

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Finance and Resources Committee 1 February 2023

DIGITAL PERTH AND KINROSS: DIGITAL STRATEGY 2023-27

Report by Head of Corporate IT and Revenues (Chief Digital Officer) (Report No. 23/34)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report introduces **Digital Perth and Kinross**, the refreshed Digital Strategy for the period 2023 – 2027.
- 1.2 **Digital Perth and Kinross** (Appendix 1) demonstrates our ambition for using digital, information and technology over the next 5 years to make a positive difference for our people, communities and staff.
- 1.3 The Digital Strategy aligns with the Council's evolving Corporate Plan, the Financial Strategy and the Transformation & Change Programme. Importantly, digital transformation is a strategic enabler for how the Council wants to work in future, as described within the Perth & Kinross Offer Framework.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee:

- 2.1 Approves the Digital Strategy 2023 - 2027
- 2.2 Approves the nomination of an elected member as the Council's Digital Champion.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:
 - Section 4: Background
 - Section 5: Digital Perth and Kinross – The Digital Strategy 2023-27
 - Section 6: Conclusion

4. BACKGROUND

Progress towards becoming a Digital Council

- 4.1 The 2016 - 2020 Digital Strategy (Report No.16/533 refers) recognised the importance of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) as an enabler for organisational transformation. It articulated the Council's aims of growing a digital culture with the citizen at the centre of its service design and

exploiting digital technologies and information to deliver more efficient, personalised and integrated services.

- 4.2 The timeline for refreshing the last Digital Strategy was extended to ensure focus on pandemic responses, fit with the new Scottish Government Digital Strategy (March 2021) and alignment with the emerging Perth & Kinross Offer Framework and Transformation & Change Programme. During the intervening period, many of the 2016-2020 Strategy's core standards and themes have remained current, relevant and available as practical supports for anchoring digital decision-making. Progressive development of our ICT infrastructure has also continued apace, ensuring the organisation's ability to launch its next Strategy from sound digital foundations.
- 4.3 The Council has been successful in delivering its Digital Strategy 2016-2020. That Strategy sought to move the organisation away from historic perceptions of ICT as a cost, towards an appreciation of digital as an investment in, and enabler for, strategic business change and improvement. It set out aims and principles that ultimately matched the times, informed our evolving digital ambitions and added value for people, staff and communities.

The last Strategy underpinned a range of activities, many of which contributed to our COVID responses. These include:

- Significantly upscaling secure remote working capacity to enable 3,000+ staff to access the centrally stored resources (information and systems) they needed to work productively throughout lockdown. This now supports hybrid ways of working
- Accelerating our MS365 implementation: this included the rapid adoption of Teams which is now our core communication and collaboration platform and SharePoint Online, on which the corporate EDMS (electronic document management solution) now sits
- Perth and Kinross Council were the first local authority in Scotland to successfully use Teams Live Events to sustain the democratic process: this MS365 function is now being used to run a range of public access events, including Council meetings; Integrated Joint Board events; consultation exercises and staff conferences
- As well as up to date versions of key tools such as Outlook and Word, MS365 provides a growing suite of simple, business focussed applications, such as Bookings and Planner, which are being adopted creatively
- A key aspect of our MS365 implementation has been upskilling and supporting staff: the role of Digital Skills and Business Change resources remains central for growing confidence in these core tools
- Due to our well-established Online Services platform, and core team of IT resources experienced in its use, the Council was able to design and implement a number of online services at speed, to support emerging COVID demands including for hardship and relief funds; volunteering; and school transport consultation. Perth and Kinross Council now has more than 100 public and internal services online

- An early priority for the evolving Data and Analytics (DA) programme was support for Response and Recovery initiatives, including processing of data to support welfare (for example for people who were shielding); identify vulnerable people at risk; re-task staff into emergency response roles; and building a Covid cases dashboard and web map to provide early warning of local outbreaks / general trends. The DA programme has now made significant further progress, with the adoption of a standard analytics and intelligence platform, implementation of a standard mapping and spatial intelligence platform and development of a cloud-based corporate data store. The technical foundations required to deliver our strategic vision of being a data driven organisation with advanced intelligence capabilities, are now largely in place.

Assessing our Digital progress

- 4.4 The strategic impact of digital in the Council has been subject to considerable scrutiny over the last few years. Outputs from three key initiatives provided a mechanism for assessing our progress towards being a truly digital Council and for benchmarking ourselves against other Councils, national targets, standards and principles. Learning from each of these exercises has informed the Strategy refresh process.

These initiatives were:

- Local Government Digital Office (LGDO) [Digital Maturity Assessment \(DMA\)](#) [August 2020]
- Audit Scotland [Digital Progress in Local Government report](#) [January 2021]
- Digital Transformation Programme self-evaluation exercise to assess the performance against original business cases of the two digital workstreams (Online Services and MyAccount and Mobile Working and Scheduling) initiated in 2016 as part of the Council's Building Ambition Programme.

