Leeds CITY COUNCIL

Report author: Jason Tutin / Becky Atherton

Tel: 0113 37 87095 / 0113 37 88642

100% Digital Leeds Update

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Report of: Chief Digital and Information Officer

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth)

Will the decision be open for call in?   ☒ Yes ☐ No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?   ☐ Yes ☒ No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- A previous version of this Scrutiny Board launched an inquiry into digital inclusion in 2015. The Board has received annual updates since then. This report is the latest update on the Council's response to tackling the issue through the 100% Digital Leeds digital inclusion programme.
- 100% Digital Leeds is led by a team in the Integrated Digital Service (IDS). The report sets out the team's role within IDS and defines the vision for the 100% Digital Leeds programme.
- The 100% Digital Leeds team leads digital inclusion for the city. They work with colleagues across the Council as well as hundreds of organisations, settings and teams across the city.
- Digital inclusion is a key 'enabler' to delivering many of the strategic priorities of the Council and the wider City. 100% Digital Leeds is referenced in the Inclusive Growth Strategy, Economic Renewal Framework, Better Lives Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the developing Digital Strategy for the city. The new Best City Ambition includes the statement that: "*We will continue our commitment to 100% Digital, reflecting the vital importance of access to our increasingly digital world. As one of the largest ambitious programmes in the UK, this work is vital in increasing the resilience of our third sector and ensuring digital inclusion for organisations and individuals across all parts of Leeds*".
- In that context, the report includes examples of the team's work with partners who support some of the most (digitally) excluded people, communities and Communities of Interest in Leeds. It also outlines some of the metrics, measures and methodologies used to evaluate the impact of the 100% Digital Leeds programme.

Recommendations

a) Members are asked to endorse the approach being taken to increase digital inclusion across the city through the delivery of the 100% Digital Leeds programme under the leadership of the 100% Digital team in IDS.

b) Agree any specific Scrutiny actions that may arise from this report.

c) Continue to provide oversight of the 100% Digital Leeds programme by receiving update reports at this Board.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

1   There is no accurate measure or dataset that can define whether someone is digitally included or excluded. Digital inclusion/exclusion is a spectrum rather than a binary indicator, and everyone will move along that spectrum as their life changes and society changes around them. However, national research over many years has identified the societal and demographic factors that mean some people are more likely to be digitally excluded. These have been referenced in previous reports to this Board and include: older people; people living in poverty and in lower income groups; people with disabilities and long-term health conditions; people with fewer educational qualifications; homeless people; people whose first language is not English and many more.

2   Not all of the people in these groups will be digitally excluded, but the increased likelihood of digital exclusion amongst certain groups is well established. Leeds figures for some of those groups are below (figures are from Leeds Observatory and Leeds Joint Strategic Assessment):

   •   1,523 households either homeless or at risk of being so
   •   5,500 care home residents
   •   12,900 adults with a learning disability
   •   14,468 households where no-one has English as a main language
   •   c40,000 unpaid carers aged 50+ (equates to half of all unpaid carers)
   •   57,429 households in fuel poverty
   •   61,137 times people benefitted from foodbanks in the last year
   •   89,833 people aged 70+

3   The overall picture is that tens of thousands of people in Leeds are likely to be digitally excluded. Some of those figures are from 2019/20, before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be significant increases in some of these indicators when the figures are next updated. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated many of the factors that lead to digital and social exclusion. The figures show the scale of the challenge, as well as illustrating some of the wider determinants that contribute to digital exclusion.

4   The barriers to digital inclusion for many people are complex and link to wider factors beyond the common issues of lack of skills or access to a device. They include personal safety and security, lack of privacy at home, not having a home, language or literacy needs, cultural considerations, disability, accessibility, poverty and low income and many more. The 100% Digital Leeds team address those hidden barriers by working with partners who work directly with people who are amongst the most (digitally) excluded. The team also identify connections between, and bring together, organisations who work with the same people at different points in their life or for different reasons.

100% Digital Leeds ambition and vision

5   Minutes from a previous meeting of this Scrutiny Board recorded the Board's "*concern that the council function that supports the co-ordination of the expanding Digital Inclusion movement in Leeds is wholly dependent on grant funding. Acknowledging the value of this small team… the Board consider that ongoing security and the sustainability of this function is essential*".

6   Since the last update to the Board, the 100% Digital Leeds team has moved to the Council's Integrated Digital Service (IDS). This move answers the Scrutiny Board's concerns and cements the 100% Digital Leeds team's role leading digital inclusion for the city. The ongoing IDS restructure will position the 100% Digital Leeds team as a key part of the Digital Change function in IDS.

7   With the strategic leadership and support of IDS, the team have further defined and articulated the ambition and vision for the 100% Digital Leeds programme. This aligns to the wider IDS vision and the developing Digital Strategy for the city. The 100% Digital Leeds ambition is included in full at **Appendix 1** and summarised below:

- **Vision:** Everyone in Leeds has equal opportunity to use digital tools, technology and services in the right way for them.
- **Mission:** Build a coordinated and connected digital inclusion ecosystem across Leeds; Increase the capacity of organisations across the city to deliver digital inclusion in a sustainable way; Implement interventions in response to community need.
- **Objectives:** Increase access and accessibility; Increase community capacity to build sustainable interventions; Increase awareness and understanding of the digital inclusion agenda and influence systems-level change across the city.
- **Outcomes: For communities:** Ensuring better digital access to support people's independence and ability to make informed choices; **For partners:** Enhancing service offers and improving efficiencies; **For the city**: Enabling the delivery of Council/City/Regional priorities and strategies.

The 100% Digital Leeds approach

8   Digital inclusion is social inclusion. 100% Digital Leeds has always taken a 'furthest first' approach to digital inclusion. They work with partners who support some of the most (digitally) excluded people, communities and Communities of Interest in Leeds. The team bring their expertise and deep understanding of digital inclusion as an enabler that can improve outcomes for the organisations and the people concerned. They listen to the expertise of organisations who understand the lived experience of people who are often marginalised, under-represented and seldom heard.

9   The 100% Digital Leeds team know that there is no 'one size fits all' to increasing digital inclusion. People's digital inclusion needs, barriers and solutions will be very different depending on their personal situation. The interventions necessary to support them on their digital inclusion journey will also differ and will change over time.

