

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

# Digital Strategy 2020 - 2025

this is Redcar & Cleveland

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# 1 Council Vision, Values and Priorities

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council has a well-established vision which sums up the organisation's optimism for the future as well as recognising the heritage and identity of the area. This is:



This vision is underpinned by a set of core values, which define organisational culture and the way that the council acts, these are:



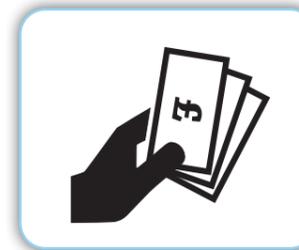
## PRIORITIES

To deliver positive change across the borough of Redcar and Cleveland the council has a set of agreed priorities that it will work towards, alongside the local community and partners. These are:



### 1 Cleaner and Greener

- Become a carbon neutral borough
- Deliver effective neighbourhood services
- Ensure our communities live in an environmentally sustainable borough



### 2 More and Better Jobs

- Ensure local people are able to access local jobs
- Promote economic prosperity by encouraging business investment & growth
- Support a skilled and versatile workforce
- Improve secondary school standards to inspire young people



### 3 Proud Places

- Strong and sustainable town and village centres
- Promote our borough as a great place to live, work and enjoy
- Thriving arts, culture and heritage sector
- Quality community spaces



### 4 Safe and Supportive Communities

- Keep people safe from harm
- Continue to provide an effective early help offer
- Redesign youth service provision
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Focus on the most vulnerable to help them achieve their full potential



### 5 Driving Change from Within

- Support our teams to help boost productivity
- Enhance the Council's reputation
- Streamline management and performance
- Financial resilience and sustainability

# 2 Policy Hierarchy

The council has a range of complementary policies and plans which set the strategic and political context in which the organisation operates. The following simple diagram provides an overview of where the Digital Strategy sits.

## Corporate Plan

The corporate plan sets out the council's vision & values and priorities. This is the strategic framework which elected members have put in place in order to ensure the delivery of their political priorities.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy

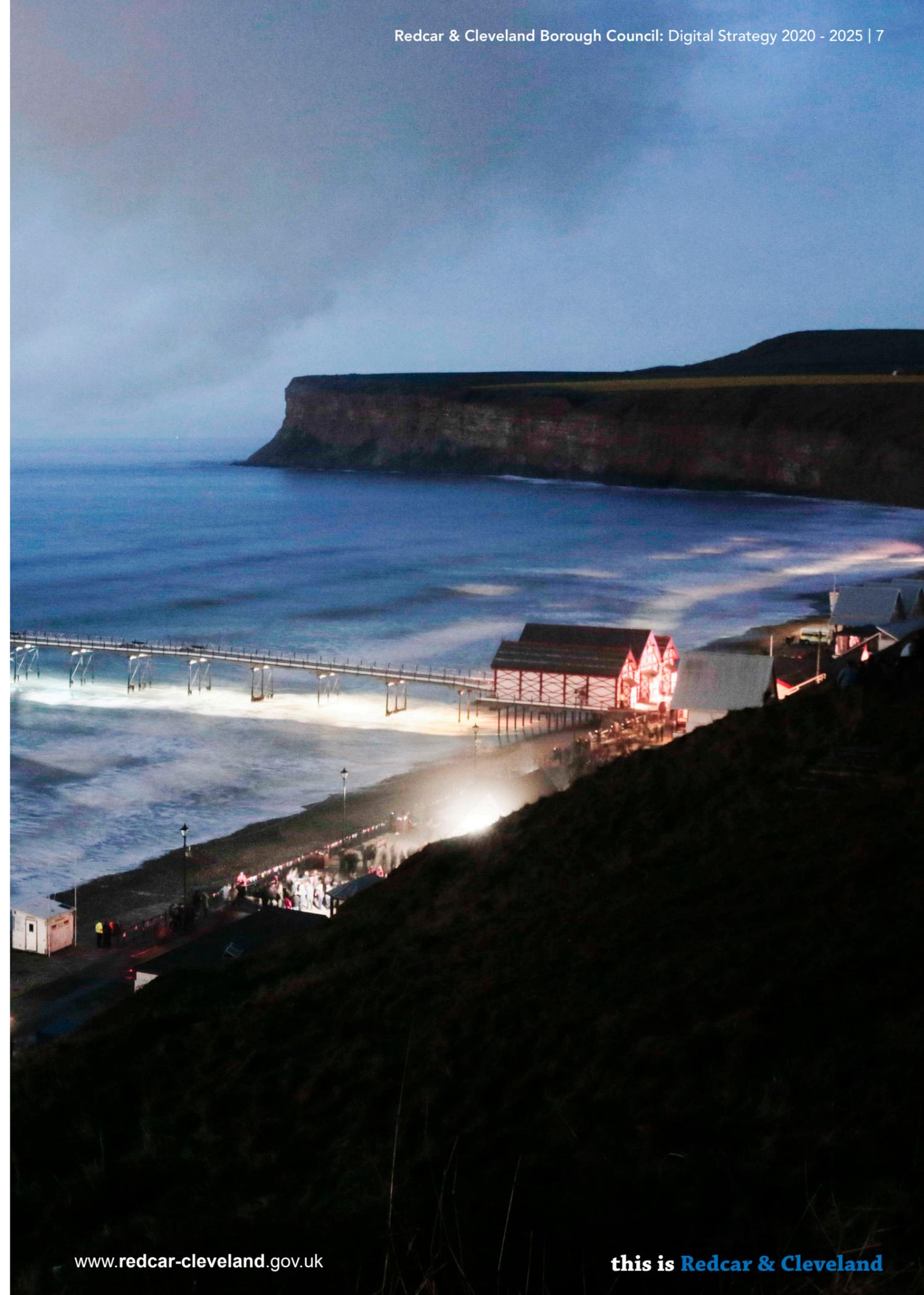
The Medium Term Financial Strategy underpins all that the council will deliver within the corporate plan. It sets out within a robust plan how the council will fund agreed priorities.

