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Since the publication of SLC's previous digital and ICT strategy in 2017, the pace of technological changes in society has accelerated. There have been major technical advances in the areas of cloud computing, big data and analytics, high speed internet provision, artificial intelligence, automation and IoT (internet of things) capabilities.

The recent pandemic has resulted an increase in remote working, with widespread adoption of new technologies such as Microsoft 365 software which has transformed collaboration within organisations and enabled virtual meetings using Teams.

As part of the delivery of the previous strategy SLC has upgraded or replaced many of its major computer systems. This includes the core IT infrastructure and the externalisation of its datacentre. Several systems, including email and the council website, have moved to the cloud and SLC offices have been kitted out with wi-fi. There has been an expansion in the number of mobile devices and apps which provide a high degree of flexibility to the council workforce.

In Schools the programme of modernising hardware and software has continued to enable high quality learning and teaching using the latest technologies

This new strategy will build on previous accomplishments and focus on service transformation utilising digital technologies. The refresh of legacy SLC business systems will continue and a new data infrastructure will be implemented to improve data quality and enable information to flow more easily between systems. This will result in better reporting and decision making.

A key element of the new strategy will be cyber security. As systems move to the cloud and services are accessed across the internet it will be important to ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to protect against cyber-attacks.

The strategy is aligned to Scottish Government's Digital Strategy "A Changing Nation: How Scotland Will Thrive in a Digital World" published in March 2021. This strategy was developed jointly with COSLA and describes a vision of embracing digital technology to deliver better outcomes for all Scotland's citizens. This vision includes digital inclusion at its core to ensure that no one is left behind in the digital revolution.

This strategy sets out how South Lanarkshire Council will exploit new technologies to help deliver its vision of improving the quality of life for everyone in South Lanarkshire. It describes how services will be delivered as "Digital First" and how we will work with partners, users and suppliers to create the secure data infrastructure to support digital services.

The strategy also sets out the technical foundations necessary to realise the Council's digital vision. This includes ensuring that appropriate and sustainable computer systems, networks, ICT skills, software and data services are in place to support the transformation to a citizen centric and digital council both in the short term and in the years beyond.

PAUL MANNING
Executive Director (Finance & Corporate Resources)

South Lanarkshire Council's vision "to improve the lives and life prospects of everyone in South Lanarkshire" is ambitious and requires innovative solutions to achieve that vision. Increasingly, these solutions depend upon new technologies to both improve front line services to citizens, and to drive down costs in challenging economic conditions.

Our Digital Vision is therefore:

> Transforming lives with Digital

The Digital Strategy to achieve this will focus on customer needs, will be business driven and be guided by the following key principle:

> The use of Information, Communication and Digital Technologies must add value to the stakeholder, whether that stakeholder is a citizen, an elected member, a business, a partner organisation or another Council service.

The approach the Council will take to deliver the Digital Strategy is governed by a number of Key Principles.

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
Alignment with Council Plan	Digital priorities will be aligned to council priorities
Alignment with Scottish Government Digital Strategy	Delivery of solutions will be aligned with national digital solutions
Customer Centric	Focus of Digital Services will be the customer using that service (citizen, elected member, partner organisation, business or service provider)
Digital Inclusion	Digital solutions will be designed to maximise access for all citizens. For those unable to access services digitally, alternative access will be available
Ease of Use	Digital solutions will be easy to use and preferred method of accessing services
Digital First	All council services will utilise digital solutions where practicable and cost-effective.
Standard solutions	Standard Digital solutions will be deployed across the Council with minimal customisation. Solution will be designed for re-use.
Quick delivery of solutions	"Off The Shelf" or shared solutions will be used where possible to deliver business benefits quickly
Business process redesign	Digital services will not simply be electronic versions of current processes. Existing Council processes will be redesigned to take full advantage of digital solutions
Single point of view	The Digital architecture will enable solutions that provide a consistent, integrated view of citizens, properties or businesses regardless of the access point.
Best Practice Governance and Project management	All Digital projects will be supported by business cases, approved at senior management level and managed and monitored to ensure that business benefits are realised
Multi-Channel	The Council will continue to deliver services through a range of channels. However, and where possible, priority will be given to moving to online channels that seamlessly integrate with back office systems.
Agile Working	ICT services and applications used by our employees will facilitate flexible working at their core and be accessible 24/7, enabling increased productivity and property savings.

