NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

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DIGITAL AND IT STRATEGY

2024 - 27

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Document control

Title	Digital and IT Strategy 2024-27		
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Governance group	Policy and Strategy Committee		
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3.0	Linda Johnston	September 2023	Review and redevelopment carried out as the previous strategy had reached the end of its life and re-alignment was required with the direction set in the council's new Programme of Work for 2023 to 2028.

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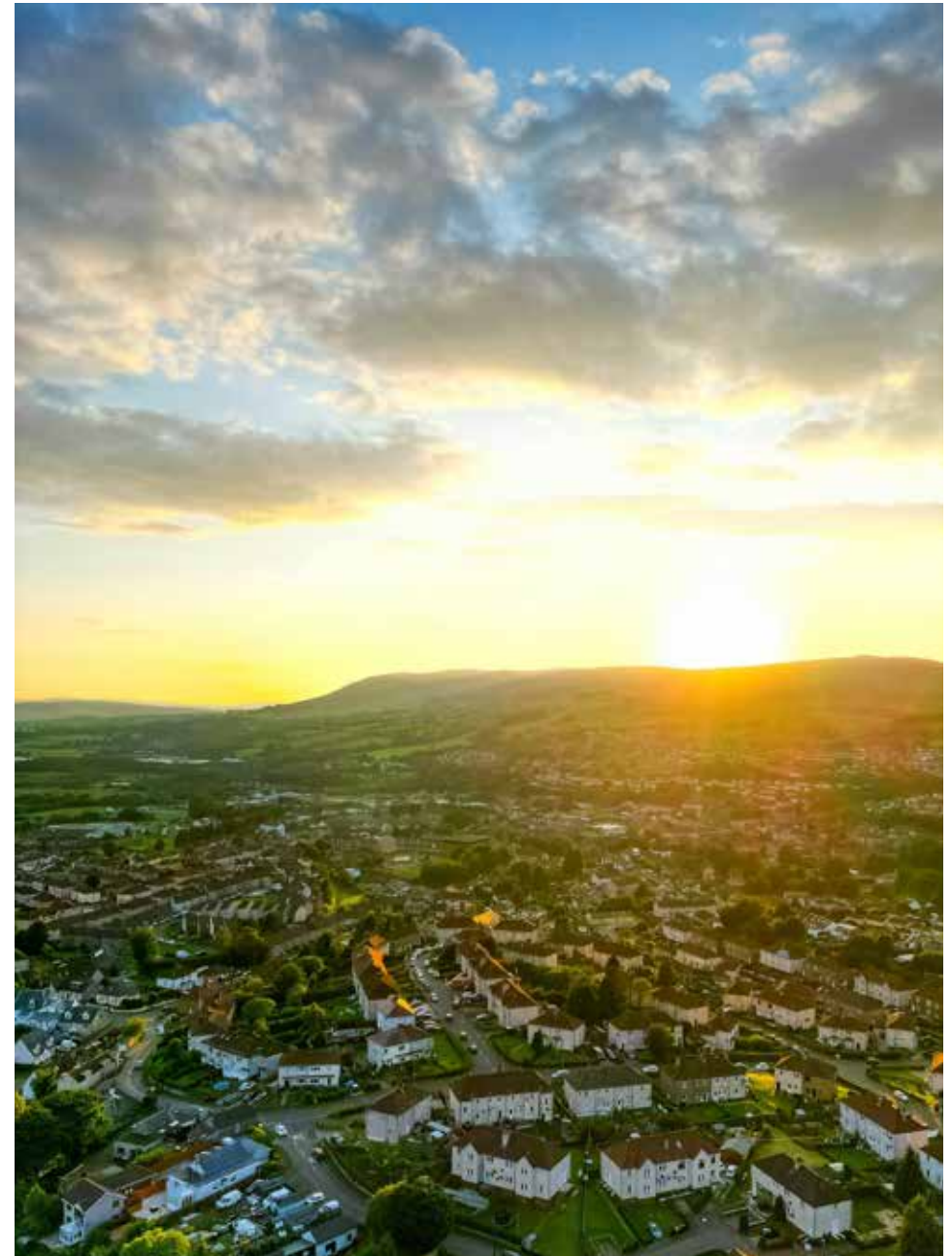|	
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Strategic alignment

The Plan for North Lanarkshire and Programme of Work. All 5 priorities and all 25 ambition statements within The Plan for North Lanarkshire. Strategic Policy Framework.

Review date

Review date	September 2026

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Introduction

Escalating the journey to a Digital North Lanarkshire

Technology can offer so many benefits for the people and communities in North Lanarkshire. It can support people to live independently in their own homes. It can enable seamless end-to-end processes to fulfil requests for service. It can mean vulnerable people get more joined up help when it really matters. It can provide a way to better use data to monitor and manage demand and improve the delivery of services to the public. It is key to connecting people and communities with place and improving their quality of life by providing access to new opportunities, new ways of working, learning, and doing business, and new ways to ensure quicker and easier access to essential care, supports, and services.

Increasing demand for care, supports, and services has arisen from significant demographical changes which are seeing more elderly people in the local community and more elderly people living alone and in their own home for longer. When combined with growing pressures from increasingly complex and intergenerational social and economic issues across local communities and constrained public spending, this brings a wide-ranging need for digital technology that brings people together to help more people in need across North Lanarkshire while at the same time helping the council to do more with less.

With public expectations ever-evolving and the reliance on technology ever growing and ever changing, the needs of people are changing too and there is more diversity in the makeup, language, and cultural norms of local communities. This means there is also a need for the council to adapt and find new ways to interact with people and communities. Strong foundations have been established to improve the connectivity and accessibility of North Lanarkshire as a place and enhance the ability of local people, businesses, and communities - as well as council staff - to gain the skills and confidence required to help them benefit from the opportunities of being digitally connected, but there's more can be done to make a difference and to make sure that no one is left behind.

The vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire, with investment targeted in digital and technological solutions that will be of most benefit to the people and communities of North Lanarkshire, aims to help realise inclusive growth and prosperity for all in line with the council's long-term ambition in The Plan for North Lanarkshire to make North Lanarkshire the place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit.

Against this backdrop the council needs to be clear about what it means to be digital - as this can mean different things to different people. It needs to be clear what the priorities are for action and where resources need to be targeted through a one council approach.

The Digital and IT Strategy for 2024 to 2027 therefore aims to provide a clear direction in this respect and ensure a common shared understanding of the journey that needs to be taken to achieve a Digital North Lanarkshire.

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Context

Digital trends and behaviours

The impact of the global pandemic demonstrated that the modern digital world is fast moving and forever changing with rapid advancements in technology and global connectivity accelerating the pace of transformation.

With so much change in a short space of time - new technology, new ways of engaging with others, new ways of learning, new ways of doing business, new ways of working - the pandemic accelerated the idea of being able to work, learn, or do business anywhere with a bank of tools readily available to enable and support this.

Trends in automation and AI (artificial intelligence) are growing and seen as a key tool to create new value for organisations, see truly transformed ways to operate and manage complex businesses, and deliver not only value through productivity and efficiency but deliver it fast. Industry thinking is also advancing considerably through the implications for a virtual workforce (i.e. bots) and virtual desktop assistants which are capable of quickly learning to auto complete a wide range of activities and take proactive steps to make workflow faster and smoother.
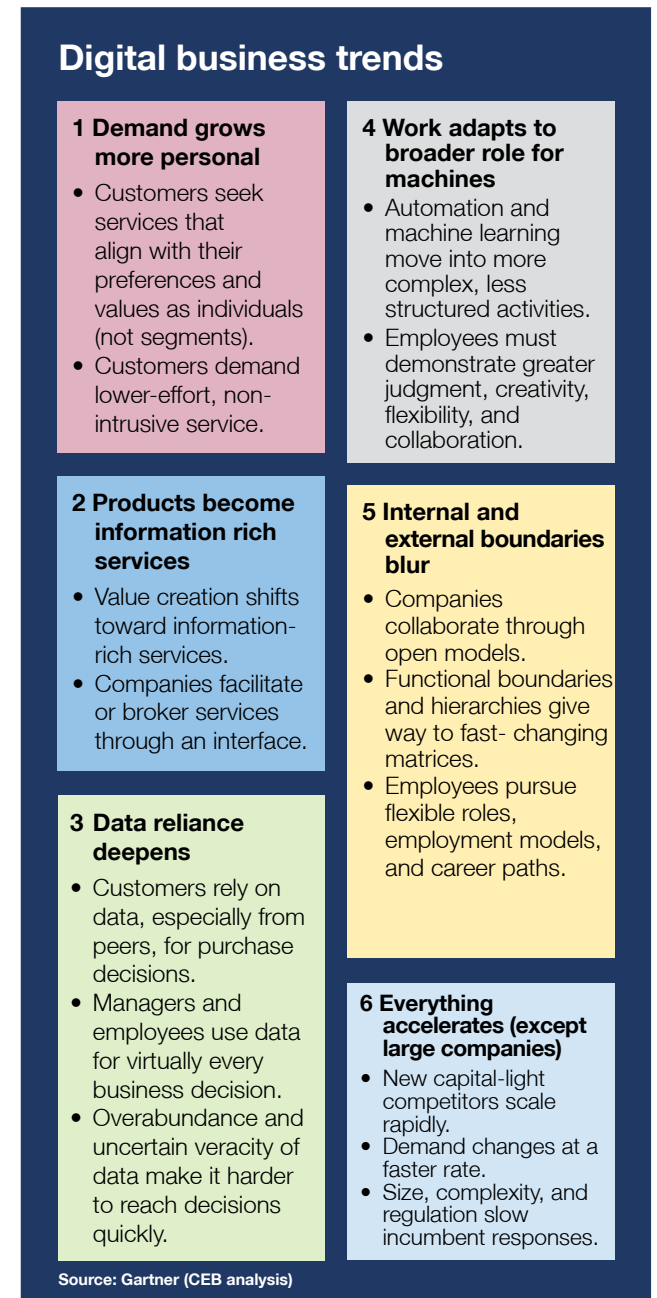
In such a dynamic digital and technological world though, it's easy to lose sight of the context and what really matters. As technology continues to play an ever-increasing role in the way in which service users, residents, businesses, and staff will Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit in North Lanarkshire both now and in the future, it is vital that the council - as a critical provider of public care, supports, and services - does all it can to keep pace with the development of technology while improving the user experience, focussing resources on those individuals in the most vulnerable situations and most in need, and reducing the cost of service delivery.

The context that matters therefore is not to see digital as a thing to add on to the day job, but more as an integral way of doing those everyday activities - that make a difference to people's lives - more efficiently and effectively. This means applying the most appropriate practices, processes, and technologies to respond to the needs of North Lanarkshire's people and communities while recognising their constantly changing and increasing expectations in an ever-evolving technological environment.

Research by Gartner has identified key digital business trends (as shown in Figure 1) that help to demonstrate the current context around the multifaceted impacts of what it means to be digital. This is accompanied by a PESTLE analysis (in Figure 2 on the next page) that provides added context in this respect.

