

To: Leadership Board

On: 2nd December 2020

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Digital Strategy Update

1 Summary

- 1.1 On 16 September 2020, the Leadership Board approved a new Digital Strategy which set out the Council's vision and ambitions in terms of progressing the digital agenda in Renfrewshire. The Strategy builds on previous work that has been undertaken by services with partners, business and communities to drive digital transformation and participation across Renfrewshire to date.
- 1.2 The next phase of the Council's digital journey will involve the Council fully embedding digital across all that we do, working collaboratively across services and with partners, to maximise the opportunities from emerging digital technologies and new ways of working and doing business.
- 1.3 The Council's ambitions in terms of delivering the Digital Strategy have been mapped against 8 key themes, with associated workstreams each lead by a Head of Service. An officer level Digital Board has also been established to drive delivery of the strategy and to ensure the pace and level of collaboration are maintained.
- 1.4 The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly accelerated the pace at which some areas of the strategy are being progressed by the organisation, recognising the critical role that digital has and will continue to play as citizens, businesses and organisations such as the Council adapt to new ways of working and living in light of COVID. Specific examples of acceleration highlighted within the Digital Strategy include the development of digital learning and teaching, the increased provision of Council services online and local work to significant enhance levels of digital connectivity in Renfrewshire through the rollout of full fibre.

- 1.5 Due to the ongoing impact of COVID 19 on the capacity of the organisation, work is also being undertaken to prioritise activities which are closely linked to the Council's response to the pandemic, or support the delivery of the Council's ongoing transformation programme, Right for Renfrewshire.
- 1.6 Progress in relation to the 8 key themes is highlighted within Appendix 1 to this report. It is proposed that six monthly updates on progress are provided going forward to the Leadership Board
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2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of Leadership Board:
- note the progress made to date against the 8 key workstreams identified within the Digital Strategy and;
 - agree that future progress updates will be provided to the Leadership Board every 6 months.
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3 Background

- 3.1 Renfrewshire's Digital strategy was approved by the Leadership Board in September 2002. The Strategy closely aligns to the national Digital Strategy for Scotland, and sets out the following vision:

'Through strong digital foundations, leadership and learning we will redefine our relationship with our customers, citizens and communities by creating a Renfrewshire where those who live, work, visit and invest are digitally capable and connected.'

- 3.2 As outlined within the Digital Strategy, it is envisaged that this vision will be progressed through 8 key workstreams:

- Digital Council
- Digital Foundations
- Digital Place
- Digital Leadership and Skills
- Smart Data
- Digital Citizen
- Digital Health and Social Care
- Digital Learning and Teaching

- 3.3 Each theme is led by a Head of Service, with detailed action plans being developed for each area of activity. An internal Digital Board has also been established to ensure that there is collaboration across these workstreams and to ensure that priority actions are driven forward collectively at pace. Given the current COVID response and related

impact on the existing capacity of the organisation, officers are currently prioritising those activities which support the COVID response or the delivery of the Councils transformation programme Right for Renfrewshire:

3.4 A detailed progress update against each of the 8 workstreams is provided in appendix 1 of this report. Highlights to note include:

- The development of a range of new online services to support the provision of services in light of COVID. The Digital First team have also continued to progress a range of process automation exercises within back office systems.
- Work has progressed to develop the first stage of a business case for a new Council website, informed by the changing needs of citizens and stakeholders through COVID19. A more detailed business case is now under development and has been prioritised by services supporting this.
- Significant progress is already being made in terms of implementing transformation through the Connectivity as a Service framework which was put into place earlier this year. The framework has triggered significant additional investment in the local area by City Fibre, who have commenced work to roll out an extensive network of full fibre in Renfrewshire.
- Work has progressed at pace to develop new approaches to support digital inclusion in light of COVID. Almost 1000 devices will have been distributed by Christmas through the Connecting Scotland to individuals and families identified as being most vulnerable and having the greatest barriers to access. 1500 additional devices and connectivity has been provided through schools to support and enhance learning.
- Work is currently underway by the Council to assess current levels of digital exclusion across Renfrewshire. This is particularly important given the coronavirus pandemic, with more services and more people communicating and working online. This is being progressed through a Public Services Panel survey issued during November 2020 and through a series of listening events with representative groups. This will inform a Community Impact Assessment which is being progressed by community planning partners.
- Children's Services has continued to progress digital learning and teaching opportunities. A central team has now been established to support digital learning and work has been undertaken to identify hardware and software requirements. A significant programme of work is underway to maximise opportunities from existing technology to support teaching and learning, with identification and sharing of best practice across establishments.

