

5.7 DIGITAL STRATEGY ACTION PLAN SIX MONTHLY UPDATE - MARCH 2022

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References: 1. [Digital strategy action plan March 2022 update](#)  

Recommendation

That the Strategy and Finance Committee receive the report – Digital Strategy Action Plan Six Monthly Update - March 2022.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the six-monthly update on the Digital Strategy action plan that details how the Council's Digital Strategy will be implemented.

Key highlights include the receipt of central government funding for an age-friendly digital inclusion project for 2022, building of the relationship with the local fibre network provider and the launch of the community digital survey that has had a positive impact on the perception of the Digital Strategy. This report also highlights some risks identified in the last six months and outlines the impact of a second national COVID-19 lockdown on some delivery timelines.

Overview

There has been positive movement on the Digital Strategy action plan priorities, although it is acknowledged that the national COVID-19 lockdown in August 2021, and subsequent COVID-19 restrictions in public spaces, have led to some delays and changing of priorities.

There have been a lot of positive comments from the community about the work happening in the digital space. Whanganui has also been congratulated on being progressive by having dedicated resource in this space and overall, there has been a lot of encouraging movement in implementing the Digital Strategy.

Ref 1. March 2022 Digital Strategy action plan update provides a detailed update to the *Indicative Priorities - Action Plan 2021-22* provided as part of the report in August 2021. Below some key highlights and risks are identified.

Key Highlights

Age friendly funding

An application for funding of \$15,000 for a 12-month project from February 2022 was successful from Te Tari Kaumātua, the Office for Seniors in December 2021. This is the first dedicated funding received for the Digital Strategy outside of resourcing. The funding is to engage directly with older people to understand their needs and barriers in accessing current digital inclusion initiatives and

will work collaboratively with Age Concern and SeniorNet Whanganui to design interventions and supports for digital inclusion. Seven other projects were successful across Aotearoa in this round.

The first steps for the project will be determined alongside the results of the digital survey.

[Funding for age friendly communities | Te Tari Kaumātua \(officeforseniors.govt.nz\)](#)

Community Digital Survey

A community digital survey covering household connectivity and the digital confidence of individuals in Whanganui was launched on Thursday 13 January 2022 and closed on Friday 25 February. Based on feedback from the WRCB, a section dedicated to rural connectivity beyond internet was included and the rural community has responded positively, particularly in Kai Iwi. Some up-to-date statistics will be provided verbally.

Relationship with Tuatahi First Fibre

Tuatahi First Fibre (formerly Ultrafast Fibre) is the fibre network owner in Whanganui. They also own the networks in Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. This relationship was instrumental in the early rollout of fibre in the region and is important to continue to enable the best internet available to our community.

- Introduced Tuatahi's community manager to Hakeke Street Community Centre and Library that resulted in them funding their Senior Tech talks provided by SeniorNet Whanganui for the next 12 months in 2022.
- Provided prizes for the community digital survey including \$500 worth of \$25 prezzie cards and 3x Samsung tablets. The tablets were provided in recognition that access to devices in Whanganui was a known issue.
- Continue to work on opportunities to improve crossover of relationships, including escalation points for fibre installs, provision of Optical Network Terminal (ONT) cables through a third-party tech provider when they have been removed by previous occupiers and ways to improve processes that involve council such as consents, pre-installs at council housing.

Govhack 2021 and into 2022

Due to the COVID-19 lockdown in August 2022, Govhack, the Australasian open data hackathon, had to move at short notice to a virtual delivery. Whanganui as a location was well represented over the weekend, both for participants and the support it received from Whanganui libraries, Whanganui & Partners, Whanganui Emergency Management, and Proaxiom's national sponsorship.

YetiTech, a local ICT company in Whanganui won a New Zealand challenge with their mental health app entry. The virtual international Govhack awards were held on Thursday 21 October, where Whanganui District Council came as a runner up across Australia and New Zealand for best government participation – Local Government.

All 30 New Zealand winners and runners up received Whanganui Visitor Guides as part of their prize package to further promote Whanganui as a destination.

We want to acknowledge that Whanganui's participation and national profile from GovHack has been because of Mike Price's involvement, dedication and enthusiasm over the years. This includes leading the way with the relocation of Proaxiom (a software development company) to Whanganui in 2015 with his business partner and his ongoing support of tech initiatives across both local business and community.