## Digital Strategy

The Digital Strategy articulates how the council will best use digital technology to facilitate the delivery of the organisation's priorities. This is set at a strategic level, providing the direction for the council's digital working.

## IT Strategy

The IT Strategy sets out the technology that will be used to facilitate the aspirations set out within the Digital Strategy. This is more of a technical document setting out the specific technology which will be used to deliver upon the council's digital aspirations.



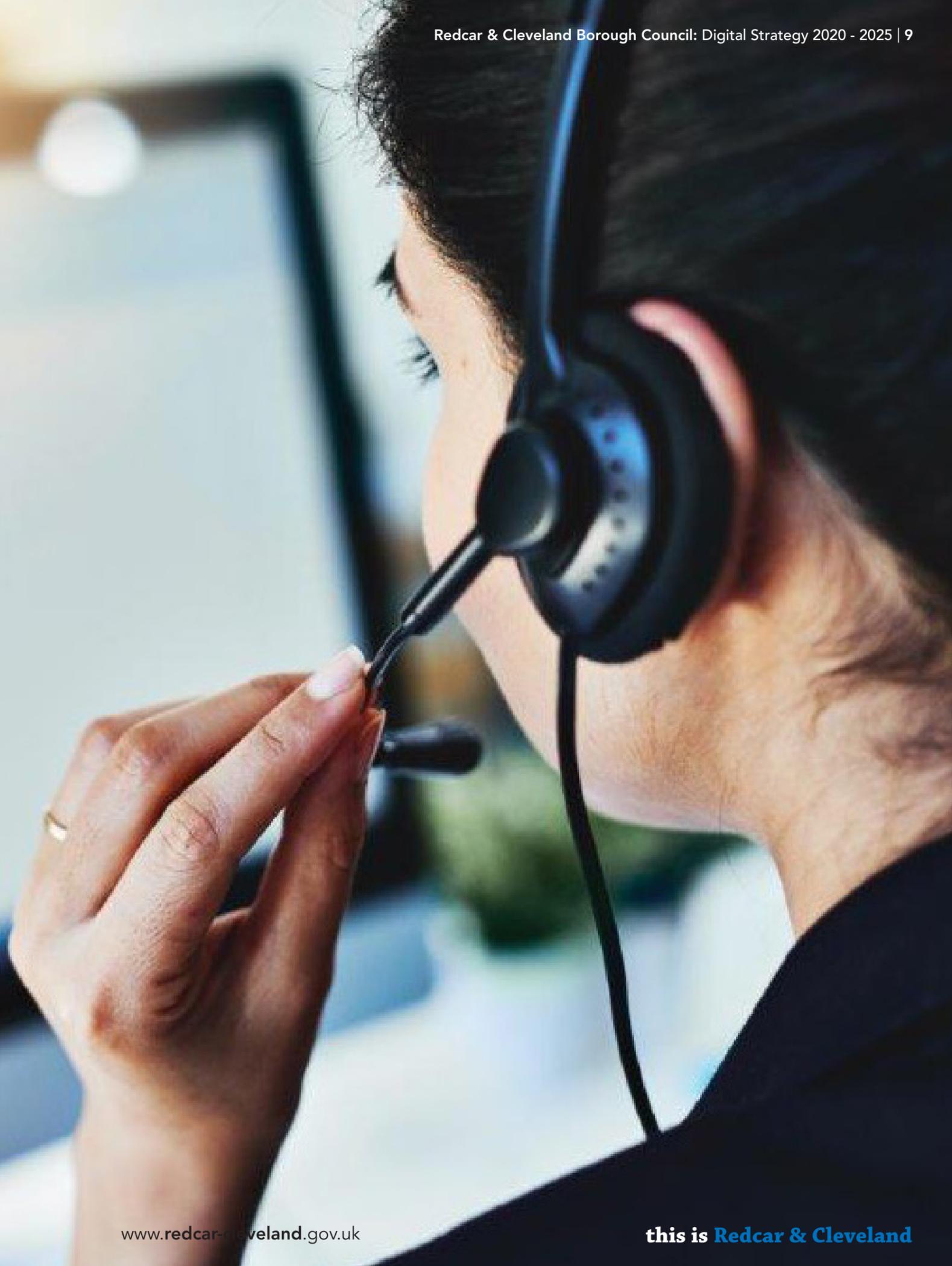
# 3 Digital Strategy Introduction

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council like other local authorities in the country, has undergone a period of substantial change over the past decade, with significant budget reductions, political change, global issues such as climate change as well as Covid-19 redefining the way in which local government operates.

There will inevitably be more change over the coming years, one certainty though is that the digital revolution will not slow down, digital technology is at the centre of how society functions, and this will continue to be the case. It is therefore vital that the council embraces digital working, and seizes the opportunities afforded by digitisation.

Whilst the council has already made good progress with digitisation, through remote working and digital communications, it is necessary to build on this and truly embed digital working at the council. This strategy defines the high-level objectives that will do just that, modernising the way that the council operates.

Although the council's services do vary significantly, there is scope for further digitisation across almost all of them, in some cases services could be fully digitised, for others digital technologies may provide an opportunity to enhance the service which is provided to residents. The emphasis will be on using the right technology for services – that which makes them more efficient. The purpose of digitisation is not to replace human interaction with residents, it is to improve the service that is provided.



