Argyll and Bute Council: Integrated Impact Assessment

About the proposal

Title of Proposal.
ICT & Digital Strategy 2027-31

Intended outcome of the proposal.
This new strategy sets out how we will continue our journey towards becoming a true digital-by-default organisation, where our ICT and digital services are so effective, accessible and user-friendly that they become the preferred choice for everyone who can use them.

How does your proposal align with strategy?
The proposal is presented as a key enabler of the council's Transformation Strategy 2026–2031 and emerging Target Operating Model. It also aligns with Connect for Success, the People Strategy 2024–2028 and the Data Strategy and Action Plan 2024–2028. The Delivery Plan records alignment with relevant national digital, AI and local government transformation priorities.

Description of proposal.
Digital technologies are now central to how Argyll and Bute Council delivers services, supports communities, and enables its workforce. Building on the progress made through our previous ICT and Digital Strategy, this new strategy sets out how we will continue our journey towards becoming a true digital-by-default organisation, where our ICT and digital services are so effective, accessible and user-friendly that they become the preferred choice for everyone who can use them.

Lead and Appropriate Officers

Lead officer.
David Murdoch

Lead officer job title.
ICT & Digital Manager

Lead officer service.
Customer Support Services

Appropriate officer.
Jane Fowler

Appropriate officer Job title.
Head of Customer Support Services

Who will deliver proposal.
ICT Department, Customer Support Services

Signed off by.
Jane Fowler

Date.
18/11/2026

Evidence

Data – What data have you used to inform the IIA.
Consultation across Council services

Other information – This may include reference to reports by other people / organisations relevant to the impacts you identified.
Scottish Government and COSLA published the Digital Strategy for Scotland: Delivery Plan 2025-2028

Scottish Government's 2026 Proposals for Reform of Local Governance identify a need for modern, responsive and person-centred public services, with greater collaboration, reduced duplication and services organised at the most appropriate national, regional and local levels.

Scottish Government's national approach to Artificial Intelligence as outlined in Scotland's Artificial Intelligence Strategy 2026-2031 . The national AI strategy highlights the opportunity for AI to improve productivity, enhance decision-making and support innovation across public services, while ensuring that its use remains ethical, transparent and trustworthy.

Consultation – What consultation / engagement have you carried out to inform the IIA?
Consultation across Council services - input to strategy from departmental Heads of Service/Management Teams

Gaps in evidence.
No, the ICT & Digital Strategy does not identify the particular needs or views of affected socio-economic groups, consumers in vulnerable circumstances, children and young people, island communities, people sharing protected characteristics, or employees affected by changes in roles and service delivery.

Knock on affect.
No

Knock on affect details.
No long term increase in resource requirements, delivery of the strategy is anticipated to assist with improv productivity, enhance decision-making and support innovation across Council services.

Monitoring – How will you monitor the impacts of your proposal.
Progress reports on the delivery plan, reporting to ICT Management Team, Departmental Management Teams and Council Policy Lead for ICT.
The Delivery Plan requires joint activity across ICT and multiple services and partners. It proposes changes to customer contact, self-service, process automation, data use,

information management, workforce learning, health and care support and performance reporting.

Fairer Scotland

Impact on service users

Service users	Impact
Mainland rural population	No impact
Island population	No Impact
Low income	Don't Know
Low wealth	Don't Know
Material deprivation	Don't Know
Area deprivation	No Impact
Socio-economic	Don't Know
Communities of place	No Impact
Communities of interest	No Impact

Impacts details.
The Strategy seeks accessible, inclusive and user-friendly services, improved connectivity, self-service with assisted digital support, and better use of data. It also recognises differing connectivity, accessibility, confidence and digital capability.

Impact on service deliverers

Service deliverers	Impact
Mainland rural population	Positive
Island population	No Impact
Low income	Don't Know
Low wealth	Don't Know
Material deprivation	No Impact
Area deprivation	Don't Know
Socio-economic	Don't Know
Communities of place	No Impact
Communities of interest	No Impact

Impacts details.
The Strategy seeks accessible, inclusive and user-friendly services, improved connectivity, self-service with assisted digital support, and better use of data. It also recognises differing connectivity, accessibility, confidence and digital capability. The supplied documents do not contain group-specific evidence sufficient to confirm the scale or distribution of impact.
The intended direction is to improve access, customer experience, service efficiency and outcomes while retaining inclusive and assisted support for people who cannot

use digital channels. The Strategy also recognises remote and rural characteristics and identifies connectivity as a priority.

