



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020**

SUBJECT: DIGITAL STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
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1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To invite the Committee to consider the progress made towards the development of a revised Digital Strategy for Education.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young People Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance, (para 9 of the minute refers)

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) review and note the work being undertaken towards the development of a revised Digital Strategy for Education; and**
- (ii) notes that a revised strategy will be reported to this Committee in June 2021.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The previous Digital Strategy for Education was approved by Children and Young People's Services Committee on 27 May 2015 (paragraph 13 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 At the time the Strategy Group had been tasked with developing a strategy to determine how ICT should be used in education in the future so that all schools were equipped for the Classroom of 2020.

- 3.3 The strategy was therefore building the capability for the digital classroom and was largely developed around 3 core themes of infrastructure, hardware and people to create an appropriate environment for digital learning and teaching.

Progress against previous strategy

Progress against each of the core themes is outlined below.

Infrastructure

- 3.4 There is an ongoing programme to equip all schools with a modern IP telephony solution providing increased flexibility within the schools environment and reducing costs for calls between schools.
- 3.5 Wi-Fi was made available in teaching areas across all schools enabling campus wide coverage in all schools with a network of 542 wireless access points enabling all mobile devices such as laptops and iPads to connect to the network.
- 3.6 All schools were provided with bandwidth commensurate with Learning and Teaching requirements with many having had substantial increases in bandwidth allocated when moving to the Scottish Wide Area Network.
- 3.7 Data storage capabilities have increased more than 10-fold since 2012 with each secondary school now able to access 1TB of storage which is backed up and primary schools able to access 150GB.
- 3.8 Personal storage has also increased with 1TB of data storage available for each teacher and pupil via the Glow platform.

Hardware

- 3.9 A hardware refresh programme and regular upgrades of the underlying software is undertaken across the schools estate to ensure the equipment available to all teachers and pupils is fully supported.
- 3.10 The number of devices within schools has grown exponentially since the last strategy with wireless devices seeing the largest increase.

	2015	2020
Personal Computer	4,000	4,074
Laptop	2,081	* 5,817
Tablet	208	1,054
Totals	6,289	10,945

* This figure includes 1315 devices funded by the Scottish Government for the digital inclusion programme.

- 3.11 In addition to the above devices, the 5 year plan to roll out the replacement interactive panels to ensure an interactive panel in each classroom is into the final year with 659 panels of a total of 774 now installed.

- 3.12 All secondary schools had the equipment necessary to allow a virtual classroom to be set up in a fixed location.

People

- 3.13 Two technology trainers (Learning Technologist) have been in post since October 2016 and during this time have provided varied and regular CPD workshops for teaching staff, support staff and pupils. These are aimed at helping attendees to become more confident with technology for learning and teaching and in particular to support the Digital Literacy and Technologies areas of Curriculum for Excellence. Figures below for CPD courses to date



- 3.14 Funding made available through the Northern Alliance has enabled the creation of a temporary post of Depute Headteacher Digital with responsibility for the curriculum delivery in a digital environment.

Impact of COVID-19

- 3.15 COVID-19 brought an abrupt halt to classroom teaching in March and a significant change in demand for digital learning and teaching. All teachers and pupils coped remarkably well throughout this challenging period although it did highlight some technical issues with the increased traffic being handled across the schools network.
- 3.16 Throughout this period the regular workshop delivery method of training provided by the Learning Technologists changed from face-to-face to online. The content of the courses was varied and aimed at upskilling staff in the use of technology to enable them to deliver learning remotely.
- 3.17 A public digital support site aimed at parents/carers and their children to help their understanding and use of Glow and the associated technologies such as Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams has also been made available.
- 3.18 Approximately 500 devices were issued on loan in response to COVID-19 to assist digitally excluded pupils to access digital learning. This loan scheme has since been replaced following local and national funding from the William Grant Foundation, Lord Leutenant's Emergency Fund and Scottish Government providing a total of 1512 devices being made available for distribution to young people in Moray. This, together with free connectivity solutions to access the internet, is helping to tackle digital exclusion in Moray.

