# Website Strategy 2018 -21

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 The Council's previous web strategy was written in 2009 when the Argyll and Bute Council website was purely informational and was ranked in the SOCITM Better Connected survey as 29th out of 32 councils in Scotland. There was no formal governance in place for the website and no dedicated team to oversee its development.

1.2 Since 2010 the action programme determined in that strategy has been fully implemented including:

- The web team was formed consisting of a web manager and 2 web developers and moved to work closely with Customer and Support Services.
- A new content management system was put in place and the website was relaunched
- Development has resulted in significant improvements to transactional digital services
- Improvements in content management, accessibility, navigation and mobile adaptiveness have ensured the council has held SOCITM 3 or 4 star status since 2011 and in 2016 was named as one of the top 20 best developed local government sites in the UK. The site has been shortlisted for Connect ICT Awards and as well as winning both internal and external awards for service delivery such as 2016 Better Connected award for best council tax service.

1.3 The website is an extremely well-used resource and an increasingly important business and communication engagement tool for the council's Services, with online transaction volumes growing from under 160,000 per annum in 2012 to over 280,000 per annum, in 2017. The significant increase in web contacts compared to traditional channels over time can be seen in the table below.
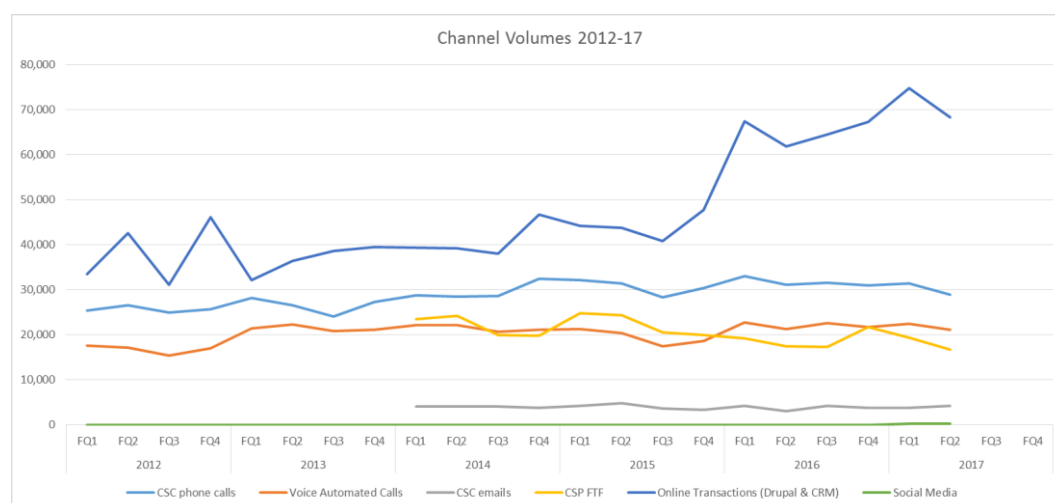
1.4 We recognise that the ways in which people access online and digital resources are changing and nothing better illustrates that than the rapid increase in smartphone and tablet usage. We have seen a 556% increase in smartphone use and a 645% increase in Tablet use over the past 3 years and 50% of web visits are done using these devices; which has opened up digital services to new customer demographics. The increase in superfast broadband coverage is also stoking this digital revolution.

1.5 It is vital that we keep a view on future trends and technologies to ensure that we are always delivering our online content in the way that our customers want while also

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seeking news way to innovate and help transform service delivery to make efficient use of ever tightening council resources.

1.6 This new strategy builds upon the progress that has been made in the past eight years to continue to grow the council's digital capability, to make best use of our available resources and provide modern, high quality digital services for our customers, colleagues and partners. The strategy will cover practical aspects of maintaining and developing our website (s) including content governance, development platforms, security and resilience as well as strategic design principles and aspirations.

2   The Strategic Context

2.1   This website strategy underpins the Council Communication, Marketing and Website Strategies 2018-2020. That overarching strategy has been informed by the Local Outcome Improvement Plan objective of "Our economic success is built upon a growing population". This more technical strategy brings together all the following elements to ensure they support the strategic vision set out in the overarching strategy that "our people will be informed, engaged and so inspired to act for a positive future for Argyll and Bute Council and the area":
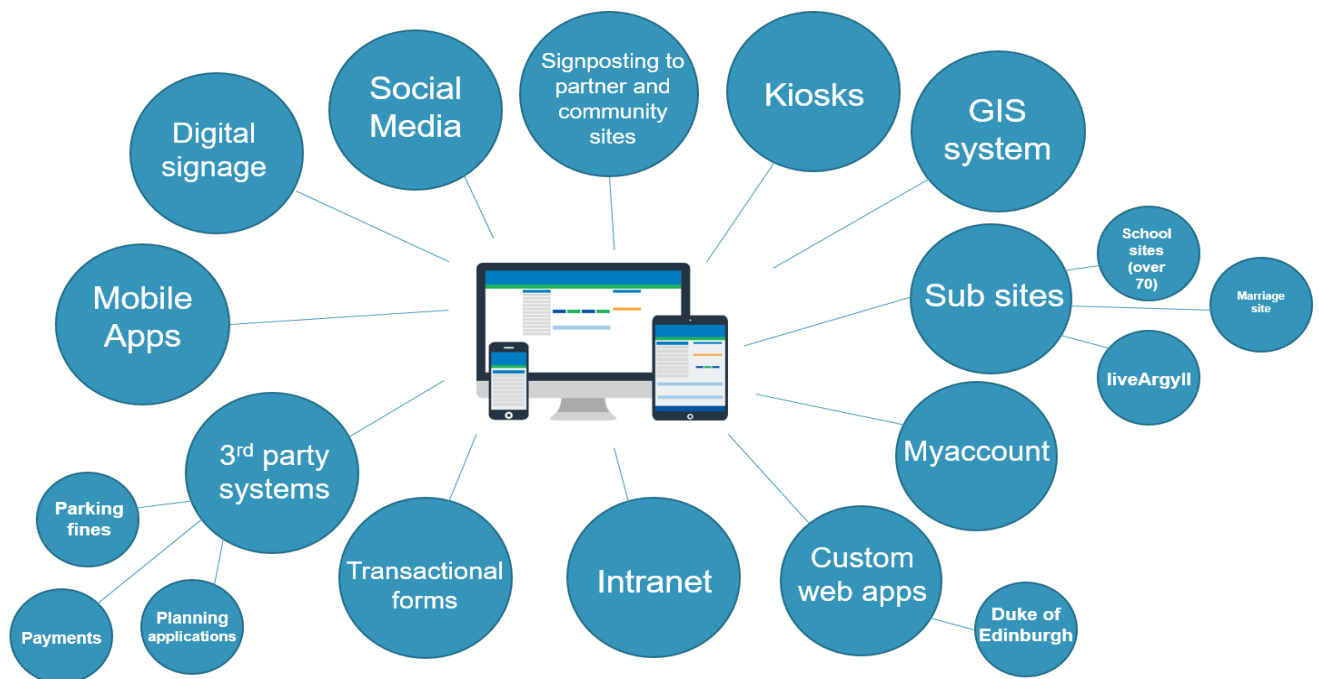
2.2   The website is at the heart of many digital developments, acting as the content source, the distributor, the delivery platform and the sign-poster to a wide variety of digital delivery media, as shown in the diagram below. It is not just a single corporate website but many hosted websites from schools to the Oban airport and marriage websites. In this dispersed way it is the primary vehicle through which our digital aspirations are delivered, both internally and externally.

2.3   This span of digital services is a key support and enabler for the successful realisation of the council's main strategic aims of making Argyll and Bute a place people choose to live, learn, work and do business. Specifically it supports the key Single Outcome Agreement and Local Outcome Improvement Plan objectives:

2.4   **The economy is diverse and thriving**, e.g. through Business Gateway, Procurement and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme services and new Rural Resettlement online application process integrated to the council's Customer Management system.

2.5 **Infrastructure that supports sustainable growth**, e.g. through excellent planning and development infrastructure web services and CHORD public realm and Masterplan information.