10 100% Digital Leeds takes a person-centred, holistic approach to digital inclusion. They utilise and maximise trusted relationships with organisations, who in turn have trusted relationships with people who are (digitally) excluded. The 100% Digital team develop sustainable, long-term solutions to increase digital inclusion by embedding digital interventions within existing locations, services and activities. They work collaboratively through partnerships and networks to build a coordinated and connected digital inclusion ecosystem across Leeds.

11 The 100% Digital team strengthen the digital inclusion infrastructure across the city by bringing together organisations in a place or serving a particular community to address challenges at scale. They increase investment into digital inclusion by helping organisations to identify and apply for funding. They use Inclusive Growth principles to build digital inclusion capacity and confidence within organisations and across sectors.

12 When working with an individual organisation the 100% Digital Leeds team deliver a series of collaborative consultation workshops with staff teams from the organisation. As many staff as possible are included in the workshops so that understanding of digital inclusion is shared across all levels and not confined to delivery staff or volunteers. The workshops are designed to take the organisation on their own digital inclusion journey that includes:

- Understand the barriers to digital inclusion
- Identify how those barriers affect their service users
- Identify opportunities to remove barriers within existing service delivery
- Identify gaps in current offer and any additional resources needed
- How to fill the gaps and ensure delivery of digital inclusion becomes business as usual
- Regularly re-examine barriers, continue to expand understanding of current or changing user needs and build capacity to meet those needs.

13 The 100% Digital Leeds team guide and support organisations at every stage of this journey. They also bring organisations together to learn from each other, especially from those who are further along their digital inclusion journey. At all stages 100% Digital Leeds works with the

organisation to maximise opportunities for increasing digital inclusion. A visual representation of this digital inclusion journey at **Appendix 2** shows that it is not a simple or linear process.

14 The workshops also help the 100% Digital Leeds team to learn more about the digital inclusion challenges faced by organisations and their service users. Understanding this lived experience informs the 100% Digital Leeds approach to digital inclusion. The workshops are often the starting point for the ongoing relationships and partnerships between 100% Digital Leeds and teams, organisations and settings across the city. The 100% Digital Leeds team will continue to maintain, develop and deepen their trusted relationships with colleagues across the Council, third sector and health and care.

Examples from the 100% Digital Leeds programme

15 Within the 100% Digital Leeds programme are projects and workstreams that will see results delivered over the short, medium and long term. The examples below illustrate some of the ways that the 100% Digital Leeds approach is making a difference to people, communities and Communities of Interest across Leeds. The examples also illustrate some of the ways in which digital inclusion is an enabler to achieving wider council and city priorities.

16 All of the examples demonstrate the 100% Digital Leeds team's crucial role in leading and driving the digital inclusion agenda. The team use their experience and expertise to coordinate, connect, amplify and accelerate digital inclusion across the city. They bring together teams and organisations with shared priorities, based in the same areas of the city, serving similar Communities of Interest or working towards common goals. The team works collaboratively to bring people together from across sectors to co-create meaningful, sustainable solutions.

Care homes

17 There are 151 care homes in Leeds, providing a home to over 5,550 residents of all ages with varying needs and care plans. The [Healthwatch Leeds Care Homes report](#) highlighted the current challenges faced by residents in care homes across Leeds: social deprivation, increased mental health issues, reduced physical activity and movement, fewer social activities and a lack of communication with relatives. 100% Digital Leeds will use a range of solutions and interventions to meet the needs faced by residents and care home providers.

18 100% Digital Leeds is working closely with the [LCC Care Quality Commission team](#) to get a greater understanding of the current priorities and pressures within the care home sector. Digital inclusion is now prioritised within the CQC team's weekly communication bulletin which reaches all care homes within the city, and 100% Digital Leeds regularly attends their Care Homes network meetings. The team are also working with their existing [digital inclusion networks](#) in the city to encourage partnerships with third sector organisations and care homes with shared offers to increase resource and capacity.

19 Initial discussions have highlighted the staffing pressures, emerging priorities and additional challenges faced by care homes and providers. This will be taken into consideration when developing this work. Co-developing interventions and working collaboratively with care homes and key stakeholders will ensure the approach is person-centred and based on the individual care home, provider, and resident's needs. This will support people living in care homes to overcome barriers to digital inclusion in the way that works best for them, with the people they know and trust, in a way that makes them feel comfortable and safe.

20 **Care Home Activity Coordinator:** "*We were able to support one family, whose loved one was at the end of her life, to stay in touch with daily video calls and they were able to say the Lord's Prayer together and have quality conversations where they could see each other in her last days.*"

21 Based on the insights gathered, 100% Digital Leeds have developed a Theory of Change with the following intended outcomes:

- Care home residents use digital technology to support their wellbeing and increase social connections
- Care home staff across the city are enabled to support their residents with digital technology
- Care homes embed digital inclusion within their existing activities and services
- Care homes utilise digital solutions such as NHS mail, Data Security and Protection Toolkit, proxy ordering.

22 Targeted digital inclusion activities will be developed with four cohorts representing 32 establishments and 1,500 residents. These cohorts are: care homes supporting people living with learning disabilities, care homes supporting older people and people living with dementia, care homes supporting people living with mental health difficulties, and care homes providing nursing care. Across these cohorts 100% Digital Leeds will target work with care homes which reflect small providers, large providers, those with existing digital inclusion offers and those expressing the need for further digital inclusion support and resources. This will enable the team to gain deeper insight into the various approaches needed to support the diverse community of care homes in Leeds and further support them to overcome barriers to digital inclusion.

