partners in skills development for Buckinghamshire, and to consider whether a Digital Skills Partnership should be created for the county.	Collaboration and Data				
To continue working as the Buckinghamshire representatives at the Association of Directors for Environment, Planning and Transport's Digital Working Group as the task and finish group for the digital connectivity aims of central government.	Collaboration and Data				
To create a digital-connectivity tool for businesses and residents to access, providing information on whether their specific premise has superfast or gigabit-capable connectivity; any known plans to improve connectivity for their premise in the future; and specific guidance on other routes to improve speeds.	Collaboration and Data				

Connected Council

- To be developed