2.6 **Education skills and training maximise opportunities for all**, e.g. via over 70 supported school websites, adult learning and internal employee online learning services.

2.7 **Children and young people have the best possible start**, e.g. by hosting facilities to pay for and order school meals, Early Years online services and authenticated **services to next generation online SEEMIS Parent Portal**

2.8 **People live active, healthier and independent lives.** e.g. Creation and support of the LiveArgyll website, ongoing support of Self Directed Support webpages and directory and effective online access to benefit related services

2.9 **People live in safer and stronger communities,** e.g. Online information and access to services regarding community planning, participatory budgeting, grant funding and consultations regarding local service delivery.

2.10 The website also directly supports the following key business outcomes that underpin our **Corporate Plan:**

- BO05 Information and support are available for everyone
- BO15 Argyll and Bute is open for business
- BO23 Economic growth is supported
- BO30 We engage with our customers, staff and partners
- BO31 We have a culture of continuous improvement
- BO32 Our workforce is supported to realise its potential
- BO33 Information and support are available for our communities

2.11 The website is a key element of the Council's **Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Digital Strategy**, supporting Digital First, Agile and Flexible Workforce, Customer Engagement and web enabled Business Solution aspects of it.

2.12 Since the web site and the digital technologies it supports are crucial mediums of Communication, it is clear that the website and its strategy directly link to the council's Communication and Promotion Strategies. In particular around digital media and marketing, customer engagement and consultation, employee communication and community engagement.

2.13 The Council website also supports the work of the Health & Social Care Partnership.

2.14   Website statistics for 2016/17

Almost 3.5 million page views

Over 177,000 file downloads

Over 530,000 users

Nearly 32,000 payments

Over 10,000 form submissions

Collected £3 million

rated 3 stars (out of 4) by Socitm

Winner of 'Better Connected' award for best council tax delivery

Used free open source software where possible

Integrated with national 'Myaccount' system

70 school websites hosted internally

3   Our Digital Vision

3.1   The Vision statement is set out below:

Providing excellent websites and online facilities that give users a secure, effective, easy to use digital gateway to council services, information and decision making.

3.2   The Council's website has four key delivery functions detailed below:

1. Informational

- Publish high quality content online that is customer focused, accurate, useful, up to date and easy to understand, irrespective of device used to access it.
- Provide appropriate levels of technical and staff resources, skills development and training to achieve content excellence.

2. Transactional

- Enable efficient and integrated digital service delivery channels that allow for end-to-end, seamless transactions with back-office systems to increase the use of low cost digital service delivery channels.
- Provide secure, authenticated and personalised digital transactional services so good that anyone who can use them, chooses to use them.
- Ensure that our chargeable transactions comply with the highest statutory and industry standards for payment so customers trust in and therefore use them instead of traditional but high cost payment mediums.

3. Promotional

- Support the marketing and promotion of Council services and activities in the local community and wider afield, keeping people abreast of service changes and community developments.
- Provide electronic communication channels for news and marketing; raising the profile of our area and promoting inward investment and showcasing Argyll and Bute as a place people choose to live learn and do business.
- Increase usage of the council's digital channels by residents, businesses, visitors and staff to increase channel shift and enhance convenience and efficiency.

4. Engagement

- Put the needs of our customers first by designing our digital services around them and their input and feedback.
- Support partnership working by sharing and promoting common content, joint services and links with partners, online participation of local groups.
- Using the website and related digital services as a medium for research and consultation to improve engagement, transparency and democracy. This will include the use of participative budgeting, a way for local people to have a direct say in how, and where, public funds can be used to

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address local needs. When offered online, studies have indicated a greater level of participation in local democracy and decision making.

- Ensure inclusivity so that wherever possible, all users will have the same access to services and information; tackling barriers and putting in place mitigations.

Principles

3.3   There are five Principles that underpin all of the delivery functions noted above and their effective adoption will help to ensure delivery of the vision:

1. Empowerment: of users and council services over content, design and navigation through control over content management, active and analytical feedback and consultation and testing. It also means empowerment of customers and communities in the way the council delivers services and through accountability and transparency provided by online tools.

2. Integration: so the website provides a seamless portal between customer facing online services and fulfilment of those service requests or customer insights by Services in the back office. Integration is also key to our objective of a one council approach to improve efficiency and joined up services who have a single view of our customers no matter what channel they use to engage with us.

3. Automation: The council cannot provide officer mediated services on a 24/7 basis but customers desire such convenience. Web automation can help to bridge that gap and increasingly powerful programmes have opened up opportunities from simple automated bin day look ups to complex engagement engines that can learn and provide meaningful responses or signpost to resources.

4. Efficiency: This is both in having an efficient website that is well structured, current, effectively managed and accessible, but also using the website as an enabler for business efficiency to maximise customer self-service and thereby free up scarce resources, also promoting efficient Partnership working.

5. Resilience: This is about providing a website that is accessible on a 24x7x365 basis with effective back-ups and contingencies if technical problems occur. It is however also about ensuring we comply with all relevant legislation and standards including data protection and freedom of information; technical and security standards and accessibility and usability standards. This helps ensure a high quality website that meets the needs of our customers.

3.4   This vision applies equally to the council's public website(s) and the internal intranet (the Hub); they may have different audiences and present different content but the vision, functions and principles remain the same.

4 Development

4.1   Our current website has, over the past 6 years, been designed to be highly transactional – which is what our customers have told us they want.

4.2 Recent consultation with key website stakeholders indicated that while online transactional services were still crucial to ensure high visit success, our customers have told us they need the site to be easier to navigate, streamlined and populated with high quality transactional services and compelling, engaging content.

4.3 In order to provide the high quality and useful digital services that customers demand, we must ensure that we are putting the needs of our customers first.

4.4 Over the coming years we will build on success to date and use the large visitor numbers and breadth of available digital platforms to create and publish compelling content that will encourage further use of the informational and transactional content. We will also provide platforms for the dissemination of promotional material about the council's services, developments and successes ensuring that customers know on what and how public money is being spent. Through effective, consultative engagement they will also be able to influence service design, funding and continual improvement.

4.5 Alongside these four areas, we always have the technical standards upon which the site is built and which enables us to achieve our main principles.

Website Architecture

4.6 Website architecture defines the logical layout and structuring of websites in line with customer needs and/or business requirements. In the context of this strategy it will largely define our approach to visual design and layout, navigation and content.

Design

4.7 The design of the council website is deliberately simple in order to allow rapid development of digital services without requiring in depth graphic design or user interface (UX) design.

4.8 Recent surveying of key stakeholders found that the visual appeal of the website ranked above average and that customers favoured an uncluttered, easy to navigate design, so no radical redesign is proposed for the immediate future. This does not mean that improvements will not be made; particularly to how content is viewed through increasingly important mobile devices.

4.9 The website has been developed to accommodate use of images and other multimedia elements in many format and the use of these elements will be encouraged and developed. Services will be encouraged to provide content in this format. There is a lack of imagery used on the site and this is due in large part to a limited availability of suitable images. Work is in hand to develop a corporate imagery resource.

4.10 Changes to design aspects of the website are tested with customers using various techniques before being deployed fully. This ensures that the site meets the requirements of customers first and that any design decisions are evidence based. User centred design is crucial to visitor success.

4.11 The website adheres, as far as possible, to the corporate style guide but does recognise that certain design elements may need to differ in order to adhere to recognised navigational or structural expectations within web design.

4.12 We will design the layout of our homepage based on informed customer interaction and engagement data in order to best implement service access and promotional/news content in the most customer focused approach. The council has recently invested in customer journey software (Hotjar) that allows anonymised feedback to inform decision making.

Navigation

4.13 As noted under the principles of efficiency and resilience above, the navigation system on a website is hugely important and acts as a road map to all the different resources and information contained within the site. If the navigation is clear, customers will stay and enjoy a good experience and are more likely to engage with the site and read/view promotional material. Customers will find what they need quickly and easily and in many cases will not need to contact the council by telephone or face to face.