- 4.5 Outcomes from these reviews were all positive, with LGDO DMA scoring Perth and Kinross Council as 3 out of 5 (defined as "Defined and Systematic (data-centric)"). This put us in the top 10% of Scottish Local Authorities, at the date of the assessment. They recognised that the Council:

- is ambitious in its design of innovative digital services for customers, people, and businesses
- has invested in upskilling staff
- has made significant progress in establishing its Mobile Working and Online Services platforms
- is well placed as a result of its emerging Data and Analytics strategy, which is setting clear future direction
- designed / delivered an innovative infrastructure for Bertha Park HS
- uses multi-disciplinary teams effectively to deliver more customer-focused services: this approach also bridges the gap between IT and Services
- has developed a best in breed approach to Benefits Realisation.

- 4.6 Investment in our Online Services platform / capacity was recognised as being critical to the speed and agility with which the organisation was able to respond to COVID challenges.
- 4.7 Developing a more robust *outcome*-focused approach to transformation; promoting collaboration across Services; and moving from an “efficiency-first / savings” to an “improving outcomes for citizens” agenda were highlighted as key steps for developing our digital culture and leadership.

5. **DIGITAL PERTH AND KINROSS – THE DIGITAL STRATEGY 2023-27**

- 5.1 To provide visible digital leadership, demonstrate collective ownership and articulate the Service perspective, an Executive Leaders Short Life Working group, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, was convened to support the development of our 2023 - 2027 Digital Strategy. A key responsibility for this Group has been identifying the Council's level of ambition for digital change.
- 5.2 The ambitions outlined in **Digital Perth and Kinross** are outward-looking, realistic, practical, achievable and aligned with organisational priorities.
- 5.3 Strategic priority areas are:
- **People, Partners and Place:** Placing communities and the citizen at the heart of how we work; Everyone connected; Tackling the climate challenge; Smart Perth and Kinross; Perth and Kinross Digital welcome; and Connected places
 - **Organisation and Services:** Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people; Digital Classroom: helping our children and young people to achieve their full potential; Smarter Working; Data and Analytics; and Securing and Accessing our Information Assets.
- 5.4 **Digital Perth and Kinross** indicates the outcomes we are ambitious to deliver in each of these areas, without touching on the technical approaches we will take to achieve them. This keeps our focus on desired outcomes, while making the Strategy accessible to a wider audience.
- 5.5 No single planning approach is practicable for such a complex environment: each outcome has the potential to require a specific programme for change, with multiple strands / activities ultimately contributing to its successful delivery. This is already the case, for example, with Data and Analytics; Smart City initiatives and the implementation of a new social care platform for adults and children services.
- 5.6 In addition, delivery over the next five years may be iterative / incremental and will need to be sufficiently flexible to take advantage of emerging technologies and opportunities. In being non-prescriptive about the “how”, we are signalling our appetite for digitally agile and transformational change and openness for adopting innovative, creative solutions as they become available.
- 5.7 If **Digital Perth and Kinross** outlines how the Council is going to use digital over the next five years to deliver its strategic ambitions, the Delivery Plan at Appendix 2 directs the headline actions being taken by Corporate IT to build

on our sound digital foundations and provide common building blocks on which new digital services and capabilities will be built.

5.8 The Digital Standards articulated in the Strategy provide a core set of digital “dos and don’ts”: these effectively comprise the organisation’s critical success factors for digital change and are key to influencing culture, attitudes to digital and behaviours. The Digital Board has a key role in exemplifying these standards and ensuring they are embedded and observed across the organisation. The evolving Leadership Competencies Framework will also be used to grow understanding around the role of leaders at all levels for embracing and promoting new digital ways of working.

5.9 The Perth & Kinross Offer Framework 5-year plan (2022 to 2027) positioned the Digital Strategy as an enabler for how the Council will change how it works, developing new relationships with communities, businesses and people of Perth and Kinross, and designing services with customers at the centre.

