_____

To: **Leadership Board**

On: **16 September 2020**

_____

Report by: **Director of Finance**

_____

Heading: **Digital Strategy**

_____

1. Summary

1.1 Prior to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, work had commenced on developing a new Renfrewshire Digital Strategy, to replace the previous strategy covering the period from 2016 to 2019. The new strategy has now been developed further to reflect the Council's experience during the lockdown, showing the increasing importance of digital in how we work, provide services, engage with our communities and educate our children.

1.2 Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy outlines an approach to embedding digital across all that we do in a way that closely aligns with our ambitions for Renfrewshire and ensures that we work collaboratively to maximise the opportunities from emerging digital technologies and new ways of working and doing business.

1.3 This paper outlines the key elements of the strategy, with the full strategy appended to the paper for members' comment and approval.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that members of the Leadership Board:
- approve Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy as appended to this report and
- note that a further report will be brought to the December Leadership Board meeting with a progress update.

3. Background

3.1   Renfrewshire Council has a strong track record in embracing new technology and developing digital solutions to enhance our service delivery, ways of working and engagement with our communities. Our ability to quickly respond to the coronavirus pandemic and move many of our services online and our employees to working remotely is testimony to our sound digital foundations.

3.2   Through the work outlined in our previous digital strategy, as well as developing our service delivery, the Council has continued to explore new ways to engage with more people and offer more digital opportunities. Despite all the new opportunities digital offers, it can also be a source of worry or even exclusion for some of our citizens. Central to the Council's digital vision is to ensure digital benefits are shared equally across all people, groups and geographies in Renfrewshire.

3.3   The attached strategy builds on these concepts and outlines a digital vision for Renfrewshire, closely aligned with the Council's strategic direction, that:

   '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.'

3.4   The strategy describes the context for our developing digital direction in Renfrewshire, particularly the importance of working together across the Council and beyond, to ensure projects, programmes and approaches complement each other, make the best use of expertise and experience, and maximise resources.

3.5   This digital strategy continues the overarching outcomes of our previous strategy, developed to be closely aligned to our Council and Community Plans. It also details the potential benefits for the Council and Renfrewshire.

3.6   Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy also aligns with the national Digital Strategy for Scotland which is currently being refreshed to reflect the experiences of the coronavirus pandemic.

3.7   In addition, on the 1st of September 2020, the Scottish Government published the Programme for Government 2020/21 which places digital at the core of the plans for the coming years. The Programme for Government 2020/21 recognises the significant role digital has played in keeping the country working, learning and connecting throughout the pandemic and lockdown and will play in strengthening Scotland's future economic resilience through growth sectors across tech industries. Developing our own digital strategy at this time puts the Council in a strong position to capitalise on any resourcing

and expertise opportunities that may emerge from the roll out of the digital elements of the Programme for Government.

3.8   Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy will be delivered through 8 themes as follows:

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

3.9   Each theme will be led by a Head of Service and the strategy includes further details describing the scope of the theme, initial progress in these areas and potential for further development. Engagement and consultation are underway, channelled through the Council's Digital Board, which this group of Heads of Service and other officers attend, to further identify the opportunities and develop specific outcomes under each theme.

3.10   It is proposed that an update paper with progress under each theme will also be reported to the December meeting of the Leadership Board.

_____

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 initial scoping work of each thematic lead.

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.

3.   **Community/Council Planning –** the Digital Strategy directly supports the Council and Community plan objectives.

4.   **Legal** - none

5.   **Property/Assets –** none

6.   **Information Technology** – the Digital Strategy has significant ICT implications given the nature of the work involved.

7.   **Equality and 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.

8. **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.

/A digital strategy for Renfrewshire/

Renfrewshire Council

September 2020

Contents//

Introduction/

Digital plays an increasingly central role in modern lives—how we connect, learn, work, buy goods and services—how we manage our daily life.

Our relationship with digital can be a huge enabler, opening a world of possibilities and opportunities and at other times a source of inequality and frustration.

Our citizens, customers and children expect high quality, secure and integrated digital services from the Council as they do with the many other organisations and businesses they interact with – to pay bills, to request services, to find out information and to do so in ways and a time that suits them.

Equally, we know that digital can be a barrier for some and our strategy will continue the work of Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy 2016–19 by putting our citizens at the heart of our approach and ensuring that the ways we work help to empower our customers and communities to access more services and information in inclusive and creative ways.

Digital means more than how we offer our own services – digital goes to the root of how we see our future place in Renfrewshire—attracting businesses and investment to a digitally-connected, smart place to work with the right infrastructure, knowledge and enthusiasm. Identifying technology solutions, improving our digital infrastructure, challenging our working culture to encourage flexible ways of working and diversifying further to embrace the opportunities of a digital economy will also help Renfrewshire to meet our climate targets – to be greener, we need to be smarter.

Our digital ambitions link closely to the overarching theme of Renfrewshire's Economic Recovery Plan (2020 – 2022) of improving lives and securing well-being through a stronger, inclusive and sustainable economy. A digitally connected Renfrewshire is a cornerstone on which the future economy will be built. The principal areas of focus for the recovery plan are sustaining jobs, supporting businesses to improve their competitiveness and productivity, and ensuring our citizens, particularly our young people are prepared and have the skills to access future employment opportunities. Early priority actions include digital and meta-skills training for Small and Medium Enterprises; delivering Renfrewshire's full-fibre high speed broadband network; delivering the Foundation Apprenticeship in digital manufacturing; implementing the Renfrewshire STEM plan in all schools; and developing a

SMART place plan for Renfrewshire focusing on energy use, water use, waste management and transport as part of our pursuit of a 'green recovery' and contribution to a net zero carbon economy.