4.14 Results from extensive stakeholder surveying together with regular feedback from website customers shows that that the navigation on both the external website and the Intranet (The Hub) is currently not meeting the requirements of many customers. The existing navigation is seen as cumbersome with too many clicks to get to important information and services.

4.15 A comprehensive review of the website and Hub navigation menus is required to ensure that all content is entered into a single coherent menu in order that comprehensive navigation menus and site maps can be generated.

4.16 All council owned websites will aim to have a navigation structure that allows customers to easily navigate to the content they need.   The general principle will be to have a shallow depth of navigation structure. That is a hierarchy that only requires the minimum number of clicks to get to content.

4.17 This will be achieved through the implementation of several well established techniques such as breadcrumb trails, top tasks, A-Z and a comprehensive site map coupled with customer focused, data driven design to address customer needs.

4.18 Enhanced navigation elements such as breadcrumb trails will be added to site(s) whenever there is most likely to be a benefit to improve customer journey and success rates. Any new development or changes to navigational elements will be tested as per the overall design approach mentioned above.

4.19 We will continue to use 'top tasks' on landing pages, and other appropriate pages, within our navigational structure. This is a well proven navigational technique and is advocated by SOCITM. We will ensure that top tasks are selected on the basis of hard evidence rather than Services' judgement.

4.20 We will ensure that the 'top tasks' approach is applied to the Hub in order to improve navigation for users

4.21 Navigational elements within the site(s) will be designed with customers in mind first rather than adhering to any organisational or departmental structures.

4.22 All activity relating to navigation will be measured using appropriate metrics in order that the effectiveness of any design or hierarchical changes can be assessed.

Search and SEO

4.23 Not all visitors to the council website arrive directly onto the homepage, many (almost 60%) come from search engines such as Google and Bing and once on the site 17% use our internal search to continue their journey.

4.24 It is therefore critical to the success of the council's digital services that they are as easy to find and access as possible through both internal and external search engines. Failed searches result in contacts to the council through more expensive to maintain channels and customer dissatisfaction.

4.25 Proper use of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) will help ensure that content is found quickly and easily. SEO covers a range of techniques which when used correctly, have the potential to ensure that sites feature at the top of Search Engine Result Pages.

4.26 Google looks very favourably on Government content and this benefits us greatly with our site ranking highly in relevant searches. Our content is seen as trustworthy and reliable, however, this can be undermined when poor quality, out of date or incorrect content is published to the website.   It is therefore critical that all content on the site is maintained and updated regularly. This can be accomplished through adherence to

a content governance framework with appropriate workflows and quality control checks.

4.27 A new search internal engine (Cludo) was implemented on the website in August 2017. This will be optimised and trained (based on actual customer feedback and usage information) to provide high quality search results to customers on an ongoing basis.

4.28 The search facilities on the Hub are equally critical to the success of this site and will be regularly reviewed and developed upon to ensure that an efficient and useful service is provided. The Hub currently uses the default Drupal search engine but open source alternatives will be investigated and implemented if they offer a significant improvement.

4.29 The web team will lead on SEO for the council and will advise on the best use of SEO techniques that will help deliver on established success measures for our various digital platforms and sites.

Technical platforms, development and maintenance

4.30 The council website is continually growing and evolving with new services, content and facilities being made available to customers. To ensure that these services reach their potential it is vital that they are developed using appropriate technologies and are available to all regardless of platform or technology.

4.31 Usage of mobile devices to access the council website has grown by over 600% since 2015 and we must recognise this trend in all future developments of the site whether content or structural.

4.32 Development of services will be carried out with a customer first position and all available feedback and success data will be used to make evidence based design choices and developments.

4.32 The website(s) are currently built using HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript and PHP although we will adopt updated languages and platforms should the need arise and after appropriate consideration and evaluation.

Content Management System (CMS)

4.33 By utilising open source software such as the Drupal Content Management System (CMS) the standards upon which the website is built are open, future proofed and inexpensive.

4.34 The website is built on internationally recognised standards and complies with relevant regulations such as Data Protection and Accessibility.

4.35 A great deal of resources have been committed to the continual development of the Drupal platform and internal skills improvement and we will continue to leverage this though he continued use of Drupal.

4.36 Drupal is recognised by leading technology experts such as Gartner as a world class CMS and features in their 'Magic Quadrant' for 2017 which analyses all market leading CMSs.

4.37 Drupal is now on version 8 and we will investigate the upgrade paths from version 7 that are open to us. Upgrading to version 8 will allow us to ensure that we are utilising the latest technology and development methods.

Mobile

4.38 The use of mobile devices including tablets and smartphones has exploded in recently years and we now regularly see at least 50% of traffic to the main council website coming from mobile devices. We have seen a 556% increase in smartphone use and a 645% increase in Tablet use over the past 3 years.

4.39 All digital developments will adopt a 'mobile first' approach to ensure compatibility and legibility on the maximum number of devices and platforms. This includes ensuring procurement requirements all new third party web based applications have a mandatory element for mobile adaptive compliance. The overall goal for customer facing digital development will be that it is platform agnostic and we will continue to use technologies that enable this.

4.40 The council has only one council built mobile app available at the time of writing (plus some third party ones such as the modern.gov App), however, this is an area that we will develop further both for internal and external apps and in line with the ICT strategy.

Agile

4.41 An agile approach will be adopted to ensure that development is swift and reactive to customer needs and evolving technologies. Agile development describes a set of values and principles which advocates adaptive planning, evolutionary development, early delivery, and continuous improvement, and it encourages rapid and flexible response to change.

4.42 Agile is very different to the traditional waterfall method which is currently the main approach we use for web and application development. With waterfall methods the development process is sequential. Requirements are determined, the product is designed and built, and then it is tested and released. It is only at this end stage that feedback and performance data is gathered from customers and we see success or failure. Generally this means there is only one chance to get each part of the project right, because there isn't a return to the earlier stages.

4.43 Agile takes a different approach. All stages of the development process - gathering requirements, planning, designing, building and testing – are conducted at the same time.

4.44 Development updates are released quickly and often and customer feedback and usage gather which is then used to make further development changes.

4.45 Projects only go fully 'live' when there have enough feedback to show that the service works for customers and meets their needs.

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4.46 Summary - For our development approach.....
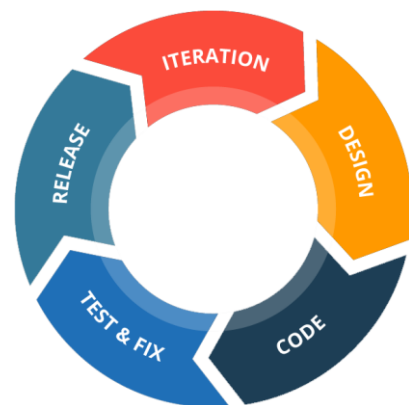
We will:

Informational

- Ensure content is found easily and quickly wherever possible
- Ensure any visual/multimedia assets comply with accessibility standards or offer alternative views of this content.
- Design our navigation from a customer focused position
- Ensure content is found easily and quickly wherever possible
- Aim to have a shallow depth navigation structure
- Continue to use a top task approach for landing pages and other appropriate pages.

Promotional

- Increase use of visual imagery and multimedia assets on the website(s)
- Adhere to the corporate style guide whenever possible including use of logos, colours, fonts and writing styles.
- Encourage customer sign up to pro-active and promotional digital resources

Engagement

- Use testing techniques to assess the effectiveness of any redesigns to the site/pages. This will include A/B testing and face to face and remote usability testing.
- Report on, and make available, 'ease of finding information' data.
- Choose top tasks based upon actual usage and service request data.
- Make guidance and tools available to allow services to create SEO maximised content
- Ensure that the search functionality on the website(s) are as effective as possible and monitor this closely through performance reporting
- Promote guidance on content creation and maintenance to editors and authors.
- use a top tasks approach and ensure that top tasks are selected on the basis of hard evidence rather than managers' judgement;

Technical

- Build and maintain a comprehensive site map
- Ensure that all major web searches are aware of the council website(s) and regularly crawl them.
- Attach all content to a central navigation menu to provide a comprehensive menu system.
- Continue to develop the website's Drupal Open source content management system

5 Marketing and Promotion

5.1 Our digital assets including the website, the Intranet (the hub), kiosks, digital signage, social media etc. present modern, reliable and well used platforms which can and should be used to promote and encourage use of council services, the council's priorities and community and business opportunities.