Don’t knows.

Due regard

The Strategy includes principles of customer-centred services, accessibility, inclusion, assisted digital support, data-informed decisions, security, resilience and customer involvement.

Consumer duty

Does your proposal affect individuals, businesses or both?
Both

On the basis of your assessment, what are the likely impacts of your proposal?

Consumer	Impact
Choice	Don't Know
Fairness	Positive
Redress	Don't Know
Safety	Positive
Information	Positive
Access	Positive
Representation	Positive

Positive impacts you have identified.
The Strategy explicitly covers residents, businesses, visitors, communities and employees, and includes public-facing and internal services.

Representation - The Strategy says customers should be involved in shaping and improving services and that customer insight should inform delivery.

Safety - Security, privacy, resilience, ethical AI and public trust are stated priorities,
Fairness - Inclusive and accessible service design, assisted digital support and responsible AI are stated principles.

Access - The Strategy seeks simple, secure, accessible digital services, improved connectivity and assisted digital support, while recognising differing capability and connectivity.

Information - The Strategy seeks accurate knowledge assistance, improved information management and trusted data..

Negative impacts you have identified.
None

What alternatives have you considered which can improve outcome for customers and/or reduce harm?
N/A

How have you reduced harm to consumers through the development of your proposal?
Security, privacy, resilience, ethical AI and public trust are stated priorities and The Strategy refers to triage of enquiries, complaints and service requests.

If you have not been able to reduce harm to your consumers, why not?
N/A None anticipated.

Children rights and wellbeing

DIRECT and INDIRECT impacts on children and young people

Direct refers to policies/measures where children are the focus of the proposed changes.
Examples include childcare, school breakfast clubs, child protection, looked after children or youth sports activities.

Indirect refers to policies/measures that are not directly aimed at children but will have an impact on them.
Examples include local welfare support schemes, work preparation classes for parents, housing supply and design, policies on air quality, or local transport schemes.

Are there any aspects to your proposal which directly impact on children?
Yes

Direct impact on children details.
Yes. The Strategy records pupil accounts and education technology, and the Delivery Plan includes completion of the Education Network upgrade to support pupils moving digital devices between home and school for wider digital learning benefits.

Are the any aspects to your proposal which indirectly impact on children?
Yes

Indirect impact on children details.
Yes. Council-wide changes to service access, connectivity, data use, AI, information management, health and care support and digital channels may affect services used by children, young people and their families.

Children rights

This section asks you to think about how your proposal affects children's rights, first by considering the 'general principles' articles, and then by thinking about the rest of the articles.
Complete the options relating to the general principles.
You should check against these whether your proposal contributes in a positive or negative way to the rights of children, whether the impact will be neutral / won't have an impact at all, or whether you don't know what the impact will be.

Children rights	Impact
Article 2: (non-discrimination) The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.	Positive
Article 3: (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.	Positive
Article 6: (life, survival and development) Every child has the right to life. The council must do all it can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.	Positive
Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.	Don't Know

In addition to the General Principles, you should consider whether any of the other articles are relevant to your proposal.

We have provided you with a list of UNCRC articles and descriptions of what they are. If you do not identify any of the other Articles as being of relevance, the assumption will be made that the proposal's impact on this right will be neutral.

Have you identified any other article as being relevant to your proposal?
No

Children's wellbeing

For each wellbeing indicator, review whether your proposal will result in an improvement to children's wellbeing or not. List of Wellbeing Indicators, with an explanation of what they are.

Children wellbeing	Impact
Safe	Positive
Healthy	No Impact
Achieving	Positive
Nurtured	No Impact
Active	No Impact
Respected	No Impact
Responsible	No Impact
Included	Positive

For the indicators where you believe your proposal will result in reduced children's wellbeing, explain what these reductions will be.

No confirmed reductions are identified in the Strategy. Potential effects associated with unequal connectivity, accessibility or digital capability may require future assessment by Education. The intended improvement is to support wider digital learning by upgrading the Education Network so pupils can move digital devices more easily between home and school. Accessibility and inclusive service design may also support inclusion.

For the indicators where you believe your proposal will result in improved children's wellbeing, explain what these improvements will be.

Achieving - The Education Network action is intended to support wider digital learning benefits.