A digitally connected Renfrewshire needs the energy, expertise and investment of many different organisations and we will continue to work closely with our partners across the education, third and private sectors – sharing, collaborating, and ensuring Renfrewshire's citizens of tomorrow have the right skills to build our digital future.

The Council's response to the global coronavirus pandemic has placed a renewed emphasis on the importance of ensuring we have the right technology, connectivity and access for our workforce, communities and children. We were able to continue providing many services, quickly and effectively, using digital platforms. Equally, the pandemic and lockdown further highlighted the digital divide between those who could continue to access services and those who felt even more isolated as a result of not having access to digital technology, skills and suitable connectivity. It has also underlined that to build back better, our future plans for our place must have digital firmly at the centre.

This strategy sets out Renfrewshire Council's digital vision, the strategic context—helping us to understand how to link digital with the broader direction of the Council, the position we are in now, the outcomes we'd like to achieve and the benefits this will bring. The strategy describes how this work will be carried out, reported and monitored and how we will support our people to deliver the outcomes. The strategy also considers our resources and how this programme of work will help us to prioritise how we best use these to achieve the most value.

Driving the digital strategy there are 8 themes which are described in further detail, with associated actions under each theme. This provides a framework for our work, but it will remain flexible and agile given the pace of change, particularly around digital technology at this time.

Our 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."

Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy aims to align all digital activity across the Council under this single vision and direction – ensuring that we work together towards this common purpose, with our work and projects interacting effectively and not created in isolation. By working smarter in this way, we can maximise our investments of resources and time to ensure that we get the best possible value, create streamlined services and ways of working which don't build barriers for our employees and our customers.

Due to the fast-changing digital world we live in, our strategy will provide a direction for delivery rather than a clear definition of a future state. It sets out what we aim to achieve for a digital Renfrewshire, how this will be supported across Council services and how we plan to measure success.

Our strategy will also be supported by an action plan – agile enough to adapt to the fast-paced digital environment and ensure that the Council is well placed to maximise opportunities through emerging technology. This strategy is step one, the action plan is step two and will be developed through a programme of engagement and consultation over the coming months.

Context/

Renfrewshire's Council Plan 2017–2022 sets out the Council's vision to work 'together for a thriving connected Renfrewshire, creating opportunities for all' and our Digital Strategy fits firmly within that vision—supporting digital connectivity, enhancing the local economy and targeting inclusive growth through digital empowerment.

Our Digital Strategy also aligns closely with Renfrewshire's Community Plan 2017–2027 with our vision of 'working together to make Renfrewshire a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive'. Underpinning the Community Plan is our aim to be inclusive and seek to address inequalities – both supported through our digital approach and reflected in this Digital Strategy's high-level outcomes.

The Scottish Government's Digital Strategy aims to put digital at the heart of everything we do from delivering economic growth and reforming public services to preparing our children for the workplace of the future. This strategy is currently being refreshed, particularly in the light of the coronavirus pandemic, and our Digital Strategy will remain agile enough to link in with the refreshed national approach, which recognises the importance of local government to achieve the national vision.

The Scottish Local Government Digital Office recently launched their refreshed strategy for the next three years with the aim of becoming a centre of excellence in data, technology and digital, working with councils to help with their own transformation and ensuring they are creating top class digital services for citizens.

Our strategy has been informed by the local and national context and will be delivered through a programme of work focused on transforming how we do things and what we do.

Ways of Working/

A successful digital organisation will have a culture which focuses on external customers before internal processes, it must be bold in its approach with an action-oriented programme of work that empowers individuals to collaborate across functions to challenge and transform the services we deliver for our customers.

Our strategy will challenge the way we do things and cultivate the cultural appetite required to become a Digital Council.

Digital Renfrewshire, Resilient Renfrewshire/

At the time of developing this strategy, Renfrewshire Council is planning for how we recover and renew following the global coronavirus pandemic. Many of our employees are still working from home, pupils and teachers have returned to classrooms but with digital homework and months of experience of digital learning, and more services than anticipated have been offered digitally as we sought to continue our work as best we could, safely and remotely.

The Council and the country's response to covid-19 has firmly reinforced the critical importance of providing digital services, of a fast, reliable internet connection and of supporting digital inclusion and removing barriers to participation.

During 'lockdown' families and friends connected digitally more than ever before, grandparents video-called much missed grandchildren, young children learned how to video call so they could keep in touch with their school friends, and digital parties, quizzes and catch ups became a weekly Friday night staple. In recognition of this, the Council and our partners responded accordingly, with families using tablets to connect with their loved ones in our care homes, online GP consultations were offered by the NHS, Renfrewshire Leisure provided online Bookbug classes to keep toddlers entertained and fitness classes to keep our citizens fit.

A national programme, Connecting Scotland, was developed to ensure everyone had access to what had truly become, these lifelines. The Connecting Scotland programme provides people on low incomes who are at greater risk of isolation during the pandemic with access to kit, access to connectivity and support to develop skills and confidence online. Renfrewshire were initially allocated 230 devices which are being distributed and another 30 which will be targeted for use by care experienced groups.