Figure 1: Digital business trends

Digital business trends

1 Demand grows more personal
- Customers seek services that align with their preferences and values as individuals (not segments).
- Customers demand lower-effort, non-intrusive service.

2 Products become information rich services
- Value creation shifts toward information-rich services.
- Companies facilitate or broker services through an interface.

3 Data reliance deepens
- Customers rely on data, especially from peers, for purchase decisions.
- Managers and employees use data for virtually every business decision.
- Overabundance and uncertain veracity of data make it harder to reach decisions quickly.

4 Work adapts to broader role for machines
- Automation and machine learning move into more complex, less structured activities.
- Employees must demonstrate greater judgment, creativity, flexibility, and collaboration.

5 Internal and external boundaries blur
- Companies collaborate through open models.
- Functional boundaries and hierarchies give way to fast-changing matrices.
- Employees pursue flexible roles, employment models, and career paths.

6 Everything accelerates (except large companies)
- New capital-light competitors scale rapidly.
- Demand changes at a faster rate.
- Size, complexity, and regulation slow incumbent responses.

Source: Gartner (CEB analysis)

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Figure 2: PESTLE analysis

Governments worldwide are encouraging digital transformation to drive growth, but job displacements and security risks remain a concern.

Research shows that strong and stable political structures are key to supporting growth and development in digital transformations that attract investment.

More elderly people aged 75+ and changing cultures and languages in local communities will impact on future digital capabilities.

Greater need for no one to be digitally excluded.

Age, income level, consumer trends and attitudes, and lifestyles will continue to influence digital behaviours, and will be key to achieving informed digital transformation that meets local needs.

Work anywhere trends and online collaborations are becoming commonplace, but there remains a significant need for action that supports ongoing organisational and staff development.

Intellectual property, cybersecurity law, and digital rights are areas of growing legal focus.

Regulations surrounding data protection and data sharing impact on how local government and partner organisations approach digital solutions.

Political — **Social** — **Legal**

Economic — **Technological** — **Environmental**
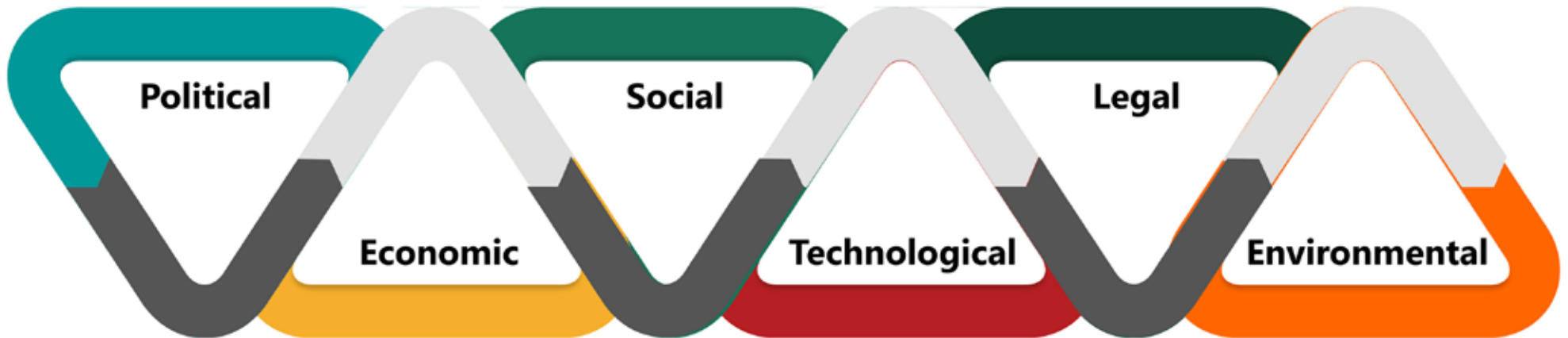
Economic value created by digital transformation will be immense and lead to rise of new industries and phasing out of some traditional sectors.

A thriving economy will spur increased investment in digital transformation initiatives by businesses.

Potential for increased income disparity between digitally-transformed businesses and those lagging behind.

Implementation of technological advances may be impacted by availability and timely delivery of supply chain materials, creating a need to explore alternative sources or practices.

Emergence of generative artificial intelligence technologies that can produce various types of content (including text, imagery, audio and synthetic data) will mean a workforce shift from manual, repetitive tasks.

Shift in thinking and more interdisciplinary roles needs to be seen as tools that lead to efficiency and the creation of new jobs (not a replacement).

Skills gaps may continue to cause difficulties in attracting and retaining talent.

How businesses operate will be revolutionised by the Internet of Things and 5G.

Rapid technological advancements brings increased vulnerability to cybersecurity threats and the need to prioritise digital security measures.

Digital technologies can help address climate change through better resource management.

E-waste and energy consumption from massive data centres present environmental challenges.

Increasing focus on sustainability could influence decision making, such as adopting more eco-friendly practices or developing products and services with a lower environmental impact.

Environmental regulations in relation to environmental protection, waste management, and energy consumption may impact on future decision making.

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Key facts and figures about North Lanarkshire

North Lanarkshire is Scotland's fourth largest local authority area by population. It is ideally situated in the heart of Scotland with first-rate connectivity to the rest of Scotland, the UK, and the world.

The council serves a population of 341,400 people and as the fifth most densely populated local authority area, North Lanarkshire is divided into 21 wards which are represented by 77 elected members.

The council employs 15,455 people (13,040 full-time equivalent). 77% of employees are female and 23% are male. 74% of employees live in North Lanarkshire.

The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to grow by 40% by 2043.

Those age 75 and over are projected to increase by 72% by 2043.

(+ 17,560 people).

15% of North Lanarkshire's population are income deprived (based on SIMD) - 50,897 people.

11% of the working age population are income deprived - 24,796 people.

1 in 4 children live in poverty in North Lanarkshire.

11,697 (19%) of children aged 0 -15 in North Lanarkshire live in relative low-income families.

Almost a third of adults with a disability don't use the internet.

Many disabled people recognise the benefits of technology in bringing them equality of access to work, services, and information - however many also experience significant difficulties in this respect.

94% of North Lanarkshire's population aged 16 and above use the internet.

Usage is 100% for those aged 16-34
99% for those aged 35-59
81% for those age 60+

There are 153,643 households in North Lanarkshire - 68% are owner occupied, 23% are local authority homes, 7% housing association, 2% vacant/other.

95% of households have internet access.

This varies from 99% in the 20% least deprived areas to 96% in the 20% most deprived areas.

26% of businesses said their connection was poor or very poor.

46% said their business was not well serviced for price or choice of provider.

67% reported current digital skills gaps within their organisations.

89% of adults who use the internet access it through a mobile phone, iPhone or Smartphone.

68% use a computer or laptop.
56% use a tablet/i-pad.
27% use digital/cable/satellite tv.

99% of properties receive superfast broadband (supporting download speeds of at least 30Mbit/s).

Fibre connectivity - which requires fibre optic cabling which supports higher speeds than the copper cables used in traditional networks - is currently sitting at 32% across North Lanarkshire.

92% use the internet to send/ receive e-mails

92% to search for information
85% for internet banking
82% to buy goods or services
75% to use social media
73% to make telephone/video calls
69% to learn something new
66% to play or download games, films or music
26% to look or apply for jobs

17% of people who are Asian, Pakistani or Indian stated they were not confident in using computers, tablets, or phones. This increased to 29% for Chinese people.

Language barriers for all groups was considered the biggest factors in accessing services both physically and online.

13.5m page views of the council's website in a year.

76% of these visits came from a mobile device.
20% from a desktop computer.
4% from a tablet.

Figure 3: Facts and figures about the people and communities of North Lanarkshire

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What it means to be digital in North Lanarkshire

Heather is a Housing Officer. She needs accurate and up to date information to be able to schedule inspections by technical officers and organise appointments for repairs.

The introduction of the Microsoft Dynamics 365 field services product provided Heather with real time visibility to help her arrange appointments that suited both tenants and officers.

As this product seamlessly links into the council's other digital products, Heather can have a single view of the customer's data at her fingertips, this reduces the need to access multiple systems to retrieve the information required and it enables a quick and efficient end-to-end service for the tenant.

Using data to improve service delivery.

Louise logs a request on the council's online system to report a fallen tree in her street, uploading a picture of the tree and location.

Louise receives an automated acknowledgement via e-mail that tells her that the request has been logged. She also gets - right there and then - an estimated timescale for resolution.

Louise's service request is automatically sent to a mobile working system which schedules the work. An officer receives information about the job on his phone, telling him where the fallen tree is.

The officer completes the work then updates the request on his phone to say the job has been completed. This triggers an automated e-mail update to Louise, who appreciates being kept fully informed and up to date at all stages of her request through to successful resolution.

A better end-to-end service.

John has a learning disability, poor mobility, and lives alone.

He was supported by a care provider for 24 hours a day with motion sensors in place to alert the carers when John requires personal care. The motion sensors were not suitable for John's needs, and he would often become distressed when they would activate without any need for a response.

The Assistive Technology team visited John at home and assessed John's needs. It was agreed that John would benefit from the installation of a specialised bed monitor system. This system allows alerts to be raised to the carers via a care assist pager.

The Assistive Technology team trained all care staff who support John on the use and functionality of the bed monitor and how to acknowledge an alert via the care assist pager.

Since the bed monitor has been in place it has given carers the support they need should an alert be raised and ensures that John's needs are being met.

Using technology to live independently.

Maya is the Digital Manager at a local manufacturing company. She is looking to introduce digital improvements to assist staff efficiency and improve customer service.

Maya applied to the council for grant funding for a digital transformation project, creating a new media conference room to allow her staff to easily communicate and connect with clients. She also plans to use the funds to introduce a new customer relationship management system providing staff with all client information in one location and enabling them to further develop relationships with their customers.

It is expected that these digital improvements will allow the creation of new highly skilled jobs, provide local apprenticeships, and improve organisational competitiveness within the industry.

Using technology to improve efficiencies in the business sector.

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Remy is looking for assistance with ordering a new bin. He is unsure who to contact and calls the council's one number listed on the website.

His call is answered via an automated service which asks Remy to say or select which department he wishes to speak to. He is automatically transferred to an officer in the waste department who is able to assist with his enquiry. This approach assists residents with reaching the right department in a quicker and easier way and enables officers to provide a more efficient response to residents.

In the future, artificial intelligence will be used to implement chat bot functionality. Residents will be able to submit their details and the nature of the enquiry. For simpler enquiries, the chat bot will be able to provide an automated response to the resident and complex cases will be forwarded to an officer for assistance.

Improving customer service through advances in technology.

Gary is a young person, aged 16, living with epilepsy. He has seizures during the night. To ensure his safety, Gary has had to sleep in his parents' bedroom.

The Assistive Technology team assessed Gary and his family's needs and as a result requested an Epi care device. The device allows parents to be alerted of seizure activity without having to be in the same room, thereby promoting Gary and his parents' privacy and dignity within the family home.

The Epi care equipment is funded by Health and Social Care in North Lanarkshire.

Using technology to improve quality of life and independent living.

