Report to Chief Executive

Digital & Data Strategy Documents

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2nd November 2026

Reason for Decision
Technology, Digital and Data Services (TDS) have produced two strategies for Oldham Council regarding Digital Technology and Data. These strategies are required to be approved by the Executive team.

Recommendations
Technology, Digital and Data Services (TDS) have produced two 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**

b. **The Data Strategy 2025 to 2030**

Digital & Data Strategy Documents

1 Background

1.1 Approved Digital and Data Strategies are important for Oldham Council because they provide the agreed direction, governance framework and organisational commitment needed to modernise services and ensure technology and data investments support the Council's priorities.

1.2 Oldham Council is committed to harnessing digital, technology, and data innovations to deliver exceptional, resident-focussed services whilst driving efficiency and sustainability. **The Digital Data and Technology Strategy 2025 to 2030** 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.

1.3 Oldham Council is poised to transform its data landscape, leveraging Microsoft technologies to deliver resident-focussed services whilst driving sustainability and innovation. **The Data Strategy 2025 to 2030** 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.

2 Current Position

2.1 At present, Oldham Council does not have approved corporate Digital, Technology and Data Strategies. As a result, there is no formally endorsed framework against which digital and technology investments can be consistently aligned, prioritised and governed across the organisation. The proposed strategies being presented establish this framework and support a coordinated approach to future transformation activity.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 Option 1: Do Nothing and continue to operate with any formal technology strategies governing TDS.
Reason for Rejection: By not having referenceable strategies for digital and data, this could lead to inconsistent decision making, weaker governance arrangements, missed opportunities for digital transformation, reduced awareness that technology and data investments should be aligned to corporate priorities and long-term service objectives.

3.2 Option 2: To operate with an overall Digital and Technology Strategy and a specific Data Strategy. This is the preferred option.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 The preferred option is Option 2, for TDS to operate with approved Digital, Data and Technology strategies which will provide the following benefits:

Provides a clear long-term direction
The Digital, Data and Technology Strategies set out a five-year plan for how the Council will use technology, digital services, cloud infrastructure, AI, automation and data to improve services and operate more efficiently. Without an approved strategy, future decisions may be taken in isolation rather than as part of a coordinated plan.

Ensures investment decisions are aligned to Council priorities
Executive approval demonstrates that technology and data initiatives support the Council's wider corporate objectives and service ambitions. This helps ensure resources are focused on agreed priorities and deliver benefits for residents.

Strengthens governance and accountability
This report highlights that executive approval provides the governance framework needed to oversee digital and data transformation. This creates a clear basis for decision making, prioritization, and monitoring of future projects and investments.

Supports service improvement and better outcomes for residents
Both strategies are designed to enable more resident-focused services through improved use of technology, automation, AI and data-driven decision making. The intention is to improve service delivery while increasing efficiency and sustainability.

Creates a shared organisational commitment
Approval of the strategy documents ensures a shared organisational commitment to digital and data transformation across the Council. This is important because successful transformation requires all services to work towards common objectives rather than developing separate approaches

5 Consultation

5.1 The strategies have been socialized around the various DMTs and other interested parties across the Council.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 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 the overarching framework and direction for future digital, technology and data transformation activities across the organisation.

6.2 Any projects, programmes or initiatives requiring investment will be subject to separate business cases, governance arrangements and the Council's budget approval processes. Funding, affordability and value for money will be assessed and approved on a case-by-case basis before any expenditure is committed.

(Matthew Kearns – Finance Manager)

7 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from approval of the strategies. The Report author should ensure that any equality, data protection and governance implications arising from the implementation of the strategies have been appropriately considered. Any future projects, initiatives or decisions arising from the strategies will be subject to separate consideration and compliance with applicable legal/procurement and governance requirements.

– Sukie Kaur – Commercial and Procurement Solicitor

8. **Procurement Implications**

8.1 There are no procurement implications arising from this report. However, it should be noted that, in respect of any third-party expenditure associated with this Strategy, the Commercial Procurement Unit will ensure that the Council's Contract Procedure Rules are adhered to, together with all relevant procurement regulations. Senga Henstock, ICT Senior Buyer, Commercial Procurement Unit, 3rd Sept 2026

9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

No Impact has been identified

9.1 **Key Decision**

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 KDD-26-15

12 **Background Papers**

12.1 The Cabinet is presented with 2 strategy documents submitted with this cabinet paper for review and approval:

- **The Digital Data and Technology Strategy 2025 to 2030**
- **The Data Strategy 2025 to 2030**

13 **Appendices**

13.1 N/A