

Perth and Kinross Council

Digital Strategy



2016 – 2020

Introduction

This Strategy outlines how we are going to develop our digital thinking and use ICT over the next four years to help us deliver our strategic ambitions.

We are refreshing our ICT priorities at this time because of the rapid pace of technology change and because people's expectations of our public services are changing fundamentally.

Across the public and private sectors, "transformation" is driving investment in new technologies with the aim of delivering better services at reduced cost. Channel shift; changing the way we work by engineering leaner business processes; improving our electronic data and records management; and supporting our workforce to operate in more mobile and flexible ways are already key elements in our transformational planning.

By moving more services and transactions online, successful transformational approaches can help us reduce cost and free up resources to target our support more efficiently to meet the complex needs of our more vulnerable citizens and communities.

We want the citizens, communities, businesses and partners who use our services to have a quality experience when they interact with us online. These groups are increasingly comfortable using new technologies and social media; they have high expectations of what technology can do for them, on a 24/7, on demand, anytime, anywhere basis.

This Strategy helps us focus on the contribution our ICT can make to improving outcomes for people. Developments in web technologies are providing increasing opportunities for citizen self-service and electronic interaction with our services. Mobile technology is enabling our staff to work more productively out in the communities they serve while also reducing operational costs and office footprints. Building on our collective understanding of local needs, we are using technology and information to deliver more efficient, personalised, integrated services.

We are working more closely with external partners to deliver services, such as integrated health and social care, in joined-up, cross-agency ways. We are embracing "Smart City"¹ ways of using ICT to enhance "liveability, workability and sustainability" across Perth and Kinross. Our ICT is expected to deliver more, different and better, with less. At the same time, Scottish Government direction anticipates that we are delivering more services collaboratively, systematically and electronically.

Key to this is developing our capacity to innovate: making it possible to translate business ideas for new ways of working into operational, effective solutions that make a positive difference for the people and communities who use our services.

Within this Strategy, we use "ICT" to refer to the technology – hardware, software and systems - we use to deliver our services. "Digital" refers to our wider culture and approaches to using new technologies to change the way we deliver our services; this encompasses our thinking around leadership, partnership working, customers, services and channels.



By delivering more services online, we are helping more people access our services in their own **locality** and contributing to vibrant, resilient local **Communities**

Organised to Deliver

Within Perth and Kinross, an improvement Golden Thread runs unbroken from our Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement to our Corporate, Transformation and Improvement Plans. This approach ensures that we focus on the things that matter most to the people who live, learn and work in our communities.

¹ See www.scottishcities.org/smart-cities/ for a summary of *Smart City* goals and principles

The Council's vision is of a confident and ambitious Perth and Kinross, in which all can contribute and share. The Council aims to maximise the opportunities available to our citizens to achieve their potential by:

- giving every child the best start in life
- developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Our ICT is a key enabling tool for delivering these goals. This Strategy aims to weave ICT into our Golden Thread and to bind it into our transformational "doing".

Operational activities to deliver this Strategy are guided by the Scottish Government's four pillars of public service reform:



Place: by collaborating with partners and across Services and systems, we use ICT to deliver joined up, integrated services where they are needed and to foster community participation and interaction.

Prevention: we design our ICT solutions and use the data we gather to deliver better outcomes for the people and businesses that use our services, while averting future costs.

People: we use ICT to work across organisational boundaries to provide seamless, high quality integrated services that put the service user at the centre of what we do. We invest in our ICT so that it becomes something that our citizens use themselves rather than something we use to do things for them.

Performance: we work hard to ensure our ICT is sufficiently modern, robust and resilient to help us achieve our strategic objectives and ambitions. We measure our performance to mark progress and refine our practice.

The actions we need to take to deliver on the principles and strategic themes outlined below are developed in our Digital Development Plan.

Making a Difference

Our Strategy is not aimed at technical specialists. It is about developing our ICT efficiently as a vehicle for positive change and a platform for citizen participation.