23 **Richard Graham, Commissioning Programme Leader, LCC Care Quality Commission:** "*The support and ongoing work with 100% Digital Leeds has been well received by staff across the care sector. The Care Quality Team have had positive feedback from a range of individuals that have found the support useful effective and easy to access. The use of digital has had great importance during Covid, from supporting family links to undertaking virtual consultations. Care home activities for residents have been an area that has particularly benefitted from the 100% Digital Leeds support, and it is enabling them to access a range of digital and virtual activities and improving health and wellbeing outcomes. This real, practical application of digital technology with the support of the 100% Digital Leeds team is helping to embed digital inclusion across the care sector in Leeds, with staff becoming more familiar and comfortable using digital technology which is a key step in the preparation for the move to even wider digitisation*"

Older people

24 The Older People's Digital Inclusion Network is co-chaired by 100% Digital Leeds and Leeds Older People's Forum. It brings together a citywide network of organisations that support and work with older people in Leeds. It gives organisations the opportunity to collaborate, share best practice, and work together to develop inclusive, person-centred approaches to support older people with digital inclusion. The network helps organisations to develop the skills, confidence and tools they need to better support their service users to use digital. Organisations work in partnership to increase resource, capacity and develop new ways to embed digital inclusion within their services.

25 Many organisations now visit each other's centres to share learning and collaborate, offering practical tips to try different approaches to support older people in overcoming digital inclusion barriers. Some organisations have partnered with Leeds University, Leeds City College and local schools in Leeds to introduce intergenerational opportunities to their digital inclusion offer. The network have also taken part in the Good Things Foundation's Connect Up programme. This is a national digital inclusion network for organisations working with older people. It has enabled Leeds organisations to share their experiences more widely and learn about different approaches to digital inclusion from across the country.

26 There are 44 organisations on the Older People's Digital Inclusion Network. With support from 100% Digital Leeds over the last year, 12 organisations have recruited a digital inclusion worker within their organisation, six organisations have become Digital Health Hubs, some have introduced device lending schemes for their digitally excluded members, and over £300,000 of funding has been secured to build resource and capacity to support digital inclusion for older people in Leeds.

27 **Hamara Healthy Living Centre:** "*RB is a pensioner who cares for her adult son. She wants to downsize from a four-bedroomed property to a two-bedroomed property. She has been on the council bidding list for many years, bidding through the Leeds Homes magazine. She has always used face-to-face or text services to place bids on Leeds City Council properties and has never used online services before. RB was only placing bids on properties that she knew the addresses of, rather than all of the suitable properties within her desired area. She could not check her queue positions on eligible properties, or any new properties added to the list throughout the week. We have supported RB with online bidding through the Leeds Homes website and checking other suitable properties and their local amenities. We have also supported her with setting up a new email address and registering on the mutual exchange website. RB is now confident with navigating the Leeds Homes website and has been approved on the mutual exchange website. RB feels more in control of her housing situation when using online services and viewing her queue positions. She now has much more choice and a greater chance of downsizing to a suitable property in the very near future.*"

Digital Health Hubs

28 100% Digital Leeds has worked with Beeston and Middleton Local Care Partnership and community organisations in south Leeds to develop a local network of Digital Health Hubs. These are places in the community where people can go to get support to get online and make the most of the internet to improve their health and wellbeing. The Digital Health Hubs in South Leeds are: Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation in partnership with Belle Isle Senior Action, Dewsbury Road Community Hub and Library, Hamara Healthy Living Centre, Holbeck Together, MHA Communities South Leeds and Middleton Elderly Aid.

29 Digital Health Hubs are local spaces with friendly people ready to help the community build their skills and confidence, get online, and use the tools that can make it easier for them to manage their health and wellbeing. This includes supporting people to: engage with the NHS in the way that works best for them, make the most of tools that can help them understand and manage existing health conditions, use digital to improve wider determinants of health such as housing, employment, social inclusion and financial inclusion.

30 Each organisation chosen to be a Digital Health Hub is at the heart of their local community, offering bespoke support services designed to best meet the needs of the community they work with and in. They are trusted places where people feel safe and welcome. By working with key local organisations to embed digital inclusion support into existing services, the Digital Health Hub model can reach people where they are and utilise staff skills and knowledge of the local area and community, supporting a person-centred and holistic approach.

31 The 100% Digital Leeds Digital Health Hub model uses the existing LCP place-based cross-sector network to identify trusted community partners in the area and bring them together to develop their digital inclusion offer as a network of Digital Health Hubs. The initial focus is on developing digital infrastructure and building community capacity for delivering digital inclusion support. To achieve improved health outcomes and increase digital health participation, the LCP's health partners support their third sector colleagues to understand the specific health needs of the local community and design bespoke digital inclusion interventions around those needs. Further partners from both community and health sectors increase community engagement with the Digital Health Hubs through signposting. The 100% Digital Leeds team facilitate this sharing of learning, resources and best practice to make the development process as effective and efficient as possible. It ensures each Digital Health Hub offer complements the others and strengthens cross-sector relationships, making for more successful partnerships going forward.

32 **Sophie-Jo Peel, Operations Manager East, Hamara Healthy Living Centre:** "*Working with the 100% Digital Leeds team has been so beneficial for our community. The support they have given us as an organisation on the Digital Health Hub project has been invaluable. Being a*

Digital Health Hub has helped so many of our community members to get online and bid for properties, apply for benefits and sign up to the NHS app. We have empowered people to do these tasks themselves and often at home thanks to our device lending scheme. Our next step is introducing health management apps to those with long term health conditions and creating a space in the café where the community can come in and use the devices while enjoying a cuppa or meal. We have also recruited Digital Champion volunteers who speak community languages to support our English class to become more digitally included. One of our older members was able to reconnect with her family overseas using Zoom, something she was unable to do during the whole of the pandemic. Everything we have achieved through the Digital Health Hub supports our community to be empowered and helps them to improve their health and wellbeing."

33 100% Digital Leeds are now working with York Road Local Care Partnership. They will test and expand the model to develop more Digital Health Hubs across East Leeds over the next six months, before rolling out the model with LCPs across the city. 100% Digital Leeds will bring together organisations as one city-wide network of Digital Health Hubs to increase knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Learning disabilities and autism

34 The last report to this Board noted that 100% Digital Leeds had secured funding from the NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group to increase digital inclusion for people with learning disabilities and autistic people. An Autism and Learning Disability Digital Inclusion Coordinator is now in place. They are line managed by Pyramid of Arts in the third sector and matrix managed by 100% Digital Leeds. This role brings additional capacity to the 100% Digital Leeds team and has a specific remit to increase digital inclusion for particular Communities of Interest.