5.2 In order to make best use of available resources and maximise the positive impact and cost effectiveness of corporate digital communications, a combined digital, marketing and communications strategy and plan has been developed by the Communications Team, Economic Development and the Web Team
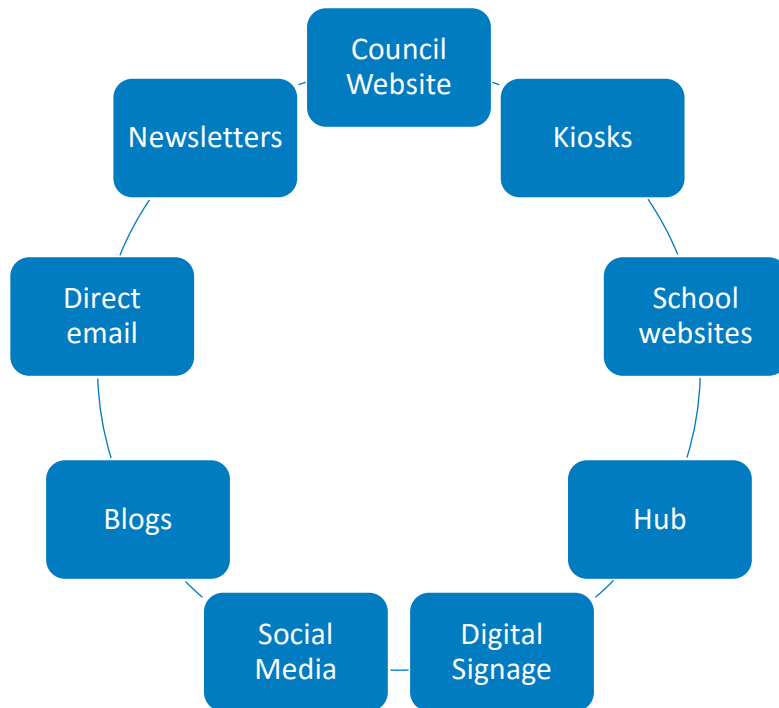
Figure 1- Our digital publishing platforms

5.3 The web and its related platforms are a key enabler and delivery medium for that strategy, which encompasses the mediums above. The website is central to all of them except newsletters (except eNewsletters) and of course direct mail, although even this is being supplanted by downloads and subscription alerts

Social Media

5.4 'Social media' is the term commonly given to online sites which allow users to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests online. As the name implies, social media involves the building of online communities or networks to encourage participation and engagement. This includes blogs, message boards, social networking websites, content sharing websites and many other similar channels.

5.5 Social media is used throughout our various web platforms including publishing to, and pulling feeds from, the major social media sites, as well as blogging and message boards built on our website, Intranet and some external sites.

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5.6   A social media policy has been created to ensure the use of social media is aligned to the council's corporate communications strategy and that any communication through these channels is consistent with the Employee Code of Conduct and other relevant Council policies and procedures. It also support employees in the effective use of social media.

5.7   In addition to being a medium by which customers can request council services, social media can be used as a positive tool to promote services and to improve engagement, consultation and communication. It can be used to share learning or practice or to promote council services.

5.8   All council sites on social media must be aligned with the council's Corporate Communications Strategy and authorised using the Social Media Presence Application Form

5.9   Full details of the council's social media policy, including how to apply for permission, can be found in the Social Media Policy and application form

Digital Signage

5.10   The council has a digital signage network that can be found in all Service Points in Argyll and Bute. There are 19 screens on the network. The screens are an excellent way of providing information in a wide variety of formats to customers that visit our premises.

5.11   While it is impossible to know exactly how many customers view the screens, service points have a footfall of approx. 89,582 combined across all locations so we know that the digital signage network has a very high potential audience.

5.12   Messages can be broadcast across the whole network or only to specific screens. Messages can also be timed to appear at certain times and dates

5.13   We will continue to maintain this network and publish relevant material to the screens when required and work with services to publish material in line with actions contained within the communications strategy and customer service strategy

Mobile apps

5.14   With 50 of all traffic to our website now using mobile devices, it is sensible that we look to the use of mobile apps when appropriate to deliver digital services. We will take a pragmatic approach to this, developing small scale prototype apps to test functionality and appropriateness before moving to full scale development

5.15   We currently have one app published in both the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store, 'Our children, their future' an app designed by Pupils at Dunoon Grammar and converted to the appropriate platforms by the Web Team.

5.16 <u>Summary -</u> For promotional activities…

We will:
Informational
- Maintain a directory of all council run social media sites approved through the social media policy. This directory will be published to the council website
- Use the council's Sentiment Metrics social media hub to manage and review our social media engagement and report key metrics to senior management at least quarterly.

Technical
- Provide high quality digital publishing platforms for the dissemination of council, community and democratic information and services

Promotional
- Work closely with the Communications Team, Economic development and other services to coordinate and maximise success of digital marketing opportunities including social media and specialist websites e.g. like the Marriage website
- Be a contributing member of the Communications Group
- Use all appropriate digital platforms to promote the availability of digital transactional services, both national and local.
- Assess the effectiveness and impact of our digital marketing using existing web analysis tools and make this data available to services
- Where appropriate, provide assistance to Services in the use of digital publishing platforms and tools to maximise digital marketing opportunities

6 Transactional Services (Web & Hub)

6.1 Creating high quality, useful and easy to use transactional services is a key enabler for the council's Digital First aspirations and the benefits of channel shift efficiencies and customer convenience that flow from it.

6.2 Our aim to provide digital services that are so good that anyone who can use them, chooses to.

6.3 We will, wherever possible, integrate third party service delivery tools and applications seamlessly into the website to provide customers with a unified single view of council services. A key enabler for that seamless service is single sign on through our local MyAccount personalised web service, so that customers log on once to it and are given access to third party (and other in house) transactional services. We will continue to add Single Sign On (SSO) to more services whenever the opportunity arises. This will include the new Revenues and benefits system and the new resource booking system.

6.4 Having secure authentication to ensure security of personal data is an important consideration for customers when we transact with them so we will continue to support the national Myaccount authentication services to allow our customers secure access to local and national digital services.

6.5 Myaccount is a simple and secure sign-in service for online public services in Scotland. Developed by the Improvement service (www.improvementservice.org.uk/myaccount.html), It provides people living in Scotland with the ability use a single user name and password to access a range of online public services. The UK government also has similar system in development called GOV.UK Verify and we will continue to monitor the development of these systems closely to take advantage of any opportunity to increase the number of our citizens signed up for these beneficial services.

6.6 We will extend this concept to business by adopting the national BisAccount authenticated service for businesses and organisations when that national service has been fully launched in 2018/19.

6.7 We will focus any design and development primarily on satisfying our customers' transactional needs and based on their priorities and statutory requirements. We will collect feedback and usage data which will allow us to adopt an agile 'develop > test > deploy > engage' cycle where we can make and then test changes to the site and our digital services.

6.8 We will use the appropriate tools to build and deploy digital services that best meet the needs of our customers whether that is through the Drupal CMS, Oracle Rightnow CRM or one of our other third party systems, but will also work through the Improvement Service, Scottish Government Local Digital Office and the UK national Gov.Uk digital office to implement collaborative transactional services such as the SEEMIS Parents' Portal.

6.9 We aspire to develop our digital services in line with the Digital Scotland Digital First service standard, a Scottish variant of the "Digital by Default" standard created by the UK Government Digital Service.

6.10 The Digital First Service Standard is a set of 22 criteria that all digital services developments are encouraged to follow.   Developed by Scottish Local Government digital office sector, it aims to make sure that services in Scotland are continually improving and that users are always the focus.