A key consideration highlighted by the pandemic and subsequent lockdown is the need to develop Scotland's digital democracy – ensuring citizens can safely and effectively engage with each other through discussion and participation in a digital way while restrictions remain to reduce the number of people who can safely get together. This is a big challenge, and one that is shared across Scotland, but the benefits will be significant. By pushing for change in this area, we can open local engagement and discussion to far more people than before.

A digital Renfrewshire is a more resilient Renfrewshire, one that can keep working, connecting and serving our citizens, customers and children. Through this strategy and working with our partners, we will ensure that people, no matter where they live in Renfrewshire, can access fast, affordable and effective digital technology.

The outbreak of covid-19 showed us that change was critical, but it also showed us that huge, fast, effective change was possible.

Strength and history/

Renfrewshire has a solid footing to continue our digital journey from—our Digital Strategy for 2016-19 focused on digital participation, connectivity, digital public services and digital economy—all themes we want to develop further to reflect the position we are in now.

Significant programmes of work have been successfully undertaken across these themes already, such as the implementation of MyAccount, opening up services for our customers across Renfrewshire, linking to ParentPay for cashless catering; and providing 1800 digital devices for pupils across Renfrewshire to allow them to fully participate in online learning opportunities and reduce digital exclusion.

As detailed under theme 3, significant work has already taken place to reinforce Renfrewshire's digital foundations —introducing Connectivity as a Service to Renfrewshire and working with private sector partners to install fibre networks direct to homes. It establishes Renfrewshire as a digitally desirable place to invest, work and live. This sector-leading work is more critical than ever and as well as enabling many of the other workstreams outlined in this strategy, brings benefits to both the Council and other organisations across Renfrewshire.

It is with this experience that our ambition has grown, to develop Renfrewshire's digital capability further, in new creative ways and with new partners and participants.

Strategic Themes/

Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy will support a significant programme of work, involving all Council services.

The proposed programme, outlined below, will focus on enabling Renfrewshire to become a Digital Council, transforming the way we deliver services for our customers. This approach will be used in further consultation with staff, customers and partners, to validate the intent of the strategy and ensure the needs of both the internal organisation and the wider community are met.

To be successful, the strategy must be more than about implementing new technology—it will change the way we work, the way we are organised to deliver services and the way we engage with our customers.

Our vision will be achieved through a framework of eight strategic themes, which have been informed by the strategic context outlined previously and through a digital audit and consultation exercise completed recently across all Council services.

Each strategic theme will be led by a Head of Service and supported by a programme management framework, aimed at achieving specific outcomes for that workstream which will be defined during the initial phase of the strategy development.

Each Head of Service will also be responsible for promoting and championing the new ways of working required in an organisation which is striving to become truly digital, showing digital leadership. The eight themes are:

Digital Council/

/Head of Customer and Business Services/

Strategic Purpose

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. 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.
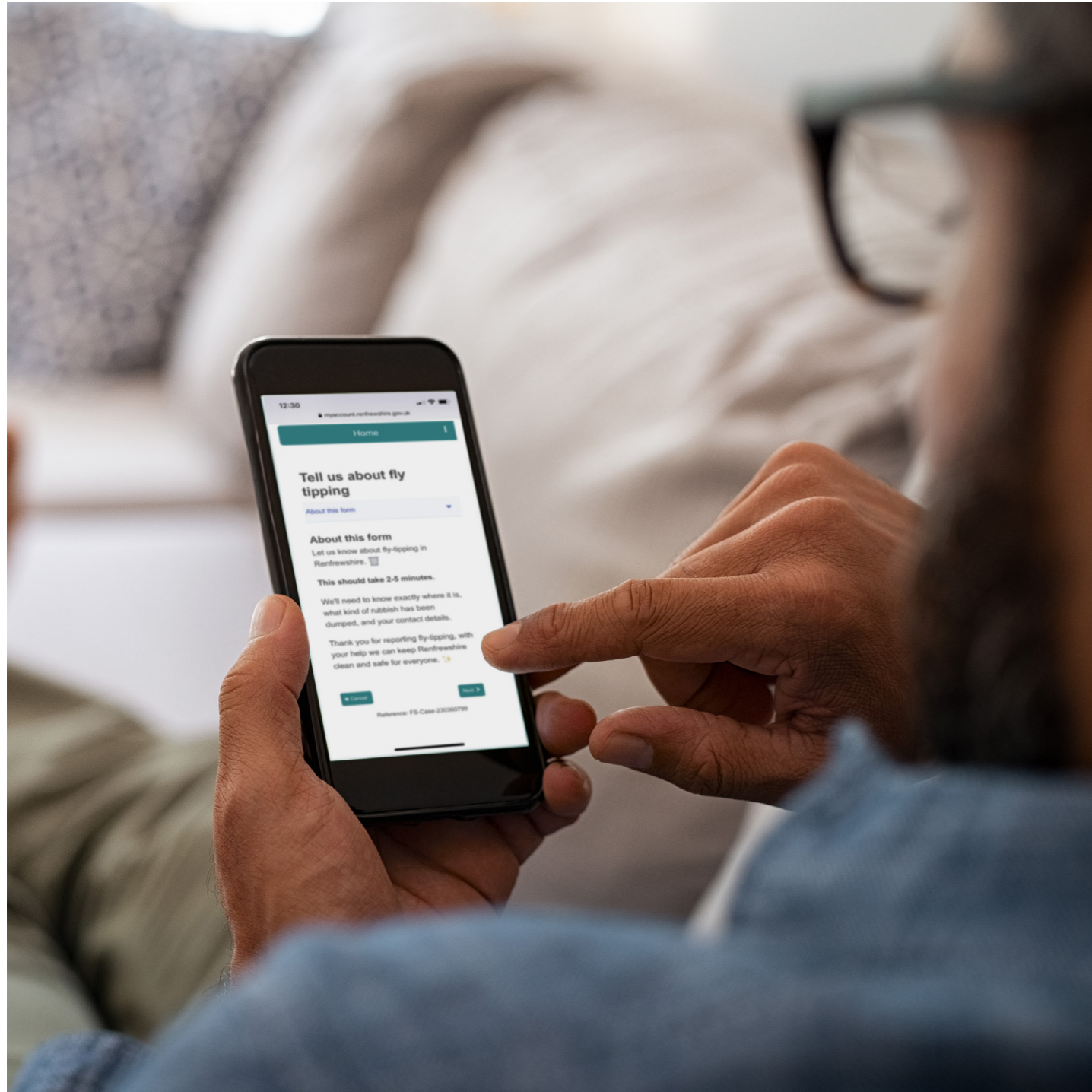
Work to Date

