

MORAY COUNCIL
ICT AND DIGITAL STRATEGY (2023-26)

1. Introduction

1.1 The Moray Council ICT and Digital Strategy 2023-2026 sets out how ICT Service will support the delivery of technology, digital and efficiency related demands within the Moray Council's Corporate Plan.

1.2 The ICT service as an enabling service recognises the need to support the ambitions of the council and adopt a transformational approach to the use of ICT and digital to deliver against these priorities.

1.3 In particular this ICT and Digital strategy is aligned with the Corporate Plan to deliver against the priorities through:

- Developing collaborative working through improved capabilities for joined up working and data sharing across services (including schools) and partners
- Increasing the availability and access to easy to use self-service for all employees and customers.
- Supporting employees to develop their digital skills to make best use of technology through specific projects e.g. Smarter Working and M365.
- Providing staff with improved access to the data needed to inform their decision making.
- Making data available to the public to raise awareness of council services and how they work.
- Adopting best practice in key ICT and digital activities
- Protecting the data held by the council through robust security arrangements.
- Preparing plans for the future potential uses of technology in line with service specific and cross cutting digital developments including identification of digital competence gaps, emerging technologies and the acquisition of new skills
- Development of digitally enabled learning environments that support increased access to learning and training, building digital literacy and resilience
- Refining the Council's approach to Cloud Services
- Improving the council's cyber resilience and security arrangements to protect ICT, digital and systems infrastructure
- Supporting the delivery of council services.

2. Drivers

2.1 This revision of the Moray Council ICT and Digital Strategy has been developed against the background of the following drivers:

Ways of Working - The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated changes to the ways of working with the Council readjusting at pace and scale to accommodate increased homeworking and delivery of new and existing services to a digital format. This strategy has been revised to accommodate the substantive changes the pandemic brought in terms of the council's priorities and how the ICT Service has and will continue to contribute as a key enabler towards their achievement.

Corporate objectives - The ICT and Digital strategy is aligned to the council's overarching strategic priorities contained within the Corporate Plan and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan including enabling and supporting transformational change required for modernisation and improvement within and across services.

Services and staff expectations - Council services are becoming increasingly reliant on technology with an increased expectation from and of services to have access to reliable and forward looking technology which helps them do their job rather than constrains them. They require greater flexibility in the way they work and use technology to be more productive whether at their desk, in the field or from home. Services expect:

- Access to accurate, trusted and timely information and data to perform in their role and to assist decision making.
- Development of their services using technology to improve service delivery and achieve efficiency savings.
- To develop their knowledge and skills to deliver change.

Customer expectations - Customers are continuing to be increasingly dependent on digital services and in the same way they expect "on demand" access to commercially available day to day services their expectations of access to council services is also changing. This is driving a change in the way they expect council services to be delivered to them and the council must change to meet their expectations. This includes:

- Placing the citizen at the core of responsive services, accessing services at a time and place that is convenient to them and on their chosen device.
- While acknowledging potential compliance issues most of our customers expect public services to be “joined up” and at the very least with all Departments within the council. Sharing of data within the council and across partner organisations to deliver improvements to service delivery is imperative to the customer experience.
- Consistency and openness in all their dealings with the Council.
- Choice in how they access services. Although there is an expectation that we will provide online services there is a need to balance this with choice. While we aim to deliver online services in an easy to use manner and encourage the uptake of these online services there is a need to cater for those that prefer, or otherwise do not have access to, online solutions, although the expectation of delivering online solutions as opposed to face to face experiences has increased out of necessity due to COVID-19.

Digital Development (Technological change) - Digital developments provide the potential to transform council services and there are increasing demands of service and customer expectations, the opportunities available from new technologies and the challenges these present including increased investment, skills development, security requirements. While the Council has a history of significant digital progress through the Moray Connected project, ongoing work with specific services and responding to the service specific demands of the pandemic, further enhancements and ongoing expansion of digital technology will remain a priority within this strategy.

The Council’s Digital Maturity Assessment (through the Digital Office (Scotland)), and the report and actions arising from that assist in identifying additional drivers for future developments.

In addition to this there are organisational culture and behaviour changes that are often required to support successful implementation of new technology.

Technology developments that will impact on the delivery of this strategy include:

- Digital developments – actions and outcomes from the Digital Maturity Assessment report and action plan
- Cyber resilience - cyber resilience has acquired an increasingly high profile following a number of well publicised cyber-attacks on public sector organisations, geo-political developments and raised warnings from the UK National Cyber Security Centre and SG Cyber Resilience Unit. This has resulted in a significant increase in the work required to comply with standards arising from the UK and SG responses to the external environment

- Supporting increasing numbers of technologies and user bases including for teachers, children and young people through the Digital Inclusion work
- The growth in Cloud computing.
- The use of social media as a service delivery vehicle.

4 Principles

All developments within the strategy will be guided by the following principles to provide consistency and clarity around the work undertaken.

4.1 Information management

ICT solutions will be developed to ensure they maintain the security, confidentiality and integrity of all personal data in line with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), other security standards such as the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI/DSS) and the Scottish Governments Cyber Resilience Programme.

We will

- Protect the data held through the implementation of best practice security standards.
- Engage with the Scottish Governments cyber resilience programme.
- Encourage the adoption of open data where possible.
- Improve data available for decision making.

4.2 Digital first

To continuously improve digital services with the focus on the customer we aim to adhere to the Digital First Service Standard and the 3 themes of user needs, technology and business capability / capacity for all digital services, processes and supporting ICT.