Included - Accessibility, inclusion and assisted digital support are explicit principles.

If you have identified any indicators as being relevant to your proposal, but you do not know what the impacts will be, explain how you will monitor impact as your proposal progresses.
The intended improvement is to support wider digital learning by upgrading the Education Network so pupils can move digital devices more easily between home and school. Accessibility and inclusive service design may also support inclusion.

Article 17 (access to reliable information), Article 23 (disabled children), Articles 28 and 29 (education and its goals), and Article 16 (privacy) may be relevant to the stated digital learning, accessibility, information, data and security objectives.

Island Community

How many islands does your proposal affect?
All

Which islands are affected by your proposal?
All

Does your proposal impact on Island communities?

Island community	Impact
Demography	Don't Know
Economy	Positive
Society	Positive

Describe any positive impacts you have identified.

Potential positive impacts include improved connectivity to council sites, accessible digital channels, flexible access to systems and services, and service resilience. The Strategy does recognises remote and rural characteristics.

Economy - Improved connectivity and digital access may support island services, residents and businesses.

Society - Accessible services and improved connectivity may support communities, but island-specific social, cultural and Gaelic impacts are not assessed.

Describe any negative impacts you have identified.
No confirmed negative island impacts are identified.

If you do not know what the impacts will be, you should reflect this in your monitoring arrangements for the proposal.

Describe how your proposal affects the islands communities you have identified differently from other communities including other islands communities and mainland areas.
No anticipated differences.

How will you ensure your proposal delivers equivalent levels of service to the islands communities you have identified compared to other areas, including mainland areas? (In your answer you should include descriptions of: • alternatives you have considered to improve or mitigate the impacts identified, • how you have reduced negative impacts on islands communities, and • how your mitigations will vary between communities, if relevant.) .
No anticipated differences.

If you have not been able to mitigate impacts, why not?
Island-specific impacts and mitigations cannot be finalised without identifying affected islands, consulting island communities and assessing service-level connectivity and access barriers.

Equality impact

Equality impact on service users

Service users	Impact
Disability	Positive
Race	Don't Know
Marriage and civil partnership	Don't Know
Religion or belief	Don't Know
Sex	Don't Know
Pregnancy and maternity	No Impact
Age	Positive
Sexual orientation	Don't Know
Gender reassignment	Don't Know

Impact on service users.

Potential positive impacts may arise from accessible and inclusive digital design, assisted digital support, improved connectivity and simplified customer journeys. Potential differential or negative impacts cannot be ruled out because the supplied documents do not assess barriers or outcomes for each protected characteristic. Disability and age may be particularly relevant to accessibility and digital capability.

Disability - The Strategy commits to accessible, inclusive, secure and user-friendly services and recognises differing accessibility, confidence and digital capability. No characteristic-specific evidence or consultation is supplied.

Age - The Strategy commits to accessible, inclusive, secure and user-friendly services and recognises differing accessibility, confidence and digital capability. No characteristic-specific evidence or consultation is supplied.

Don't knows identified.

The Strategy commits to accessible, inclusive, secure and user-friendly services and recognises differing accessibility, confidence and digital capability. No characteristic-specific evidence or consultation is supplied.

Equality impact on service deliverers

Service deliverers	Impact
Disability	

Service deliverers	Impact
Race	
Marriage and civil partnership	Don't Know
Religion or belief	Don't Know
Sex	Don't Know
Pregnancy and maternity	No Impact
Age	
Sexual orientation	No Impact
Gender reassignment	No_Impact

Impact on service deliverers.

The Strategy seeks accessible, inclusive and user-friendly services, improved connectivity, self-service with assisted digital support, and better use of data. It also recognises differing connectivity, accessibility, confidence and digital capability. The supplied documents do not contain group-specific evidence sufficient to confirm the scale or distribution of impact.

The intended direction is to improve access, customer experience, service efficiency and outcomes while retaining inclusive and assisted support for people who cannot use digital channels. The Strategy also recognises remote and rural characteristics and identifies connectivity as a priority.

Don't knows identified.

The Strategy commits to accessible, inclusive, secure and user-friendly services and recognises differing accessibility, confidence and digital capability. No characteristic-specific evidence or consultation is supplied.

Due regard.

The Strategy commits to accessible, inclusive, secure and user-friendly services and recognises differing accessibility, confidence and digital capability.