Mike helped to run code clubs in July 2021 at Hakeke Street Community centre, kept pushing the conversation regarding a local tech network and worked with other local ICT professionals, despite advancing illness up to September 2021. Mike, unfortunately, passed away in January 2022.

We recognize both this incredible loss but also take it as a call to ensure his local legacy continues based on the foundations he helped set since 2015. GovHack 2022 will again be supported by the Whanganui District Council and led out of Whanganui nationally. His support also helped the launch of the first networking event for a local tech network in December 2021.

Risks and Proposed Mitigation

By having the Digital Strategy action plan, it has allowed the last six months to assess where Whanganui is placed and identify some key risks – including the actions that will be taken over the next six months to mitigate them.

Risk	Observations	Mitigation
<p>Reliance of historic view and branding of Whanganui as a digital leader and innovator</p>	<p>We are now in 2022 and accolades from 2012 (i.e. fibre rollout) and 2018 (SmartCity21) provide an outdated view of the digital reality in Whanganui</p> <p>Issues with current fibre network installs due to early rollout of fibre as an overhead network when newer rollouts were underground. As well as growth near Whanganui city limits development where fibre is not available.</p> <p>Infometric stats for the last 3 years shows overall job growth in Whanganui however the net loss of 4 jobs within the knowledge economy</p> <p>ICT businesses in Whanganui are reporting difficulties in attracting/retaining skilled staff</p>	<p>Digital survey in 2022 will provide data and grounding for reality in Whanganui 'now'.</p> <p>Continuing to build relationship with Tuatahi First Fibre to improve fibre processes, an escalation pathway and barriers to network expansion</p> <p>Need to acknowledge current reality of digital in Whanganui and that relying on past accreditations can be damaging and do a disservice to those who are experiencing digital exclusion. Keep front of mind that digital and technology development often outpaces the ability of those to adapt and it is an ongoing journey that needs an agile and in-depth approach. Submitted new nomination to ICF SmartCity21 in Jan 2022 to have updated view of where we rank and need to focus efforts to reach this standard again.</p> <p>Continue to embrace the positivity towards trying new initiatives in Whanganui and promoting desire of council and community to support new and relevant digital initiatives</p> <p>Support ICT businesses in partnership with Whanganui & Partners in Whanganui and identify pathways through the establishment of the Whanganui tech network to provide a voice and channel for local tech professionals to report actual realities of running ICT businesses in the region. This will include requesting support and promoting successful ICT stories more cohesively. It's also about providing support to early conversations regarding the set up of a dedicated tech non profit by tech leaders.</p>

		<p>Tell the Whanganui story in national forums within the digital exclusion community and be an active member of the Digital Exclusion Coalition Aotearoa (DECA) – including helping establish the local government constellation.</p>
<p>Promoting a digital-first approach by Council without understanding the experience, needs and ability of customers (internal and external)</p>	<p>Those who have participated in the survey by phone have indicated that they feel left out by a focus on online consultations and processes. Phone continues to be the number one contact method for the Council in the period 1 Sept 21 to 31 Jan 22.</p> <p>Complaints re: council services requiring vaccine passes, particularly entry to council reception and libraries.</p> <p>Need to ensure all council staff are able to pick up new tech rolled out internally to assist with collaborative team work, video calling and remote working capability.</p> <p>Need to get oversight and agreed prioritisation of all digital work within both the Council, our libraries and Whanganui & Partners.</p>	<p>Need to integrate roll out of ICT initiatives, external and internal, by early engagement with stakeholders to understand needs.</p> <p>Make sure the voice of customer and feedback is sought and included in all digital initiatives i.e. market research or user testing undertaken to really understand what customers want and how they actually interact with Council with Policy and Communications teams; internal engagement regarding success of tech rollouts – comms and engagement research is due to start shortly.</p> <p>Education around accessibility of digital tools and making other options available to enhance digital inclusion and the ability to participate.</p> <p>Provide more visibility on ICT projects within Council and road map includes what happens to the tools and their ownership after transfer to BAU i.e. Antenna user stats.</p> <p>Enhance internal information sharing with other teams that deliver the Digital Strategy through their work plans. Recognise a need to better engage with Iwi – this will be a focus in the next six months.</p>

Feedback and next six months

The next Digital Strategy full update will be in six months per the agreed timeline. A report on the community digital survey will be provided in the next Community Wellbeing Team update to the 24 May Strategy & Finance Committee meeting.