3.5 The Digital Strategy will be a key enabler of the Right for Renfrewshire (R4R) transformation programme, across the tranche 1 service designs and in the design of the subsequent phases of the programme. For example, the coronavirus pandemic has accelerated both an adoption of digital by our workforce and by our communities meaning that people are accessing services and engaging with the council in a way they have never done before. This has been most notable in the digital channel shift the council has experienced, where we have seen an increase monthly digital transactions to 15,000 compared to 5,000 at start of 2020.

- 3.6 As we begin to plan the restart of the R4R transformation programme alongside our response, recovery and renewal activities, we will continue to make the most of emerging opportunities, including developments in digital technologies, our learnings from the pandemic and their potential to influence and change services and ways of working.
- 3.7 Due to be launched in early 2021, our new and ambitious People Strategy and 5-year plan that will put people and skills at the heart of our values and culture. It will place our values front and centre of decision-making day-to-day, changing cultural norms and improving service user and employee experience, aligned with, and supporting other key council strategies including the Digital Strategy. The People Strategy will be a key enabler in supporting the delivery of our digital ambition across all themes, supporting our people with the future digital skills required to deliver transformational change.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 It is proposed that updates in relation to the implementation of the Digital Strategy are provided to members of the Leadership Board on a 6 monthly basis, with the next update due prior to Summer 2020.

Implications of the Report

- 1 **Financial** – delivering the Digital Strategy will have resource implications for the Council and includes a commitment to working collaboratively to ensure best value for our approach. The full extent of the resource implications will be established during the work of each thematic lead and where required will be subject to appropriate governance approvals before any identified project progress.
- 2 **HR & Organisational Development** - the Digital Skills and Leadership theme links closely with our OD and workforce planning to ensure our people have the skills and tools required to do their job in the best possible way.
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- 4 **Community/Council Planning** – the Digital Strategy directly supports the Council and Community plan objectives.
- 5 **Legal** – none
- 6 **Property/Assets** – none
- 7 **Information Technology** - the Digital Strategy has significant ICT implications given the nature of the work involved.
- 8 **Equality & Human Rights** - the Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights

have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website. In addition, reducing inequalities is one of the overarching outcomes within the Digital Strategy.

9 **Health and Safety** – none

9 **Procurement** – none

10 **Risk** – none

11 **Privacy Impact** – none

12 **Cosla Policy Position** – this work aligns with COSLA's current work alongside the Scottish Government to refresh the National Digital Strategy.

13 **Climate Risk** – as outlined in the strategy, we hope that a move to expanding our use of digital technologies will support the Council to achieve our climate targets.

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List of Background Papers

None

Appendix 1 – PROGRESS UPDATE AGAINST EACH CORE THEME

Digital Council -	<p>We will transform the relationship between citizens and the Council by providing online services so easy and efficient most people choose to use them and can do so unaided.</p> <p>We will put citizens at the centre of service design and optimise the digital experience through a seamless, consistent, integrated and personalised approach to digital information, engagement and support for customers, residents, staff and partners.</p>
<p>Update on Progress:</p> <p>This theme has two areas of focus - the development of digital services and the enhancement of the overall customer digital experience when interacting with the Council.</p> <p>Digital Services</p> <p>Digital services and connectivity continue to be fundamental to service delivery during the pandemic. The Digital First team have continued to lead on the development of digital services and have directly facilitated the development of the end to end design of new digital capability for COVID related support, such as the Business Grants, Local Assistance and Self-Isolation Support processes. These have been progressed while continuing to deliver on the established transformation timeline, albeit priorities continue to be adjusted to respond to new COVID requirements. Examples of business as usual activities of where the redesign process has been accelerated include the registration of births, deaths and marriages and the licensing application and renewal process for a whole range of council approved licenses.</p> <p>The Council has also invested in creating a process automation capacity, using technology to streamline back office processes and automate system updates to a range of applications including council tax and Business World. The council automation team have continued to develop automations although this has been on a slower track than planned due to the pandemic. Despite this, automations are now running to support council tax administration, council tax reduction processing as well as the running of creditor routines and automations that support waste management administrative processes. A pipeline of development is being progressed in Business Services, focusing on payroll and recruitment processes as well as continuing to develop automation opportunities in the Revenues and Financial Support function.</p> <p>Digital Experience</p> <p>Part 1 of a 2-part roadmap to a new council website and Digital Experience is now being progressed following the development of initially a Digital Experience Strategy in January 2019 and the subsequent development of a detailed Digital Experience Business Case. The programme has been developed by the Digital Experience Team with support from ICT and Digital First.</p> <p>Part 1 will assess detailed technology options, timelines and costs for consolidating, diversifying and protecting our digital channels and developing a new council website. Assuming successful consideration and assessment of Part 1, the project would propose to move in to the second stage which would be focused on the launch of a new website at the end of 2022</p>	