Figure 4: What it means to be digital to people in North Lanarkshire

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Roadmap to delivery

Programme of Work 2028

The council's digital journey began in earnest in 2019 and the background to the evolution of the digital strategy is set out in Appendix 1. Although this journey has been significantly impacted by the pandemic, it has been kept on a constant path by the vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire set out in the previous versions of the Digital and IT Strategy. This has ensured the focus remains on the three pillars that aim to achieve Digital Communities, a Digital Economy, and a Digital Council.

Figure 5: 3 pillars of a Digital North Lanarkshire

Digital Communities

Enhance the coverage and reach of digital networks to all homes, eliminating areas of low connectivity, driving take up, tackling areas of digital exclusion, and creating markets that support affordability and give the people and businesses of North Lanarkshire improved choice and increased access to education, training, jobs, and opportunities.

Digital Economy

Stimulate economic growth by supporting an environment that improves digital connectivity and helps businesses to grow, transform and automate, improve digital skills, enhance productivity, foster innovation, and make more jobs and opportunities possible.

Digital Council

Provide accessible and inclusive services across a wide range of need and enhance technologies and online supports available to help communities to help themselves.

Achieve more agile, efficient, and productive ways of working through automation and self-serve processes that strip away routine transactional activities undertaken by staff to increase the capacity for them to provide more tailored support for people who need it most.

Within these three pillars a wide range of activities have been delivered since the first Digital and IT Strategy was established; Appendix 2 summarises the extent of North Lanarkshire's digital journey to date.

The council's new Programme of Work to 2028 - approved in March 2023 - set out plans for a Digital North Lanarkshire as one of seven priorities to increase the scale and pace of change and achieve coherence across all areas of work in order to turn the council's overall ambition of *inclusive growth and prosperity* for all in The Plan for North Lanarkshire into a reality.

Through these seven priorities (summarised in Figure 6 on page 11) the aim is to expand the reach of the impact and ensure council resources are expended on work that has the biggest impact and where it is needed most, while building evidence that the programmes, projects, and activities implemented are having a positive effect on the lives of all who live in North Lanarkshire both now and in the future.

The seven priorities are interdependent and cross cutting and the improved outcomes delivered within each will support and enhance all others as the programme becomes embedded; the priorities for a Digital North Lanarkshire and One Service underpin the other five priorities and will be key enablers to realising their success.

Figure 6 (on page 11) sets out the roadmap towards achieving a Digital North Lanarkshire in line with the seven Programme of Work priorities. This is supported by a Delivery Plan which is set out in Appendix 3.
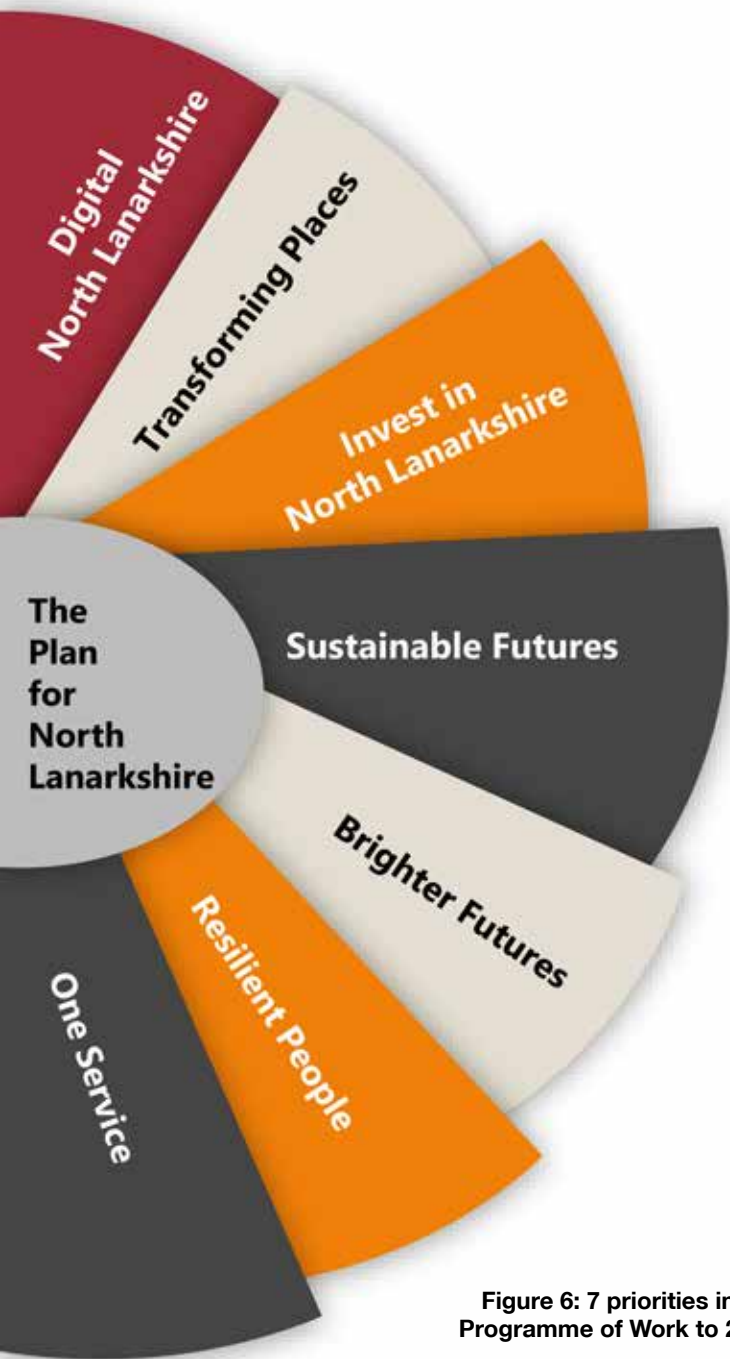
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Figure 6: 7 priorities in the Programme of Work to 2028

Digital North Lanarkshire

To develop a skilled digital workforce, promote an innovative, sustainable culture, and be the digital leader for a transformed North Lanarkshire. This programme will be a key enabler in delivering the other programme of work priorities and driving economic growth as well as transforming the education and abilities of learners of all ages.

For the Digital and IT Strategy this means embedding digital thinking into everyday delivery, embracing digital technology to do business significantly differently, and always considering a digital-first approach. This will require a focus on skills, culture design, and empowerment of the workforce.

Transforming Places

To plan and co-ordinate public and private sector investment to deliver transformational change across town centres and local communities at pace to attract more people to live, work, learn, invest, and visit within North Lanarkshire and to improve economic outcomes and the health and wellbeing of residents. This programme will involve attracting new (and sustaining existing) populations to create sustainable communities and a stable demographic spread that supports economic growth. This will involve enhancing place, greenspace, and housing and integrating services to improve health, wellbeing, and social outcomes, and accelerating investment for job creation. This will involve providing access, physically and digitally, to local and regional opportunities to support business development and survival as well as enable urban and rural families to thrive.

For the Digital and IT Strategy this means transforming the council's digital infrastructure, boosting school internet access and creating a free public Wi-Fi network across town centres and communities. The fundamental benefit is accelerating the availability of gigabit-capable fibre broadband (providing download speeds up to one gigabit-per-second) for communities and businesses to access. This area of activity will ensure significantly improved access to high-quality, reliable fibre connections, making a real and transformative difference to investment opportunities for businesses while also tackling digital exclusion.

Invest in North Lanarkshire

To support and accelerate investment in North Lanarkshire, and the council's own investment programme, through a collaborative, streamlined, advisory service to help grow and sustain the economy and transform communities. This programme will play a key role in facilitating employment opportunities and the associated infrastructure critical to supporting continued population growth and net inward migration.

For the Digital and IT Strategy the connectivity contract will support significant inward investment with households and businesses across North Lanarkshire having significantly improved access to gigabit-capable fibre broadband years earlier than planned through fundamental improvements in connectivity across the council area.

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Brighter Futures

To support and improve educational attainment, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, and volunteering and prepare young people and the wider community for the future through specialised education, voluntary work, and enterprise. This programme will give them the skills, knowledge, and confidence to successfully transition to further education, training, or employment. This will shape innovative employment pathways and maximise key industry growth sectors to boost economic growth. This will provide opportunities to develop real-world job skills that add value and pathways to specific industries and help to offer choice and inclusive access to jobs and training.

For the Digital and IT Strategy this means that digital will underpin work to educate children and young people differently by ensuring a focus on increasing digital and hybrid learning experiences in education, enhancing the use of digital methods and approaches as important aspect of life, and looking at what digital can do to make a brighter future for everyone in North Lanarkshire.

Sustainable Futures

To focus commitments to net zero carbon and climate resilience and the associated energy solutions and investments required to make it a reality. This programme will bring essential momentum to the council's commitment to achieve net zero by delivering an integrated approach to carbon reduction through more innovative energy generation and energy efficiency. This will be delivered along with a programme of climate adaptation, in partnership with local communities, to ensure local infrastructure and lifestyles are ready for the impacts already embedded due to climate change.

For the Digital and IT Strategy improvements to digital connectivity across council assets will help to control and monitor energy usage to drive continuous improvement that maximises cost savings. Digital and technology will help monitor potential solutions for sustainable futures as digital platforms can support climate change by enabling transactional activities that are made in more cost efficient and climate friendly ways. The abundance of data available to digital platforms can support activities to promote sustainable options and motivate climate friendly behaviours.

Resilient People

To deliver whole family support locally, when families need it, in a way that addresses the impacts of poverty and reduces inequality. This programme will provide an integrated approach, working with partners, to an earlier and more effective response to need. This includes promoting the strengths and skills of individuals and families, increasing economic activity, and providing practical and emotional support. This will integrate family support with the town and community hubs to maximise opportunities for community-led and strengths-based approaches and ensure families receive the right support when they ask for it and in their own community. This approach will break down referral pathways built around the needs of systems rather than people, which are at best confusing and at worst stigmatising.

For the Digital and IT Strategy this means enabling the digital infrastructure in community and town hubs to support the aim to deliver whole family support locally. Ensuring the right technology and supports are on hand locally will be critical for hubs to operate as a single entity that supports a much wider integrated community offer - with communities having more direct access to the services they need and staff closer to the communities they work in. This seeks to ensure everyone is given equality of opportunity and individuals are supported, encouraged, and cared for at each key stage of their life.

One Service

To ensure services are delivered, regardless of owner, in a streamlined, efficient, and supportive model. This programme will be a key enabler in delivering the other programme of work priorities and ensuring the council delivers services (regardless of structures or the alignment of functions) in line with the overall vision of *inclusive growth and prosperity* for all.

For the Digital and IT Strategy, the successful implementation of One Service will enable services to innovate, react quicker, increase efficiency, and promote a self-adapting service redesign culture. Increasing digital maturity and data-led decision making will ultimately support people at home, work, or at school through innovative solutions.

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Digital culture, leadership and knowledge

1. Create a mature and sustainable culture across the organisation to ensure that digitisation of council services provided to the public successfully transition them to achieve the outcomes specified within The Plan for North Lanarkshire.

2. Develop digital leaders to facilitate behavioural change required to enable service transformation within existing resources.