6.11 The standard has 3 themes:

- user needs - focus on what your users want to do rather than the organisation's objectives or the mechanics of delivering your service

- technology – how you've built your service

- business capability and capacity – having the right team with enough time to maintain the service

6.12 We will meet these requirements wherever possible.

Customer engagement

6.13 Our customers are at the heart of what we do and the reason we provide online services. It is crucial to us that we involve customers in the shaping of our service delivery whether that is through feedback mechanisms, taking part in usability sessions or simply keeping them informed of developments and improvements. Engagement pre-supposes a two way exchange of information, ideas and participation. Regular customer led website developments will be published to the website informing customers of fixes, improvements and enhancements in a 'You said we did' section. However customers will also be informed of topical changes in a 'What's New' page updated monthly.

6.14 We will consult with services regularly to establish what development may be required on the website to support the delivery or promotion of services, changes or improvements in line with the council communications strategy to ensure full use of the council's digital marketing assets are realised. This includes coordinating marketing and PR opportunities that maximise the usage of our various digital media platforms to engage, inform and assist residents, business and visitors to Argyll and Bute.

6.15 The effectiveness of our transactional services will be monitored and analysed using the site tools and surveys and remote and face to face usability sessions and, where required, where required we will make improvements based on actual usage data and stakeholder feedback, with a particular emphasis on customer option and usage data.

6.16 Additionally we will work with partner and third party organisation to provide useful online resources, engagement and transactional services that benefit the residents, businesses and visitors to Argyll and Bute. The aim will be to make the customer experience as seamless and intuitive as possible.

6.17 As part of continual improvement we aim to share, where appropriate, best practices and data with partner organisations to ensure that any collaborative developments are as high quality and useful as possible. This will be done in a careful and well managed way and in compliance with data protection legislation. We will review our transactional services to ensure a plan is in place to meet the requirements of privacy and other elements of the new General Data Protection Regulations in 2018.

Usability testing

6.18 Ensuring that all customers who visit the website can find and use the information or service they require, is vital to growing the usage of our digital channels and therefore meeting the council's channel shift objectives.

6.19 By providing customers with digital services so good that they choose to use them, we will drive up use of our digital platforms and increase the likelihood that customers will not need to revert to more expensive service delivery channels.

6.20 In order to develop these high quality services, regular usability testing is crucial to establish what does and does not work, for customers. It allows us to make design decisions based on actual customer usage which is likely to have a far higher, and more positive impact, than if done on a whim.

6.21 Usability sessions can be held face to face with stakeholders or conducted remotely though online tools. Usability testing sessions regularly use techniques such as task completion, screen recording, card sorting and a variety of other exercises and activities to engage customers and gather useful feedback and suggestions. Combined with A/B variant testing and an agile approach it will be used to make rapid and meaningful enhancements to our transactional digital services.

Data driven design

6.22 Making decisions based upon real user data and feedback allows us to make significant impactful and positive changes that benefit customers, services and other users.

6.23 Data from users of our website(s) including analytical usage data, feedback from customers such as comments, suggestions, complaints and compliments is extremely valuable when making decisions as to what improvements or changes should be implemented. When used properly, this can ensure that any changes to the website(s) or web applications, have the maximum positive benefit to customers.

6.24 As part of recent stakeholder engagement, it became clear that access to performance, feedback and analytics data was very important to services in order to help them make positive design and development decisions relating to their digital service delivery. We will ensure that this information is published appropriately to services and other relevant stakeholders in order that the most beneficial decisions and improvements can be made that satisfy customer needs.

Extending Access

6.25 Despite the convenience that digital services can deliver there will always be cases where service users cannot or will not use digital channels. Assisted digital is a catch all term for the services, policies and strategies the council uses in order to support

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customers who currently use non-digital channels in order to help them benefit from the opportunities offered by going digital.

6.26 An Assisted Digital Strategy has been developed by the Council that adopts a number of approaches from training to assistive technology like BrowseAloud and alternative digital channels such as voice automated services. New tablet based and simple to use kiosks will be installed at all our Customer Service Points with agents on hand to assist customers where needed in order to provide a gateway to digital transactional and informational services. These Kiosks consists of a tablet device encased within a stand that allow customers who visit our service points the opportunity to access many council information resources and self-service options. The information is presented through a web based front end which is designed, built and maintained by the Web team.

6.27 Kiosks are already available in several Customer Service points including Lochgilphead and Helensburgh and more are to be made available in 2018.

6.28 The website, intranet and any other Council owned websites will seek to implement functionality that encourage reluctant digital users to adopt these channels. Included in this from 2018/19 will be a new "Virtual Assistant" service that will sit ahead of the webchat and Contact Us services and use powerful algorithms to help provide answers to customers' online queries on a self-service basis. This system will be constantly refined and tuned, in effect learning from its mistakes. In the longer term this will be linked to voice recognition to provide a simple natural language user interface.

6.29   SUMMARY - For our transactional services…..

We will:
Informational

- Regularly publish details of website fixes, improvements and enhancements in a 'You said we did' section on the council website and keep customers up to date with new features in a 'What's New' section
- Provide easy access to key informational resources through a new 'Virtual Assistant'

Transactional

- Design our transactional services from a customer first position
- Extend the number of authenticated transactional services using MyAccount single sign on and implement the new national BisAccount service for businesses/organisations
- Implement new easy use kiosks in CSPs to permit easy and supported access to transactional and informational services

Promotional

- Promote digital transactional services (online and voice automated), as the first point of contact for customers and use all available media to encourage use.
- Promote national as well as local transactional services that will benefit our customers and communities, collaborating with national agencies.

Engagement

- Utilise customer feedback and usage date to make informed design decisions, holding regular online surveys/polls and stakeholder consultation and satisfaction measurement.
- Conduct usability testing on new and existing transactional services and provide the outcome of this and other feedback data to services and other relevant parties to make improvements to content and design.

Technical

- Adhere to the guidelines set out in the Digital First Service Standard and comply with General Data Protection Regulations when designing new transactional services
- Adopt an 'agile' development, testing cycle to drive transactional design and applications.

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7 Content Strategy

7.1 The nature of local government and the number of services that Argyll and Bute Council delivers to residents is such that, if the website is to be truly effective as self-service delivery and marketing channel, it must hold and present a high volume of information and service content. It is essential that all content is actively managed and that the process of content creation is well defined to ensure consistency, standards compliance and quality assurance.

7.2 We must encourage a sense of ownership of the site content within Services and to this end will encourage submission of ideas and content through various mechanisms. This will allow the crowdsourcing of content but will still be firmly placed within content workflows to ensure that only useful, appropriate content is published and then removed when no longer relevant.

Content governance

7.3 Best practice dictates that there should be a proper workflow process in place for content management and production and that there must be a separation between authoring and publication in order to ensure the required quality.

7.4 The main content organisational models employed in Local Authorities for the management of content for the web are:

- **Model 1 – Centralised publishing**: All web content is routed through the web team who are responsible for writing and publishing all web content based on material supplied from the service areas. So long as the web team is user-focused and is well trained in writing clear, accessible content, this model can have the advantage of aiding consistency of content and style. However, the disadvantages are that the web team may not spot service specific errors within the content and there can be delays in publishing content if the web team is under resourced due to holidays, sick leave or if there is significant amounts of content need to be changed simultaneously. This model also engenders a lack of ownership of content.

- **Model 2 – Devolved publishing**: Content Management Systems (CMS) allow organisations to devolve content creation to service areas, leaving the web team to concentrate on quality control and more technical aspects such as enhanced developments, online transactions, security etc. In this model, content is created by web contributors at service level but is not published until the web team has checked and authorised it. Once again, the web team cannot be expected to identify service specific errors and without sufficient training at the service level, inconsistencies in readability, accessibility, style and so on may start to creep in. Backlogs in publishing content may also be an issue.