This workstream has two areas of focus—the development of digital services and the enhancement of the overall customer digital experience when interacting with the Council.

Digital services provide our customers with the opportunity to interact with the Council in a modern and more flexible way. The digital platform is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year and is used by thousands of customers each week to request Council services.

The digital platform was launched 3 years ago, with the introduction of MyAccount, and to date has reached over 70% of all households in Renfrewshire. There are now 70 online services ranging from council tax and waste to licensing and school payments.

Digital services are created by the Digital First Team within Customer and Business Services—the team was created to work across Council services and to involve customers in a complete end to end redesign of their processes, gaining efficiencies throughout while meeting the needs of the users.

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 coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the use of the MyAccount platform with over 15,000 digital requests being made per month by customers, an increase of over 5,000 since the start of 2020.

Digital experience represents the way we engage with our staff, customers and service users over a variety of digital channels and touchpoints which includes our websites, social media channels, apps, emails and all other digital platforms.

The quality of our digital experience determines how our audiences feel about their interaction with the Council. They may be happy and satisfied because they were able to carry out a transaction quickly and easily online and they found the information they were looking for with ease. Or they may be dissatisfied because it didn't work for them. Digital experience underpins our strategy and is vital to enabling people to interact with us digitally.

We will improve our current web offering and particularly our website and intranet to meet the needs of our services and users, highlighted through recent community and staff engagement and amplified during the pandemic.

A detailed audit of our current provision was undertaken as part of the first year of the Digital Experience Strategy to inform the design of a future solution and included testing our ability to meet future web accessibility standards. The audit concluded that we now need to transform and future proof our digital estate. The aim is to deliver a new website and digital experience in 2022.

This workstream has undertaken significant work to date, including the creation of a Digital Experience Team, within the Communications and Marketing service, development of a business case to deliver the digital experience strategy and replace the Council's web platform, implementing immediate fixes to our current websites to ensure compliance with GDPR and Web Accessibility Standards and launching The Thread – new online hub to help staff and partners engage with the Digital Experience programme and find the latest guides, standards and legal requirements to support good management of our channels. The team has also developed a new COVID-19 website within the existing website providing the latest public health and service information.

Good digital experience builds reputation and trust, increases the uptake of self-service, reduces costs, improves our efficiency and reduces ongoing day-to-day support requirements. Good, intuitive digital experience can also promote digital inclusion and a new approach to digital experience, with a new main website as the flagship and nerve-centre, is vital for the Council and will support delivery of this strategy.

Digital Foundations/

/Head of ICT/

Strategic Purpose

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.

Work to Date

The Council undertook the transition to the Microsoft Office 365 platform 18 months ago, a move which has allowed the level of flexibility and home working that has supported the workforce through the pandemic and subsequent lockdown. Without this, services and partners would have been limited in their ability to work so effectively from home locations.

As the prospect of lockdown emerged, ICT upscaled the remote access infrastructure anticipating increased usage. This increase in capacity was tested up-front with high volumes of remote connections via Edinburgh-based cloud hosted data centres which were established in 2017 as part of the adoption of Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).

Internal remote-control software tools were reconfigured to enable the seamless support of Council provisioned end-user devices in the office or at home. Since lockdown began, ICT have continued to maximise our use of Microsoft Office 365, utilising this extensive, always developing and evergreen toolset for 'anytime anywhere' conferencing, collaboration and information sharing.

The key priorities for this workstream moving forward include continuing to support both office and home working technologies and business as usual activities and continuing to progress programmes and projects such as Connectivity as a Service (CaaS). The Council are always looking ahead and identifying new technology solutions which could provide real benefit to the Council and to home workers. This includes the development of a 'Bring Your Own Device' solution for personal smartphone or tablet use, and the technical and security requirements to support personal laptop access to Council systems, should that be necessary.

Providing access to next generation digital technology is fundamental to enabling Council employees to carry out their work effectively and to the way our citizens, communities and businesses live, play and do business. Being able to continue to serve our citizens well into the future requires a 'step change' in how connectivity services have been traditionally provided to the Council. Connectivity as a Service (CaaS) allows this step change to be achieved by replacing legacy and expiring Council connectivity services with investment in future-proof, next-generation gigabit connectivity. Through CaaS, the Council acts as an anchor tenant for demand, while stimulating private investment into next generation digital infrastructure such as fibre-to-the-home (FTTH), 5G and the Internet of Things.