3. Develop and deploy a self-adapting redesign framework to accelerate digital business transformation of critical council functions.

4. Support development of a skilled workforce to foster consistent knowledge, improve digital adoption, and accelerate digital-first business capabilities.

Improved customer experience

5. Ensure a connected / integrated digital experience to facilitate users to transition to efficient digital and hub-based services and become empowered to be self-managing and digitally active.

6. Implement smart community hubs to improve access to omni-channel, digitally enabled services, and experiences.

7. Ensure accessible data to improve public reporting and transparency, streamline effort involved in request for information processes, and leverage business development opportunities.

Digital first operations

8. Ensure useful, secure, compliant, and digital first applications are available to support critical but streamlined service delivery.

9. Facilitate fibre-enabled innovation to maximise the full potential of Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in service delivery.

10. Ensure single source of data to provide insights and evidence that support decision making and service planning.

Performance optimisation

11. Develop an efficient digital and IT cost model to ensure scarce financial resources are aligned to vital enabling technologies.

12. Enhance security monitoring to maintain effective access and control over council data as the council delivers the anticipated increase in its digital footprint.
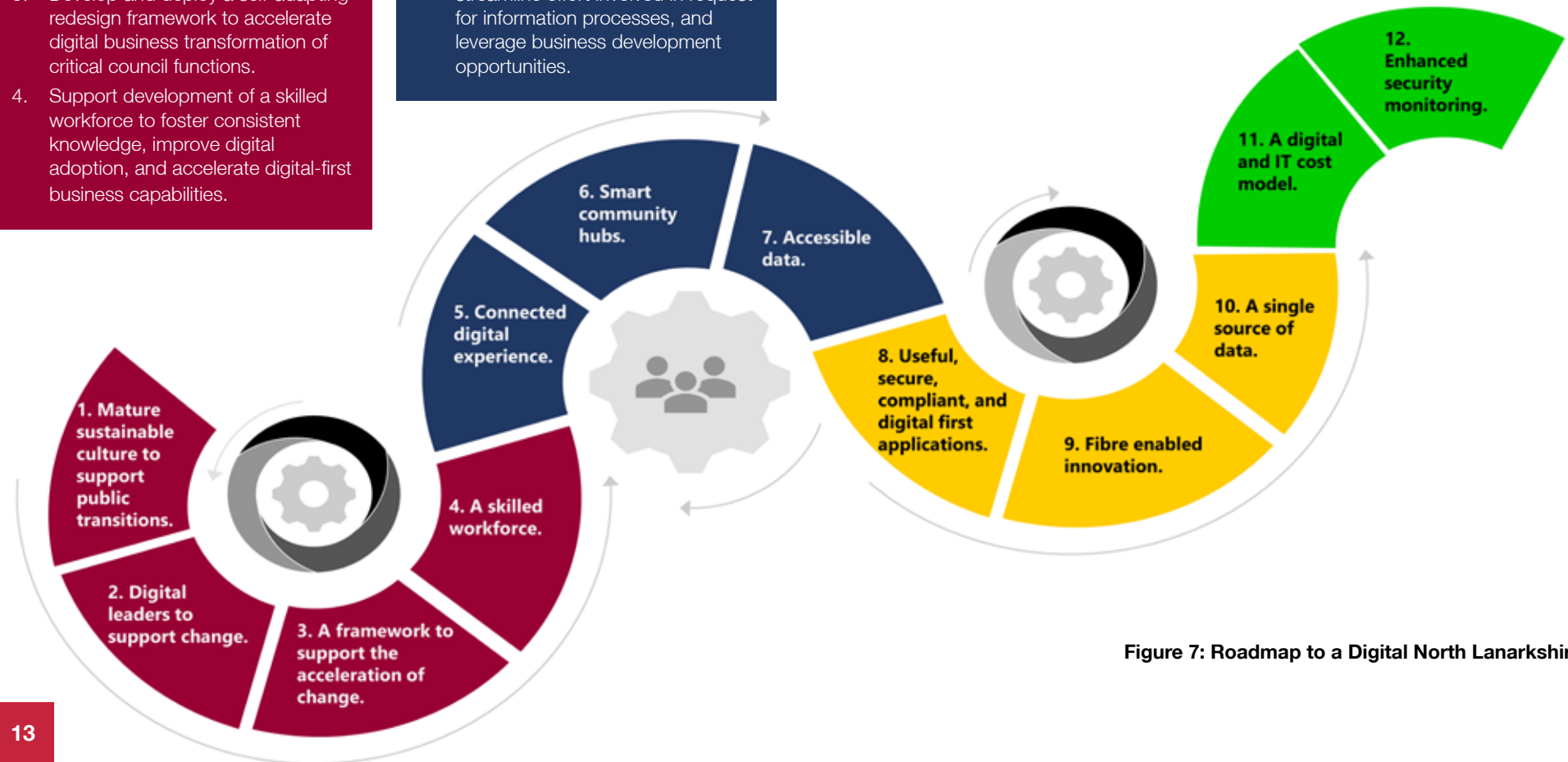

Figure 7: Roadmap to a Digital North Lanarkshire

Making a difference

Principles and standards

The achievements to date (summarised in Appendix 2) would not have been possible without the considerable effort of employees from across the organisation.

The extent of digital transformation that has been required to build the solid foundations now being experienced should not be underestimated. Establishing the foundations for North Lanarkshire's digital vision represented a significant shift in mindset and culture in terms of how the council conducts its business and a greater emphasis on the public interacting and using council services through digital methods. While this shift towards digital methods of working benefits people who interact with the council most, it also enables council employees to work in a more efficient and effective manner.

A wide range of different stakeholders and groups (see Figure 8) will continue to be impacted by digital transformational activity in striving to realise the vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire. As such, enabling the people and communities of North Lanarkshire to thrive in a digital world, while ensuring that no one is left behind, requires digital to be embedded at the centre of the way the council operates.

In practice this means that implementation of the Digital and IT Strategy is underpinned by six principles that mean people always come first regardless of the activity being delivered. The principles are set out in Figure 9 on the next page and what this means in practice is outlined in Appendix 4.

1. **Employees first**
2. **Inclusive**
3. **Digital first**
4. **Innovative**
5. **Flexible**
6. **Connected**

The principles for a Digital North Lanarkshire are aligned to the national Digital Scotland strategy, A Changing Nation: How Scotland will Thrive in a Digital World (2021), which sets out an approach that aims to ensure that Scotland will fulfil its potential and thrive in a constantly evolving digital world. It includes a national commitment to tackle digital exclusion by stating that "geography, background or ability should not be barriers to getting online and benefitting from digital technology".
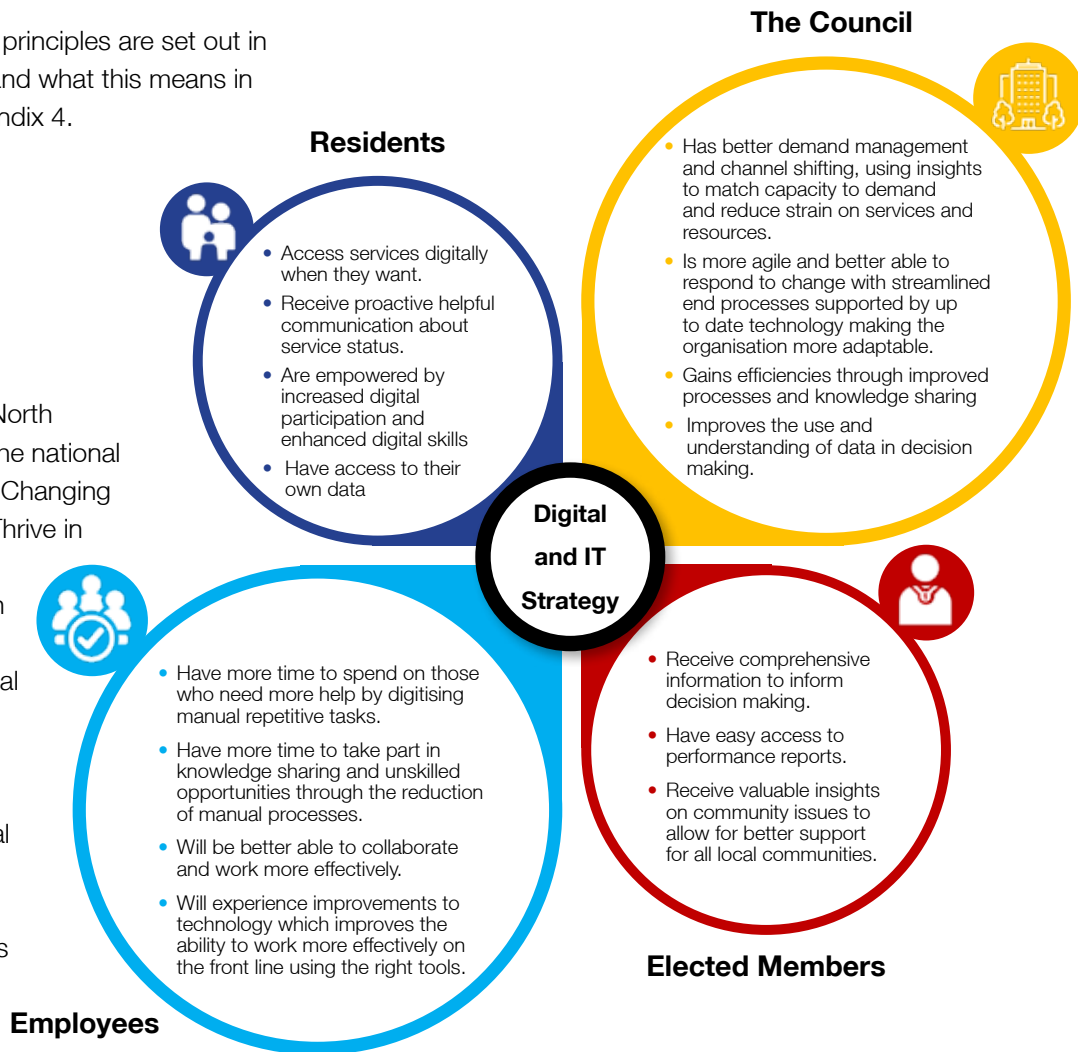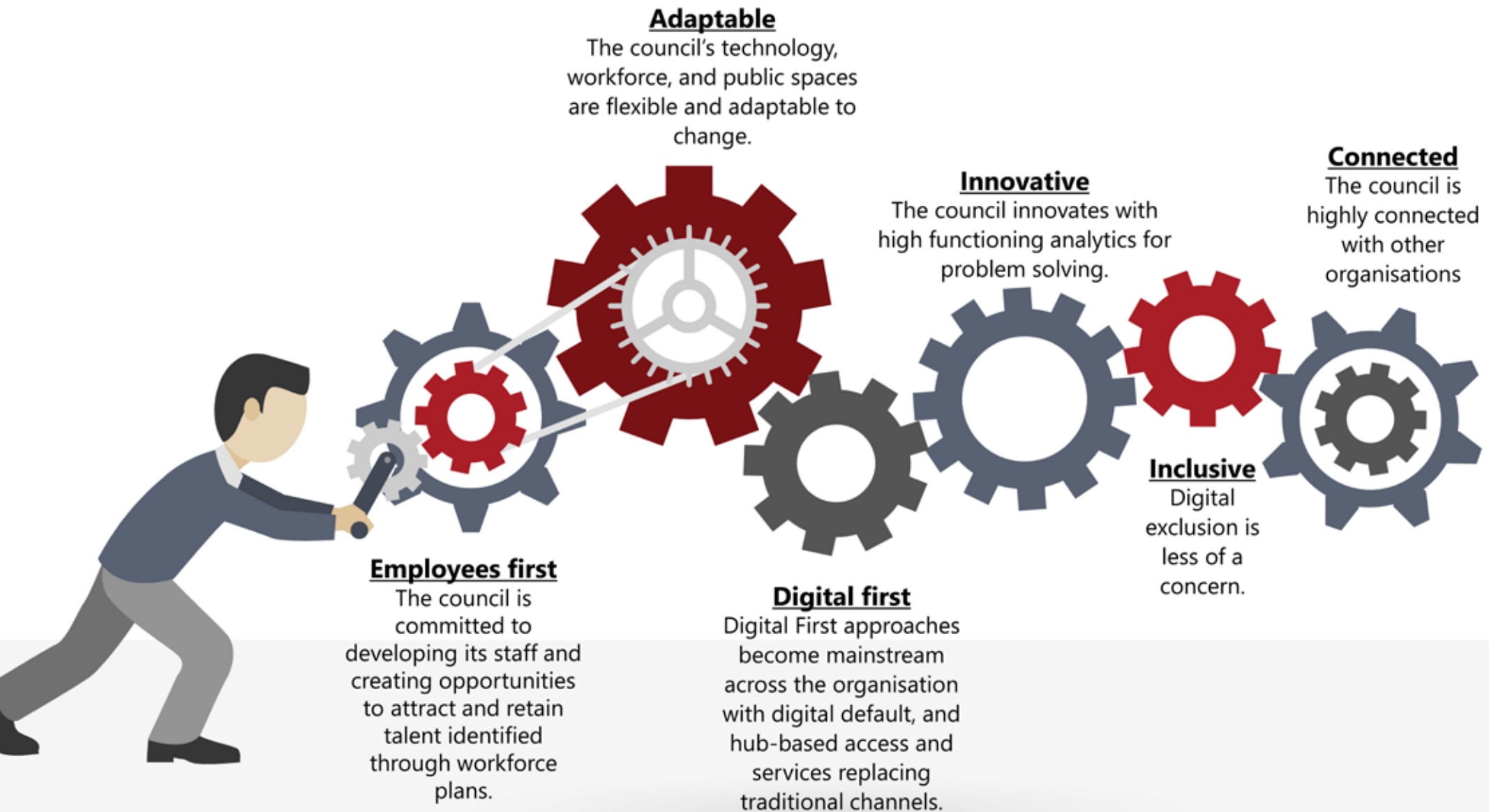