35 Expected outcomes for the role include measures that will be achieved over the short, medium and longer term. These include:

- An increase in the digital skills, knowledge and confidence of people with a learning disability, autism or both to improve the self-management of their condition.
- Increase in ability of social care service users to access support and information to connect them to their local communities and improve independence.
- Increase in ability of people to access digital health support and thereby maintain their mental health outcomes and prevent admission to inpatient settings.
- Increase the ability of people and those caring for them to access GP Practice support and Annual Health Checks to maintain their physical wellbeing.
- Enhancement of the quality of life for people with a learning disability, autism or both.
- Reduction in need for care and support from statutory sector.
- Reduction in health inequalities and Potential Years of Life Lost due to having a learning disability, autism or both through the provision of local level support.

36 This role and the work they do are aligned to, and embedded within, the 100% Digital Leeds programme. There are multiple connections to wider 100% Digital Leeds workstreams. For example, Hamara is one of the Digital Health Hubs in south Leeds and they run the Halo project which empowers adults with learning disabilities and difficulties as well as people who are on the autistic spectrum. The work that 100% Digital Leeds is doing with the care home sector includes a cohort of care homes supporting people living with learning disabilities. The Autism and Learning Disability Digital Inclusion Network is one of the specialist digital inclusion networks that 100% Digital Leeds have set up to focus on increasing digital inclusion for different Communities of Interest.

Accessibility

37 100% Digital Leeds is tackling the issue of digital accessibility through their work with the organisations supporting people with disabilities and impairments, especially through the Autism and Learning Disability Digital Inclusion Network (ALaDDIN) and Sensory Impairment Digital Inclusion Network. Many of these organisations' service users can feel 'designed out' of the digital world. People with disabilities and impairments are less likely to be in paid employment so might not have the financial means to pay for access to the internet or the specialist software and equipment that meets their needs. Even if they have the equipment and connectivity, they can feel (or be made to feel) as though doing things online is 'not for them'.

38 100% Digital Leeds is working on a number of initiatives in response to accessibility issues raised by autistic people, people with learning disabilities and people with sensory impairments, as well as the organisations that support them. These projects are part of the 100% Digital Leeds ambition to increase opportunities for everyone to access digital tools, technology, and services in the way that works best for them. They include:

- 100% Digital Leeds helped Pyramid of Arts to secure funding for a project that involves an arts group creating work to reflect their experience of what digital tools, technology and services mean to them: what they use them for, how they help them, and the barriers that can make them feel excluded, particularly regarding accessibility. After the project's conclusion, this work will inform ideas for accessible Easy Read symbols/pictures to illustrate the feelings and experiences of autistic people and people with learning disabilities, in collaboration with the Learning Disability Service at LYPFT and Change's Words and Pictures group.
- 100% Digital Leeds is working with organisations on the accessibility of video CVs. This is in line with the aims of the Leeds Being Me Strategy and its [Employment Task Group](#), pledging to improve employment opportunities and experiences for people with a learning disability. The work is exploring how to develop accessible information and training on how to create video CVs, as well as tips for best practice for people with learning disabilities. Increasingly there are opportunities to produce video CVs when applying for jobs, but no accessible guidance on how to do it. This advice and guidance will be published on the [Being Employed Leeds website](#).
- The Sensory Impairment Digital Inclusion Network is working on a Resource Directory to help create a culture shift in the city. The network wants to raise awareness and promote resources, services and etiquette that improves accessibility for people with sensory impairments. 100% Digital Leeds is working with local and national partners to produce this Directory, which will be a reference point for any organisations that support people with sensory impairments in a specialist context or within the context of their wider services.
- 100% Digital Leeds has been increasing access to, and awareness of, voice assistive technology for organisations that support people with issues such as sensory impairment and memory loss. This digital tool can be much more effective at helping people with impairments than other technology and allows them to engage with digital in a person-centred way.

39 100% Digital Leeds is working with their specialist networks to increase awareness and understanding of the barriers to digital accessibility and the inclusive solutions available. This collaborative approach will lead to more people in more organisations who have a greater understanding of accessibility. This will result in more informed decision making to increase digital inclusion and improve outcomes for people with impairments and disabilities.

Arts and culture

40 The Arts and Culture Digital Inclusion Network is a collaboration between 100% Digital Leeds and arts@leeds and over 100 individuals from the arts and culture sector in Leeds. The programme for the quarterly meetings is co-produced with network members and a mailing-list ensures information reaches those not able to attend meetings. The network was formed in response to the necessary move to online arts and culture delivery as a result of the pandemic.

The aim was to support arts and culture professionals to make the move to digital delivery by sharing learning and resources, helping artists and organisations embrace digital innovation whilst continuing to keep programming as accessible and inclusive as possible. The aims and actions of the network closely align with the issues highlighted in the recently published APPG Levelling-Up inquiry The Case for Culture: "*Digital engagement can work to connect creatives, audiences and freelancers but digital poverty poses real challenges to the same groups.*"

41 The network improves digital inclusion for the arts and culture sector and audiences through:

- **Participation:** Cross-sector collaboration so more people able to engage with arts and culture digitally; Embracing arts and culture as a key motivator and safe space to explore for those reluctant to embrace digital.
- **Programming:** Producing more ways for people to engage with arts and culture digitally; Supporting partners to develop and embrace a 'hybrid' or 'blended' approach to delivery for more inclusive programming; Building in accessibility as standard
- **Promotion:** Organisations are able to make the most of digital marketing opportunities; Cross-sector collaboration supporting digitally excluded audiences to be reached and engaged.
- **Peer support:** Learning and resource is shared across the sector to drive growth and innovation; The sector continues to work together to learn, adapt, and improve, to be as digitally inclusive as possible.

42 The network will work with Leeds2023 to develop, deliver and promote a series of practical skills workshops aimed at supporting engagement with upcoming programming. The series will focus on developing the basic skills needed to create and submit content for a collaborative digital storytelling strand of the festival with workshops taking place on audio recording, image editing, and video game design. The workshops will be free of charge and open to all with the target audience being Leeds2023 artists, local creative professionals and partners supporting the arts engagement of the people and communities. Leeds2023's partnership with 100% Digital Leeds will support cross-sector engagement and professional diversity of participants, leading to broader audience participation in Leeds2023 programming.

