

COUNCIL – 26 SEPTEMBER 2023
CONSERVATIVE GROUP AMENDMENT
AGENDA ITEM 5: NOTICE OF MOTION

Motion as printed

Additions shown underlined.

Deletions shown as strike through.

Digital Divide

This Council notes that there is an ever-increasing use and reliance for services including payment by the use of smart phones, Apps and other digital devices as well as the increase in the use of artificial intelligence and communication tools such as chat functions within websites.

Whilst it is recognised that the use of technology has brought benefits to sectors of the community, it has also driven a growing digital divide.

We therefore welcome that this Council does not subscribe to a digital by default policy, and instead employs a more flexible, customer focused approach to enable access to Council services. As such, we further welcome this Council's continued commitment to ensure that no resident is forced to go digital if they either do not wish to or are unable to do so.

In recognition of ~~this divide~~ **the Council's commitment to ensuring that no resident is digitally excluded within the County, this Council commits to** ~~requests that the Chief Executive and Leader:~~

1. **Continuing to ensure, through the that implementation of this Council's digital by design policy choice culture, the availability of non-digital alternatives to access Council services.** ~~does not exacerbate the digital divide and that services are accessible to residents of all ages.~~

2. Continuing to keep ~~Ensure that the Council's strategic strategies and policies are under reviewed against best practice to ensure they meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in line with legislation and our own ambitions, with periodic updates to the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure Member engagement and oversight.~~
3. ~~Ask the Resources and Fire and Rescue Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider this issue and bring forward any recommendations to Cabinet as to what improvements can be made in relation to accessibility of services;~~
3. Continuing to build upon the work that is already being undertaken and ~~Support~~ Warwickshire County Council's strong relationship ~~ongoing work~~ with The Good Things Foundation in respect of tackling the digital divide inclusion best practice and to ensure digital inclusion in Warwickshire's libraries.
4. Continuing its extensive programme of work to build digital skills, including free access to public computer networks, provision of free WiFi in public spaces and the digital device lending scheme.

Proposer: Cllr Yousef Dahmash

Seconder: Cllr Tim Sinclair

Clean version

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We therefore welcome that this Council does not subscribe to a digital by default policy, and instead employs a more flexible, customer focused approach to enable access to Council services. As such, we further welcome this Council's continued commitment to ensure that no resident is forced to go digital if they either do not wish to or are unable to do so.

In recognition of the Council's commitment to ensuring that no resident is digitally excluded within the County, this Council commits to:

1. Continuing to ensure, through the implementation of this Council's digital by choice culture, the availability of non-digital alternatives to access Council services.
2. Continuing to keep the Council's strategies and policies under review in line with legislation and our own ambitions, with periodic updates to the Resources and Fire & Rescue Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure Member engagement and oversight.
3. Continuing to build upon the work that is already being undertaken and Warwickshire County Council's strong relationship with The Good Things Foundation in respect of digital inclusion best practice and to ensure digital inclusion in Warwickshire's libraries.

4. Continuing its extensive programme of work to build digital skills, including free access to public computer networks, provision of free WiFi in public spaces and the digital device lending scheme.

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