Residents
- Access services digitally when they want.
- Receive proactive helpful communication about service status.
- Are empowered by increased digital participation and enhanced digital skills
- Have access to their own data

The Council
- Has better demand management and channel shifting, using insights to match capacity to demand and reduce strain on services and resources.
- Is more agile and better able to respond to change with streamlined end processes supported by up to date technology making the organisation more adaptable.
- Gains efficiencies through improved processes and knowledge sharing
- Improves the use and understanding of data in decision making.

Digital and IT Strategy

Employees
- Have more time to spend on those who need more help by digitising manual repetitive tasks.
- Have more time to take part in knowledge sharing and unskilled opportunities through the reduction of manual processes.
- Will be better able to collaborate and work more effectively.
- Will experience improvements to technology which improves the ability to work more effectively on the front line using the right tools.

Elected Members
- Receive comprehensive information to inform decision making.
- Have easy access to performance reports.
- Receive valuable insights on community issues to allow for better support for all local communities.

Figure 8: Stakeholders

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Adaptable
The council's technology, workforce, and public spaces are flexible and adaptable to change.

Innovative
The council innovates with high functioning analytics for problem solving.

Connected
The council is highly connected with other organisations

Inclusive
Digital exclusion is less of a concern.

Employees first
The council is committed to developing its staff and creating opportunities to attract and retain talent identified through workforce plans.

Digital first
Digital First approaches become mainstream across the organisation with digital default, and hub-based access and services replacing traditional channels.

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Approach to channel shifting

A key aspect to realising a Digital North Lanarkshire is to enable more streamlined service delivery through a broader set of channels compared to traditional delivery models.

This follows the desire to see new services seamlessly blend traditional and digital channels and meet residents where they are to match their channel preferences and expectations.

As such, an approach to channel shifting in in place to support the service redesign processes (see figure 10 below).

Digital

Online Web
- Primary contact channel, fully transactional and mobile - tailored to customer needs
- Focussed on enabling any time access to information, transactions and certain assessments
- Enabling community collaboration and engagement with council and partner organisations

Web Chat
- Offers instant interaction with customers to help build relationships and quickly answer questions
- Provide quick and effective solutions, redirecting traffic from traditional channels
- Actively signpost customers to self-service to service their needs

Social Media
- Useful for broadcast messaging and signposting of new services or routes to information
- Listening mechanism to track and monitor customer sentiment and identify community trends
- Can be used for some basic self-service interaction through automated bots

Traditional

Phone
- A rationalised numbering strategy to focus customer demand to as few contact points as possible
- Automated services for routing calls and the provision of self-service options where feasible
- Used as a key channel where online self-service is not feasible or cannot satisfy a customer need

E-mail
- An expensive channel that is phased out in favour of self-service, web forms and social media
- Automated outbound emails are used to confirm actions, status updates and in certain cases validate and share information with customers

Face to Face
- Needs and interventions based service delivery cases where other channels are not appropriate
- Appointment based by default with provisions to escalate crisis cases
- Used as a channel to drive channel shift through face-to-face clinics and support sessions

Paper Mail
- Processes are paperless by default unless there is a legal obligation
- Where paper is needed it is managed centrally and relevant data and content maintained electronically to allow generation of paper copies without the need to manage and store paper

Figure 10: Approach to channel shifting

Being digital is everyone's business

By following the well-established principles and standards in place, investment targeted in digital and technological solutions that will be of most benefit to the people and communities of North Lanarkshire should be focused on making a difference. What it means for the person - who is in receipt of (or requires access to) the care, supports, or services they need - should be at the centre of any digital transformation activity. Practical examples of what it means to be digital to people in North Lanarkshire are set out in Figure 4 on pages 8 and 9.

To achieve this requires the council to move from doing digital to being digital and being digital is everyone's business. This means that employees across the organisation have a role to play in embedding digital at the centre of the way they and the council operates. It also requires a wide range of solutions to develop and control the technology to be deployed along with its usage and interaction with hardware and software.

Technology is central to the delivery of everyday operational service functions and the management and development of solutions required to support council services in progressing transformational activities which facilitate delivery of the Programme of Work to 2028. All individuals, teams, and functions across the council are therefore instrumental in the provision of solutions that help to realise the digital vision; this is depicted in Figure 11 on page 18.

Strathclyde Country Park

Field services

As the town and community hub model progresses field services will consolidate technological support across all services and devices regardless of whether these are from the corporate or school estate.

The current field service function provides support and assistance to end user incidents and requests by travelling from place to place from a central location. In order to make a difference, field service support will be designed around the council's new operating model as such to present an efficient service to end users, cognisant of the needs of the town and community hubs, the staff within them, and the services that need to be delivered.

The design will focus on a North/South distribution of support agents at key cluster locations, organised to offer a higher rate of first-time fix. The new model will allow for an improved logistical response to on-site issues with team skills developed to provide support to a wider range of incidents and requests.

Design and development

These functions will:

- Support business change activities across the organisation to radically change processes to achieve dramatic improvements in productivity, cycle times, quality, and employee and service user satisfaction, recognising that digital transformation is a means to a clearly defined end, it's not the end in itself.

- Manage the support and development of the council's application environments that facilitate process digitisation, automation, service user interaction and authentication, customer records management, integration, and spatial technologies.

- Provide information security assurance, assessment, guidance, threat management, and security incident response.

- Ensure proactive workplace IT service management and operational change and effective service contract and relationship management.

Everyone

Will ensure the council remains safe and legal by reducing risk and managing digital information and activity securely.

Everyone understands that digital activity has important data and security considerations and key processes and protocols that must be followed.

All employees

Communicate, collaborate, and share online.
Employees understand that communicating digitally will often be the most effective and efficient way to receive and send information and updates.

Handle files and content and find, manage, and store digital information.
Employees understand that information must be stored in a structured format and be retrievable when required.

Solve problems by finding solutions to problems using digital tools and online services.
Employees understand that digital solutions can make customers and colleagues lives easier, and lead to better decision-making.

Transact in an effective way by managing tasks and actions online.
Employees understand that their job will require them to access and update information via a range of digital platforms.

Infrastructure

These functions will:

- Manage development of the digital workplace environment supporting collaboration, compliance, usability, and facilitating self-development and peer support in these technologies.

- Manage and develop an end user device estate and catalogue of devices that support service needs, is responsive to developing use cases, is cognisant of market conditions, and maintains asset management and secures data assets.

- Manage, optimise and develop the council host environment, delivering computer and storage capacity across resilient, secure environments that host core applications and data assets.

- Manage and develop connectivity solutions supporting multiple use cases, applying appropriate security and availability options.

- Manage and develop the security perimeters and practices between and across hosted and connectivity environments that allow service users and service areas to interact and consume hosted and internet services.

Figure 11: Being digital is everyone's business.

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Governance and risk

Assurances to support delivery of the vision to achieve a Digital North Lanarkshire

Implementation of the Digital and IT Strategy is done so in line with the council's governance arrangements to ensure well informed decision making and clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities and accountabilities.

From an operational delivery perspective, there are four key aspects which support the practice of good governance in the drive to achieve a Digital North Lanarkshire:

- Risk management.

- Enterprise architecture governance group.

- Enterprise architecture principles.

- Supporting frameworks, plans, and sub-policies.

Ensuring an ongoing commitment to reduce the carbon's footprint is also a key requisite for consideration in all areas of work.

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Arrangements in place to **manage risk** focus on four corporate risks that support the strategic management and delivery of the Digital and IT Strategy. These are subject to regular formal review by relevant senior management in line with the review frequency set out in the councils Risk Management Strategy. Periodic reviews are also undertaken by the Business and Digital Management Team, the Corporate Management Team, and the Audit and Scrutiny Panel in line with their respective governance roles.

(1) Information security and information governance There is a risk that information, in whatever format, is not managed securely or that information governance across the council and its arm's length external organisations is ineffective.

(2) ICT operational capacity There is a risk that ICT operations may not have the capacity/capability to support the council and its partners in delivering services, meeting strategic objectives, ensuring secure operations, and facilitating change.