- **Model 3 – Hybrid (or federated) model**: Many organisations, particularly larger ones, have overcome some of the issues of Model 2 by introducing an intermediate layer of content management and separating functions of minor changes from major redevelopment of web pages. Minor changes are regarded as modifications to existing web pages whereas major changes involve the creation of new web pages. Hence services can instantly publish minor changes without control but major ones still require sign off. Services therefore have

significant content management responsibility but there is still a high degree of quality control.

7.5   Currently the content management of the website most closely aligns with Model 2.

7.6   This has its advantages in that a great deal of content is maintained directly by services and therefore is accurate and covers many technical details of services delivery that would be very difficult to achieve with a single central publishing model, Model 2 also has some significant disadvantages including content not being updated as often as required, content that is too long or too detailed and a reduction in the use of plain English.

7.7   The requirements of resourcing a centralised model 1 are not possible in the current financial climate as it would require additional web team resources to properly implement. **Model 3, the hybrid approach, is recommend as the most appropriate model** to fit with the workflows and resources of the web team and wider Council services, but it does still require Services to commit resources to effectively manage their own web content.

Best Practices and standards for web content

7.8   We will adopt the following best practices when writing web content:

Plain English

7.9   All content on the website will follow the council's guidelines on writing plain English which can be found on the councils intranet site (The Hub)

Frontloading

7.10   Frontloading is a writing technique where the most important, information is provided first, followed by additional details. It is sometimes known as the "inverted pyramid" model.

7.11   Studies have shown that frontloading content makes it easier for customers to understand and scan a webpage to see if it is relevant for their needs.

7.12   This is a technique advocated by gov.uk and usability.gov and can make a tremendous difference to how well content is used by customers.

User Stories

7.13   User stories are a writing technique advocated by the Government Digital Service (GDS) that describes a user and the reason why they need to use the service you're building.

7.14   It enables content creators to write concise, targeted copy that meets customer needs and encourages them to think about their work from a user's perspective

7.15   When Services request new content from the web team or wider digital services team, they will be asked to provide a 'user story' and 'acceptance criteria'. This will allow the web team to assess the priority of the content and how best it can be implemented on the site.   Services will be assisted with this if required by the digital team.

7.16   User stories are a powerful way of establishing WHAT your customer NEEDS and HOW it can be satisfied. They can be used at the beginning stages of new information content or complex transaction development.

7.17 Providing high quality content is critical to success with the website(s) and other customer facing digital platforms. If content is out of date and/or inaccurate, it reduces customer satisfaction and can result in customers reverting to traditional more expensive service delivery channels such as telephone or face to face.

7.18 With over 3000 pages on the current website, managing this content can be extremely time consuming and difficult. Therefore it is essential that the number of pages and volume of information on the website is properly managed.

7.19 All content on the website will have a lifecycle whereby it is reviewed after certain period of time and either archived, or removed from the website. This will be reported to the Customer service board on a biannual basis for appropriate action by Customer Service Action Managers

7.20 We will make use of appropriate software and systems to analyse our sites and provided reports on content quality including broken links, spelling and clarity. This will be made available to all relevant parties for action.

Accessibility

7.21 Web accessibility is the practice of making website content available to all users, particularly those with disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, and neurological disabilities. It includes making a website as accessible as possible regardless of browsing technology, such as for people with text-only web browsers and old browser versions.

7.22 Argyll and Bute Council is committed to making its website(s) accessible to as many people as possible. We will continue to meet AA accessibility specification as defined by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). We will Aim for AAA compliance wherever possible although we acknowledge there may be occasions where this is not feasible due to colour contrast ranges and externally sourced content.

7.23 Compliance with web accessibility is an ongoing process and so the websites(s) will be regularly monitored using various tools and improved upon where possible. We will achieve compliance with the 2 stage accessibility test undertaken each year by the SOCITM Better Connected assessment.

7.24 We will continue to offer customer's access to accessibility tools e.g. BrowseAloud and alternative content where appropriate to enhance their experience on the website.

7.25 SUMMARY - For web content…

We will:

Technical

- Adhere to World Wide Web consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 – level AA
- Achieve the SOCITM accessibility standard in the annual Better Connected survey
- Implement an archival workflow on the website to allow management of out of date information and highlight irrelevant, obsolete and non-functioning content to Services.
- Continually monitor accessibility levels through appropriate monitoring tools.

Informational

- Ensure that a regular review of the effectiveness the governance model is conducted, is supported and used by all services that contribute to the website(s).
- Establish workflows that guide and support content creation based upon the governance framework
- Ensure that the content on the website is accurate, up to date, and useful
- Provide content authors with tools that will allow them to maintain high quality content
- Ensure all content creators and editors have access to guidance and support in writing content that is clear, customer focused and uses plain English.
- Reduce, simplify, combine or remove content on the site with a view to providing content that meets the needs of customers and that can be actively managed
- keep website size and content rigorously pruned;
- support a hybrid approach for content management and governance;
- Write website content in plain English and ensure that content authors and editors have access to plain English training material and resources

Engagement

- Enable stakeholders to directly contribute idea and content for publication to the website(s)
- Encourage and assist services to create content that is customer focused.

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8   Standalone and microsite development

8.1   Our general policy toward web development is that we have a single central website for the vast majority of our content.

8.2   There may, however, be occasions when the council website is not be the best platform for a specific project or development and in these circumstances where there is a compelling reason to depart from the main site, there a formal process is in place to assess requirements.

8.3   This process, approved by SMT on 18th September 2017, exists to ensure that where required demands cannot be met in house, that best value for money is obtained, maximum use of available assets for site monitoring, usability testing, and quality control are employed and that the council receives the requisite acknowledgements and marketing benefits from the new site or application.

8.4   External website proposals will be assessed by the Web Team and Communications Team managers through the use of the website assessment form available on the Hub. The completed form will then be submitted, by the Web and Communications Managers, to the Customer Service Board for comment.

8.5   Any sites that are developed externally must provide a performance update once a year for the Customer Service Board. This will be coordinated by the Web Team.

We will:

Informational
- Ensure all staff know the required processes and procedures for creating and maintaining standalone sites
- Maintain a comprehensive central database of all public facing sites owned and operated by Argyll and Bute Council
- Support services to make best use of in-house resources when a standalone site is required.

9   Looking to the Future

9.1   The use of emerging and future technologies needs to be planned within the context of the Council's strategies for communication and engagement externally with residents and partners and internally with staff.

9.2   Experts such as Gartner see a growth in the use of emerging tech such as conversational user experiences incorporating Bots and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and we have made tentative steps into this area through the use of smart assistants and enhanced search capabilities, however there is a great deal of potential to more fully incorporate AI etc. into our processes.

9.3   Other technology developments such as augmented reality (to overlay visual information onto pictures or videos) and Smart Speakers (Amazon Echo, Google home etc.) offer potential alternative channels that can provide customers with compelling, enhanced and practical digital experiences.
These technologies allow users to access information through more natural, intuitive mechanisms, whether that is seeing through the screen of your smartphone where a building is located (AR) or asking questions or advice through speech (smart speakers) these emerging technologies humanise technology and lower the barrier of entry to complex data sets allowing everyone regardless of technical ability to benefit.

9.4   It should be noted that any development in these areas require time and resources to benefit fully from their capabilities, however, we are already working with our customer engagement platform suppliers to ensure Argyll and Bute is at the forefront of these fast developing technologies. By the end of 2017/18 we will have linked the corporate Facebook Account to our Smart Assistant information bot and in 2017/18 will implement the next generation Virtual Assistant online.

9.5   We will initially explore some of these emerging technologies through small scale experimental projects with successfully proven developments having full business cases developed to take the idea into full development and production within the lifetime of this strategy.

9.6   We are also engaged with the Scottish Local Government Digital Office to collaboratively develop solutions as such green field technologies offer an excellent opportunity for low cost national approaches to be rolled out.

9.7   The council is also undertaking thorough analysis of its digital systems, processes and integrations as part of the Transformation programme and the web site and platforms will implement the relevant approved developments that come from that programme.

