

Title of Report:	Digital Transformation Programme
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2021
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Accelerating our Economy and Contributing to
Outcome	Prosperity
Lead Officer	The Council will work with its partners to maximise business start-up opportunities and encourage existing enterprises to grow and prosper

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£31,109 from September 2021 to March 2023
Included in Current Year Estimates	The Council will work with its partners to maximise business start-up opportunities and encourage existing enterprises to grow and prosper
Capital/Revenue	Business Development Manager, Prosperity and Place
Code	To be delivered by existing staff
Staffing Costs	£31,109 from September 2021 to March 2023

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the Digital Transformation Programme and request permission to sign the cross-Council Collaboration Agreement.

2.0 Background

The Digital Transformation Programme is a new business support initiative that is designed to support over 1000 businesses across Northern Ireland to improve their productivity by incorporating digital technologies into their businesses. It will be delivered through a range of workshops and one to one mentoring.

It has been designed to provide further support to businesses as they aim to recover and re-build from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Funding has been secured from Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund against the total programme costs of £1.2million, with councils contributing £342,200. An 11 council split implies CCAGBC will provide match funding of £31,109.

3.0 Programme Details

The new Digital Transformation Programme will provide a platform for businesses to understand the digital options which are available to them, plan the next steps in their digital journey and create value for their customers in an increasingly competitive economy.

The workshops will show Northern Ireland businesses how they can adopt existing and proven technologies to help them transform their business models, improve productivity and create value for customers and will appeal to businesses in all sectors including manufacturing, retail, tourism, hospitality and construction.

The Programme, which will commence in September 2021, will also offer 198 businesses (18 per Council area) with the highest potential for digital transformation an opportunity to be selected for one-to-one digital innovation mentoring. The mentoring will explore how their business can adopt digital technologies to deliver transformational change with the completion of a Digital Acceleration Plan.

3.1 Programme Targets and Outcomes

The following targets and outcomes have been set for the programme and are confirmed in the Letter of Offer to Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council who are acting as lead council:

Description	Total
Number of fundamental workshops	26
Innovation road maps prepared	198
Number of businesses receiving mentoring	198
Number of mentoring days delivered	1,188
Number of masterclass workshops	30
Number of network cluster events delivered	25
Number of Digital Acceleration Plans prepared	198
Number of participants engaged through either workshops or workshops and mentoring	1,040
Number of new jobs created by 30th June 2023	185

Number of jobs sustained by 30th June 2023	350
Invest NI referrals	20

4.0 Next Steps

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council are finalising a Programme Collaboration Agreement for all 11 Councils to sign and once this is in place, they can move forward with the procurement of delivery organisation(s). It is hoped that delivery to businesses will begin in September and will continue until 31st March 2023.

5.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Members confirm that they are content for the Chief Executive to sign the Collaboration Agreement as confirmation of Council's involvement in the Digital Transformation Programme.