It covers these three key areas:

- Our Digital and ICT Principles
- Focussing on the Customer Experience
- Online by Design and Making us Mobile

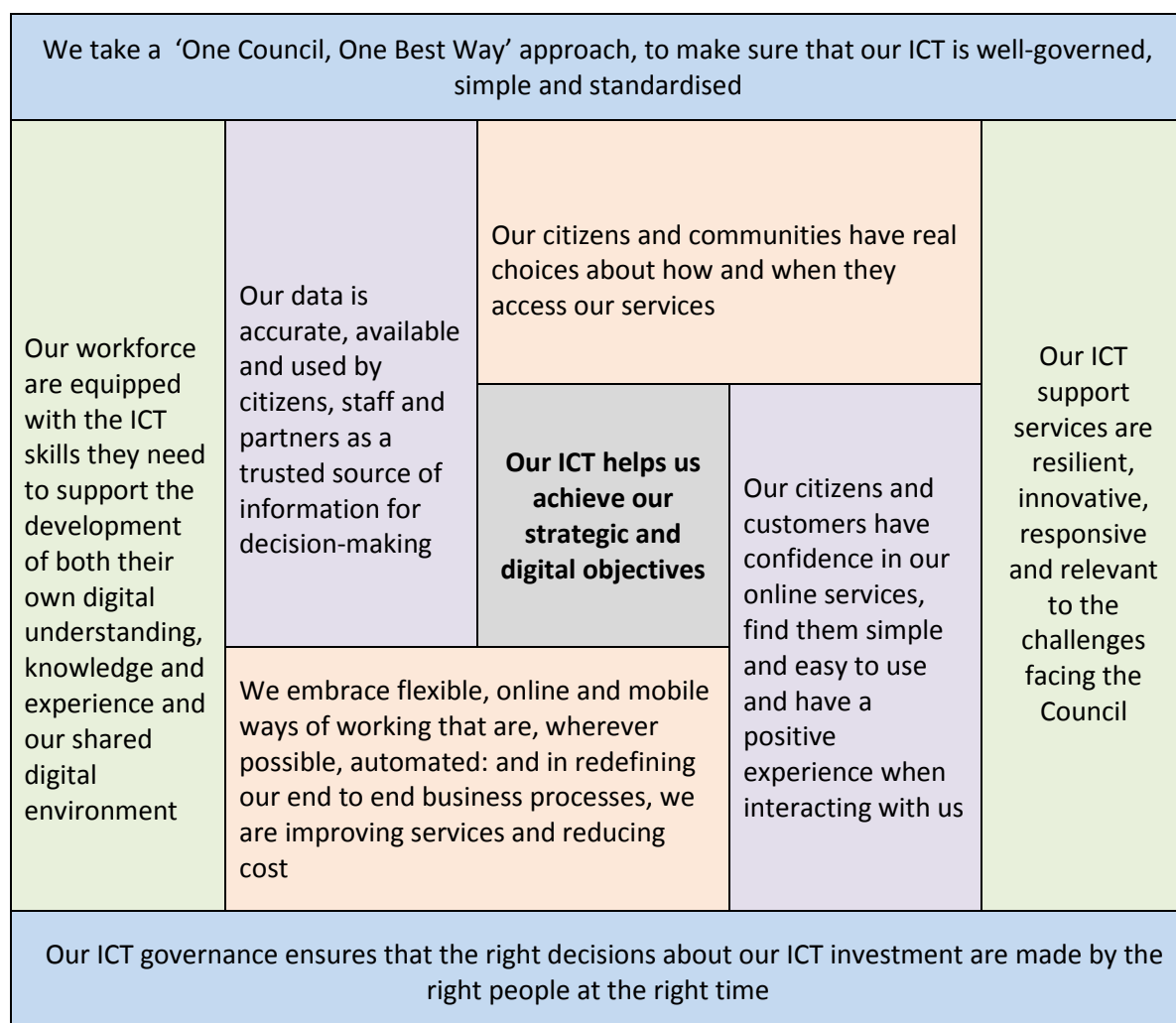
We will know that ICT is contributing to positive change in Perth and Kinross when:



Our ICT infrastructure and online services contribute to economic growth, a thriving, expanding economy for **our Businesses** and to providing employment opportunities for all



Technology is helping **our Learners** reach their potential and prepare for life and work



Our Digital and ICT Principles

We recognise four general principles and approaches that cut across all our strategic themes to support the achievement of our ambitions. Together, these provide a core of ICT and digital commonality and consistency across our organisation that places the people and communities who use our services at the heart of our planning around ICT. By getting the right information to the right people in the right place at the right time, we are working together to ensure that our services can be accessed when and where they are needed, in ways that ensure no citizen is left behind. These principles also help us get best value from our investment in technology.

| Principle | What this means for Perth and Kinross |
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| We have sound ICT and digital governance in place | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our investment in, and planning around, ICT is aligned with the Council's strategic objectives Our ICT Governance is a part of our wider Corporate Governance activity but has its own specific focus that gives structure, oversight and transparency to ICT decision making. It provides an environment which enables and encourages innovation while effectively managing risk |
| We are growing Perth & Kinross Council as a digital organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our online services improve efficiency by meeting customers' expectations of a convenient, trusted channel for their day to day interactions with us Our Digital Leaders understand the value our ICT adds to the organisation. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drive whole Council ICT approaches Offer challenge about working in different ways at points of |

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| | <p>change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accept that best value and 100% fit are not the same ○ Drive ICT solutions that share with partners or exploit ICT assets we already own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support everyone in our workforce, who uses ICT, to become a digital native. Digital natives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Think about “our ICT” not “my ICT” ○ Understand the digital skills required for their role in the Council, embrace new ways of working and are open to acquiring new ICT skills and knowledge ○ Understand the value of the information they gather and view this as a shared corporate asset which can be used and re-used • Our citizens and communities view “the Council” as a single service provider and expect us to work collaboratively with other public sector bodies and partners |
| We understand the value of data to our organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We collect data once, use it often and simplify, standardise and share for increased transparency, openness and accessibility • We share personal data in effective and appropriate ways to improve service design and delivery, while maintaining citizen trust • We have information security policies and procedures in place to protect our digital information throughout its lifecycle • We use information collaboratively, to support decision making and target our services effectively • We share and link data securely and effectively across functional and organisational boundaries |
| We are building our digital capabilities from resilient ICT foundations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We take a “One Council, One Best Way” approach. We implement generic, flexible enterprise solutions, that work across applications and are vendor neutral, to make our ICT solutions more interoperable, shareable and scalable between Services and across organisational boundaries. We know that this requires commitment and compromise however we do this to simplify support, reduce costs and promote partnership working. • We think about our ICT not simply as a cost but as a shared resource that is holistically planned to improve outcomes and add value for the citizens, business and communities that use our services • Our ICT is built on a robust, well maintained core of corporate components and services that are needed to underpin our business systems • We build our ICT infrastructure and services in incremental, agile ways to release benefits for citizens and staff at the earliest possible stage • To build flexibility into our infrastructure, we use open industry ICT standards wherever possible to avoid over reliance on single software vendors and to remove artificial barriers to interoperability between systems |

Focussing on the Customer Experience

The people and communities who engage with us to receive services or information form a broad group that includes citizens, learners, external and third sector partners, communities, local businesses and visitors. Historically, this group has consumed minimal ICT services directly. However new technologies now give us unprecedented opportunities to provide them with online choices and anytime / anywhere access to public services.

To get the most from online technologies, we need to develop our ICT as a platform for citizen participation - something our citizens use themselves rather than something we use to do things for them.