43 **Pam Johnson, Head of Culture Programmes, Leeds City Council:** "*As noted in the All-Party Parliamentary Group report The Case for Culture, 'Digital engagement can work to connect creatives, audiences and freelancers but digital poverty poses real challenges to the same groups'. The arts and culture sector is uniquely placed to champion digital inclusion to bring in new audiences to engage with work digitally, to upskill those facing barriers to digital inclusion and to demonstrate the benefits of being able to access provision digitally. Leeds residents should all be able to make an informed choice free from barriers when they want to experience arts and culture. We champion this right to access arts and culture through the Culture Strategy for Leeds 'placing it at the heart of the city's narrative'. Our partnership with 100% Digital Leeds in creating and developing the Arts and Culture Digital Inclusion Network has been invaluable in embedding the ethos of digital inclusion within the sector in Leeds. We look forward to seeing the network become a catalyst for change, advocacy and support to realise the ambition to make Leeds the most digitally inclusive city for everyone.*"

Homelessness

44 100% Digital Leeds are working with Leeds partners supporting people experiencing homelessness to explore, develop and implement digital inclusion interventions that meet the needs of homeless communities. In late 2021 key partners from the third sector, NHS and Leeds City Council were brought together to map the needs of the various communities experiencing different forms of homelessness and lacking reliable accommodation. By pooling their knowledge and experience of the needs of the community with 100% Digital Leeds's knowledge of digital exclusion the group were able to form a better understanding of the uniquely complex barriers to digital inclusion faced by this community.

45 The complexity of the situation meant partners expressed concern about ensuring the right approach to digital inclusion support was taken from the off, flagging the risk of digital being an enabler for negative patterns of behaviour that may exacerbate the situation of an already vulnerable person. To minimise this risk and maximise the likelihood of a successful intervention the network agreed that three key third sector partners well established within the homeless community should work closely with 100% Digital Leeds to design a bespoke intervention using a strengths-based approach that would embed digital inclusion support into each organisation's core service offer.

46 Next steps for this work include: 100% Digital Leeds will bring partners back together to share learning and explore opportunities for working with more services supporting people experiencing homelessness to embed digital inclusion within their offer. They will continue to work with partners on a one-to-one basis to develop custom digital inclusion interventions building on the strengths of the organisation and embedded within their core offer. They will also explore the possibility of partners coming together as part of a formal digital inclusion network to continue sharing learning and to develop referral pathways.

47 **Case study from BARCA Leeds:** "*Person A is a 34-year-old male who has been in and out of prison for most of his adult life. He was released from prison in November and gifted a Community Calling smartphone by Barca in December 2021. The device has allowed him to get online without having to visit the library or Job Centre meaning he could more regularly and proactively check his emails. He has been able to apply for a budget advance through DWP, find and secure housing, and complete a Peer Mentor course. Not having to rely on Pay As You Go calls and data has allowed him to reconnect with and regularly contact his family and support services. This has allowed him to rebuild and maintain a positive support network including detoxing from methadone, meeting Probation requirements, and avoiding reoffending, all of which have allowed him to stay out of prison for the longest period of his adult life.*"

Prisons and prison leavers

48 HMP Wealstun contacted 100% Digital Leeds to ask for help with updating their education offer for prisoners. Digital exclusion within prisons is widespread. Connectivity is severely restricted by legislation and a high percentage of prisoners have low literacy, learning difficulties and other barriers which make them more likely to be digitally excluded. Digital inclusion is essential for prison-leavers who face challenges such as searching for housing, finding meaningful employment and building new support networks or reconnecting with family, all of which reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

49 Exploratory work was undertaken with the education staff at HMP Wealstun, part of the Reducing Reoffending department. This led to the design of a digital inclusion plan that would fit with the strengths-based, person-centred 100% Digital Leeds approach. The aim was to maximise opportunities to embed digital inclusion support within existing settings, systems and processes. 100% Digital worked with their existing network of partners and brought together new partners working directly within the prisons ecosystem in Leeds. They identified various areas in which digital inclusion could be piloted with a view to wider implementation.

50 Following the exploratory discussions, three main areas of focus were identified:

- Improve in-prison support for improved digital skills, confidence and motivation
- Improve the transition between internal and external support
- Improve digital inclusion support for prison-leavers

51 By working with the prisons service as a whole, mapping the full journey of a prisoner from incarceration to post-release and working with partners to support digital inclusion at each available opportunity, the following Desired Outcomes were agreed:

- People are equipped with real-life digital skills that they will use to find housing and meaningful employment on release

- Prisons have better tools to support prisoners whilst in custody
- Stronger partnerships between prison and third sector partners
- Digital inclusion support is embedded within the processes of leaving prison
- Maximise opportunities for prisoners to engage with digital whilst in custody
- Reduced reoffending rates

52 **Iain Sharkey, Learning and Skills Manager, HMP Wealstun:** "*I've now had several meetings with 100% Digital Leeds, and they have really taken the project into places I couldn't have foreseen. By getting to know the whole of our service and processes from the ground up, they've been able to identify lots of opportunities for digital inclusion that we didn't know existed. Together we are now identifying various areas to tackle digital exclusion for prisoners and prison-leavers, which will provide them with better opportunities to find meaningful employment, avoid reoffending and live easier more connected lives. Two of these projects, the development of digital skills in one of our prison workshops and developing a new digital skills induction questionnaire for prisoners new to the establishment are already being taken forward. I look forward to working with 100% Digital Leeds in the future and also helping them develop further networks with our other partners and prisons in the area*."

Devices and connectivity

53 100% Digital Leeds is developing a strategy to increase people's access to devices and connectivity. An outline of the strategy was approved by IDS Senior Leadership Team in November 2021. It has three strands focusing on lending, gifting and affordability of devices and connectivity.

54 Leeds Libraries have taken over the ownership and management of the Council's tablet lending scheme since the 100% Digital Leeds team moved to IDS. The last report to this Board noted the resource implications of the lack of sustainable funding to pay for the running costs of the 1,000 iPads that are currently part of the lending scheme. The 100% Digital Leeds team is working with IDS colleagues who are leading the Procurement for the Council's Mobile Voice and Data contract. The intention is to bring the lending scheme under the wider Council contract. This will make the scheme more flexible so that a wider range of devices can be purchased for lending. It will also make the scheme more cost effective and simplify contract management. Colleagues in the library service have been informed of progress at each stage and will be included in discussions and decisions on the future of the scheme.