For the next six months, the focus will be on prioritising digital work based on the insights received from the digital survey, promoting better cohesion internally on digital initiatives and then how to use both of these levers to start telling a connected story that helps build tech capability for

March 2022 Digital Strategy action plan update

Updates are provided to the table provided at the 10 August 2022 Strategy and Finance council meeting in the columns “March 2022 status” and “March 2022 update”. Where dates, activities or measures have been revised, these appear in red text.

Key for status:

On target Activity is tracking as expected, may have some slight revisions identified	Concerns Some issues identified or revisions made to keep on target	At risk Immediate actions needed or changes to plan required to deliver
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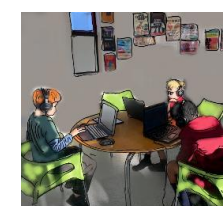
1. CONNECTIVITY AND INCLUSION

Goal:

We are accessible, linked in and known for it

Outcome:

Whanganui’s digital infrastructure and networks support our image and mean that everyone can participate online



Strategy	Key Activities	March 2022 Status	Outcome / Measure	Timeframe	March 2022 update
1.4 Identify gaps in our digital network and advocate for increased connectivity and resilience.	Survey a wide range of people in their community regarding their digital access eg. COVID vaccination centre	On target Note: slight realignment of delivery out of COVID-19 lockdown in 2020	Establish a baseline of current connectivity in Whanganui in 2021 Determine where the priorities are for connectivity and inclusion activities and partnerships	Revised to early 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to do survey was delayed in 2021 due to lockdown and uncertainty of events and public gatherings Survey launched in January 2022 and while hampered by COVID-19 traffic light red in Whanganui has had a positive response and general support from the community. As at 20 February, there has been 433 responses over 5 weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23% associated with rural community distribution 60% traffic from the Whanganui.govt.nz website 4% completed by paper 1% completed by phone Survey is expected to highlight some issues and also help to prioritise focus for next six months
	Work with Ultrafast Fibre to understand the level of fibre connections in Whanganui				
	Review use of Skinny Jump as a fixed wireless provider and current access barriers	On target	Advocate on behalf of community to Spark regarding access and speed issues in Whanganui region	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very productive relationship formed with Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa (DIAA) to share data and intel, work is being done together to identify communities impacted, in particular with local SteppingUP champion Alistair Fraser 855 Skinny Jump modems provided in Whanganui since 2018 to Sept 2021 – approx. 58% have been provided via Davis, Gonville and Hakeke St libraries Data of non-availability of cell towers is being used to target households for the digital survey to help build data Further work expected in 2022 to be able to look at options for low cost internet and community based barriers
	Connect with Crown Infrastructure and rural broadband for	On target	Advocate and facilitate collaboration for rural community on broadband access	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to WRCB in December 2021 and appointment of digital champion David Wells, supported by strategic Lead – Agribusiness at W&P