New strategy

- 3.19 The Digital Strategy for Education needs to be revised to address some of the emerging issues related to performance of WiFi, internet bandwidth and the need for extended virtual classroom capabilities as the passage of time and the requirements arising from the response to COVID-19 has resulted in an increased number of devices accessing the network and a major shift to blended learning.
- 3.20 A revised strategy framework has been prepared and is currently being developed to incorporate lessons learned from the previous strategy, the response/recovery in relation to COVID-19 and also best practice guidance around digital learning and teaching to ensure the revised strategy meets the aspirations of the corporate plan.
- 3.21 The development of the strategy is being overseen by the strategy group chaired by the Quality Improvement Manager (QIM) lead officer for Raising Attainment and Senior Phase Curriculum, and includes representatives from each of the ASGs, the Learning Technologists and the ICT service.
- 3.22 The impact of COVID-19 continues and the situation is unlikely to change significantly as we move into the next school term. It is however essential that buy-in is achieved from all stakeholders and for this reason an extended consultation period is required to ensure the views and feedback from teaching staff, pupils, parents and trade unions is incorporated into the strategy.
- 3.23 The proposed planning framework has been developed and work is now progressing to develop each of the 3 key action priorities below:
- i. Digital Inclusion
 - ii. Learning and Teaching
 - iii. Curriculum
- 3.24 Digital inclusion has, in part, started to be addressed with the managed distribution of the devices to those who are currently considered digitally excluded. While this work progresses the formal strategy and action plan will be developed to consider:
- a) One device initiative
 - b) Pilot projects
 - c) Improving resilience
 - d) Good practice, Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)
 - e) Connectivity
 - f) Innovation
- 3.25 The learning and teaching stream will consider how the objectives will be achieved including
- a) Pedagogy
 - b) Microsoft Teams, Google Classrooms
 - c) Family learning
 - d) eSgoil

- e) Good practice, CLPL
 - f) Virtual, consortia approaches
- 3.26 Typically the curriculum priority will consider what we will do to achieve the outcomes through
- a) Digital literacy
 - b) Online safety
 - c) SQA
 - d) Timetabling – secondary
 - e) eSgoil
 - f) Certification
- 3.27 Over the next few months the strategy group will lead on work to develop a coherent Digital Strategy for Education and consult with the various stakeholders to ensure the strategy is fit for purpose, meets the expectations of the stakeholders and addresses the aims and objectives of the service plan which links to all national and local plans.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The strategy for the use of ICT within schools will incorporate best practice guidance from the National Improvement Framework and support the outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan and LOIP with respect to the vision for Education in Moray.
- (b) Policy and Legal**

Statutory requirements and council policies will be considered in the preparation and delivery of the strategy.
- (c) Financial implications**

No additional financial resources are required to support the development of the strategy and any additional resources required to deliver the strategy will be reported back to committee.
- (d) Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications arising from the development of the strategy and plan.
- (e) Staffing Implications**

Staff are critical to the success and adoption of the strategy to meet the challenges of achieving the objectives of the council's corporate plan. Consultation will take place with all stakeholders to ensure their input is incorporated into the final strategy and plan.
- (f) Property**

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities

Central to the new strategy is to tackle digital inclusion. Recent funding streams has provided access to devices to individuals considered digitally excluded addressing some of the equalities issues and the provision of internet access also goes some way to tackle geographic issues of internet access.

(h) Consultations

The Head of Education, Head of HR, ICT and OD, Quality Improvement Managers and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments incorporated.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 COVID-19 has resulted in a number of the key priorities identified for the new strategy already starting to be delivered. This is most apparent with the distribution of 1315 laptops, 130 Chromebooks and the availability of internet access through MiFi devices to those Moray pupils considered to be digitally excluded. While it is important that all stakeholders are consulted in the preparation of the development of the next strategy work will continue in those areas such as planning for 1:1 device distribution and trialling of devices to ensure the final strategy can be implemented quickly.

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Background Papers: None
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