55 The original 100% Digital Leeds tablet lending scheme was first piloted in 2016. At the time, it was the only device lending scheme in the city and one of the first device lending schemes in the country. Since then, 100% Digital Leeds have supported dozens of organisations in Leeds to secure funding to set up their own lending schemes. This means that the Council scheme is now one part of the wider device lending provision across the city.

56 Lending schemes are important, and a loan may be appropriate for some people as a short-term response or if they have an immediate need. But lending a device is unlikely to provide a long-enough intervention for people with very low digital skills or for those who are the most digitally excluded.

57 Gifting devices with connectivity to people who are digitally excluded can have a longer-term impact and can be more cost-effective than device loan schemes. O2 and Hubbub launched the [Community Calling campaign](#) in Leeds in January 2021. The campaign gifts smartphones with free data, calls and texts to digitally excluded people. Ove the last year, 100% Digital Leeds has worked closely with Hubbub to coordinate the distribution of phones through their networks of community partners across the city. As well as working collaboratively with partners in Leeds, 100% Digital Leeds also worked with colleagues in the region to distribute phones across West Yorkshire.

58 In three phases during 2021, the 100% Digital Leeds team distributed 1,350 phones to organisations supporting digitally excluded people throughout Leeds. Priority was given to service-users who did not have a phone, could not afford to get online or could not access the internet independently.

59 100% Digital Leeds has a number of [digital inclusion networks](#) bringing together partners who support specific communities. The success of Community Calling in Leeds relied on multiple organisations working together to deliver phones to digitally excluded people. 100% Digital Leeds has excellent relationships with the organisations they work with, and those organisations have trusted relationships with their service users. Some organisations acted as distribution centres for smaller organisations who work with the same Communities of Interest.

60 The organisations have all supported each beneficiary to make the most of the device they've been given. This is a direct result of the work that 100% Digital Leeds has done with each of those organisations to help them understand the person-centred approach to supporting people to become more digitally included.

61 There are additional benefits to beneficiaries being gifted a device rather than being lent a device. These include higher levels of:

- **Certainty** – recipients of gifted devices are safe in the knowledge that their device won't be recalled at the end of a loan period.
- **Security** – recipients can fully utilise features that they may not feel comfortable using on a shared device. This could include keeping personal photos and messages on the device, installing their own apps, creating their own bookmarks and using websites and tools that store personal data and passwords.
- **Ownership** – each recipient can take ownership of their own digital development. They are free to use the device in ways that are meaningful for them and learn new skills at their own pace over a longer timeframe.
- **Trust** – giving a device to someone can strengthen the trusted relationship between the recipient and the organisation.

62 **St. Anne's Resource Centre:** "*RM has led a life of trauma and chaos. His past has affected his mental health and he struggles to control his emotions and temper. As a result, he has had frequent incidents at St Anne's when he has been verbally abusive and physically threatening to staff and other service users. Staff had supported him to access music using shared equipment and Wi-Fi at St Anne's and found this had helped him to calm himself. After realising he could use music to self-manage, RM was given a Community Calling smartphone in December 2021 to access tools that help him de-escalate and manage his emotions. He has since been placed in temporary accommodation and being able to access entertainment media at home on his phone has helped him manage his mental health and stay home and 'out of trouble'. Since being gifted the smartphone RM has spent more time at home and St Anne's have seen him in fewer incidents.*"

63 **Leeds Housing Options:** "*Person A has been in and out of prison for the majority of her adult life for numerous thefts from shops and was a sex worker prior to her most recent sentence. She is also fleeing domestic violence from another rough sleeper with whom she was previously in an abusive relationship. They were on a joint claim for Universal Credit which left Person A dependant on her partner and unable to break away from the abusive relationship. Having a smartphone has allowed Person A to make their own separate Universal Credit claim and the couple have now separated. Person A has a history of not attending probation meetings and getting recalled to prison as a result. Having a smartphone with connectivity has allowed her to stay in active contact with the Probation team and break that cycle.*"

Food poverty

64 People experiencing food poverty are likely to also be experiencing digital poverty. Organisations supporting people experiencing food poverty are well placed to identify digitally excluded people and signpost them to the help they need to get online. For those on a low income, accessing the internet costs more and is less reliable. Many people can't afford or don't have a good enough credit rating to get a contract for Wi-Fi at home, leaving them relying on mobile phones and 4G data. Those who can't afford a high enough monthly 4G allowance may consistently run out of data and be left without the ability to get online for part of the month. Those who cannot afford (or are otherwise unable to access) a data contract are left paying for data on a 'Pay As You Go' basis, the most expensive and least reliable way to access the internet.

65 100% Digital Leeds has worked with Food Banks and organisations providing food parcel provision to support the connectivity of people experiencing digital poverty. 100% Digital Leeds's partnership with Community Calling meant that organisations like Woodhouse Community Centre and New Wortley Community Centre could gift reconditioned smartphones with a year's free 4G data, calls, and texts to those in need. The phones were gifted via food parcels as part of their role as Community Care Hubs, ensuring that the most vulnerable people in the city had access to support during the pandemic.

66 100% Digital Leeds is working with Zest to ensure that people in Leeds are supported to access the NHS Healthy Start scheme. The scheme gives vouchers or a pre-paid card to parents who qualify, to help with the cost of buying healthy food and milk. From April this year the scheme will only accept online applications, making it difficult for those who are digitally excluded to apply for this much needed and under-utilised support. This ongoing partnership has seen organisations across the city trained to support access to the scheme, including identifying digital exclusion amongst service users and signposting to further support.

Working nationally

67 100% Digital Leeds has a national reputation as one of the best digital inclusion programmes in the country. The team are regularly asked to speak at conferences, offer informal advice to other councils or share and publish their work online. That well-deserved reputation means that 100% Digital Leeds is in a stronger position to secure national funding or take part in national projects.

68 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has confirmed extra funding for the Digital Inclusion Toolkit. 100% Digital Leeds led the first phase of this project with partners including Croydon Council and TechResort CIC based in Eastbourne. The additional funding will see 100% Digital Leeds continue to lead the project with TechResort, and more councils are being invited to join this phase.