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
Integration	ICT Services will provide the right tools to enable integration between the specialist applications used by council resources, the core components such as the council's CRM, property and financial systems and national solutions such as MyAccount and National Planning and Building Standards Portal.
Data quality	High quality data, which is both complete and accurate, is essential to deliver digital services. The value of data shall be recognised such that there is an emphasis on data quality to ensure accurate information is used both to both deliver transactional services, and better use of analytics and metrics to aid decision making and continuously improve digital services.
Collaboration and Shared Service	The Council will work with the Scottish Government, NHS Lanarkshire, other local authorities and public sector partners to deliver shared and collaborative services to the benefit of the Scottish citizen. A key part of this will be participation in the Scottish Local Government Digital Partnership (Digital Office).
Technology/vendor independence	The ICT architecture will be designed to reduce the impact of technology and supplier changes on the business.
Innovative and agile	ICT architecture will be flexible and able to accommodate changes required to meet future requirements for digital services.
Enterprise Architecture	An enterprise architecture will be developed to create high level view of Digital and ICT Systems and facilitate integration and interoperability.
Scalability	All ICT systems will be capable of adapting to number of users to optimise cost.
Data Security and Compliance	All components of the computing environment must be secure and comply with applicable legislation.
Best Practice IT Processes	South Lanarkshire Council IT Service will utilise best practice IT processes, including Prince 2/Agile for project delivery, ISO12207 for software development and lifecycle management, ITIL for IT service management, ISO27001 for information security, and continuous improvement techniques to develop Digital and ICT Services.

OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	OUTCOME
KEEP THE LIGHTS ON	Primary purpose of IT Service will be to support customers to maintain council services. This will require refreshes of end of life hardware/software and software upgrades to comply with legislative changes. Appropriate levels of funding and resources will be allocated to meet this objective.	Required levels of system availability, performance, functionality, security and compliance are maintained to enable council services to be delivered.
CUSTOMER CONTACT AND TRANSACTIONAL WORKING	Council services will, wherever possible, be delivered as "Digital First". Channel shift initiatives will encourage customers to move from more expensive channels (eg voice, face to face) to less expensive self-service channels (eg Council website). Customers engage digitally with SLC at a time and in a manner convenient to them.	Data, information and services are readily and consistently available to customers and other stakeholders. Customer transactions are available on-line, in real time and from any device. Expensive, and less effective, exchanges of information are minimised or eliminated.
AGILE WORKING	Mobile and Flexible Working technologies provide an opportunity to increase productivity and reduce costs. There is less dependence on location to perform many tasks.	Employees and elected members can securely access systems using any authorised device from any location. Staff downtime is reduced and corresponding productivity increased. Property costs are reduced.
BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND DATA MANAGEMENT	Data quality and currency varies depending on its age and source. As part of the strategy a data architecture will define how information is stored and used. Council wide systems such as Microsoft 365, Oracle Fusion and Objective EDRMS will be exploited to transform business processes.	More efficient data management, improved data quality, better management information for service design and targeting of resources. Availability of dashboards with joined up data and automated reporting to external bodies.

OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	OUTCOME
PARTNERSHIP WORKING	One aim of Health and Social Care Integration is to provide "joined up" care to service users. To achieve this different bodies (eg Council, NHS) require to share data in an efficient manner and also allow staff to seamlessly work in each other's premises.	Better service to citizens as professionals from different public sector bodies have access to required information to do their job.
DIGITAL LEARNING & TEACHING	Supporting and delivering the requirements of South Lanarkshire Council's learners. Alignment with national strategies.	Consistent and coherent approach to ICT in all SLC learning environments. Equipping our young people with requisite digital skills in preparation for the outside world.
DIGITAL INCLUSION	Support delivery of SLC Digital Inclusion Strategy, including designing digital services to be as accessible as possible.	Ensure that "No One is Left Behind" as take-up of digital services increases.
DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY	Provision of high bandwidth, high availability internet connectivity across South Lanarkshire.	Improve speed and availability of internet connectivity for council users, citizens, businesses and tourists. Support economic development. Provide choice of affordable methods to access council and other internet services.

KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

The Council, citizens and other stakeholders increasingly depend upon Information and Communications Technology to deliver, and consume, public sector services. From email to internet transactions, from critical business systems to voice and data services, even small outages in ICT systems have a significant and detrimental effect. The primary purpose of IT is to support customers to maintain council services. This is achieved through high levels of IT service availability, system performance and data security. Specifically,

- external hardware and software contracts will include formal Service Level Agreements to ensure systems availability
- internal IT Services to council resources will be supported by Operational Service Level agreements that fulfil customers' business requirements
- end of life hardware and software upgrades will be implemented in a timely and cost-effective manner to ensure continued IT service delivery
- legacy business applications will be replaced, transforming service delivery and generating efficiencies
- hardware and software implementations will be supported by full life cycle management policies to offer functional, technical and legislative compliance
- all hardware, software, data and communication technologies will be implemented to full PSN and Cyber Essentials Plus compliance standards to ensure that data is securely available to discharge the Council's business
- all analogue telephony will be moved to digital in time for analogue switch-off in 2025.

CUSTOMER CONTACT and TRANSACTIONAL WORKING

It is recognised that automation of digital transactions facilitates significant benefit, whilst reducing costs, for citizens. This is also true of internal transactions where automation is just as important and can also deliver efficiencies. Our customers will have a choice of channels through which they can transact with the council but we will work to ensure that the digital channels become the most popular by ensuring that they are easy to use and available 24 x 7. Customer services will be designed for the convenience of our customers rather than our internal business processes and allow a seamless customer journey across all channels. The provision of on-line, web chat, voice and face to face services will enable customers to switch from channel to channel without loss of data or the need to restart a transaction.

- Facilitate self-service for employees and managers to reduce internal transaction costs.
- Standardise future IT Investment in web facing systems that inherently support self-service.
- Invest and deploy automated integration tools that simplify systems integration and eliminate the need for re-keying of data.
- Rationalise the number of systems throughout the Council to reduce support costs and effort. Deliver a web responsive and transactional service portal to view and change personal information, request council services, or make payments.
- Upgrade and integrate our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) with other customer service channels.
- Have a single identity for customers regardless of channel preference linking with MyAccount.
- Implement a single telephone contact capability that delivers a seamless service.

AGILE WORKING

Our employees and elected members will be able to securely access systems from any authorised device and from any location. Productivity is increased through elimination of expensive travel time and more efficient use of property. Future Council workforce planning will require to take account of how new technology is changing both how services are delivered, and the roles requires to deliver those services in future.

- Deploy Wi-Fi to major council office and buildings, including provision of access to external systems for trusted partners.
- Invest in modern and secure mobile technologies.
- Invest in unified communication technologies to support 24/7 access to voice and data.
- Invest in cloud technologies and Software as a Service (SaaS) to deliver services that are device and location independent.
- Enable our workforce to remain connected to their colleagues and teams whilst working in a flexible working organisation.
- Develop mobile applications that automate data transfer and facilitate field based working.

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE AND DATA MANAGEMENT

To ensure that SLC has a "joined up" view of the data held by the Council, to exploit that data by making sure that the data quality and integrity is high, that it is utilised for process automation, and that high quality information and data analytics are available to managers to inform decision making.