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS	We will ensure that the digital foundations – application hosting, data storage and connectivity are available, accessible and secure. We will ensure that these foundations keep pace with technology innovation so that this can be exploited to meet the needs of the Council and our citizens.
<p>Since September time has been taken to consider and develop the key objectives for this theme, a number of which have emerged as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that these foundations keep pace with technology innovation so that it can be exploited to meet the needs of the Council and its citizens. • Our technology will serve to enable and empower both customers and staff rather than adding complexity to what they do. • We will continue to provide a secure, resilient and reliable core infrastructure. We will take all measures necessary to ensure that our network is protected against cyber-attacks and that there are robust arrangements in place to ensure service continuity in the event of a failure. • We will ensure that our operating systems and applications are on the latest versions so that they are fully supported and where applicable, continue to provision platforms and software in the cloud to reduce long term cost and support resilience. • We will maximise the use of existing systems and past investment whilst embracing technological advancement to deliver a truly flexible and mobile working environment that is fit for the digital age. <p>In addition to the work to develop our objectives, there are several projects ongoing which enhance our use of existing systems, these include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) for Apple and Android operating systems to enhance flexibility for staff; • Business World (roll out of additional functionality including Purchase to Pay); • Implementation of ECLIPSE system for Criminal Justice, Adults and Financials (replacement for the existing SWIFT system supporting Social Care); • Implementation of Uniform (replacement for Accolade system supporting Planning); • Connectivity as a Service (CaaS) for initial services including Wide Area Network (WAN), CCTV, Urban Traffic Control and Internet; and • Fibre To The Premise (FTTP) covering 70% of Renfrewshire (under the City Fibre private sector led investment of £40million across Renfrewshire). <p>Furthermore, many additional projects are planned including the following: Connectivity as a Service (CaaS) for future services including Wi-Fi, Telephony, and Internet of Things; and Delivery of Infrastructure as a Service (i.e. Data Centres in Edinburgh).</p>	
DIGITAL PLACE	Embracing the benefits of digital, we will enhance economic growth, enable businesses, stimulate innovation and support inward investment to encourage economic regeneration.
<p>Progress within this theme continues to demonstrate the key linkages to the Council's Economic Strategy and the response and recovery planning associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Positive engagement with key internal and external partners from across Renfrewshire is central to the work to further develop the outcomes and actions for this theme.</p>	

Some highlights from our recent activities are as follows:

- Discussions are ongoing with UWS and WCS on the potential of digital spin-outs through an entrepreneurship theme in the Council's Economic Strategy. We would also like to develop this theme further by extending it to Renfrewshire high schools (the advent of the fibre connectivity to school campuses will assist with this);
- The above entrepreneurship programme links well to the Council "Start Up Street" initiative (gone live in George Street Paisley from Nov 2020) which will offer full digital access premises on low rents to new business ideas;
- Our partnership with WCS on the Advanced Manufacturing Challenge Fund has an emphasis on upskilling training programmes with local companies and their employees to adopt the potential that digital technology could hold for their development;
- The emerging Kickstart and Youth Guarantee programmes for employability will see a large number of local companies taking on new trainees for placement opportunities over minimum of 6-month period. Here we will look to put an emphasis on digital learning with these workplaces for the individuals involved.

**DIGITAL
LEADERSHIP
AND SKILLS**

We will build digital confidence across our whole workforce by equipping employees with the required knowledge and capabilities to use technology effectively and safely. We will build future capacity and capability by developing a pipeline of digital talent.

Since our last update work has continued to develop our digital capabilities framework which describes the skills and behaviours needed by leaders, staff and citizens to thrive. Central to the development of this is working with the other themes and wider organisational programmes such as the People Strategy and the Right for Renfrewshire transformation programme to ensure that we can define our outcomes, articulate our aspirations, and provide a flexible way in which to support the delivery of our digital strategy and its action plan. Work to date has shown that the council recognises that as the pace of technological innovation increases, coupled with the continuing requirement to deliver cost effective services – the workforce of the future will need to be very different to that of today.

It is recognised that digitally enabled transformation requires a digitally confident workforce and making sure that employees have the knowledge, skills and capability to keep pace with technological advances to deliver improved Customer outcomes and meet the needs of the organisation is a key focus.

Nurturing and promoting agility, adaptability and re/upskilling remains a key objective. In the new Council values, emphasis is placed on lifelong ways of delivering training & skills development to our staff – new and emerging digital technologies will support this aspiration. Working with council services and partners, we will develop a pipeline of recruitment and training support to help identify emerging needs in terms of new skills and experience.