	<p>future investment in region</p> <p>Support improvement of rural digital connectivity in district</p>		<p>Broadband access and connections in rural Whanganui increases</p> <p>Facilitate collaboration with other parties (including Whanganui District Health Board, Whanganui District Council, Te Puni Kōkiri, Rural Connectivity Group). Report on progress to Whanganui Rural Community Board 2 times a year</p>	<p>(refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural connectivity section included in survey including cellphone and landline alongside internet access, survey was designed to help identify the impact that poor internet has on productivity in these areas as a lever for change Positive uptake by rural community through WRCB channels, this drove at least 101 responses. It was particularly supported by WRCB members and in particular representing Kai Iwi Based on survey results, will present to WRCB in April 2022 to look at areas can prioritise to deep dive on impact of low connectivity and then identify ways to us raise to central government / providers 	
1.5	<p>Support digital inclusion programmes and encourage new opportunities for free or subsidised devices and training.</p>	<p>Work with community on feasibility of supporting a home devices non-profit model i.e. digits.org.nz</p>	<p>Concerns Timeline revised</p> <p>Devices at home programme set up in Whanganui</p> <p>E-waste is reduced in Whanganui</p> <p>Device access at home is increased</p>	<p>2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early discussions with crossover with Climate Change advisor around e-waste started in Dec 2022 Intention is to wrap this up through the Age-friendly project and potential around options for tech focussed non-profit in Whanganui There are issues in this space around what the Ministry of Education is doing with device provision and giving some time to see what happens in this space 	
	<p>Support and work with local community groups and organisations to provide place-based initiatives for digital inclusion</p>	<p>On target</p>	<p>Digital devices are available to promote initiatives in a wide range of communities</p> <p>Digital inclusion activities or connectivity increases across Whanganui</p> <p>Funding in Whanganui digital inclusion initiatives (new or ongoing)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$15,000 funding received for an age-friendly high intervention digital inclusion project for 12 months, majority of funding is intended to cover a resource for 10 hours per week dedicated to this work alongside Age Concern and SeniorNet Whanganui – the project gives the opportunity to explore a collaborative model and community led development principles. Whanganui Libraries supported over 200 vaccine passes in the local community and continues to provide a service to do it outside the library. They also continue to run Code Clubs and classes for Seniors where possible with COVID-19 restrictions School holiday programme in September 2021 demonstrating robots and automation and artificial intelligence in a fun engaging way –it was fully subscribed with 12 tamariki attending each session. Feedback from guardians was it was great to see this type of program available and also helped them to see that “Screen time” wasn’t always bad 	
1.6	<p>Investigate the viability of a community technology hub.</p>	<p>As part of survey/data, review community needs for hub</p> <p>Review opportunity within other council projects for shared space/development opportunities</p>	<p>On target</p>	<p>Opportunity for an community technology hub is investigated in related council projects</p>	<p>Year Two in line with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth spaces and places Davis Library extension W&P work at the Backhouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting initial conversations and road map for an Whanganui tech led non profit Out of the tech network local business regarding viability of supporting Esports in Whanganui and the ability for this to support other tech initiatives within a community space Intention is to keep creating a space that Youth Council can be part of any development in this and that it fits in with the youth places and spaces work

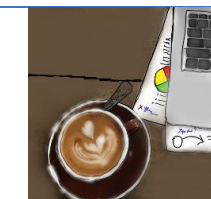
1.7	Encourage increases in free wifi throughout the district.	Understand where and how people access free wifi in Whanganui (see 1.4)	On target	Information on how people currently access free wifi services in Whanganui is available	Ongoing in 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wifi question in digital survey, early indicators are that InspireNet offering and in particular Victoria Avenue has some issues There also appears to be general interest in wifi availability in parks Work to continue in this and working with external providers and Information Management internally
		Promote location and accessibility of free wifi locations in Whanganui	On target	Resource available that is accessible and up to date to where can access free wifi Increased awareness of free wifi locations in Whanganui	Ongoing in 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above

2. A HIGH VALUE CREATIVE ECONOMY

Goal: We are prepared for the future

Outcome: Whanganui's economy reflects the changing nature of work and our standard of living improves

Refer to: [Whanganui & Partners Securing our Economic future – Statement of Intent 2021/22](#)