Digital Place/

/Head of Regeneration/

Strategic Purpose

Embracing the benefits of digital, we will enhance economic growth, enable businesses, stimulate innovation and support inward investment to encourage economic regeneration.

Work to Date

Work continues in developing the digital place considerations for Renfrewshire, with a focus on ensuring excellent digital connectivity in our key business parks and investment locations including the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS), Hillington, Inchinnan and Westway. We believe this will increasingly be a key factor for businesses choosing to invest in Renfrewshire.

Investment in digital infrastructure in town centres is also a priority as this can help create sustainable locations. Investment in aspects such as Wi-Fi, future-proofing centres for the emergence of 5G and the installation of electric car-charging points to cut carbon emissions will be key indicators of a town centre's health and sustainability credentials in the future. Having such infrastructure in place will make our town centres more attractive investment locations for both housing and business markets.

The digital place workstream will focus on the need for a SMART place plan for Renfrewshire, to secure investment in SMART technologies. The economic advantages of applying SMART city thinking to energy use, waste management, water use and transport could be substantial.

Also under consideration is the potential for creating a data centres sector in Renfrewshire. The economic advantages of data centres to the Renfrewshire economy could be significant and include positive construction and operational impacts, skills development, clustering of businesses who need access to data centres and development of a digital ecosytem. The economic benefits of data centres to the Irish economy have been substantial—€7.13 billion has been invested in Ireland through capital and operational expenditure with 5,700 FTEs supported. Whilst the Renfrewshire economy cannot expect investment of such scale, there may be opportunities to support niche markets in the data centre market sector such as marketing Renfrewshire as disaster recovery location or establishing an edge network.

Renfrewshire's Economic Recovery Plan will highlight the importance of our digital economy. Specifically, the importance of delivering Renfrewshire's full-fibre high speed broadband network to create a first-class digital infrastructure for the benefit of businesses, homes and education and building network resilience against the impacts of future economic shocks. It will also highlight the need to prepare our existing and future workforce with the required digital skills which will be vital for Renfrewshire's future economic prospects.

Digital Leadership and Skills/

/Head of HR and Organisational Development/

Strategic Purpose

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.

Work to Date

As demonstrated over recent months, a digitally literate Renfrewshire is more resilient and better equipped to address a range of challenges. Continuing to build our capacity for strategic thinking and leadership around digital at all levels is critical. Our digital culture will determine how we successfully support the development of digitally capable people—leaders, employees and citizens.

The response to the coronavirus pandemic has shifted the way we digitally engage, work and live at a pace we would not have thought possible six months ago. Now, more than ever, it is important that we ensure everyone is supported across our organisation and communities and has the opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge —enabling people to live, work and learn in a digital Renfrewshire.

Our approach to building digital leadership and skills across our organisation and communities focuses on the codesign of a digital capabilities framework which describes the skills and behaviours needed by leaders, staff and citizens to thrive in a digital environment.

The development of the framework will enable us to articulate our shared aspiration and benchmark; to define a common language to open up conversations; and to provide a flexible way to support the needs and aspirations within the Council and the communities we serve.

Internally, the framework for our leaders and workforce and will be supported by our People Strategy—initial scoping work has looked across the public, private sector and third sector to learn from best practise and we have already begun to identify capabilities ranging from ICT proficiency and productively to digital health and well-being.

As well as showing the importance of digital through the employee lifecycle from recruitment to retirement, our research has demonstrated the importance of nurturing and attracting digital talent enabling us to create a futureproof workforce. Development work will continue over the coming months.

Smart data/

/Head of Policy and Commissioning/

Strategic Purpose

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 we gather good quality data, which is used and stored securely, and can reliably be used to inform decision making.