We will

- Develop systems and processes with the customer at the centre
- Encourage adoption of online, no contact services
- Communicate with our customers electronically where possible.
- Add efficiency to service delivery
- Do it once – share information where possible
- Develop the digital skills of our staff
- Prepare for the future by monitoring developments in technology

4.3 Reuse

The council utilise a range of systems to deliver services to the public and the core applications will become increasingly important as we pursue a joined up

council. Where we are looking for change we will seek to reuse or improve existing applications rather than developing from scratch.

We will:

- Reuse solutions and reduce the total number of solutions supported
- Process redesign through the reuse of existing tried and tested solutions
- Reduce the duplication of data collected and establish a single view of our customer

4.4 Managed risk

There is a need to employ risk management to drive the service but a balanced approach will be required to avoid risks preventing or inhibiting progress to the detriment of our service users.

We will:

- Work with services to understand their requirements
- Keep services aware of the art of the possible
- Pro-actively look for solutions rather than inhibit development of council services
- Remove barriers where possible, but where there is a valid reason why requirements cannot be met, we will provide a clear explanation

5. Priorities

From the preceding drivers and principles of this ICT and Digital Strategy, 4 key priorities have been identified for this latest 5 year ICT and Digital Strategy.

- Transformation
- Business Intelligence and Insight
- Digital Culture
- Compliance

5.1 Transformation

The Council seeks to transform services and introduce change for our customers while driving service efficiencies. To support these ambitions the ICT Service will aim to:

- a) Extend the availability of online services available to the public and provide a single view of their transactions with the council via the customer portal.
- b) Participate in the development of a shared network protocol with NHS to enable improved capabilities for shared working Health and Social Care Moray and Digital Health Innovation Group.

- c) Further develop the intranet to provide secure access to all staff wherever they are working and to promote the intranet as a staff engagement vehicle.
- d) Assist in developing a maturing digital culture within the Council. A more informed, mobile and technology or digital aware workforce is one of the main enabling factors for the transformation of service delivery. Employees must be provided with the tools to enable them to provide and manage the delivery of services anytime and anywhere. They must have the training and support to enable them to make best use of the tools available to them.
- (e) Work with Education ICT Strategy Group to deliver the infrastructure to meet the future needs of ongoing Curriculum Reform and key objectives for successful digital learning and teaching.

5.2 Business Intelligence and Insight

Data is one of our most valuable assets and although Moray Council holds vast amounts of data it is primarily held in departmental silos. To unlock the value of this data an open and transparent approach will be developed. Providing open and transparent access to data will provide employees the information to perform their role, managers with the data to manage the service, Elected Members with the data to make decisions based on timely and relevant information and also importantly enable the public to understand the reasons for the decisions we make. To support this priority we aim to:

- a) Continue with the development of a single trusted view of our customer to ensure consistency, accuracy and trust in the data held and to benefit the customer and provide further efficiency to council services.
- b) Share data, where appropriate and as guided by individual services and partners in line with data protection principles and general data protection regulations to add value to council services using robust and transparent data sharing agreements.
- c) Co-design and enable with individual services digital dashboards for staff, elected members and the public to view data appropriate to need and better understand the underlying trends within their service and the actions required to address any issues and/or to improve services with automation built in where possible.
- d) Develop usage reports for managers to understand how their service is making use of ICT and digital technologies.

5.3 Compliance

The ICT service is subjected to an increasing number of compliance regimes including Public Service Network (PSN) accreditation, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Payment Card Industry Data Security

Standards (PCI DSS), Scottish Government Cyber Resilience programme and software licensing. There is a need to develop policies and procedures to ensure an ongoing approach to compliance within the council and this should be supported by a consistent and managed approach to staff awareness. To meet our obligations in relation to compliance and standards we aim to:

- a) Review our ICT Security Policy to ensure that security controls are adequate and up to date, building on identified good practice.
- b) Continue to maintain our device estate to ensure it is built around a recent operating system version of operating system and that the office productivity toolset is delivered to current Windows devices
- c) Review our business continuity arrangements to mitigate against potential risk and to put ICT in a position to assist services to deliver essential functions in the event of a disaster.
- d) Migrate to the next generation secure email for PSN to continue to provide secure email solutions for communicating with government bodies.
- e) Adopt industry standard methodology for the delivery of our support service to introduce robust best practice processes and improved reliability and quality of service
- f) Improve user awareness, knowledge and understanding of role and responsibility with regard to compliance

5.4 Plan for the future

The pace of technology change is increasing and it is important that within the context of a 5 year strategy we continue to plan for opportunities that are presented from advancements in technology. To plan for the future we aim to:

- a) Investigate options to deliver efficiencies through the adoption of “cloud” / “online” services where they comply with compliance requirements, provide cost effective solutions which do not introduce unnecessary risk to the operation of the council.
- b) Review mobile application development tools and standards.
- c) Identify the potential for and implement collaboration tools to deliver further efficiency savings.
- d) Review the application portfolio with a view to rationalising the number of applications in use throughout the council, reduced the number of systems to be supported and consolidate the number of data sources.
- e) Consider and investigate the potential of new and emerging technologies which would be beneficial to the operation of the Council with clear added value for service delivery and efficiencies including but not restricted to e.g. Chatbots, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models, Power Apps/BI, Internet of Things.

- f) Develop digitally enabled environments (including learning), improving digital literacy, resilience, connectivity, collaboration.

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