	Strategy	Key Activities	Status	Outcome / Measure	Timeframe	March 2022 – six monthly update
2.1	Identify skills needed for the future of work and encourage the development of relevant courses, including e-learning opportunities.	Investigate online/remote ICT training programmes that are funded by TAAF until 31 Dec 2022	At risk Need to focus on establishing relationship and building trust/confidence in what tech programmes can deliver	Number of students who access IT/technology training in Whanganui increases	2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been potential offers of programmes, particularly aimed at Maori and Pasifika, from players like Microsoft that have had limited interest – there is a need to start from the ground up and build a foundation that supports community orgs and iwi to take up these opportunities, including determining actual reality of tech pathways in Whanganui Hoping to build this through investigating viability of tech non profit
		Consider potential support and wrap around services or resources to encourage IT training in Whanganui	At risk See above	Number of students who access IT/technology training in Whanganui increases	2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial discussions on creating a space that supports remote ICT learning, connections with Manawatech (Manawatu tech network) and AWS Restart programme either being available in Whanganui or supported with mentors or internships Also as above, want to look to tech leaders locally to support this who understand the local opportunities available and potential barriers
2.2	Support platforms and initiatives to assist students to become 'future-ready'.	Work with schools to access digital programmes aimed at students and teachers	At risk To look at if can find a local champion in tech or school space to help build relationships	PLD hours in Whanganui schools are recorded, including non-profit investments or activities	Investigate feasibility with schools in 2021 Programmes investigated in 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a real difficulty getting buy in from schools in this space, some groundwork needs to be done to establish relationships and build the trust and confidence of the value of these types of programmes Need to look at building relationships outside of school but in community that can influence this space, i.e. Iwi Partnership with esports/gaming is being investigated alongside a local tech company and Sport Whanganui
		Review feasibility of Recycle a Device (RAD) being implemented in a Whanganui secondary school (refurbishment of devices by students to provide to community)	Concerns Need to revise timelines to ensure success	A device recycling programme is established in Whanganui Increase in students reporting skills to repair, refurbish or reuse devices and e-waste	Local programme established by December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 laptops donated by community out of engagement from digital survey to RAD Based on discussions with local tech company that works with e-waste, reviewing the focus on how to approach this and encourage children to get involved Exploring breakerspaces that can inspire youth to consider how to recycle or reuse digital waste alongside local business To investigate a formal MOU with Digital Wings in collaboration with climate change advisor to have formal e-waste management for end of life council tech
		Support any place or space initiatives that involve digital assets or technology by the	On target	Youth committee is supported for digital initiatives within Youth Places and Spaces	Scoping assessment 2020/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to Youth Council in December 2021 and working with Youth Council Project Officer to ensure opportunities to involve or support youth digitally are taken, both for external projects and internal capacity of the Youth council

		Youth Committee per LTP			Implementation 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support provided to enable Youth councillors connectivity
		Work collaboratively to develop programmes that assist with employment & redeployment of the Whanganui workforce post Covid-19	Concern Update not provided so need to ensure visibility on W&P delivery in general	In collaboration with partners, at least 1 programme of work that targets pathways for new employment & talent development – specifically for Whanganui people – created	2020/21 (refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asked W&P for more detailed update as not clear in their reporting to council, did not receive in time for report
2.3	2.3 Develop and build on programmes to get businesses online.	Look at ways to increase visibility and relevance of Digital Boost in Whanganui and other programmes	On target Widened activities to make sure that all programmes that can increase participation are considered and supported	Signs up in the Manawatū-Whanganui region increase (as at June 2021, 4%) Number of businesses reported to having participated in programmes to increase business visibility online increases	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Ambassador programme ran within Whanganui and Partners to increase Google business use for 6 months and was reported to be successful by W&P Need to request updated stats from MBIE and continue to identify opportunities to promote Digital Boost as part of W&P offerings alongside keeping up to date with other programmes that help businesses get online Hoping as part of ICT network that a local database of providers is created that will help businesses know where to go for services i.e. websites, social media etc.
2.4	Facilitate the use of digital technologies and smart approaches to drive innovation and productivity.	Support businesses to innovate through a collaboration space	On target	1 significant project leading to new business innovation established	2020/21 (refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Backhouse Trust work is ongoing with a focus on having a space dedicated to tech, part of tech network first get together Release of Talent Connect mobile giving businesses and potential employees a different digital way to connect, stats to be provided on uptake and success in next update
2.5	Foster a dynamic knowledge economy and workforce.	Create a network of IT companies and professionals in Whanganui	On target	Increased awareness of IT opportunities in region IT companies are able to share resources, grow their business and attract IT professionals At least 4 events per annum held for digital network	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Whanganui Tech event held in December 2021 sponsored by W&P, great uptake and turn out. Focus was on an update on the Backhouse. ICT professionals gave positive feedback – guidance received from Manawatech, similar organisation in Palmerston North Networking has led to discussions around a tech non profit to support these type of local initiatives
		Attract IT related events to Whanganui	On target	Increase the profile of technology and digital opportunities in Whanganui Increased local media reporting on digital initiatives and events in Whanganui	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Govhack 2021 ran in 20-22 August 2021, went virtual due to COVID lockdown earlier that week across NZ. Whanganui District Council came as a runner up across Australia and New Zealand for best government participation – Local Government, the winner was Moreton Bay Regional Council in Queensland. All NZ winners and runners up (30 people) have received Whanganui Visitor Guides as part of their prize package to further promote Whanganui as a destination Whanganui & Partners, Library and Council working together for Tech Week 2022