9.8   Summary - In looking to the future….

We will
Technical

- Investigate the use of new and growing technologies; particularly those using automation and which have the capacity to 'learn' and evolve to remain current.
- Adopt new technologies where appropriate and when they have reached a suitable level of maturity.
- Implement all relevant approved developments arising from the council's Transformation Programme, adopting an agile approach to development projects and activities.

Engagement

- Work with the Scottish Local Government Digital Forum to identity potential projects utilising emerging technologies.

10 Security and Resilience

10.1 Security of the website and the data it holds is critical. The site must be trustworthy if it is to be a successful platform for digital service delivery and any downtime, whether due to malicious behaviour or not, must be recovered from as quickly as possible to avoid any data loss, reputational damage, reduction in trust and loss of business through our digital channels.

10.2 The council's website, intranet site, school websites and several others are all hosted internally by the council's ICT service and we work with ICT to ensure full security compliance. All data transmitted across the council website is encrypted using TLS (currently ver 1.2).

10.3 ICT will maintain the security and resilience of the website servers using backup server failover techniques to ensure that the service is uninterrupted as much as possible. We currently use external site monitoring technology to ensure prompt notification of outages and analyse every outage to identify lessons to be learned and take remedial action. This resilient approach will be used going forward and each year is subject to resilience testing as part of the SOCITM Better Connected testing. We will achieve a pass for SOCITM resilience every year.

10.4 The minimum required customer data is be stored within the website database for the sole purpose of providing council services to customers. Customer data retention will be 3 months. After this time data will be removed from the database.

10.5 The website is currently built on open source web technologies which are well proven and used by some of the most high profile sites in the world.

10.6 Any customer data that is collected for the purposes of service delivery or improving services is anonymised wherever possible and where this is not the case, this is made clear to customers.

10.7 Cookies are used throughout our websites(s) and applications to provide enhanced services to our customers and enable us to gather usage data. The purpose of these cookies are documented in our term and conditions and mechanism to allow customers to opt out of cookies use is presented to customers on entering the site.

10.8 Summary - For web security and resilience....

We will:
Informational
- Provide clear terms and conditions of use on the council website which covers data usage, privacy, data protection, cookie use.
- Ensure cookie use information is clear and up to date.
- Maintain a list of council owned and operated website and other customer facing digital assets and ensure the web team/ICT that we have administrative access to resolve any technical or security issues that may arise.

Technical
- Continue to build on a secure and solid foundation that supports current and future development
- Continentally monitor site availability and have resilience measures in place to reduce downtime to a minimum with an aim of having 99.9% site availability
- Work closely with ICT to ensure that the underlying technologies are reliable, secure and efficient and that the website adheres to relevant security policies.
- Achieve a pass every year for the SOCITM Better Connected resilience assessment
- Comply with relevant legislation including the Data Protection Act
- Adhere to a Customer data retention schedule of 3 months. After this time data will be removed from the database

Engagement
- Ensure that any customer data collected by us is only used for the purposes of improving our digital services. The data will not be passed onto third parties unless explicitly stated.
- Comply with current Data protection legislation and put measures in place to meet the requirement s of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will be in effect from 25th May 2018
- Ensure that users of our digital services are aware of the scope of data that we collect, its purpose and how they can opt out of any such data collection.

11 Website Roadmap and Action Plan

2018 **2019** **2020** **Longer term**

Informational

Enhanced site search

Begin Content Review

Restructure main navigation menu

Implement new navigational elements

CMS upgrade. Enhanced content creation tools

Restructure main navigation menu

Voice Automated AI

Augmented reality promotions

Chat bots – service suggestion AI

More transactional mobile apps

Transactional mobile app development. Increased use of mobile and emerging technologies

Integration of Digital marketing Channels

Customisation and personalisation of website

Transactional

Increased number of digital transactions available.

Implement new virtual assistant technology

Full coordination of digital and traditional marketing activities

Full reporting of usage data and metrics.

Integrate myaccount single sign on to Book IT and Council Tax.

Centralised media assets repository/library. Encourage submission of content from staff and customers

Enhanced customer feedback tools for website and Hub. Push notifications and alerts.

Promotion **Engagement**

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12 Web Strategy action plan

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
Web 1	**Create a central library of images in collaboration with Comms and Economic dev**	Collected images available/suitable for illustration and digital marketing.	Central library available to all relevant parties Library populated	Web team Comms/ Ec Dev	Q1 2018	Design Marketing and Promotion
Web 2	**Implement google optimise on website and intranet for A/B testing.**	Make design decisions based on actual user data. Review and monitor major design changes	• Deploy optimise code to website. • Carry out test a/b projects	Web team	Q1 2018	Design
Web 3	**Review Web content to ensure it meets accessibility guidelines (WCAG) level AA compliance**	Ensure website(s) are as accessible to as many people as possible.	• Regularly review site to ensure compliance with WCAG Level AA	Web team	Ongoing	Accessibility Design Content governance
Web 4	**Pass Better Connected accessibility assessment**	Achieve compliance with the 2 stage accessibility test undertaken each year by the SOCITM Better Connected assessment	• Pass achieved	Web team	Q1 2018	Accessibility Design
Web 5	**Create and publish guidance for authors and editors on producing accessible digital**	Create guidance to help web authors ensure that all content meets W3C WAI level AA wherever possible.	• Publish training material to Hub and/or other relevant platforms. • Monitor usage/downloads	Web team Comms team	Q1 2018	Accessibility Design

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
	content		of material			
Web 6	**Create a central, comprehensive menu structure within Drupal For both website and Intranet**	Stakeholder feedback suggests it is difficult to navigate the sites.	• All content is entered into main menu. • Produce comprehensive and standards compliant site map. • Submit website sitemap to google/Bing etc.	Web team	Q1 2018	Navigation
Web 7	**Implement 'breadcrumb' navigation menu**	Add additional navigation element which highlights current and previous locations to user	Breadcrumb menu is published to all relevant pages	Web team	Q2 2018	Navigation Search and SEO
Web 8	**Review content and consolidate or remove 'deep' pages**	Reports will be generated to identify potentially out of date content and update, remove or archive as appropriate.	• Generate content report and get feedback from services on validity of content. • A Reduction in the number of pages on the website. The actual number will be determined after analysing content report.	Web team Editors Authors	Q1 2018	Navigation
Web 9	**Optimise the internal search engine on the council website to**	USe functionality of Cludo search engine to create optimal search results for users	Customer satisfaction with Search goal - 75%	Web team	Q1 2018	Search and SEO

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
	increase usage or, and satisfaction with search.	including use of page ranking and banners.				
Web 11	**Report on, and make available, 'popular search terms, 'ineffective searches', 'search success' and 'customer satisfaction with search' data. Data will be made available through the Hub.**	Continue to measure and report on the performance of the Cludo search. The data from Cludo will be reformatted for display on the Hub to allow services to identify areas that require work.	• Data is published to the Hub • Customer satisfaction with Search goal - 75%	Web team	Q2 2018	Search and SEO
Web 12	**Increase usability testing with customers**	Hold at least 1 face to face and 1 remote usability sessions per year. Which incorporate Accessibility testing where possible.	Promote and hold usability sessions.	Web team	Q2 2018	Website Architecture
Web 14	**Investigate and propose an upgrade path to Drupal 8**	Drupal 8 is now reaching a level of maturity whereby all the modules we require are available on the new version. We should look into how best to port our current system (ver 7)		Web team ICT	Q3 2018	Content Management System (CMS)