Whilst a focus on future of work is critical, sight will not be lost of the need to take full advantage of the use of existing systems and maintaining an ongoing focus on training & improvement with attention on realising the potential of enterprise-wide solutions.

Our Digital Workforce will:

- be confident in the use of digital & data technologies
- be equipped and trained with the right digital tools to do their jobs safely and proficiently

- be aware of risks associated with digital working
- be collaborative and share knowledge on new ways of digital working
- be problem solvers, exploring how technological solutions can help deliver services more efficiently
- be agile, concentrating on how we work and less on where we work

Through our engagement to date, several key actions are emerging these include:

- Develop a digital skill, training & recruitment roadmap
- Develop a digital capability and skills framework
- Heighten focus on digital skills as part of recruitment & selection – pinpoint specific skillsets for the future (e.g. using data)
- Develop a talent pipeline focused on digital skills and expertise – analysis re ‘jobs-of-the-future’
- Trial and adopt agile working practises, increasing mobility and flexibility across our workforce.

Work on these emerging actions is currently being progressed by a newly formed working group lead by the Head of HR and Transformation.

In addition to the above over recent months, staff have been supported and encouraged to engage with digital learning and gain new skills, with some examples highlighted below:

- Through our Learning at Work Week, one of our dedicated themed days (Tech Tuesday) focused on developing skills in the software and technologies available to us, and this was very highly rated by those who participated in our evaluation survey.
- The Council have procured new software, including Articulate and Adobe Connect to modernise our in-house digital materials and workshops, offering more interactive learning experiences.
- In partnership with West College Scotland, 23 employees are working towards the Microsoft Office Specialist accredited qualification. Due to the success of this we are exploring opportunities to extend this programme to a further cohort in 2021.
- Also in partnership with West College Scotland, we provided the opportunity for interested staff to attend virtual Microsoft 365 training over May and June this year, covering Microsoft Teams, Word, Excel and One Note. ICT also provided additional Microsoft Teams virtual sessions covering basic and intermediated levels.

SMART DATA

We will make data ‘smart’, supporting collaboration and informed decision making. We will use digital tools to collaborate with organisations across all sectors, make our data open and share digital assets for the public good.

Local authorities increasingly gather and store increasingly significant amounts of data in relation to services and citizens. It is important that the council gathers good quality data, which is used and stored securely, and can reliably be used to inform decision making.

Put most simply, this theme is about achieving a data mindset in the organisation. The focus will be on developing meaningful insight and using data collaboratively to improve service delivery and resulting outcomes for local communities. To enable this approach, we must foster new skills and develop new roles within the organisation, ensuring 'smart data' is a key organisational enabler.

Progress in this area has been made through engaging internally to better understand our how we can achieve a data mindset within the organisation. Through our work to date, three emerging workstreams are being developed as follows:

1. **Data Quality** - will focus on maximising the quality of data across core systems and ensure data is accessible for operational and strategic purposes.
2. **Smart use of data** - will focus on the strategic use of data across the organisation and externally with partners.
3. **Data Leadership and Skills** has two core aspects. The first will be ensuring that the council fosters and develops the right skills within the organisation in terms of data analytics. It is recognised that there is significant internal expertise but that some of the job roles that we may need as an organisation may not currently exist in their current format. In addition, key actions will be developed to ensure that senior leaders across the council recognise and value the importance of data within the organisation and ensure that services maintain high quality and accurate sources of information.

Work on these priorities is currently being progressed by a newly formed working group lead by the Head of Policy and Commissioning.

DIGITAL CITIZEN

We will empower our citizens by helping communities increase digital skills and confidence and increase digital participation. We will enable access to digital public services, tackling digital inequality and creating the opportunity for active citizenship. We will work in partnership across the public, private, and third sector including academic institutions.

The Council has a strong history of working very closely with local partner organisation to promote digital inclusion, with a range of specific initiatives progressed in response to recommendations within the Tackling Poverty Commission. The DigiRen partnership forum has worked very successfully to share learning and to develop new options for ensuring greater inclusion and there have been real examples of innovation locally.

Work is currently underway by the Council to assess current levels of digital exclusion across Renfrewshire. This is particularly important given the coronavirus pandemic, with more services and more people communicating and working online. This is being progressed through a Public Services Panel survey issued during November 2020 and through a series of listening events with representative groups. This will inform a Community Impact Assessment which is being progressed by community planning partners.