(3) Digital and IT strategy There is a risk that technology and its replacement (and deployment of the replacement) cannot sufficiently support the council in delivering the long-term vision and ambitions (including the digital ambition) set out within The Plan for North Lanarkshire and Programme of Work.

(4) Digital adoption There is a risk that despite very considerable new digital technology across the council, the organisation fails to create the right conditions for successful digital adoption across employees and service users.

Implementation of the Enterprise Architecture principles is governed by the **Enterprise Architecture Governance Group** (EAGG) to ensure a holistic and co-ordinated organisation wide approach to design is maintained and best value is achieved.

Specifically, the role of EAGG is to:

- Provide strategic oversight and organisation wide governance for all digital and IT related projects, services, solutions and operations within the council to ensure such are fit for purpose and comply with all relevant standards, specifications, and principles.
- Ensure that a cohesive, intergrated, and data driven approach to enterprise wide architecture is undertaken.
- Ensure that a holistic full lifecycle view of solutions is considered.
- Ensure the council's enterprise architecture principles are considered and addressed for new proposals, and remain relevant.

With a wide range of technology assets across the council, it is important that all digital transformation activities deliver value for money service provision and build on existing investments when solutions are procured from a diverse range of suppliers. As such, any technological solutions implemented must comply with a set of **Enterprise Architecture principles (see Appendix 6).**

The Enterprise Architecture principles aim to:

- Provide a consistent set of guidelines against which any proposal or concept must reference and adhere to.
- Support evidence-based information and technology decision making.
- Provide a foundation for both business anf IT architectures, standards, and development policies.
- Aid in the definition of functional requirements, solution concept design and subsequent selection of products, services, and suppliers and in definition of service management planning.

A range of operational frameworks, plans, and sub-policies support the implementation of the Digital and IT Strategy. These are listed below and summarised in Appendix 5:

- Data Protection Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Records and Information Management Policy
- Payment Card Industry Data Security Policy
- Records Management Plan
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy

These frameworks, plans, and sub-policies play a critical role in supporting the governance of day-to-day activities that are essential to deliver the vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire. They also help ensure the integration of related activities and common factors in order to align resources and maximise impact.

These documents are subject to a formal review process (with reporting to the relevant committee) to ensure they remain fully reflective of expected good practice and current legislative requirements and fit for purpose and aligned to the long-term vision of the council.

Figure 12: Governance and risk

Carbon commitment
Programmes of work, projects, and activities to realise the vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire are delivered in line with the council's carbon commitment set out in the Climate Plan (Action on Climate Together).

Providing digital services that offer online, anytime access to services will have a positive environmental impact across several important areas such as minimising waste and recycling, thanks to the limited need for paper forms.

The development of a digital workforce will reduce the council's carbon footprint by saving energy and reducing emissions, because of decreased work-related travel and asset rationalisation programme.

Work with suppliers will ensure green energy is used in the provision of services to the council including where cloud solutions are being provided to the council. Purchasing will be prioritised on equipment with minimum energy ratings and minimum recycling content and energy efficient software.

Work with the local business community to improve their adoption of digital technologies will also have a positive environmental impact across North Lanarkshire.

Conclusion

Systematic and consistent deployment

For the new Digital and IT Strategy for 2024 to 2027 to successfully realise the vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire, its deployment across the organisation is critical to ensure that it is systematically deployed and implemented in all relevant areas of the council, it is implemented to its full potential, and it is understood and accepted by all stakeholders.

Communication, enabling transformation within existing resources, and enhancing skills are key to the successful deployment of the new Strategy.

As such, these are key areas for delivery during 2024/25 through the supporting Digital North Lanarkshire Programme of Work.

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Appendices 1-6

Appendix 1: The evolution of North Lanarkshire's digital strategy

2017

The vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire was established and senior managers from all services pledged to "Participate and support DigitalNL".

2018

The original Design Blueprint for Digital Public Services was developed to detail the extent of digital transformation on the range of different stakeholders and groups who would be impacted by the transformational activity.

A set of principles were established to convey a set of clear guidelines that required to be followed in order to maintain the design integrity and strategic alignment of new online services with the council's long-term ambition.

2019

The outline Business Case was approved for DigitalNL linking the ambition in The Plan for North Lanarkshire with the ambition for digital transformation.

The first Digital and IT Strategy was developed, to bring together many programmes of work, policies, and plans essential for a one council approach to delivering a DigitalNL.

Three key themes were established for a Digital North Lanarkshire - this focused on achieving Digital Communities, a Digital Economy, and a Digital Council.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire was established as one plan for one place with a place-based ambition to achieve *inclusive growth and prosperity for all*.

North Lanarkshire was one of five councils selected to be a fieldwork site for the national performance review on digital progress in local government undertaken by Audit Scotland - key from this was the recognition that the DigitalNL vision was already wider than the scope of the national review.

2020

The full Business Case for DigitalNL was approved linking the technical detail with a comprehensive delivery plan that saw 17 work packages and 62 transformational activities mobilised.

From March 2020, the pandemic saw the acceleration of many planned initiatives (delivered at scale in a matter of days or weeks) and the development of many new agile innovations as employees, service users, suppliers, businesses, and communities were forced swiftly into digital channels and new ways of working and engaging.

The Digital and IT Strategy was refreshed to reflect the impact of the pandemic and the fast-paced transformation and digitisation environment within which the council was now operating.

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Appendix 1: (continued)

2021

The Framework Agreement was awarded to Commsworld to transform the area's digital infrastructure and ensure homes across North Lanarkshire have access to gigabit capable broadband. This includes boosting school internet access, creating a free public WiFi network across town centres and communities, and enhancing the coverage and reach of gigabit-capable fibre networks to businesses, private and council-owned social housing, and residential households.

Service provision was realigned following the insourcing of culture, sport, and leisure services.

The national Digital Scotland strategy was published - this aligned to the digital themes already in place in North Lanarkshire for Digital Communities, Digital Economy, and a Digital Council.

The commitment to DigitalNL was reiterated in a council wide development session involving 160 senior and operational managers.

A detailed design to live session - attended by over 130 line managers, team leaders, and employees - set out each of the steps in the service redesign process to support employees in understanding their role in digital transformation and how they are driving change.

2022

Following the end of the Agilisys contract and ensuing significantly reduced resource, the Year 4 Roadmap set out the direction for DigitalNL for 2022/23.

Services previously outsourced to Wipro (supplier of the ICT service delivery contract) were insourced and resources incorporated within Technology Solutions.

The schools' technician service was also integrated within the wider business and digital operating environment.

The Digital and IT Strategy was refreshed to reflect the changes to the business and digital operating environment and to reiterate the overarching digital vision for North Lanarkshire. It set out the programmes of work that would be instrumental in securing not just the digital vision, but in enabling and supporting delivery of the council's large-scale place-based investment programmes. Defining the key programmes of work in this way aimed to strengthen the digital alignment with the council's long-term vision to better reflect the scale and complexities of the DigitalNL programme and the interdependencies across all of the programmes of work.

2023

The council's new Programme of Work for 2023 to 2028 set out plans for a Digital North Lanarkshire as one of seven priorities to increase the scale and pace of change and achieve coherence across all areas of work in order to make the vision in The Plan for North Lanarkshire a reality.

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Appendix 2: Digital Council

2020

Mass migration of over 4,825 users (employees and Elected Members) was completed to M365 with its associated components, Teams, OneDrive, SharePoint, Yammer, and modern office productivity tools.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) developments have continued to improve productivity in tasks that are high volume, repetitive, and manually intensive. Successes have included saving 25 minutes in processing time for each community care grant application on the Pecos system which equates to 650 per month and 1.6 FTE.

Establishment of a community benefit monitoring and reporting framework which enabled the delivery of outcomes and benefits of approximately £187,850 from the council's digital business partners.

Implementation of a corporate Data and Information Strategic Roadmap to define the future approach to driving data management and storage to support strategic and evidence based decision making.

The removal of time consuming low value activities has been achieved through the completion of digital sprints, providing automated processes in terms of reporting an issue in terms of household waste issue (10 options), missed bin pullouts, communal bins, special uplifts, recycling centres.

Digital Diplomas and digital related Graduate Apprenticeship programmes now available for all staff.

2021

Implementation of the technological solutions required to support delivery of the council's future Hybrid workplace model using community based Hubs, tested through a proof of concept in four locations.

Completion of the proof of concept for dynamic scheduling opportunities to create digital self-serve processes for tracking and rescheduling appointments, with the pilot for adult health and social care and the full work package for housing repairs now complete.

Digital sprints continued to deliver improved ways of working through automated processes and by reducing manual handling with processes in place in respect of booking a van or trailer into a recycling centre, requesting an additional bin collection, requesting a pull-out service, and requesting a simplified collection service. In addition, development work was undertaken to support implementation of Covid business grants for the discretionary fund, taxi operators, and taxi drivers.

2022

Year 4 DigitalNL roadmap delivered on 95% of objectives set with the remaining 5% being moved to Year 5 (notwithstanding the end of the system integration contract and the significantly less resources available for technology development).

17 improvements have been progressed since the original Digital Maturity Assessment in 2019 which suggested the council had low maturity with a placing of between 1 and 2 on the scale of maturity. The 17 improvements had a positive impact on a second Digital Maturity Assessment (in March 2023) which shows progress to a placing of 3 on the maturity scale.

Three Focus Groups took place in the autumn of 2022, one targeting 16-24 year olds and two with third tier managers - these gathered evidence of the level of digital skills and the gaps in this respect to inform areas for improvement and establish the hooks that users can best relate to. This aims to encourage peers to become more digitally engaged moving forward.

Digital sprints continued to deliver improved ways of working through automated processes and by reducing manual handling with processes in place to allow local people to apply for a business waste collection (including online payment), report an issue with debris or an obstruction, as well as trees, street cleaning, grass, graffiti, overgrown shrubs / bushes or to request the removal of broken glass or a syringe.

One of the key modern office tools that is now operational is the Business Intelligence Hub which is facilitating a significant move away from data collection to data management and analysis that adds value and supports decision making and the identification of areas for improvement. The development of the Business Intelligence Hub aligns closely to the continued development of the Data Custodian model across the organisation and the recently agreed Data Quality Framework which is currently being rolled out.

2023

Azure adoption and transition of multiple line of business systems to that platform. This involved the set up of a Microsoft Azure cloud platform and the move of 27 line of business systems that were previously hosted in council data centres. This allows the council technical teams to optimise support and maintenance costs for hosted systems by only using computing resources required for the systems to operate effectively.

Digital sprints continued to deliver improved ways of working through automated processes and by reducing manual handling with online services in place in respect of housing field services repairs scheduling, business waste, ordering and paying for a grey/recycling/food bin, booking and paying for a special uplift, cancelling special uplifts online with automatic routing to the refunds team, rents online, debt advice, and waste special uplifts.

Appendix 2: Digital Communities

2020

- The council's new website (built on the content management system software, Drupal) went live in November 2020 following an extensive build and review process to ensure consistency in terms of format, tone of voice, and the ease of readers understanding the content.

- Having completed the service redesign process, waste solutions was the first service area to go live on the Customer Services Hub in November 2020, with report it online forms and telephone enquiries stood up initially, followed by additional services such as requesting a special uplift.