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To investigate viability of bringing a gaming/esport type event to Whanganui, this has been done by other local councils to success and will be investigated further • Whanganui Chronicle was very interested in the digital survey and reported on it 3 times in one week, including the announcement of the age friendly project – several people who did the survey by phone who do not use the internet commented this is how they found out about the survey. Govhack was featured on the front page of the mid-week, with a photo at the Alexander Library where the event would have taken place • SmartCity21 declaration submitted in January 2022 for the year 2021 to the Intelligent Community Forum, this was the first update since 2019 to Whanganui’s information – in partnership with Whanganui & Partners, membership was renewed as part of this process. Expect in 2022 based on feedback to have some actions and also review if the accreditation and membership is of value to Whanganui now
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3. INNOVATION						
<p>Goal: We foster innovation and improvement through a digital lens Outcome: Whanganui stays current with digital opportunities and has a reputation for innovation</p>						
	Strategy	Key Activities	Status	Outcome / Measure	Timeframe	March 2022 update
3.1	Attract global pilot technology projects to Whanganui and become known as a technology testing 'centre of excellence'	Develop a targeted Whanganui business attraction plan	Concern With Whanganui & Partners, general need to increase visibility and reporting of initiatives that sit within their delivery	1 new IT sector business confirmed to set up in Whanganui	2020/21 (refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per Whanganui & Partners update to council
3.2	Continue to release clean, accurate and machine readable open data	See 4.2	On target	See 4.2	Ongoing – expect to be in line with work around GovHack 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use Govhack 2022 to promote and encourage internal council staff to think about how data available can be made open and available and also to celebrate legacy of local tech champion Mike Price Work with democracy team in next six months regarding LGOMIA trends and identify any data that could be made available Local tech company has offered to work with council on how to present live dashboards if interested including W&P economic dashboard
3.3	Develop incubator programmes for start-ups and accelerator programmes for growing businesses.	Foster a culture of entrepreneurship and capital investment within Whanganui	On target	1 business accelerator/incubator programme completed	2020/21 (refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovate Whanganui ran by W&P in 2021
3.4	Support clear government funding, angel and venture capital pathways for start-ups, growing businesses and research and development initiatives.	Increase technology knowledge onfarm by holding agri-tech event	On target	1 agri-tech event to demonstrate farm use efficiency, including digital backend development insights, to attract students to primary industries delivered	2020/21 (refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whanganui based Agtech event during Techweek planned for May 2022 sponsored by W&P
3.5	Work with stakeholders to find ways for technology to address waste and climate change issues.	Embed digital opportunities into climate change strategy	On target	Opportunity for technology focussed on measuring and reducing waste is identified	TBC, to review with Climate Change Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change Advisor onboard December 2021 and initial conversations started In next six-monthly update will provide a climate change specific update

4. A DIGITAL COUNCIL						
<p>Goal: Whanganui District Council is future-focused and enabling Outcome: Working with Council is easy and our services and approaches are smart</p>						
Strategy	Key Activities	March 2022 status	Outcome / Measure	Timeframe	March 2022 update	
4.1 Enhance Council’s digital engagement, support and online services (including the use of interactive online tools) so that anyone can interact with Council whenever, and wherever they are.	Promote our existing digital tools and services by partnering with community groups to demonstrate tools we have to different customer groups	Concerns See risks in report	Increase engagement, effectiveness and raise profile of council digital tools Improve access and usability of digital tools Reduce support required in person or via telephone and allow customer service to support more complex issues Receive feedback to improve our tools or their access	Ongoing – first round intended for 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone still remains the number 1 that customers contact and interact with the council in the last Customer Experience report to council Early comments from those who completed digital survey by phone was they felt they were increasingly excluded from council services and consultation because of “digital first” approach Focus needed on deep diving into statistics – we know people are still choosing to use phone as the number one way to contact us – need to look into how we can uncover why there is a lower uptake of digital tools 	
	User testing with identified groups of digital exclusion incl. seniors and disability Review accessibility of PDFs usage on website and alternatives	Concerns See risks in report	Provide opportunity to feedback on website and understand user needs Improved customer satisfaction with council and website accessibility score	2021/22 in line with Communications team work program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing and time be able to dedicate to this work is a concern, to be worked on in the next six months to support Communications team for this work 	
	Stocktake our social media and digital channels	Concerns See risks in report	Understand digital training needs for staff Digital channels are included in Comms team toolkit for staff Awareness of how to use digital channels Council digital channels are utilised and up to date	2021/22 in line with Communications team work program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above 	
	New council digital tools are launched	Concerns revision of timelines to be undertaken and better collaboration across Council needed to deliver	‘My Council’ programme is launched People know how to use ‘My Council’ and is reflected in user uptake statistics	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed launch of multi log in platform as dedicated comms plan and community outreach needed that has been hampered by COVID-19 restrictions Expect to be able to test some ways to help encourage people to use Council digital tools via the Age friendly project 	