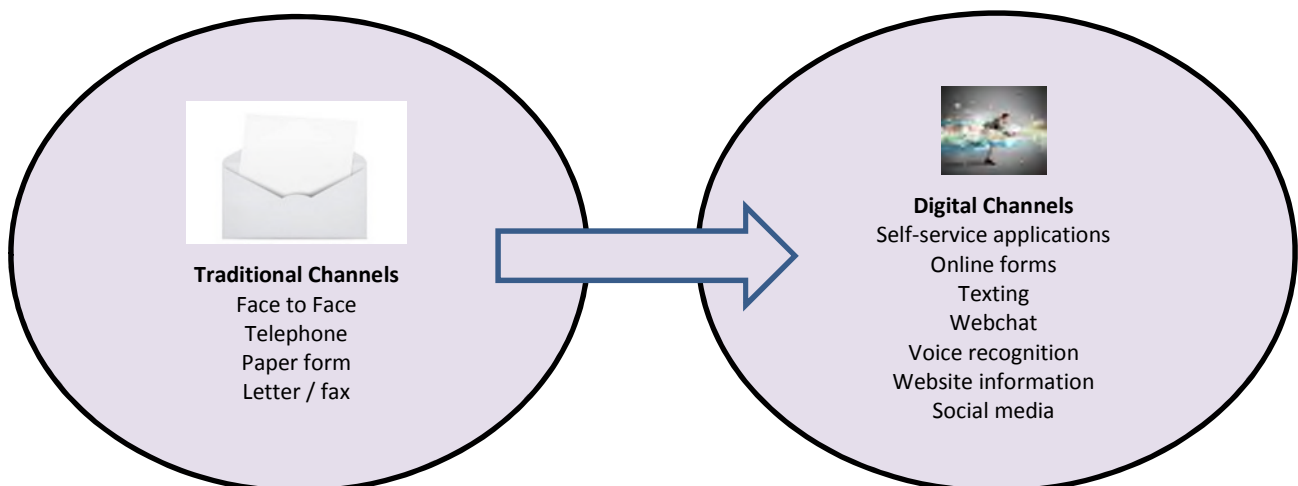
Our **Citizens** know which of our services are available online, use digital channels by choice and know they can get help if needed when accessing online services

| Focussing on the Customer Experience | What this means for Perth and Kinross |
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| Putting our customers at the centre of what we do | <p>Our citizens have a choice of channels for engaging with us. Our online services are good enough to make them our customers' channel of choice.</p> <p>We design our online services around the people who use them. Our starting point is the customer and not technology or internal business processes. Our citizens have a personalised experience when they use our online services.</p> |
| Delivering better services | <p>Moving to online, mobile or flexible working, where appropriate, gives us the chance to improve the customer experience.</p> <p>We re-design our services to be "high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive". We take full advantage of new mobile and digital tools, technologies and approaches to improve our services, giving our citizens a positive experience when they interact with us.</p> |
| Making it easy for people to interact with us online | <p>We want to increase the number of interactions and transactions we carry out online.</p> <p>We understand what people are trying to achieve when they use our online services. We let citizens know which of our services are available online. These services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are accessible from a single starting point and have a common look and feel • allow the customer to decide how and when to communicate • use plain English and make information easy to find by reducing website "noise" and clutter • are device and platform neutral. |
| Digital inclusion: making sure that no-one is left behind | <p>Some of our customers are offline, or are online but have limited online capability. We work to ensure that our online services build a more equitable, inclusive Perth and Kinross.</p> <p>Our digital services are actively helping us target and reduce inequality. We work to remove the barriers that prevent some customers from using our online services. We provide free of charge, accessible "assisted digital" services in person, webchat or over the telephone to help customers take advantage of our online services.</p> |

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| "MyAccount" | <p>Our "MyAccount" approach encourages uptake by providing a single easy to use point of entry to our online services.</p> <p>Our single citizen sign-on is based on the national mygovscot myaccount approach. It gives customers secure and easy access to multiple online public services by entering one name and password.</p> |
| Making information accessible | <p>In adopting "Smart City" principles, we are ambitious about growing our culture and practices around data sharing.</p> <p>We apply open data standards which means the information we publish is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accessible and can be easily shared • in a standard structure format so that it can be easily processed • reliable, consistent and always available • traceable, to build trust. |

Online by Design and Making us More Mobile

Channel shift is the process of moving customers away from using expensive means of contacting us to more cost effective routes, without compromising quality, accessibility and uptake.