Put most simply, this workstream 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 will have to foster new skills and develop new roles within the organisation, ensuring 'smart data' is a key organisational enabler.
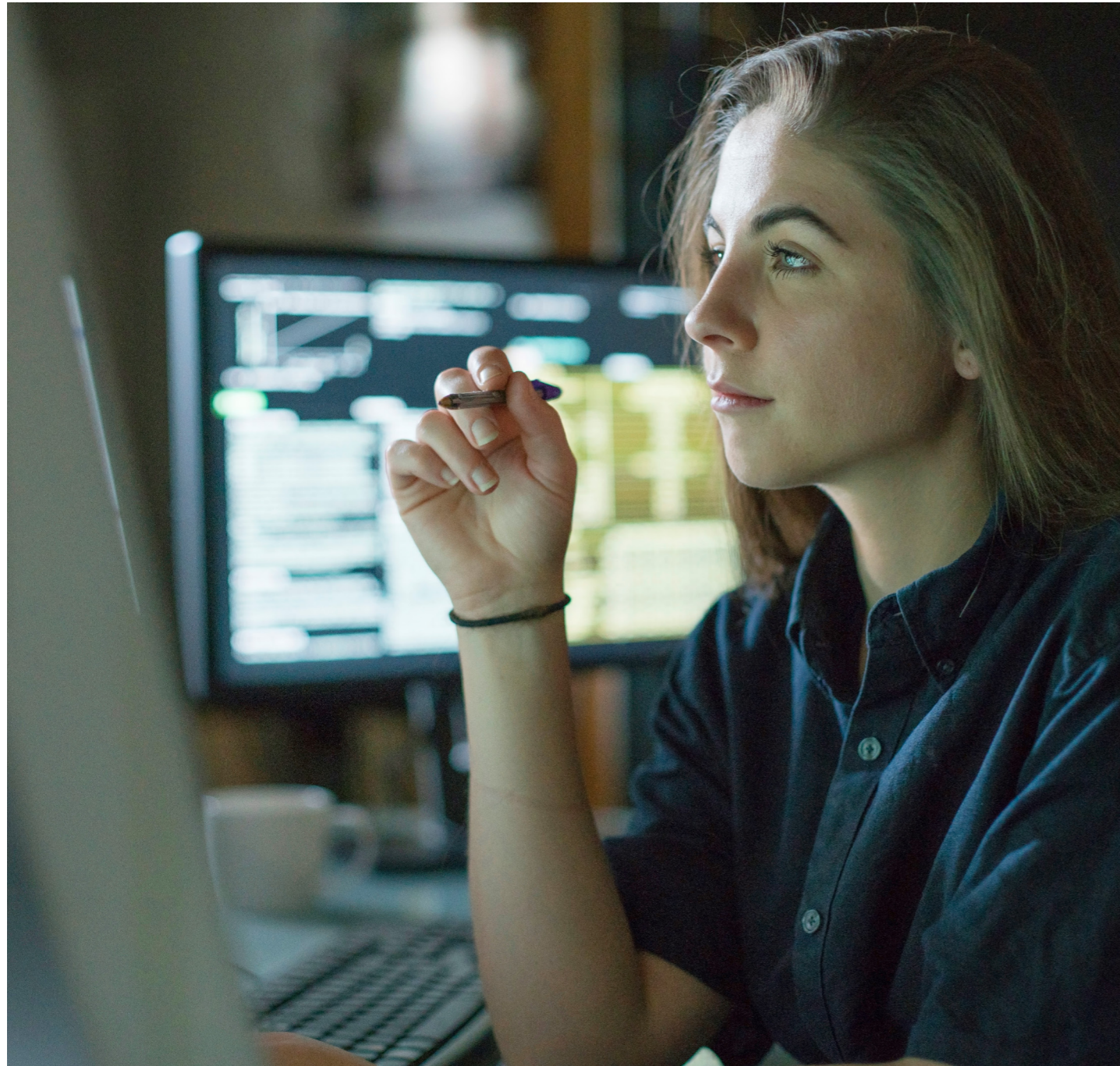
Work to Date

In recent years, the Council has considered its resources in terms of data and established a data analytics function, with strong GIS capabilities at its core. A number of very skilled analysts with specific subject expertise also work across wider Council services. As services develop, significant demand is being experienced for analytical support, and there is a need to plan and manage this more strategically within the organisation.

A range of potential opportunities have been identified for further exploration in relation to predictive analytics; Smart Cities; data warehousing; open data; geospatial; information as an asset; focus on solutions for example in climate change.

Work is ongoing corporately on data quality and data management, with a key aim of enhancing the reliability of information held within Council systems and using this more efficiently to deliver services.

Digital Citizen/

/Head of Policy and Commissioning/

Strategic purpose

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.

Work to Date

Officers within the Council have worked collectively with wider community planning partners to develop a nationally recognised approach to digital participation. A partnership network called Digi Ren, is the key driver of this programme of work, with many examples of activities being undertaken including coding classes, Digiteers in libraries, digital participation in housing and specialist projects in services such as the Disability Resource centre.

In response to the pandemic all local partners and services have worked to support digital participation. There are a range of examples of services accessing funding to provide devices and connectivity to keep people connected and able to participate in activities and services. Many groups and organisations have also adapted their service delivery to offer activities online. The Council, with the support of the wider network, has participated in the national Connecting Scotland programme, with national funding allowing the allocation of almost 300 devices and dongles in Renfrewshire. These were distributed through voluntary sector, community groups and Council services to people who had been significantly impacted by the pandemic due to their personal circumstances.

In terms of moving forward, the principles of our Digital Participation Strategy remain appropriate, providing an excellent focus and will continue to be progressed:

1. We want to reduce the barriers to digital participation across Renfrewshire, targeting those who are most excluded first;

2. We want to build capacity for digital participation across Council services and partner agencies;

3. We want to target efforts towards those who have the most barriers to digital exclusion first;

4. We want to work in partnership with Council services and partner agencies.

Digital Health and Social Care/

Strategic Purpose

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.

Work to Date

Optimising available data and digital technologies will be essential in changing health and social care delivery models and has been identified as a key enabler of our Recovery and Renewal Programme. Effective use of technology can support further integrated working and enhanced productivity within the HSCP and enable our service users to manage their health and remain independent for longer.

The response to the pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technology across the health and social care system significantly quicker than was thought possible six months ago. Attend Anywhere technology has been successfully implemented to support service delivery within Primary Care, Community Mental Health and District Nursing. The use of Skype and Microsoft Teams has enabled ongoing remote team working across services.

The HSCP will continue to build on these successes with Renfrewshire Council and NHS GGC as our parent organisations who provide and support the HSCP's technology solutions. A Digital Delivery Group, with representation from both partners, will be formed to assess and take forward digital opportunities which arise from recovery and renewal activity. In addition, the HSCP is looking to create additional capacity to lead this work.

Digital learning and teaching/

/Head of Curriculum and Quality/

Strategic Purpose

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.