In addition, work is also progressing in relation to the Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland programme which the Council is co-ordinating at a local level in partnership with Engage Renfrewshire and SCVO. Applications for the distribution of 650 chrome books, tablets and connectivity from a range of partner organisations were recently approved. These will benefit children and young people who may be experiencing barriers to digital access across Renfrewshire and will be distributed through the neighbourhood hubs over Christmas 2020.

DIGITAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	We will support the migration from analogue to digital Telecare and develop a pipeline of innovation which is aligned to the priorities of the Scottish Government Digital Office and the Health and Social Care Partnership's (HSCP) strategic agenda.
<p>Health and social services are facing significant demographic, workforce and finance challenges and, to ensure the sustainability of the Health and Social Care Partnership going forward, we recognise that the way care and support is delivered will need to change. This theme reflects the central role of digital in this transformation, by enabling people to have more choice and control and supporting the delivery of better outcomes, whilst making best use of the available resources.</p> <p>As the Health and Social Care Partnership continues to respond to the current coronavirus pandemic, our immediate focus remains the accelerated adoption of digital technology across the Partnership to support our response and recovery, building on the new ways of working that have been implemented during COVID.</p> <p>In parallel, we continue to implement three major digital programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECLIPSE social work case management system which will provide an opportunity to review and improve the way we deliver services. • The Totalmobile Scheduling and Monitoring System for Care at Home Services which will provide more accurate management information and improve how we schedule our care workers' visits, enabling us to better manage our resources and offer a more responsive service. • The upgrade of Telecare equipment (used to support our most vulnerable service users in their home) must be upgraded from analogue to digital technologies by 2025. This new technology will improve connectivity and quality of calls; provide a more resilient solution; and remove reliance on service users' own telephone lines. <p>Work is also underway to progress the next tranche of key priorities include for the partnership which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working our operational services and stakeholders to refine our digital priorities and identify the key digital developments that will be required to underpin the HSCP's Recovery and Renewal Programme • address the accelerated adoption of digital technology by facilitating partnership working across NHS and Council ICT services to further exploit enterprise technologies such as MS O365 for collaboration, and the Council's connectivity strategy which will deliver significantly improved connectivity to all Council locations, acting as a catalyst to gigabit connectivity to the home, for the citizens of Renfrewshire • work with other key Council Digital Strategy work streams to ensure consistent approaches to improving digital skills (Digital Leadership & Skills) and exploiting current and future data sets (Smart Data) 	

DIGITAL LEARNING AND TEACHING	We will fully exploit the national digital services SEEMiS and GLOW to improve the digital school infrastructure and develop the digitisation of learning and teaching.
<p>Work is being undertaken to identify and compile a list of the key digital projects that will support this theme over the coming two years. Already there are many digital projects and activities supporting digital learning underway that the Digital Programme will take cognisance of. An update of progress of recent digital developments relating to learning and teaching is provided below across our key areas:</p> <p><i>Infrastructure and IT Estate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wi-Fi surveys are in progress and an agreed strategy for Wi-Fi is being discussed with Secondary schools. • Matched funding is being provided to schools to increase the ICT estate issued to schools for teachers use, with 200 laptop orders placed. • Additionally, 1800 additional Chromebooks have been provided to schools for the use of our most vulnerable students as part of the digital inclusion programme. <p><i>Resources – capacity and capability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A central team consisting of Digital Learning Manager, Digital Learning Development Officers and Central support was set up in August to support literacy and numeracy learning. • Analysis has been conducted to identify hardware and software learning requirements for staff in schools, to enable further work to be identified to support this. • Current software in schools is being analysed to ensure ongoing DPIA and GDPR compliance • The range of professional learning offered to schools has been broadened, and exploits links with major industry leaders including Microsoft, Google and Apple • A review of highly effective practice is underway to identify case studies in schools of good examples of digital learning that can be learned from and shared. <p><i>Engagement, coordination and communication</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A YouTube Channel has been created as a space for teachers to share resources and highly effective practice regarding digital learning. • A Twitter account @DigiLearnRen is being used for teachers to share professional learning opportunities and appropriate links to examples of good practice. • Digital Learning Champions were set up last year and continue to play a key role in supporting schools. • We are moving forward with developing initial stages of an adult learning programme, finding digital solutions to family learning programmes. <p><i>Learning, teaching and assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two additional schools have been awarded the prestigious Scottish Government Digital Schools Award since August, and we are aiming for every school in Renfrewshire achieving this status. • Six staff are contributing to the West Partnership online school that will support children and young people who are self-isolating. • Renfrewshire’s own online school has been launched, providing resources and making teachers available to answer any questions that pupils have, and this has been supporting self-isolating children. • The Supported Study -Higher Maths online course has been launched, with a high number of children accessing this in Renfrewshire. 	