- Design and implement a data integration bus to enable data to be securely shared across SLC systems and partners. Define where data is held and "systems of record".
- Install connectors across major systems to facilitate information exchange for business process automation and management reporting.
- Use big data approaches on our business data to identify patterns, trends and associations that inform our decision making.
- Identify opportunities to enrich council data with open source data where appropriate.
- Develop an open data strategy - Open data is the practice of making council data available freely to customers and commercial organisations to help drive digital innovation.
- Develop tools that enable a council wide approach to business intelligence to support initiatives such as the prevention and early intervention agenda.
- Further develop the corporate EDRMs solution to deliver automated workflows, record management and integration with other council systems.
- Implementation of a structured Electronic Information Management solution to facilitate secure internal and external collaboration.
- Develop data sharing protocols and procedures with our partners and other public sector organisations.
- Retire legacy unstructured data repositories.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Health and Social Care Integration is a key driver for partnership working through ICT and we will ensure that the ICT solutions enable care to be delivered independently of organisational boundaries. In order to plan strategically for the delivery of services in the future we will securely share our data with Health Care partners and develop our business intelligence systems to predict future demands and align these to organisational resources. This will be facilitated by,

- deploying data sharing tools that allow secure sharing of data within the Health and Social Care Partnership. This will include enabling secure access across partner systems and federation of domains to facilitate collaboration such as video conferencing, messaging, and shared address book/calendar access
- working with our partners to deliver Digital and ICT services that enable Health and Social Care Integration, e.g., Telehealth/Telecare
- continuing to develop and implement Technology Enabled Care options to support independent living
- engaging with the national programmes such as MyAccount, National Entitlement Card (NEC) and MyGov.Scot programmes
- developing data sharing protocols and procedures with our partners, including community partnerships
- continuing to participate in the Lanarkshire Data Sharing Partnership
- working with various partners including COSLA, Digital Office, Improvement Service, Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Scotland Excel, higher education and tech industry to deliver cost-effective solutions at pace and share best practices across wider public sector.

DIGITAL LEARNING & TEACHING

Deliver digital technologies to support imaginative, innovative learning environments suitable for learning in the 21st century. This will be delivered through:

- modern robust infrastructure to support anytime anywhere learning including resilient secure networks supporting a range of uses including mobile working and "Bring Your Own Device"
- a range of hardware solutions to meet the differing needs of educators and learners
- learning and teaching resources including modern industry standard and specialised software, supporting additional needs, early years through to senior phase
- provision of ICT solutions to support the South Lanarkshire Council Primary Schools Modernisation Programme
- promotion of GLOW and Google Classroom as learning and teaching tools
- enable home and remote learning for learners
- full ICT Managed Service Contract which allows schools to focus on the core business of learning and teaching
- training and continuous personal development to enable staff to maximise use of available ICT resources.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

The SLC Digital Inclusion Strategy was approved in 2020 with the objective of ensuring that no one is left behind as digital services are introduced. To support this the Digital Strategy the council will:

- work with partners to improve digital connectivity, including interim measures where appropriate
- support initiatives to deliver free public wi-fi and user devices
- ensure that projects implementing new technology take account of impact to users and staff at planning stage
- fully train staff as part of all new technology introductions
- put users (staff/citizens) at heart of new technology projects making it as easy as possible to use.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

SLC depends upon good quality internet connectivity to operate and deliver the majority of its services. New software applications such as video conferencing (e.g., Microsoft Teams), cloud computing, public wi-fi, 5G and internet of things (IoT) will require connectivity to be upgraded across the council area. The SLC digital strategy will:

- identify the future needs of SLC to provide services to citizens
- replace wide area network contracts with new partnership arrangements which will provide a range of connectivity options to meet SLC needs
- leverage available funding to accelerate investment in digital connectivity
- facilitate the rollout of fibre optic technology across the council area.