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Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
Web 15	**Implement mobile adaptive theme on all 3rd party sites/applications**	Apply themes supplied by the web team to 3rd party systems to ensure consistent branding across platforms.	Adaptive presentation for mobile devices. Application of current corporate branding to 3rd party systems	ICT Web team	Q1 2018	Mobile
Web 16	**Create digital marketing request form on Hub**	Put processes in place that allow services to easily request and get assistance with digital marketing opportunities	Create and promote form and process.	Webteam Comms Team	Q1 2018	Marketing and Promotion
Web 17	**Publish digital marketing metrics to a central location.**	This data can be used by services to make informed marketing decisions and learn from the work of colleagues		Web Team Comms Team	Q1 2018	Marketing and Promotion
Web 18	**Attend information security forum**	This group will advise on best practices to ensure that customer data is held securely and that the site(s) are properly secured against attacks and intrusion. Resilience plans will be established to ensure that recovery from any downtime is as efficient as possible.	put forward appropriate person for attendance	Web team Digital team Governance & Law	Q1 2018	Security and Resilience
Web 19	**Create appropriate workflow within Drupal to remove or archive data, as appropriate, from the website**	Currently content on the website is either published or not. We will introduce a third option where content can be labelled as 'archived'	Develop functionality where content can be marked as 'archived' within the Drupal CMS	Web Team	Q3 2018	Content governance

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
Web 20	**Fully Implement content governance model 3**	The governance model supports the creation and maintenance of accurate up to date and useful content. We will adopt model 3 (hybrid)as it provides the most appropriate model for Argyll and Bute Council	Model implemented and communicated to all appropriate stakeholders	C&SS Comms CSB	Q1 2018	Content governance
Web 21	**Implement the use of 'User stories' as developed by the Government Digital Office**	User stories will provide a standardised format for content creation increasing usability and consistency.	Guidance is added to content creation pages and is promoted and made available to authors and editors through Hub.	Web team Comms team Authors/editors	Q1 2018	Content Strategy
Web 22	**Provide up to date training material on the Hub for content authors and editors**	Stakeholder feedback has indicated that many Authors and editors require training to make the most of the available digital platforms	New training material published and in use	Web team	Q1 2018	Content Strategy
Web 23	**Publish performance and feedback data onto an appropriate platform and allow access to this data to relevant parties.**	There was considerable interest from Stakeholders for access to performance and feedback data. This will be made available in order that content and design decisions can be data driven.	Data is published to the Hub in an appropriate format and publicised to staff.	Web team	Q1 2018	Development Content Strategy
Web 24	**Review and update privacy, terms and conditions and**	We must ensure that all of the relevant polices are reviewed and updated to ensure	Updated policies agreed and published.	Web team Governance and Law	April 2018	Content Strategy Security and Resilience

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
	cookie guidance information	accuracy and take into account implementation of GDPR in May 2018.				
Web 25	**Review transactional services to ensure compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**	We will review our transactional services to ensure a plan is in place to meet the requirements of privacy and other elements of the GDPR in 2018.	Review completed Plan created and published to appropriate location	Web team Digital team Governance & Law Services	April 2018	Content Strategy Security and Resilience
Web 26	**Investigate the use of new and growing technologies. Propose development projects**	This could include technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Augmented reality and voice controlled smart devices	Create development plan that incorporates project using new and growing technologies	Web team Digital team ICT Services	2019	Looking to the Future
Web 27	**Create a central list of council owned and operated websites and other customer facing digital assets**	Include all customer facing websites, applications, apps and accounts with web based applications (e.g. social media and other publishing platforms) to be updated by all services.	List compiled and published to website	Web team	Q1 2018	Development Marketing and Promotion Content Governance Security and Resilience
Web 28	**Create new section on Hub to properly reflect all the available resources in-house for digital**	Promote work of web team, digital team, Comms team regarding online digital marketing and development	Sections created and published	Web team Digital team Comms team	Q1 2018	Marketing and Promotion

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
	marketing and service development					
Web 29	**Create mechanism to allow submission of content from various stakeholder groups on the Hub. (crowdsourcing)**	Request from Communications MOWG to encourage submission of good quality content to online channels. Will be integrated with existing/new workflows to ensure only good quality, useful and appropriate messages are published.	Create required functionality and promote to appropriate stakeholders	Web team Comms Team Digital Team	2020	Marketing and Promotion
Web 30	**Implement 'top tasks' approach to navigation on Intranet (The Hub)**	'Top task' navigational element uses visit data combined with other contact data to create a list of most commonly used or request services. This is already well established on the website and will be deployed to the hub to improve ease of navigation	• Analyse data and identify top tasks. • Create appropriate navigation. • Monitor satisfaction through 'finding information' metric	Web team	2020	Navigation
Web 31	**Ensure that all new systems with a customer facing digital element are mobile adaptive**	It is vital that all new systems are suitable for use on the wide range of devices that are commonly used.	Mobile requirements are incorporated into the procurement of customer facing digital platforms	Procurement Services	2020	Development Accessibility Navigation Mobile
Web 32	**Investigate and adopt agile**		A process is adopted that works within the	Web team Digital team	2020	Development

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
	working practices within the web team and digital development teams that will allow for rapid and efficient digital development		council's already established methodologies			
Web 33	**Establish a preferred method for mobile app development.**	A choice should be made as to which platforms and/or frameworks are used to progress the development of mobile apps.	Platform(s) or framework(s) is/are agreed upon and adopted by relevant parties	Web team ICT Digital team	2020	Development Mobile
Web 34	**Integrate Single sign on (SSO) to new system whenever possible.**	Integration with Myaccount SSO will provide customer with an easier way to sign into and use council services.	Wherever possible systems are fully integrated to SSO. This includes integration of: • Resource booking system • Revenues and benefits system	Web team ICT Digital team	2018	Development
Web 35	**Adopt national BisAccount authenticated service.**	Extend the concept behind the Myaccount SSO service by adopting the national BisAccount authenticated service for businesses and organisations when that national service has been fully launched in 2018/19	Bisaccount is integrated with appropriate system and promoted to businesses in Argyll and Bute	Web team ICT Digital team	2018/19	Development

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
Web 36	**Work with national bodies to implement collaborative transactional services**	We will work through the Improvement Service, Scottish Government Local Digital Office and the UK national Gov.Uk digital office to implement collaborative transactional services such as the SEEMIS Parents' Portal	Integration work completed	Web team ICT Digital team	2020	Development
Web 37	**Regularly report to customers on web development and improvements**	We will inform customers of Improvements and enhancements in a 'You said we did' section. However customers will also be informed of topical changes in a 'What's New'	Section created on website and Hub. Updated on a monthly basis.	Web team Digital team	2018	Development
Web 38	**Install tablets in service points**	Allow customers to interact with council services and information from easy to use devices located in public service points.	Tablets installed and configured	Web team ICT Digital team	2018	Development Mobile Marketing and Promotion
Web 39	**Implement "Virtual Assistant"**	The "Virtual Assistant" service sites in front of the webchat and Contact Us services on the website and uses powerful algorithms to provide answers to customers' online	Virtual assistant launched on website	Web team Digital team	2018	Development Navigation

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
		queries				
Web 40	**Natural language user interface**	Smart Speakers (Amazon Echo, Google home etc.) offer potential alternative channels that can provide customers with compelling, enhanced and practical digital experiences	Develop prototype apps and skills that leverage the capabilities of this developing technology	Web team ICT Digital team	2020	Development Navigation
Web 41	**Monitor and report on the quality or website content.**	• Use appropriate software to monitor the quality of the website including broken links, spelling, and use of language. • Create and publish actionable reports that are available to appropriate parties based on this data.	Reports published	Web team Digital team Services	2018	Development Navigation
Web 42	**Investigate use of AI to enhance conversational user experiences.**	Experts such as Gartner see a growth in the use of emerging tech such as conversational user experiences incorporating Bots and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and we have made tentative steps into this area through the use of smart assistants and enhanced search capabilities, however		Web team Digital team		

Ref	Action	Description	Planned outcome	Owner	Target date	Links to
		there is a great deal of potential to more fully incorporate AI etc. into our processes.				
Web 43	**Conduct annual resilience testing on the website**	A resilient approach will be used going forward and each year is subject to resilience testing as part of the SOCITM Better Connected testing. We will achieve a pass for SOCITM resilience every year.	Achieve a pass	Web team ICT Digital team	2018	

The council is undertaking a thorough analysis of its digital systems, processes and integrations as part of the Transformation programme. Further tasks will be added to this plan as the approved web related outcomes become known.