# 4 Digital Snapshot

The following statistics from the Office for National Statistics publication *"Internet Access - Households and Individuals, Great Britain 2020"* provide an indication to the extent that the internet is a part of people's lives:



In February 2020, **96%** of households in Great Britain had internet access, up from **93%** in 2019, and **57%** in 2006 when comparable records began



Internet connections in households with one adult aged 65 years and over have increased by **seven** percentage points since 2019, to **80%**

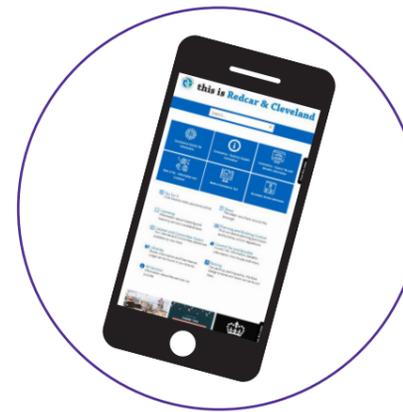


In February 2020, **76%** of adults in Great Britain used internet banking, increasing from **30%** in 2007 and **73%** in 2019



In February 2020, **87%** of all adults had shopped online within the last 12 months, up from **53%** in 2008; those aged 65 years and over had the highest growth, rising from **16%** to **65%** over this period

The following are some key facts about Redcar and Cleveland and the council and the current digital offering:



Between September 2019 and September 2020, the council's website was viewed over **2.7 million** times. Approximately **60%** of these viewings were from mobile phones or tablets, with **40%** from laptops or computers



The council's Facebook following has grown from **8000** in 2018 to over **13,500** in 2020



A single Facebook post in 2020 reached over **120k** people



The borough of Redcar and Cleveland covers **93** square miles and is home to **136,000** people. Across the borough the council owns more than **500** land and property assets



The council employs over **2000** staff who work out of over **60** buildings of different size and in different locations



Council staff and elected members currently use over **1400** laptops or desktop computers, over **1350** mobile phones, over **300** tablets, working on over **80** systems, using **85** multi-functional devices (printers/scanners).

# 5 Digital Strategy Objectives

To focus the council’s work to become more digital a series of interlinking objectives have been established. These are set out over the following pages, and are broken down into the categories: *Improving Access for Citizens* and *A Digital Business*.