Work to Date

Our priority moving forward is to develop a flexible, layered and empowered Renfrewshire approach to digital learning through a new digital plan aligned to the Council's Digital Strategy.

The focus of this plan will be:

- Empowering learners by enabling them to develop the skills required to thrive in the rapidly growing digital economy.

- Strengthening infrastructure across the school estate to support new and creative approaches to learning and teaching that are not restricted by time or location.

- Providing opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning on digital pedagogy to promote a shared understanding in, and provision of, high quality learning.

We have recently appointed a Digital Learning Manager who will work with key stakeholders to develop the plan in the coming months. Once the plan is agreed, our expectation is that it will be implemented this session and we will start to see meaningful digital change in learning and teaching across Renfrewshire.

Since schools closed on 20 March 2020, teachers and pupils had to embrace digital technology in order that educational services could continue on a remote basis. The remote delivery of education has been a success, and the pace of digital change has, through necessity, accelerated significantly. Teaching staff have taken lockdown as an opportunity to be creative and collaborative, to experiment and to share ideas and best practice. As a result, confidence in the use of digital platforms for the delivery of learning has grown, which only bodes well for the future as we continue our digital journey in the classroom.

A variety of digital platforms have been used including Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Show my homework and Seesaw.

The use of our digital learning platforms has expanded significantly:

- Schools have gone from storing very little online to now storing nearly 2.5 TB of files on Glow. For perspective, that equates to more than 34,000 hours of MP3s, 80 days' worth of video or 620,000 photos. In the future, online (Cloud) storage may reduce the Council's costs in terms of the requirement for server infrastructure.

- There were, on average 6,000 daily users with over 400 Google Classroom school classes active each day.

- Renfrewshire teachers have created 128,371 posts on Google Classrooms and have received 29,007 replies from their students.

- Microsoft Teams was accessed around 49,000 times.

- Over May, Renfrewshire students logged into Glow (the Education intranet) over 310,000 times.

- The Council benefitted from £705,000 of Scottish Government funding for Digital Inclusion which has enabled us to ensure digital inclusion for senior phase pupils across Renfrewshire and provided a stock of devices to support any pupil who may have to self-isolate as part of 'Test and Protect'. In total we were able to purchase 1,800 Chromebooks and were able to supplement our pre-existing stock so that we can now offer 500 dongles for those pupils who do not have access to the internet at home. We will also be able to provide short term pop-up solutions to boost Wi-Fi in our secondary schools.
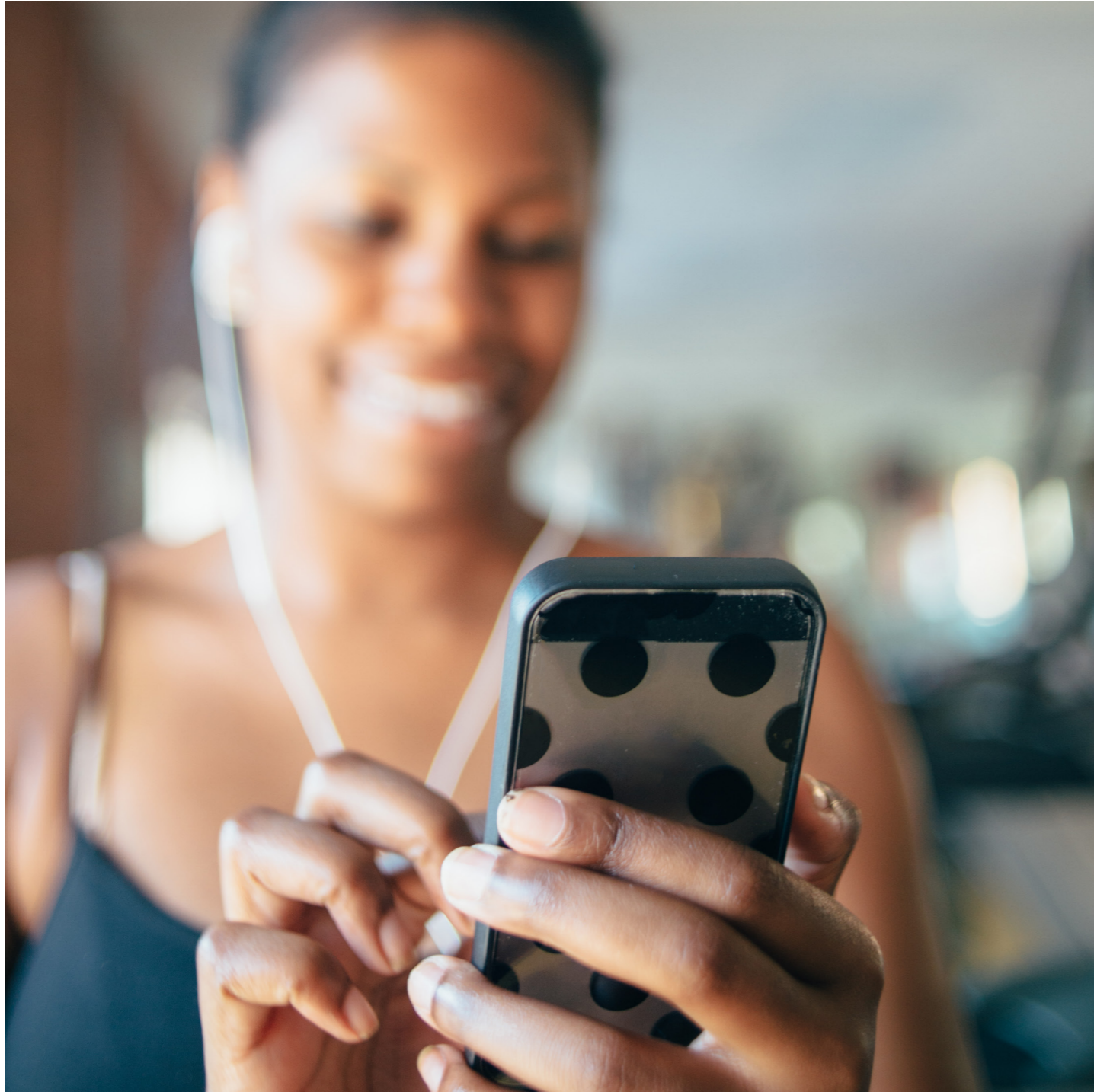
Renfrewshire Leisure/