- Intended to provide a modern and fully functional digital platform with opportunities for service users, residents, and businesses to self-serve digitally, the number of new MyAccounts set up to allow access to the Customer Services Hub (and online digital services in North Lanarkshire and across Scotland) increased by 28,000 users since the launch of the Hub in November 2020, to over 93,000 accounts.

- The Digital School was established to promote and enable digital learning across North Lanarkshire by supporting schools and families on how to use the digital tools available and establishing a digital pedagogy that engages learners and delivers a high-quality learning experience for all. The use of digital technology in this way aims to enrich learning and teaching, raise levels of attainment, and close the attainment gap.

- From Connecting Scotland Grant funding, 6,506 digital devices were issued to children and young people, and 2,024 internet connectivity solutions were provided to support digital learning and tackle digital exclusion. Children and young people in priority groups - such as those entitled to free school meals, and those working with the Virtual School (for care experienced young people) and the Pathways Programme - have all been issued with a device.

2021

- A Virtual Classroom was launched in January 2021 to provide an online and interactive platform for young people; this includes learning areas such as literacy, numeracy, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), and health and wellbeing. By March 2021 the virtual classroom had 593,446 users.

- The digital skills of education staff were improved through a range of bespoke training programmes. 2,366 staff attended 8 sessions early in 2021 and 896 attended at a further 33 follow-on sessions.

- The first 5G-enabled immersive classroom in Scotland went live at Muirfield Community Centre in Cumbernauld in February 2021. This saw a room transformed into an exciting and engaging learning environment to give children, young people, and wider community users a 360-degree digital experience. Users experience what it's like to be in outer space, under the ocean, on a World War 1 battlefield, or even on top of Everest thanks to this new learning initiative which is the first of its kind in the UK.

- Development of the Digital Consortium offer continued for young people within the senior phase wishing to do Advanced Highers and Highers, which have a smaller uptake. There are now 3 digital classrooms which support the in-school and remote learner experiences.

- A digital learning platform was established for members of the nine Community Boards.

- Working in collaboration with digital transformation partners, Agilisys and Avado, Data Analytics training modules were developed to offer local businesses and third sector organisations the chance to take part in a suite of six bite size training modules. This helped them to more effectively manage and utilise data in order to drive better decision-making and improve the products or services they provide to customers.

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Appendix 2: Digital Communities (continued)

2022

- Expert digital help was made available for local businesses through the establishment of 2 lots within a wider business support framework. This provided 1 to 3 days of dedicated consultancy support. The Digital Development Lot helped to build skills and capabilities to increase digital knowledge and help businesses reach their goals. The Marketing and Digital Marketing Lot provided support to undertake market research and formulate a plan to support the business in promoting and selling their products and/or services with a view to increasing sales.

- Digital grant funding provided substantial financial support to assist businesses with the adoption and integration of digital technologies and e-commerce, and digital skills training.

- The national Digital Boost programme was delivered and through this programme businesses can access free webinars and grants as well as support from a digital consultant. Online advice and tips are also available to help their business and platforms do more with digital.

- Two Intergenerational digital skills courses were delivered on the use of iPads - in Drummond Drive Retirement Complex with Thornlie Primary and at James Dempsey Gardens Retirement Complex with Greenhill Primary - this increased the digital abilities of the tenants and improved pupils' confidence and social skills.

- Changes have improved and increased access to and use of public access computer resources by library members and members of the public across North Lanarkshire. A flexible community digital learning hub has been created on the first floor of Motherwell Library.

2023

- Commsworld are in place and building a full fibre backbone that traverses all North Lanarkshire's towns and many villages.

- Three possible locations have been identified as suitable locations for Immersive Experience Rooms. The Proof of Concept at Muirfield was further developed in its use and accessibility to a range of establishments and third parties. Procurement is now complete, and a supplier is ready to commence install.

- A new technical team has been established to support the health and social care workforce in the use of enhanced technology solutions and assessment and planning with regards to safe-tech solutions.

- The Digital sub-group continues to meet monthly with the Chair and Vice Chair having been voted in for another year. Latest consultations have included work with Commsworld as part of the SmartNL programme to shape future what community benefits will look like for local communities.

- The virtual classroom - which contains the new Tech Tuesday's resources and materials to support children and young people learning remotely as well as staff in school - has achieved 1 million visits.

- The Digital consortium is continuing to be developed by the Digital School and education establishments. There are now 9 digital classrooms across the estate.

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Appendix 2: Digital Economy

2020

- A cross council multi-disciplined Digital Skills and Inclusion Group was established to support economic recovery and growth and ensure that all the work streams related to digital skills and inclusion were fully integrated.

- A Digital Skills and Connectivity Survey was undertaken of local businesses to establish a baseline for digital skills and identify current and future digital skills requirements and skills shortages. Around two third of respondents reported current digital skills gaps within their organisations.

- Through grant funding, Business Gateway, Digital Boost, expert help, and signposting to partner organisations, a range of digital business support was available and promoted to local businesses via the council and partners organisations. This enabled the council to support e-commerce and the introduction of new digital technologies as drivers of business growth and economic recovery.

2021

- The council, in partnership with New College Lanarkshire and the University of Strathclyde launched a Smart Hub at the Motherwell Campus of New College Lanarkshire. The Hub is home to a robotics and automation training facility and provides dedicated space for manufacturing Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to meet, learn, and access business support and academic expertise. The Hub also works with local schools to raise awareness and engage pupils with manufacturing and give them the opportunity to develop their skills by using the technologies within the Hub.

2022

- Work continued to establish a NL Digital Skills Academy to reach, inspire and support young people and adults seeking employment - as well as potential career changers and returners to the labour market - to take their first steps to exploring a career in a digital or creative role.

- Over 2022 and 2023, through the community benefits within the Commsworld contract a range of digital support has been delivered to support young people, businesses and communities. The highlights of this include:
  - 6 Modern Apprentices recruited via the council/Commsworld shared apprenticeship model.
  - Delivery of SmartSTEM programme across North Lanarkshire schools including 1 primary school flagship event (200 attendees), 1 secondary school flagship event (200 attendees), and delivery of 20 individual primary school workshops to 1,418 pupils.
  - Delivery of a flagship business event (Accelerate North Lanarkshire) attended by 196 people in Motherwell Concert Hall and Theatre.

  - Development of an interactive, online map highlighting organisations and venues delivering community based digital services and resources across North Lanarkshire.

- Smart Hub Lanarkshire continues to provide robotic and automation skills to local businesses and has an extensive school's outreach programme to inspire the next generation with advanced manufacturing skills.

- The council through the Enterprise Development team and Business Gateway services continues to support businesses to support their digital capabilities through grant funding, training workshops, and one-to-one business support.

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Appendix 2: Digital Economy (continued)

2023

- The new North Lanarkshire Progression Pathways for early to third level have now been launched. The NL Digital School will track impact.
- The North Lanarkshire Virtual Classroom (containing high quality, moderated e-Learning resources) has been refreshed with an overhaul being completed to the existing provision to tie in with the new progression pathways and include new focussed computer science content.
- The Virtual Classroom now contains the new Tech Tuesdays resources - 6 new videos released every week - that focus on pre-recorded lessons to support the pathways. In addition to broad and general teaching and learning materials, the Virtual Classroom hosts a large range of videos and materials which support young people's pathways into work.
- Schools and centres are supported to gain Digital Schools Award Scotland Status with 43 accredited establishments across NL and plans are currently in place to increase this number.

- Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the investment plan for North Lanarkshire includes funding for a range of digital support for people, businesses and communities. Key provision includes:
  - A Digital Communities Challenge Fund which has been developed to support community organisations to improve their digital connectivity. This will be launched in early 2024.
  - Grant support for businesses through the Business Growth Fund up to £50K which can be used for digital skills, consultancy, capex and infrastructure support for digital transformation projects through the adoption and integration of digital technologies and ecommerce.
  - Expert help of up to 5 days support for digital projects, building skills and capabilities that increase digital knowledge and support with digital marketing covering areas such as social media platforms, website content and design, data analytics, and search engine optimisation.
  - Funding to continue the delivery of Smart Hub Lanarkshire.

  - Provision of digital skills training to support the North Lanarkshire Digital Skills Academy. This includes support for the establishment of community based Digital Labs to provide local adults aged 16+ with the relevant skills, confidence and motivation to get online. Training also includes a North Lanarkshire Digital Youth Academy aimed at 16-24 year olds and support for co-ordinating and supporting digital career pathways.
  - Establishment of an interactive digital heritage and countryside trail to enhance the visitor experience across North Lanarkshire.

Appendix 3: Delivering a Digital North Lanarkshire

Digital North Lanarkshire - Delivery Plan 2024 to 2027	2024	2025	2026	2027
Create a mature and sustainable culture across the organisation to ensure that digitisation of council services provided to the public successfully transition them to achieve the outcomes specified within The Plan for North Lanarkshire.				
Conduct management and technology research to understand current and future state digital culture for the organisation.				
Understand the 5 steps to change in preparation for digital maturity assessment.				
Undertake digital maturity assessment with digital culture, leadership, and knowledge activity group.				
Share Health and Social Care digital maturity data with the digital culture, leadership, and knowledge activity group to inform the council's digital maturity assessment.				
Consider wider staff survey as a follow-up to the digital skills survey from November 2021 in order to gauge the extent of staff skills and gaps.				
Develop digital leaders to facilitate behavioural change required to enable service transformation within existing resources.				
Review research and current thinking into digital champions / leaders to understand the skills required for a digital leader in order to build and lead teams, keep people connected and engaged, and drive a culture of innovation, learning, and continuous improvement and review leadership development programmes to incorporate digital capabilities, including cognitive transformation (thinking differently), behavioural transformation (acting differently), and emotional transformation (reacting differently).				
Develop digital leadership core competency guide based on the research results and linked to service requirements.				
Develop and deploy a self-adapting redesign framework to accelerate digital business transformation of critical council functions.				
Set up short life change management group to provide expertise, skills, and knowledge of change across the council and North Lanarkshire in order to develop a toolkit to sit beside the project management framework.				
Undertake self-assessment to look at the re-design pieces and feedback reviewed by change management group.				
Support development of a skilled workforce to foster consistent knowledge, improve digital adoption, and accelerate digital-first business capabilities.				
Invest in upskilling the council's workforce to be more digitally capable by creating and developing a self-assessment tool to allow staff to understand their current level of digital skills and undertake further learning as appropriate.				
Use the enhanced digital skills of the council's workforce to encourage a culture of a digital-first approach (i.e. thinking of a digital solution) when faced with opportunities or challenges to improve the way of work, which will result in efficiency gains and improved customer service.				
Measure and evaluate impact of whole service / authority transformation change to digitise systems (for example i-trent) to inform future user experience.				

