Emergency Powers Decision Report

Digital and Data Strategy Documents

Decision Maker: Chief Executive

Service Area: Technology & Digital Services
Directorate: Corporate Resources
Report Author: Matthew Gratton
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Date of Decision: 2nd November 2026

1. Power to make the decision

The decision is being taken under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions which cannot be delayed until the next Cabinet meeting.

2. Decision Sought

Technology, Digital and Data Services (TDS) have produced strategies for Oldham Council regarding Digital Technology and Data. The purpose of presenting these documents for an executive approval decision is to ensure the strategies are understood by the Executive / Group Leaders as they form the backbone of all new technology, digital and data project work.

Therefore, approval is sought for both:

a) The Digital Data and Technology Strategy 2025 to 2030
Oldham Council is committed to harnessing digital, technology, and data innovations to deliver exceptional, resident-focussed services whilst driving efficiency and sustainability. This strategy outlines a 5-year plan to transition from hybrid to full cloud infrastructure, integrate AI, Robotic Process Automation (RPA), AI agents, and broader automation tools. It aligns with central government priorities, including the UK Government's *Blueprint for Modern Digital Government* (January 2025) and the *Transforming for a Digital Future Roadmap* (2022-2025), which emphasise modernising public services through technology to enhance productivity and resident engagement.

b) The Data Strategy 2025 to 2030
Oldham Council is poised to transform its data landscape, leveraging Microsoft technologies to deliver resident-focussed services whilst driving sustainability and innovation. This strategy outlines a 5-year plan (2025-2030)

to evolve from fragmented data silos, with no central corporate home for data and analysts embedded in business units, to a unified, AI-enhanced ecosystem using Microsoft Fabric, Co-pilot agents, Power BI, and automation tools. It aligns with the UK's National Data Strategy (NDS) and the Transforming for a Digital Future Roadmap (2022-2025), emphasising data-driven public services for better productivity and resident engagement. This builds upon the ongoing discovery and transformation programme, which provides key deliverables like AI and Power BI applications for data insights, ensuring these outputs inform a council-wide data framework without redundancy.

3. Reason for urgency

Executive approval of the Digital and Data Strategy documents ensures a shared organisational commitment to digital and data transformation, providing the governance, direction and investment framework needed to improve services, deliver efficiencies and support better outcomes for residents.

With multiple TDS papers being submitted for approval it is essential to understand the context within which they are requested and hence important for Oldham Council in under pinning technical infrastructure for future change.

4. Risk(s) of not taking the decision

The risk of not securing Executive approval could lead to inconsistent decision-making, governance, missed opportunities for digital transformation, and reduced awareness that technology and data investments are aligned to the Council's corporate priorities and long-term service objectives.

5. Financial impact if decision not taken forward

There are no finances requested and therefore there is no direct financial impact.

6. Statutory Officer clearances

a. Section 151 Officer

Name Lee Walsh
Date 7 October 2026
Comments

The approval of the Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2025-2030 and the Data Strategy 2025-2030 does not create any additional financial commitments for the Council. The strategies provide a strategic framework for future digital, technology, and data transformation activities across the organisation.

Any future projects, programmes or initiatives requiring investment will be subject to separate business cases and the Council's decision-making and budget approval processes.

b. Monitoring Officer

Name: Alex Bougatef
Date: 13 October 2026
Comments:

The exercise of emergency powers should be undertaken in consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council. However, the Council has not yet appointed a Leader or Deputy Leader for the current municipal year so it is not possible to consult them. In addition, there is no certainty about when a Leader or Deputy Leader will be appointed as the Council has failed at successive meetings to do so. For the reasons given in the report an urgent decision relating to the report is required and it cannot await the appointment of a Leader and Deputy Leader at some undetermined future date.