4.2	Grow the transparency and accessibility of Council information and establish guidelines for open data approaches.	Establish a monthly digital dashboard to collate digital initiatives and measures within Council	At risk revision of timelines to be undertaken and further work done to understand where data is available and what it looks like, also in line with what new CE wants to see	Provide comparable baselines to measure Council success in digital space Raise awareness of digital initiatives in council Demonstrate to community that Council is embracing digital	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to other work and expected changes to CE, this was not looked at closely as expected, to be looked at as part of new CE appointment and work with Group Manager and ELT to needs of this reporting Work to be done to collate what data is out there or needs to have better focus to have meaningful reporting in space, including with Whanganui & Partners
		Host GovHack in Whanganui to promote open data Look into ways to open more WDC data	On target	Open data releases by WDC increase Process is established for how to release and host open data Awareness in community of open data availability increases	August 2021 Processes to be established for 2022/23 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Govhack 2021 hosted online by Whanganui however still very positive and local update, local tech company YetiTech won the Whanganui Emergency Management prize and looking at ways to support app that was developed for mental health resiliency. Has also led to conversations regarding how may be able to support tech needs of CDEM, particularly in automation and reporting in future
4.3	Establish internal and external working groups and opportunities to identify and pursue new trends in technology (See also: 1.3)	Create a community provider forum for digital initiatives Work within council and community to determine the need for a digital forum and at what level(s)	Concerns Timelines and key activities revised in light of loss of programmes in Whanganui	“Cheat sheet” for digital resources is created and accessible for non-profits More people are reached by digital inclusion programs	2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there has been support by the Connected Community Advisor directly to non profits and charities to access tools, there hasn't been the opportunity to make it more widely available Some funding has run out for digital literacy programmes funded out of COVID-19 in December 2021 and also expect this to happen when National Library partnership funding stops in June 2022 with the removal of dedicated librarian resource in this area Over next six months will look at best way to create an appropriate forum that support digital inclusion space and work with Community Well-being team to help establish resources that help organisations in this space overall
		Establish relationships with regional and district councils in wider region	On target	WDC is connected to and contributes to technology initiatives in wider region	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial conversations via DECA (Digital Equity Coalition Aotearoa) to help set up a local council constellation for those working in the digital inclusion space, was parked in 2021 due to other priorities for DECA (including the NZ digital strategy feedback process and attempts to address Auckland issue re: students access during longer lockdown). DECA has communicated digital survey to members in January 2022 and setting the scene for developing this New Far North District Council appointment for their digital strategy in 2022 and initial connection made to share ideas and issues Connected Community Advisor Panellist for Achieving Digital Equity in Our Service Delivery for Taituara on Tuesday February 2022 to promote Whanganui's digital strategy and support of digital equity initiatives
4.4	Embed a creative, digital focus in relevant Council work to celebrate Whanganui's arts, culture and heritage.	Develop and support pathways for digital sectors	Concern With Whanganui & Partners, general need to increase visibility and reporting of	Mana whenua creative community is acknowledged and celebrated as globally unique Delivery of 1 digital incubator programme supported Central	2021/22 (refer to W&P Statement of Intent 20/21)	

			initiatives that sit within their delivery	government investment into Whanganui digital sector leveraged		
4.5	Continue to develop and use digital tools to build Council's resilience and improve safety.	Opportunities to review use of digital tools for emergency management is taken	On target	Council's approach to risk reduction increasingly uses digital tools	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support during Emergency management to automate some tasks and processes within MS Teams to enable easy handover and tracking of work • CDEM sponsored a challenge at Govhack 2021 which produced a local winner with an app focused on mental health support