69 The Local Government Association's Digital Pathfinder Programme has awarded funding to 100% Digital Leeds to create a 'Community-based Model for Digital Inclusion'. The model will take other councils through the Stages required to foster collaboration between key partners in a place. Each Stage will include Steps to be followed to build partnerships and bridges between services and organisations that serve a particular community. Using the Community-based Model, partners work together to better understand the needs of a community and co-design solutions to meet those needs.

70 After the success of the Community Call scheme, Hubbub UK secured funding for their new Tech Lending Community project. This £400,000 national fund will see grants of between £50,000 – £120,000 awarded to organisations to set up device lending schemes for people living in temporary accommodation. 100% Digital Leeds worked with Hubbub to shape the project, develop the grant fund and inform the grant criteria. They will continue to work with

Hubbub and the organisations who receive funding to support the development and delivery of the project.

71 In all cases the 100% Digital Leeds team is clear that any regional or national work must directly benefit digitally excluded communities in Leeds. This could be in the form of increased funding that can be used to enhance or expand digital inclusion in the city. In other cases, the projects will allow the 100% Digital Leeds team to work with other councils to 'test and learn' specific elements of their approach. They will use the opportunity to validate and prove the effectiveness of their work or adapt it in response to feedback. This will increase the impact of the 100% Digital Leeds programme for communities in Leeds.

Summary

72 The 100% Digital Leeds team know that people's motivations, barriers and support needs will change as they move through life. The team also recognise that nobody is defined by just one metric, indicator or demographic marker. Someone who has always enjoyed arts and cultural activities may be a care home resident. A prison leaver may experience homelessness or food poverty. A person with a learning disability may have specific accessibility needs that could be addressed in a Digital Health Hub.

73 By strengthening the place to empower the person, 100% Digital Leeds is developing and delivering person-centred digital inclusion at scale. The team achieves this by working with organisations who support people in different ways, for different reasons and at different points in their lives. Those organisations share their understanding of the lived experience of the people they serve and support. Those insights help the 100% Digital Leeds team to design and deliver holistic and sustainable digital inclusion interventions.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected: All		
Have ward members been consulted?	☐ Yes	☒ No

74 Flexibility is built into the 100% Digital Leeds approach to increasing digital inclusion across the city. The team take a 'furthest first' approach and develop projects that are designed to reach the most (digitally) excluded communities. In some cases, the work of the team is place-based and will focus on a specific ward or geographical area. In other cases, their work is focused on a particular Community of Interest or on tackling barriers to digital inclusion that affect multiple communities.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

75 The 100% Digital Leeds team regularly consult and engage stakeholders to receive feedback on their work. They present regularly to IDS Senior Leadership Team and have recently discussed their programme and priorities with the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and the CCG's Executive Management Team. They also took part in an 'All Member Briefing' towards the end of last year to discuss the Council's wider digital agenda.

76 All of the work of the 100% Digital Leeds team relies on consultation, engagement and collaboration with organisations from all sectors who are working to increase digital inclusion with and within communities across the city.

What are the resource implications?

77 People who are digitally excluded are some of the heaviest users of Council, NHS and other services. They will also be more likely to use those services over the telephone or face to face.

Too often that choice is forced upon the person as a result of them being digitally excluded. This has resource implications for both the individual and the services in terms of increased time and money spent on providing and accessing those services in that way.

78 Digital inclusion is not an end in itself, it is an enabler to achieving other priorities. Increased digital inclusion and engagement gives people more control over their lives. It can increase their ability to make informed decisions, manage their health and wellbeing, improve their financial resilience and be more connected to friends, family, their community and the wider world.

79 When increased digital inclusion leads to individual behaviour change, the resource savings and benefits are realised for everyone. Individuals can save time and money, services can be more efficient and effective, organisations can support people in ways that are more meaningful and holistic.

What are the legal implications?

80 This is an information rather than decision-making report and therefore there are no legal implications arising from it.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

81 Risk management of individual projects is built into the way that the 100% Digital Leeds team works. Programme governance includes regular reporting to IDS SLT, other leadership teams and senior stakeholders, as well as annual reports to this Scrutiny Board.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

☒ Inclusive Growth   ☒ Health and Wellbeing   ☒ Climate Emergency

82 All of the work outlined in the report plays a key role in achieving the Council's ambition to build a compassionate city, tackling poverty and reducing inequalities. Work discussed is aligned closely with the Best City Ambition, the Economic Recovery Framework, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

83 After hearing evidence in 2015, this Board published their Scrutiny Inquiry Report into digital inclusion in 2016. The report stated that: "*It was highlighted to us that digital inclusion has not been a priority for the Council and in the absence of a clear strategic approach the potential to reduce digital exclusion has not been maximised. To be a compassionate city with a strong economy, digital inclusion needs to be a priority which is progressed in a co-ordinated way. There is a need for better knowledge, links and coordination between the public, private and voluntary sector so that we are achieving more together.*"

84 That ambition led to the development of the 100% Digital Leeds programme. Those principles have guided the work of the 100% Digital Leeds team and the 100% Digital Leeds approach has been defined and agreed at previous meetings of this Scrutiny Board.

85 The result is that digital inclusion is now a priority for the Council. There is a clear strategic approach and the potential to increase digital inclusion is being maximised through the 100% Digital Leeds programme. Digital inclusion is being progressed in a coordinated way and the 100% Digital Leeds team are using their knowledge to increase and improve links and coordination between the public, private and voluntary sectors. The city is achieving more together through the digital inclusion leadership of 100% Digital Leeds.

How will success be measured?

86 Digital exclusion is an indicator of wider factors that determine social exclusion. As such, success for 100% Digital Leeds is measured at a project and programme level more than an individual level. Individuals will always be (and become) digitally excluded due to factors outside of their direct control. To ensure people have the support they need when that happens, the focus of the 100% Digital team is to strengthen the place to empower the person. The digital inclusion ecosystem built by 100% Digital Leeds is increasing the support people need, in the places they need it.

