Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	11 September 2018
	Cabinet		4 October 2018
Subject:	Digital Inclusion Working Group Final Report	Wards Affected:	All
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer		

Is this a Key Decision? Yes **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** Yes

Exempt/Confidential No

Purpose/Summary

To present formally the final report of the Digital Inclusion Working Group.

Recommendations: That

1. The Working Group was impressed with the Visitor Economy (VE) 'Passport to Success' scheme aimed at college students across the Liverpool City Region coming into the tourism industry; whereby students are able to achieve a bronze, silver or gold passport standard to provide them with a range of opportunities to either gain quality work experience, an interview, apprenticeship or a full-time job.

    The Working Group, at its meeting held on 23 May 2018 acknowledged that literary and numeracy skills should be embedded as a priority along with digital skills.

    Accordingly, it is recommended that:-

    (A)   The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Employment and Skills Board be requested to consider the development of a Digital Skills Passport Scheme (incorporating numeracy, literacy and communication skills) to help Sefton residents to gain future employment, via the Learning and Skills budget to be devolved from 2019; and

    (B)   Sefton Council, via Sefton@Work, in conjunction with local organisations such as Sefton Community Learning Service, work with the Liverpool City Region with the aim of exploring the application of such a Skills Passport for the benefit of Sefton employers and residents;

2.   Using the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion "Mosaic" data, areas of high unemployment be targeted to enable those Sefton residents excluded from the labour market to develop their ICT skills to improve their opportunities for gaining future employment;

3.   To facilitate the above the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be requested to devolve sufficient funding to Sefton Council to appoint a project worker with the clear objectives of:-

    (A)   Working with local employers to map ICT/digital skills;

    (B)   Working with local partners such as Sefton Community Learning Service to develop and deliver bespoke training programmes to target residents in the areas identified in the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion "Mosaic" data;

    (C)   Identifying, using the data from the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion "Mosaic", a number of residents who would benefit from and be able to undertake training as referred to in 3. (B) above; and

    (D)   Working with local employers to develop a compact agreement to enable those residents who successfully complete the bespoke training programme(s) to gain relevant employment;

4.   If further opportunities arise for a roll out of the Include-IT project and to support the objectives of recommendation 2 then Sefton CVS be requested to consider such roll out to the priority areas identified within the Poverty Modelling and Digital Exclusion document; and

5.   Chief Legal and Democratic Officer be requested to submit a monitoring report to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Resources to be held on 5 March 2019, setting out progress made against each of the recommendations set out in the report and that thereafter, monitoring reports be submitted to the Committee on a six monthly basis.

Reasons for the Recommendation:
The Working Group has made a number of recommendations that require approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) and the Cabinet.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:
No alternative options were considered. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) established the Working Group to review Digital Inclusion and the Working Group has performed this task.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A)   Revenue Costs

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report. The implementation of recommendations that result in efficiency savings and any necessary financial investment will be the subject of separate reports.

(B) **Capital Costs**

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report. The implementation of recommendations that result in efficiency savings and any necessary financial investment will be the subject of separate reports.

Implications:

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Financial
Legal: Housing Act 2004
Human Resources
Equality   1. No Equality Implication ☑   2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated ☐   3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains ☐

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose

Protect the most vulnerable: Digital inclusion is a principal and approach that aims to ensure that people have the capability to use the internet to do things that benefit them on a day to day basis - whether they be individuals, businesses or other entities e.g. the voluntary sector.   Likewise digital inclusion aims to reduce digital exclusion and the digital divide that can exist within society for a variety of reasons   The government's Information Economy Strategy called for greater focus on digital inclusion in order to: • help businesses make smart use of information technology and data;   • ensure citizens benefit from the digital age; and   • underpin economic growth   Digital inclusion will be one of the areas that the Council will seek to contribute to and enable within the Borough of Sefton and as such help residents to improve their chances to gain employment.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above
Place – leadership and influencer: As above
Drivers of change and reform: As above

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above
Greater income for social investment: As above
Cleaner Greener: None directly associated with this report

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD 5273/18) has been consulted and notes there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 4497/18) is the author of the report.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection

Introduction/Background

At its meeting held on 13 June 2017 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) approved the establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Digital Inclusion with the terms of reference and objectives set out below.

Following consultation with the Head of Corporate Resources it was subsequently recommended and approved that the commencement of the Digital Inclusion Working Group be deferred until January 2018. This was to enable the objectives of the ICT Development Programme to be progressed and thereafter be included in the Working Group's Scoping Document.

Overview
Digital inclusion is a principal and approach that aims to ensure that people have the capability to use the internet to do things that benefit them on a day to day basis - whether they be individuals, businesses or other entities eg the voluntary sector.

Likewise digital inclusion aims to reduce digital exclusion & the digital divide that can exist within society for a variety of reasons

The government's Information Economy Strategy called for greater focus on digital inclusion in order to:

- help businesses make smart use of information technology and data;
- ensure citizens benefit from the digital age; and
- underpin economic growth

Digital inclusion will be one of the areas that the Council will seek to contribute to and enable within the Borough of Sefton and as such this working group can help to develop a series of recommendations and principles for consideration as part of this work.

<u>Objectives</u>

The objectives of the Working Group are to:-
- Identify the opportunity for the Council in supporting and enabling Digital Inclusion within the Borough of Sefton and the wider City Region;
- Identify how this can feed into the Councils future ICT and Digital Strategies;
- Confirm the strategic themes that should be addressed as part of this work eg connectivity and skills;
- Identify potential council activities that could be provided on a more digital basis and the enabling activity that will be required to support this; and
- proactively engaging with the Combined Authority and their advisors/consultants to ensure that opportunities identified for Sefton are incorporated in to the Liverpool City Region Digital Infrastructure Action Plan to ensure positive outcomes for the borough and its constituent communities

All proposals will need to take account of resource requirements and be within the parameters of the current Medium Term Financial Plan

Accordingly, the Working Group has met on numerous occasions to undertaken such review and its Final Report, together with associated recommendations, is attached.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) and the Cabinet are requested to support the contents of the Working Group Final Report and approve the recommendations contained therein.