

**ICT AND DIGITAL STRATEGY 2021-2024**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Council approved a 3 year ICT and Digital Strategy in October 2017. A new draft ICT and Digital Strategy for 2021-24 has been developed and is attached and presented for approval.
- 1.2 This ICT and Digital Strategy aims to position Argyll and Bute Council as a “digital by default” authority. It will sit alongside the updated Digital Strategy for Scotland to help realise Argyll and Bute’s full potential in a digital world.
- 1.3 Policy & Resources Committee is asked to approve the ICT and Digital Strategy for 2021-24 attached at Appendix 1.

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The Council approved a 3 year ICT and Digital Strategy in October 2017. A new draft ICT and Digital Strategy for 2021-24 has been developed and is attached and presented for approval.
- 2.2 This ICT and Digital Strategy aims to position Argyll and Bute Council as a “digital by default” authority. It will sit alongside the updated Digital Strategy for Scotland to help realise Argyll and Bute’s full potential in a digital world.
- 2.3 Policy & Resources Committee is asked to approve the ICT and Digital Strategy for 2021-24 attached at Appendix 1.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Policy & Resources Committee is asked to approve the ICT and Digital Strategy for 2021-24 attached at Appendix 1.

**4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 Our ICT Digital Vision is to provide digital technologies and processes to support our people and our customers to deliver services, encourage collaboration, get things done and contribute to a more efficient Council. Our ICT Digital vision is supported by four key themes - Customers, Technology, Processes, and People. The strategy matches ICT and Digital services with the council’s ambition for service improvement and sustainability through digital innovation. It sets out how ICT and Digital services will be designed, sourced and delivered, and how digital technologies and processes can support our people and our customers to work better together.
- 4.2 The council’s ICT service has, to date, provided a safe and efficient digital working environment. The response to the 2020 lockdown and the move to a predominantly home based workforce has shown that the council is already in a strong position. Socitm’s UK wide benchmarking service, Socitm Improve, scored the council’s ICT service as the number 1 ranked UK local authority ICT service for 2019/20. The council scored highest of all in both cost and performance, illustrating a service that provides exceptional quality and value for money compared with other councils in the UK. The service is well placed to lead on a further series of transformational projects designed to support the council’s ambition for service improvement and sustainability through digital innovation.

#### 4.3 Our goals as a truly digital by default authority are to:

- be inclusive and put customers' needs first;
- make services more efficient through the adoption of new ways of working enabled by technology;
- put services online and encourage all of our people and customers to use them by default;
- work in real-time - with systems available 24/7;
- be automated - with minimal manual processing;
- be intelligent and pre-emptive of the next steps and future trends;
- be secure and accessible anytime.

4.4 The draft strategy sets out the overall objectives for a digital by default council and identifies what we will do to achieve them. It was developed with input from all departments and approved by the ICT Steering Board and Departmental Management Teams. It contains a high level action plan but detailed actions and measures will be incorporated into and monitored via annual ICT service plans.

4.5 It should be noted that many of the planned actions are dependent on business case justification. If the business cases do not show a positive return, then these actions will be dropped at that point. Where a positive return is demonstrated, then the savings will be needed to fund the cost of the new developments. Future budgetary pressures are expected over the strategy period given the council's overall financial outlook but the strategy should be used to influence future financial decisions in relation to digital by default services.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The previous ICT and Digital Strategy applied until the end of 2020 and this new strategy serves as its replacement. The council is a sector leader in using digital technology to enable effective public service delivery and, when fully implemented, this new strategy will lead to further efficiencies, savings, and improved services for council staff and customers.

### 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy:               | A new ICT and Digital Strategy has been developed to cover the period from 2021 to 2024  |
| 6.2 | Financial:            | Future budgetary pressures are expected over the strategy period given the council's overall financial outlook but the strategy should be used to influence future financial decisions in relation to digital by default services. |
| 6.3 | Legal:                | Aims to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation  |
| 6.4 | HR:                   | None.  |
| 6.5 | Fairer Scotland Duty: | The ICT and Digital Strategy has been assessed for impacts through the EQSEIA process and there are  |

no adverse impacts. The strategy aligns with the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland Strategy and Digital inclusion agenda.

6.5.1 Equalities: None.

6.5.2 Socio-economic duty: None.

6.5.3 Islands: None.

6.6 Risk: Aims to manage ICT security risks

6.7 Customer Service: Potential to further improve services through adoption of appropriate ICT and Digital Services with positive outcomes for staff and customers

## **Appendices**

### **1 ICT and Digital Strategy 2021-24**

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**Executive Director**  
**16 Nov 2020**

**Policy lead: Councillor Mary Jean Devon**

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