87 At a programme level, all of the success measures are aligned to the Objectives and Outcomes set out in the 100% Digital Leeds vision at Appendix 1. The team works with organisations so that the digital inclusion support they offer can change to best meet a person's needs as their life changes or their situation develops. This means that all of the projects and workstreams within the 100% Digital Leeds programme are designed to increase organisational capacity, infrastructure, understanding and collaboration. This culture shift within teams and organisations sees them prioritise digital inclusion interventions alongside their other services. Organisations understand that digital inclusion can improve outcomes for individuals and communities, as well as helping them to deliver their services and support more efficiently and effectively.

88 Many of the projects within the 100% Digital Leeds programme have their own success measures. The team have developed Theory of Change models for some of their work. They have defined and agreed desired outcomes with partners for other workstreams. Across all of their work there is a recognition that success measures should be considered in the short, medium and long term.

89 At an individual level digital inclusion is an enabler to help people achieve their goals, and those goals should be defined by the individual. They will range from the deeply personal to wider lifestyle and social/societal goals. For some of the people who are furthest from inclusion, progress towards those goals will not be quick or easy and will rarely be a linear process free from setbacks. 100% Digital Leeds will continue to work with teams, settings and organisations so they are more confident and better placed to support people on their digital inclusion journey.

90 The 100% Digital Leeds team have taken part in a series of workshops with the Health and Care Evaluation Service. They have discussed different tools for measuring and reporting on different aspects of the programme. They are continuing to work together to develop tools to measure the economic effectiveness of 100% Digital Leeds.

91 More widely, digital inclusion is an enabler to delivering a range of Council and City strategies and priorities. In those cases, the success of the work of 100% Digital Leeds will be seen over a much longer-term. The measures and Key Performance Indicators of those strategies will be achieved more easily, more effectively and for more of the population if digital inclusion is addressed within that wider work. The success of increased digital inclusion will be reflected in Population Health Management data, employment and employability surveys, re-offending rates, usage statistics for Council and NHS digital services, and other indicators.

92 Nationally, Socitm Advisory were recently commissioned by LGA to examine in more detail the work that councils are doing on digital inclusion across England. One strand of this work was to understand how councils are evidencing the outcomes of their digital inclusion programmes. Another strand was to inform the creation of a national return on investment tool for digital inclusion. Due to the lack of recent and relevant evidence to create and scale a national return on investment tool, Socitm's focus has now turned to what can be done to lay the foundations for an improved evidence base over time. 100% Digital Leeds was represented on Socitm's working group and they will continue to play an active role in any future work.

What is the timetable for implementation?

93 The 100% Digital Leeds programme is ongoing, led by a permanent team within the Integrated Digital Service. Some projects within the wider programme have their own timelines. The team report regularly to IDS Senior Leadership Team and to other boards and stakeholders as appropriate.

Appendices

Appendix 1: 100% Digital Leeds vision, mission, objectives and outcomes.

Appendix 2: Digital inclusion journey for organisations.

Background papers

None.

Appendix 1: 100% Digital Leeds ambition.

Vision:
Everyone in Leeds has equal opportunity to use digital tools, technology and services in the right way for them

Mission:
Build a coordinated and connected digital inclusion ecosystem across Leeds
- Coordinate conversations with partners focussed on the needs of different groups across the city
- Ensure services and interventions are joined-up, efficient and effective rather than fragmented offers
- Create networks of organisations to facilitate targeted work with specific communities (either Communities of Interest or geographical communities)
- Strengthen the place to empower the person, build a sustainable infrastructure of support that people can be referred into
- Digital inclusion is seen as everyone's responsibility across the Council, third sector, and health and care

Increase the capacity of organisations across the city to deliver digital inclusion in a sustainable way
- Help organisations understand the benefits of digital inclusion and their role in delivering digital inclusion interventions
- Build their confidence and skills using a stepped approach in line with their capacity
- Ensure digital inclusion is embedded into service provision
- Assess the help and resources they need so that we can help source resources for them
- Help to improve the suitability and accessibility of the resources available

Implement interventions in response to community need
- Listen to the voice of people with lived experience
- Assess the provision in the places that people go to address the issues faced by these communities
- Respond to gaps identified by our partners to ensure that needs are being suitably addressed
- Measure progress, both effectiveness of provision and level of engagement with digital services
- Prioritise the groups/communities that are further away from equal opportunity of access

Objectives:
Increase access and accessibility
- More choice and opportunities for people to access digital equipment and connectivity
- Greater choice and flexibility of digital skills provision across the city
- Identify gaps in provision of the above, find and implement solutions
- Develop the digital inclusion 'ecosystem' within the city – services, referrals, systems
- Ensure the ecosystem supports people with specific needs and responds to the changing needs of people throughout their lives

Increase community capacity to build sustainable interventions
- Greater understanding of digital inclusion within organisations and across sectors – including the benefits, barriers, solutions
- Embed digital inclusion interventions and activities within services and organisations across the city
- More organisations / settings increase their digital inclusion confidence, capacity and capability
- Ensure we are reaching the 'furthest first' to support wider Council and City strategies on inclusion, health and wellbeing, inclusive growth etc.
- Build and maintain networks of partners working collaboratively to improve digital inclusion for specific communities

Increase awareness and understanding of the digital inclusion agenda and influence systems-level change across the city
- Positive relationships with our partners based on sustained trust
- Increase our reach and influence across the Council and the city
- Bring additional resources / funding / projects into the city to increase digital inclusion
- Build on our leadership role in this area by driving and developing the digital inclusion agenda and delivering the vision

Outcomes:
For communities:
Ensuring better digital access to support people's independence and ability to make informed choices.
Leading to increases in:
- Health and wellbeing
- Social opportunities and connections
- Financial resilience
- Access to services (online transactions)
- Access to education, training and employment
- Access to leisure

For partners:
Enhancing service offers and improving efficiencies
- Appropriate use of services
- Early intervention
- Shift to online to free up in-person resources
- Self-management by service users
- Organisation resilience and sustainability
- Maximising reach and impact

For the city:
Enabling the delivery of Council/City/Regional priorities and strategies
- Best City Plan
- Better Lives Strategy
- Digital Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Inclusive Growth Strategy
- Leeds Community Healthcare and Forum Central Third Sector Strategy
- West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership Digital Strategy

Appendix 2: 100% Digital Leeds consultation workshops with organisations: the digital inclusion journey