DIGITAL LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

To achieve the key deliverables, it will be necessary to implement the following:

- develop digital skills, culture and innovation at all levels within the Council
- initiate a programme of work to digitally transform services based upon principles set out in the Digital Strategy.
- ensure that all investments are supported by business cases which clearly state alignment with Council plan along with costs and benefits.
- apply formal Programme and Project Management techniques (including planning, oversight, risk management and change control) to ensure that solutions are delivered at speed and on budget.
- participate in national initiatives such as the Local Government Digital Office to leverage shared solutions and learn from others
- where appropriate, undertake joint procurements with other Scottish public sector organisations
- benchmark the "digital maturity" of South Lanarkshire Council to identify areas of opportunity
- comply with South Lanarkshire Council's Procurement Strategy and Policies
- manage ICT assets as per Council Asset management Plan.

DIGITAL FOUNDATIONS

The use of standardised and common ICT Platforms reduces technical investment and support costs. We will achieve a modern sustainable IT environment by:

- deploying a secure corporate network which is capable of delivering digital services to all council premises for use by employees, elected members, partner organisations, citizens and pupils.
- providing connectivity to national networks to enable partnership working
- implementing modern and secure mobile solutions to allow digital services to be accessed on a range of devices, including smartphones, tablets and laptops
- partnering with commercial providers to enable cost effective solutions to provide high speed connectivity to our schools
- investing in Cloud Technologies and Software as a Services (SAAS) as appropriate to deliver services that are device and location independent
- investing in resilient infrastructure to provide high availability digital services such as the Council website
- providing common business solutions which are re-used across the Council and, where possible, share these with other public sector bodies corporate
- ensuring seamless integration of ICT applications via an enterprise bus. This will allow data to be exchanged between systems in a timely manner to improve data quality, deliver effective digital services, enable citizens to view and update their own data, and provide insight to enable better targeting of resources.
- developing a single view of the customer authenticated via MyAccount Scotland.
- ensuring that adequate resources are in place to facilitate effective and efficient delivery of digital solutions.

CYBER SECURITY

The Council's approach to Cyber Security is ensure that Citizen, Council and Partner transactions are conducted securely. As such, South Lanarkshire Council will maintain its accreditations with the Public Sector Network (PSN) and Cyber Essentials Plus schemes.

Technology is an intrinsic part of our daily working environment and has changed the way we interact and retain important information. This makes security management vital for public confidence and for the efficient conduct of public business. In order to maintain the highest standards of information security, the Council has developed a number of policies to protect information technology assets, such as computer hardware and software, telecommunications equipment and data held within the council's IT systems.

The Council is committed to preserving the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all the physical and electronic information assets throughout South Lanarkshire Council. Data and information security requirements will continue to be aligned with the council's goals. The framework of security policies is intended to be an enabling mechanism for information sharing, electronic operations, and reducing information-related risks to acceptable levels.

In particular, business continuity and contingency plans, data back-up procedures, avoidance of viruses and hackers, access control to systems and information security incident reporting are fundamental to this framework. The objectives of these policies are:

- to achieve a council-wide security minimum standard
- to make the public and all users of the council's information systems confident of the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information used and produced
- to ensure that all users are aware of Acceptable Use Policy
- to minimise business damage and interruption caused by security incidents
- to meet all legislative and regulatory requirements.
- To ensure the council's ICT equipment and facilities are used responsibly, securely and with integrity at all times
- to comply with the requirements set by UK government when connecting to the Public Services Network (PSN)
- to comply with the requirements set by Scottish Government in the Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation scheme
- to comply with Payment Card Industry standards (PCI-DSS) for all systems which process card payments
- to develop security standards for cloud services to ensure that they can be securely integrated with other Council systems.

ARCHITECTURE STANDARDS

The adoption of reference architecture standards within the IT Service will, through time, accelerate delivery through the re-use standard and effective solutions. Reference Architecture provides the basis for sound technical governance and ensures the consistency and applicability of technology use within the Council.