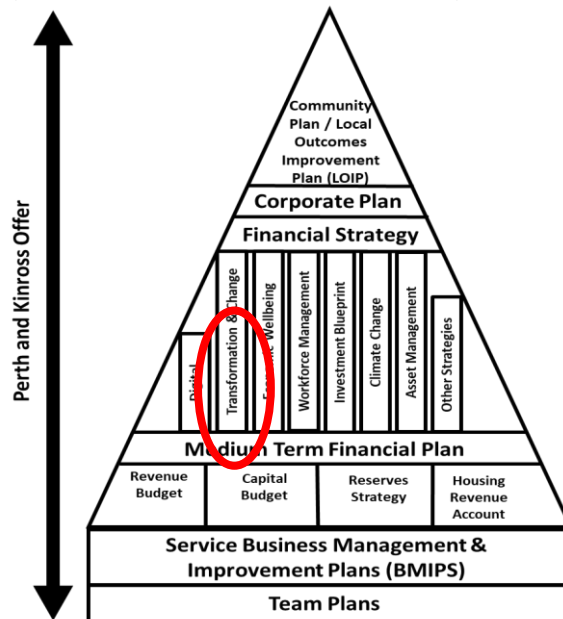


Digital Perth and Kinross

Our refreshed Digital Strategy 2023-2027, will underpin the Perth & Kinross Offer by:

- taking a “One Council” approach to digital and IT, that prioritises value / benefit for citizens, learners, business and staff over local / Service change;
- enabling a Modern Digital Workplace in which our secure, integrated infrastructure allows us to deliver joined-up modern services from anywhere that can be accessed any time;
- ensuring our new Corporate Customer Service Strategy delivers high-standard digitally inclusive services for all;
- growing citizen and staff confidence in using new technologies for connecting, collaborating and communicating.

- 5.10 The Digital Strategy is a core component of the Council's strategic planning framework: digital is also clearly positioned as a core enabler for transformation and change, supporting the Financial Strategy and for tackling key Council challenges such as economic wellbeing and climate change.



- 5.11 Scrutiny and performance of this Strategy will take place via further Digital Maturity Assessments and external scrutiny, as well as through our existing performance management framework to Council and this Committee.
- 5.12 The Strategy gives a commitment to continue to collaborate and align closely with Heath, Community Planning and other public sector bodies, to share and / or join up systems and information whenever safe and appropriate to do so; and to work with our digital partners on codesign of local, regional and national digital services.
- 5.13 We recognise that the shape and structure of our organisation needs to change and we need to place a greater focus on delivery of the Perth & Kinross Offer to transform the experience of people who use our services. Continued investment in digital solutions and information technology is crucial as these are strategic enablers for change and will be used to transform the organisation and accelerate the pace and scale of these changes. Our Transformation & Change Strategy outlined our commitments to change and this is further underpinned and enabled through our Digital Strategy.

Transformation & Change commitments:

- Transforms our customers' experience
- Transforms the shape and structure of our organisation
- Transforms our systems and processes
- Transforms our spending and response to demand.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 We are all digital leaders: we are all responsible for working collectively to ensure digital reform delivers positive impact and outcomes for the people

who rely on our services. **Digital Perth and Kinross** gives us an ambitious vision for using digital, information and technology to shape change during the next five years and a set of practical, realistic standards for achieving that vision. We should all continue to promote One Council ways of working that bring services together for more holistic, integrated responses shaped around communities, peoples' life events and the customer experience.

- 6.2 Digital reform is core to the Transformation & Change Programme: it will enable positive efficient change, new ways of working and provide leadership, challenge and support, both across the organisation and with partners and communities.
- 6.3 It is recommended that Committee approves **Digital Perth and Kinross**, our Digital Strategy 2023 – 2027, which sets out an accessible vision for how we can use digital, information and technology to put people at the centre of our services, and our services at the centre of our communities.

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Approved

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Karen Donaldson	Chief Operating Officer	January 2023

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	No
Workforce	No
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Legal and Governance	No
Risk	No
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	No
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 Digital and ICT are important enablers to facilitate the delivery of national and local outcomes.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 Digital and ICT are important to the advancement of the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising directly from this report. However, continued investment in our Digital capacity is recognised as being critical to the speed and agility with which the organisation as a whole will be able to progress the Digital Strategy and respond to future developments and emergent challenges.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications arising directly from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no Asset Management implications arising directly from this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

- 3.3 n/a

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Convenor, Finance and Resources Committee; Elected members, via a briefing session; Executive Leaders Team; Executive Leaders Short Life Working Group; the corporate Digital and the Education Establishment ICT Change and Digital Infrastructure Boards; Senior Management Teams; and IT Extended Management Team and staff.

External

- 4.2 A Local Government Digital Office Digital Maturity Assessment (DO DMA) [August 2020] and Audit Scotland Digital Progress in Local Government report [January 2021] both reviewed the Council's current state of digital readiness for transformation. Assessment workshops were attended by a cross-section of staff.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [A Changing Nation: how Scotland will thrive in a Digital World Scotland's Digital Future](#) – Delivery of Public Services [March 2021]
- [Scottish Technology ecosystem: review](#) (the Logan Review) [August 2020]
- [Draft Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan](#) [September 2022]
- The [Perth & Kinross Offer](#)
- [Transformation & Change Strategy](#)

3. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Digital Perth and Kinross
- Appendix 2: Digital Perth and Kinross 2023-2027 Delivery Plan to 31 Dec 2024