Renfrewshire Leisure will actively work in partnership with the Council in the development and delivery of our digital strategy to achieve the greatest benefit from shared resources, where it is appropriate and beneficial for both organisations to do so. The strategy will help Renfrewshire Leisure to engage with customers in a faster and more cost-effective way, that minimises delays and number of processes and therefore avoids unnecessary steps and staff intervention. Renfrewshire Leisure will continually strive to be current and up to date with technology and able to respond to developments and changes in consumer behaviour.

The strategic purpose of the Renfrewshire Leisure strategy is to support their charitable purpose— to improve the mental and physical health and well-being of the local community. Renfrewshire Leisure's digital evolution will enable customers and service users to purchase and access services easily and efficiently using modern technology and enable employees to engage with customers, communities, partners and each other easily, confidently and safely.

Five Digital Pillars/

The strategy is built on the five pillars of:

- Technology platforms
- Software applications
- End user devices
- Data management
- Optimising technology (and skills development)

The approach focusses on:

- **People** – customers, employees, communities, partners
- **Processes** – to simplify, automate and remove duplication
- **Platforms** – to manage the digital and technology estate
- **Tools** – to enable the organisation to evolve

A digital and technology approach must:

- Improve customer service
- Increase productivity
- Streamline/automate processes
- Improve data quality, analytics and information

Principles and considerations:

- Systems approach - whole system thinking
- Meets Public Sector Network requirements
- Meets Payment Card Industry Standards
- Data governance arrangements are secure
- Data management improvement in collection, processing, analysing and reporting

The delivery of the Digital Strategy will also be closely aligned to the Council's Right for Renfrewshire transformation programme to ensure any digital work coming from the programme is effectively commissioned in line with the key strategic themes.

Outcomes and benefits/

The themes form the framework for delivering Renfrewshire's Digital Strategy and the following overarching outcomes, outline what we are working towards together:

• Reduced social inequality
• Improved education and attainment
• Improved health and well being
• Economic growth
• Reduced unemployment
• Sustainable and efficient public service delivery

Through our digital approach, there are a range of significant benefits we would expect to see, for our organisation, customers, citizens and communities.

These include:

• Services at times and in ways that suit
• More opportunities to participate
• Better access to information and data
• Smarter use of data to target services where they are most needed
• Increased organisational and community resilience
• Economic benefits

Governance and Leadership/

The delivery of the strategy will be led by a Digital Board, chaired by the Director of Finance and Resources. The Digital Board will exemplify digital leadership and

• Promote collaborative working to help drive creativity
• Provide direction and guidance on the relationship between innovation and risk
• Promote and encourage new ways of working

The board will also hold the responsibly to:

• Plan and measure the change centrally
• Create a long term technical and data architecture (and plan)
• Create a communications plan which brings the vision to life
• Make the right levels of investment

The Digital Board will report to the Corporate Management Team who will be responsible for the ownership of Digital across the Council, ensuring user and customer experience is embedded throughout services and for developing the right organisational environment and appropriate level of empowerment to deliver against the strategic objectives.

The Digital Board will provide regular updates to elected members through annual reporting to the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board.

Measuring Progress/

Feeding into the overarching outcomes, each strategic theme will also be defined with clear outcomes supported by a robust action plan. These will be developed over the coming months through engagement and consultation.

The success of strategic delivery will be measured against the achievement of outcomes with progress being reported, and exceptions managed through the Digital Board.

Resources/

This strategy will require resources to develop, deliver and support the different strands of these programmes at a time when resources are stretched. We will continue to explore opportunities for potential new funding streams and have 'ready to go' projects prepared should quick win funding become available. In addition, we will focus more than ever on sharing our expertise, learning from others and ensuring decision-making around digital resourcing is shared and planned in a collaborative way to maximise our investment and achieve best value.

Our people/

People are the most valuable asset that we have, and therefore having an engaged, skilled and effective workforce is at the core of delivering successful outcomes, facing challenges together and will be central to realising the Council's vision for cultural and transformational change.

Our People Strategy is in its final stages of development, with input from key partners and stakeholders, and puts a real emphasis on the governance and service ownership required to have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time. It will integrate the Council's approach to organisational development and workforce planning and be aligned with other key Council strategies including this digital strategy.

Our People Strategy will be a key enabler in supporting the delivery of our digital ambition across all pillars, supporting our people with the future digital skills required to deliver cultural and organisational change. The Digital Leadership and Skills theme will work in tandem with our People Strategy across the full employee lifecycle, to identify opportunities, challenges and next steps.