The business case for the adoption of Reference Architecture is robust in consideration of the Council's technology requirements moving forward. However, it is also important to consider that the Scottish Local Government Digital Office are also in the process of applying Reference Architecture standards at a national level. The scope for standardisation and sharing of technologies and systems across the Scottish Public Sector cannot be understated. The benefits of referenced architecture include:

- improved interoperability of systems by establishing standard solutions and interfaces and thereby creating a *transactional* Council
- a move to common platforms leveraging the Digital Office repository to identify sharing opportunities
- facilitating shared procurements and software developments
- shared best practice across councils
- eased integration with national solutions (e.g., ePlanning, proposed National Care Service)
- reduced implementation costs through the reuse of common assets
- improved technical and operational communication across systems and processes
- improved standards and tools to support the Council's business objectives through better systems and data management
- shared Services and Technologies become achievable across multiple public sector organisations.

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Acceptable Use Policy	A set of rules applied by the owner, creator or administrator of a network, website, or service, that restrict the ways in which the network, website or system may be used and sets guidelines as to how it should be used
Business Case	The business case provides justification for undertaking a project or programme. It evaluates the benefit, cost and risk of alternative options and provides a rationale for the preferred solution
Business Intelligence (BI)	An umbrella term that refers to a variety of software applications used to analyze an organization's data
Cloud Technologies	A type of Internet-based computing that provides shared computer resources and data to computers and other devices on demand
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	A computer system used by the Council to manage interaction with its citizens
Data Quality	A measure of the accuracy and completeness of data held on a computer system
Digital Maturity	A measure of how well an organisation makes use of digital solutions and processes to achieve its objectives
Digital Service	A service delivered via the internet, or via an electronic network
Data Protection Act (DPA)	The **Data Protection Act** controls how your personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government
Electronic Data and Record Management System (EDRMS)/ Electronic Content Management (ECM)	A type of content management system and refers to the combined technologies of document management and records management systems as an integrated system
Freedom of Information (FOI)	The **Freedom of Information Act** provides public access to information held by public authorities. Public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities; and members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities
ISO 12207	The international standard for software lifecycle processes covering all the tasks required for developing and maintaining software
ISO 27001	The international standard that describes best practice for an information security management system (ISMS)
IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL)	A widely accepted approach that provides a framework of best practices for managing information technology as a service

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Mobile Apps	Software applications developed specifically for use on small, wireless computing devices, such as Smartphones and tablets, rather than desktop or laptop computers
Mobile Technologies	Technology that is portable. Examples of mobile IT devices include Smartphones and tablets
MyAccount	Scottish Government digital service which offers individuals the ability to set up and use an online account - with a single user name and password - to access a range of online public services, such as paying council tax or requesting a parking permit
MyGov.Scot	A web site for people in Scotland to access public services
National Entitlement Card (NEC)	Offers citizens access to various public services and facilities with a single card
National Planning Portal	A web site that provides answers, services and information to anyone involved in the planning process, from home owners and businesses to planning professionals and government officials
PRINCE2/AGILE	PRINCE2 is a formal, structured methodology for IT project management. The AGILE approach can be used for rapid development of software solutions eg Mobile Apps
Public Sector Network (PSN)	The government's high-performance network which helps public sector organisations work together, reduce duplication and share resources. Organizations are required to demonstrate that their security arrangements, policies and controls are sufficiently rigorous to allow interaction with the PSN and those connected to it
Reference Architecture	In information technology, a reference architecture defines an overarching framework which aids selection and implementation of standard ICT solutions which can co-operate within that framework
Scottish Local Government Digital Partnership	A partnership between 27 Scottish Local Authorities to work together to implement digital solutions across Councils.
Service Level Agreement	A contract between a service provider and customers which defines the level of service that the customer can expect from the provider. For ICT, typically this includes times to respond to problems, system availability and system performance.
Software as a Service (SaaS)	A way of delivering software applications over the Internet - as a service. Instead of installing and maintaining software on a local computer, you simply access it via the Internet

Term	Description
South Lanarkshire Council's Plan "Connect"	Formally defines the Council's commitment to improving the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire
WEB Facing Systems	Applications that are designed and delivered with the intent of access by individuals or organizations over the Internet
Wi-Fi (Wireless Networking)	A facility allowing computers, smartphones, or other devices to connect to the Internet or communicate with one another without wires within a particular area