## Improving Access for Citizens

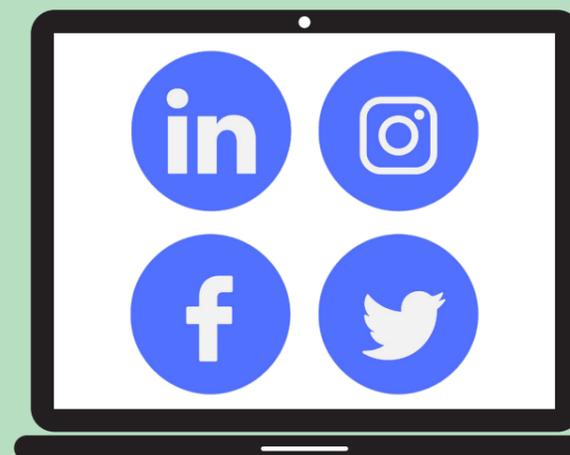
Improving access for citizens is all about making the council more accessible digitally, enabling residents to transact with the council and access information on services, when suits them. The key areas of focus in this regard will be:

**To improve the council’s online offer, ensuring that residents and visitors can access the information they need on council services through a new website.**

The council’s website will be both interactive and informative providing a better experience for users. Residents will have improved access to information and services, enabling them to transact online with the council when works for them. Be it reporting a missed bin, keeping on top of council tax payments or applying for a job, the new website will ensure that residents can better manage their business with the council.



To enhance the council’s digital communications offer, using the appropriate social media platforms to communicate with residents and staff.



The council will grow its social media offer, using the various platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube to communicate with residents. Social media enables the council to share key updates with residents every day, as well as hear what people think. It is one of the council’s main tools for engaging with the local community, with more and more people choosing to interact with the council in this way. The organisation will use the right platforms, for the right messages, reaching the appropriate audience through an intelligent customer focused approach.

To support residents to be able to access the digital services provided by the council.



As the council’s digital offer evolves, with more services provided digitally it will be vital to ensure that residents are able to access the services provided. To facilitate this the council will work with partners to drive the work to provide high speed internet access across the Borough. In addition the council will seek to ensure that residents aren’t excluded and that support is available to improve digital skills where help is needed. The council will work with service users, and partners to develop digital services which meet each other’s differing needs.

## A Digital Business

A Digital Business is all about placing technology at the centre of council operations, working digitally in order to be more efficient, and deliver the council's priorities.

**To reduce the council's carbon footprint through working digitally.**



The council is fully committed to reducing its carbon footprint, with a goal to be carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030. Working ever more digitally will enable the council to reduce its carbon footprint by reducing travel through having more virtual meetings, reducing the amount of paper used through doing more on screen. In addition, working more digitally will underpin work to rationalise buildings and reduce carbon, by allowing staff to work from home, not being tied to a fixed base.

**To place cyber security at the centre of digital transformation.**



The council learned a lot following the cyber-attack in February 2020, which will help to shape future digital working. Technology has the potential to both improve service delivery, as well as cause great disruption when there is an outage. The cyber-attack reinforced the need to continue to invest in security tools which will help to reduce the risk of a successful attack, in addition to transforming organisational culture. The council will regularly refresh and review its cyber security arrangements to ensure that they are robust.

**To invest in technology which improves services and makes them more efficient.**



The council has committed a significant amount of money from its capital programme to investing in information technology and digital improvement projects. This will fund, the ongoing development of the IT network and infrastructure, which underpins all the council's digital services, as well as be invested in systems which improve efficiency through the better use of data and information. The council will invest in modern technology, to complement human interactions and improve the service provided to residents.

**To be a modern flexible organisation, where staff and councillors have the equipment and systems to do their job from any location.**



With more than 2000 staff of varying professions, the council's workforce is large and multi-disciplinary. Due to Covid-19 a large proportion of this workforce began to work from home for the first time, with little lead in. Whilst digital technology has made this possible, there is more to do to embed this way of working longer term. The Council will strive to ensure that staff are provided with the technology to enable them to do their job wherever they are, be it through handheld devices for the front line, or improved systems to ensure the home working experience remains positive. Equally the council will strive to build on some of the progress made in councillors accessing meetings electronically.

# 6 Governance of the Digital Strategy and Digital Transformation

The overall responsibility for the delivery of the Digital Strategy and digital transformation within the council is as follows:



# 7 Tracking Progress and Reporting Performance

As an action within the corporate plan, progress on the delivery of the council’s Digital Strategy will be reported through the regular performance reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny and Improvement Committees.

The following performance measures will be monitored and reported against regularly. They provide some indication of the impact of the delivery of the objectives set out within this Digital Strategy:

**Objective:** Improving Access for Citizens

PERFORMANCE MEASURE
Social Media – Increase the number of likes on the council’s Facebook page
Website – Increase the number of unique visits to the council website
Website – Reduce the bounce rate when accessing pages on the council website
Website – Increase the average time spent on a page on the council website

**Objective:** Digital Business

PERFORMANCE MEASURE
Secure the highest score through the LGA Cyber Security Stock-take rating
Reduce the number of sides of paper printed
Reduce the annual Cost of printing
Reduce the annual spend on staff mileage