We are moving services online – **online by design for our customers** is a major enabler for improved customer service and reduced costs. This is making more of our services available, 24/7, out into the communities we serve.

Equipping our workforce with the skills, technologies and environment to work in mobile, flexible ways – **making our workforce mobile** - is central to our ongoing programme of office rationalisation. Growing workforce mobility is reducing our accommodation requirements, increasing productivity, reducing our carbon footprint via more intelligent job scheduling and can contribute to a better work/life balance for our staff.

Online by design and making us mobile are not single activities that can be planned like a conventional project. These headlines cover an ongoing programme of individual improvements that are being delivered and prioritised under the governance and oversight of our ICT Transformation Board.



Our planning and delivery around mobile working and digital services is based on the following core of shared organisational standards.

| Online by Design and Making us Mobile | What this means for Perth and Kinross |
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| Online First | <p>We promote a culture of “online first” for service delivery.</p> <p>We positively champion online solutions and deliver all services online that can be usefully, accessibly and efficiently delivered online.</p> |
| Quality Online Services | <p>Our online services are integrated, optimised and of a standard quality.</p> <p>We ensure consistency and quality in our online approaches by applying organisational digital standards.</p> |
| Nudging our Customers Online | <p>Our customers know about the online services we provide and make positive choices about interacting with us online.</p> <p>We tell our customers about the ways they can interact with us online and provide a range of resources to support them. Customers feel comfortable using our online services because these are designed around <i>their</i> experience. Our online services are quicker to use and more accessible than traditional channels. They give customers the chance to complete a range of transactions from a single starting point.</p> |
| A mobile workforce | <p>Our workforce operates in mobile and flexible ways.</p> <p>We deploy a single integrated enterprise mobile platform which is scalable and flexible enough to respond to business and technology changes. Our solution takes account of the geography of the communities we serve, allowing our workforce to operate in mobile ways even where there is no available broadband connection.</p> |
| Thinking mobile | <p>Our mobile ways of working are integrated into our professional practice and underpinned by accessible support resources for our workforce.</p> <p>Being mobile lets us think about work as ‘something we do’ rather than ‘somewhere we go’. We organically develop our HR policies to respond to the demands of a mobile environment, in which management is performance-rather than presence-based.</p> |
| Avoiding Vendor Lock-ins | <p>We avoid locking the Council into proprietary business solutions, even when the business applications we use offer mobile or web based bolt-on solutions.</p> |
| Engineering processes | <p>We champion moving to online and mobile ways of working at points of change, when a positive decision to work differently has already been made. We understand that working in digital and mobile ways means redesigning, reorganising and reforming the way we work.</p> <p>Our Leaders and Managers build thinking around online ways of delivering services into their improvement planning at a sufficiently early stage to allow operability, security and scope for integration to be effectively assessed <i>before</i> resources are committed. The new business processes we engineer are lean, effectively documented and automated as far as practicable. Our mobile working approaches are built around organisational roles and not the individual staff member.</p> |

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| Positively Embracing Scotland's Digital Future | <p>We are committed to supporting the national digital agenda.</p> <p>We maintain a watching brief over national developments to identify opportunities for our Council and participate where possible in initiatives that are likely to translate into national solutions</p> |
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Making it Happen

This Strategy should be read in conjunction with our Digital Development Plan. The Plan focuses on realistic headline actions we are taking *now* to start delivering this Strategy

Together, these documents will help us achieve better outcomes for our communities at a time of unprecedented pressure on public finances.

By positioning ICT as a vehicle for citizen-centred change, this Strategy underpins our vision of Perth and Kinross as a caring, thriving and vibrant community, in which our inclusive culture makes sure no citizen is left behind.