Row group label: **Digital culture leadership and knowledge**

Appendix 3: (continued)

Improved customer experience	**Ensure a connected / integrated digital experience to facilitate users to transition to efficient digital and hub-based services and become empowered to be self-managing and digitally active.**				
	Develop systems and portals to enable residents to engage, report, request, and pay for services.				
	Implement a chat bot functionality to enable residents to receive automated responses or to chat to an advisor.				
	Implement a customer relationship management system to enable staff to route enquiries to the relevant service and encourage cross service working.				
	Design and develop artificial intelligence capable of generating text, images, or other media (using generative models) to enable the implementation of chatbot functionality.				
	Establish a roadmap to identify the redesign requirement for services to support the transition to the council's future operating model in hubs.				
	Redesign the council's purchase to pay system to introduce a standardised approach and enable electronic invoicing.				
Digital first operations	**Implement smart community hubs to improve access to omni-channel, digitally enabled services, and experiences.**				
	Develop model to enable customers to sign up for online services and establish required resourcing to increase engagement and usage of online services.				
	Review and implement technology solutions to support customers with additional needs to ensure there are no barriers to accessing digital services.				
	Further develop community use of immersive experience pods which enhance digital experiences within a community and beyond and evaluate the impact on community groups.				
	Ensure accessible data to improve public reporting and transparency, streamline effort involved in request for information processes, and leverage business development opportunities.				
	Develop a model that opens up access to the council's non-personal / non-commercial data in a way that allows anyone to freely access and use the data to inform decision making with the resulting portal enabling greater transparency and efficiency, and improved used of data.				
	Implement a Centre of Excellence which will standardise procedures, implement clear governance structures, develop and share best practice, demonstrate value through economies of scale and develop skills and knowledge among partners and staff.				

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Appendix 3: (continued)

		2024	2025	2026	2027
	Ensure useful, secure, compliant, and digital first applications are available to support critical but streamlined service delivery.				
	Implement a new housing and asset management system to improve data management, monitoring, and service delivery across housing.				
	Implement a new case management and scheduling systems to meet statutory obligations and to improve service delivery and performance management across social care.				
	Review tools and products currently deployed to support the council's financial management arrangements, identifying and assessing options for longer-term suitability, as well as opportunities to deploy efficient and effective automation and self-service.				
	Implement a leisure and facilities booking systems, including integration with hub place bookings and introduction of compliant and secure payment facilities that accommodate home and agile working arrangements.				
	Review asset management practices across the organisation, including categorising and consolidating system usage.				
	Develop a portfolio of existing case management systems across the council and use the results to establish a process and timeline for assessing existing solutions and new requests.				
	Review current telephony systems and implement a new cloud-based Microsoft Teams integrated solution, incorporating virtual voice and digital assistant functionality.				
	Develop and implement a strategy for the use of automation and generation artificial intelligence (AI) across the council to define the architectural model of AI use for the council and establish a framework and governance for usage.				
	Create a catalogue of standardised online technology catalogues to enable council service areas to determine digital solutions matching their requirements and enable self-service, where appropriate.				
	Create and integrate a framework that enables the use of spatial mapping solutions (i.e. digital representation of the environment) across the application estate.				
Digital first operations	**Facilitate fibre-enabled innovation to maximise the full potential of Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in service delivery.**				
	Implement the procured Wide Area Network solution and associated technical functionality, such as internet breakout services and continued development and deployment of fibre across North Lanarkshire.				
	Deliver and manage a council-wide public Wi-Fi service.				
	Identify opportunities to use the Internet of Things technology and establish a framework for use, including an adequate governance model.				
	Develop and implement a plan to enable internet access for temporary accommodation properties.				
	Develop a strategy to provide internet access to residents across North Lanarkshire.				

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Appendix 3: (continued)

		2024	2025	2026	2027
	Deliver the Smart Park pilot scheme (using omniled solutions), in order to gather data within the park setting and prepare a business case on whether there are adequate benefits to deploy further.				
	Develop and deliver community access to the immersive pods (sensory spaces which can be utilised to house the latest sensory technology to provide support, in such areas as mental health and employability) across North Lanarkshire.				
	Create a digital infrastructure development toolkit and associated processes which enables third party commercial connectivity providers to deliver services across the council.				
	Ensure single source of data to provide insights and evidence that support decision making and service planning.				
	Create a master data catalogue of all data assets across the council, defining the prime record for each data set/field and supporting data owners to assess quality and data mapping.				
	Develop and implement a method for services to transition from using paper-based storage to a digital solution for retaining appropriate council information.				
Performance Optimisation	**Develop an efficient digital and IT cost model to ensure scarce financial resources are aligned to vital enabling technologies.**				
	Identify digital and IT spend across the council and develop a model to establish whether this is essential and priority spend.				
	Develop and deploy structures and processes that aid the identification and development of operational innovation and that facilitates beneficial service transformation.				
	Enhance security monitoring to maintain effective access and control over council data as the council delivers the anticipated increase in its digital footprint.				
	Consider areas in relation to security within the council that can be monitored in terms of service delivery and develop a framework for how performance against these elements could be used to benchmark against the council's peers.				
	Review data assets and solutions delivered by or in conjunction with third party providers and develop a plan to ensure that suppliers are consistently assessed and reported upon to enable operational performance to be effectively managed throughout the duration of any engagement.				
	Consider the range of cyber security controls, which may be used to manage and secure council data and systems, assess the risk associated with data loss, and create an assessment model to provide meaningful, insightful, and simple representation of the cyber rating of data control.				

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Appendix 4: Principles to support delivery of the vision for a Digital North Lanarkshire

Employees first

The council is committed to developing its staff and creating opportunities to attract and retain talent identified through workforce plans.

In practice this means: Employees will be equipped with the appropriate tools to do their job and to adapt to changes in an increasingly fast changing digitally enabled environment.

Employees need, and rightly expect, to have access to technology to enable them to carry out the day-to-day activities required for their job. They need to be able to do this in an effective, efficient, safe, and secure way. They also need the right skills, knowledge, and capabilities to use the tools and be able to play a role in shaping the development of future service delivery.

Digital adoption needs to be accelerated but to do so requires the organisation to clearly communicate what changes are happening and why each change matters and for leaders to build a culture that adopts digital change by ensuring that engagement, training, guidance, and support for employees and end users is timely, appropriate, and ongoing.

To develop and sustain a digital future for North Lanarkshire, and to ensure no one is left behind, the council needs to ensure that all people are equipped with the skills to thrive in the digital world and local businesses are planning for the digital roles that they will need now and in the future.

Digital first

Digital First approaches become mainstream across the organisation with digital default, and hub-based access and services, replacing traditional channels.

In practice this means: Embedding modern and innovative digital and technological solutions that improve council and public interactions and provide a connected digital experience. Council services are more efficient, face to face contact is reduced in favour of digitised services. Digital platforms are used to reduce demand and provide personalised end-to-end services to the public.

The council needs to be able to achieve that once and done approach for routine transactional activities and non-value adding tasks so that key resources can be released to spend more time on those vulnerable individuals who need more personalised help and support and those people who are not digitally enabled.

Digital leadership and culture are key to securing a Digital First organisation and leadership styles need to be able to adapt in order to champion change and engage and empower employees to innovate.

It is recognised that there are many threats to the privacy, integrity, and availability of digital products and services so Digital First means that security will be built into digital services by design.

Inclusive

Digital exclusion is less of a concern.

In practice this means: People, businesses, and communities need to have the means to thrive online and be able to work, learn, access information and services, and connect with other people and organisations every day. They need to be consulted with when it comes to significant transformations that are being made to the services they rely on, and they need efficient ways to access council services and get what they need at the first point of contact.

All council design and digital transformation activities will strive to understand the needs of local people and communities, involve them in the design of products and services, and ensure that services designed are easily accessible and meet the needs of the people who require them. The focus will remain steadfast on the outcomes that require to be achieved from the user's perspective.

It is recognised that the pandemic had exacerbated digital exclusion and increased the need for the council to identify and address barriers and inequalities to make sure that no one is left behind.

This means the council will continue to ensure that activities undertaken understand the needs of those experiencing digital exclusion and there is a strategy put in place to ensure equity and access for all residents and communities and groups with limited digital proficiency. This also means ensuring access to in-person navigation support and internet access.

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Appendix 4: (continued)

Innovative

The council innovates with high functioning analytics for problem solving

In practice this means: Employees will make best use of digital tools and solutions available to manage demand, enhance ways of working and productivity, and optimise service delivery. Insights and evidence are essential to support informed decision making and service planning. Data analytics and predictive algorithms should be easy to access and to use every day to help identify, analyse, and anticipate problems.

To be an innovative organisation requires a clear understanding of what that means in practice and for the art of the possible to be something that is relatable to employees within the everyday working environment. What tools and solutions are available and how to use them needs to be the starting point if employees are to apply innovative approaches to transform council services and if behavioural change is to facilitate transformation to services within existing resources.

The council embraces technological innovation, including leading technologies like the Internet of Things to improve efficiency and enable smarter more informed decisions. Optimising processes through business change techniques with better communication and remotely controlled operations will help to identify risks, inefficiencies, and bottlenecks.

Adaptable

The council's technology, workforce, and public spaces are flexible and adaptable to change.

In practice this means: It is recognised that digitisation is underpinned by technology that is evolving at an exponential rate of change and therefore the council needs to actively seek opportunities to explore new and emergent technologies that can help deliver improved care, supports, and services and improve outcomes for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire.

Digitisation provides unprecedented opportunities to deliver better outcomes and create an environment that allows organisations to openly share challenges and ideas and to co-develop and co-produce innovative solutions to old problems.

Council technology, workforce, and public space are flexible and adaptable to change.

All staff can access the files and case information they need, when they need it, and wherever they are.

Digital platforms support flexible and rapid improvements. The council acts as a broker to link residents to digital services.

Connected

The council is highly connected with other organisations.

In practice this means: The council recognises that digitisation delivers better benefits through collaborative approaches. This means the council is highly networked with other organisations and collaborates at a community, local, regional, and national level, and across the public, private, voluntary, and academic sectors.

Multi-agency working is the norm. Council services and partners share a digital platform, so data is shared instantly.

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Appendix 5: Supporting frameworks, plans, and sub-policies

Data Protection Policy Latest version available: Version 7.0 June 2023 Next review due: March 2025	Information Security Policy Latest version available: Version 4.0 June 2023 Next review due: March 2025	Records and Information Management Policy Latest version available: Version 5.0 June 2023 Next review due: March 2025
To deliver services effectively the council needs to collect, process, and hold large volumes of information relating to organisations and individuals. Protecting the confidentiality and integrity of personal data is a critical responsibility that is taken seriously at all times. The council is exposed to potential fines of up to 20 million Euros (approximately £18 million) or 4% of its total annual turnover, whichever is higher and depending on the breach, for failure to comply with data protection law. The collation and holding of information of any nature creates a risk of information falling into the hands of third parties or misuse of the information. To manage those risks the council has in place a number of policies. The Data Protection Policy is a statement that sets out how the council will protect personal data. It sets out the principles, rules, and guidelines that informs how the council will ensure ongoing compliance with data protection laws.	Information is critical to the council and its employees, customers, partner agencies, and other stakeholders. Information systems and physical assets (including supporting processes, networks and equipment) must be protected to ensure the council can continue to operate. For the council the aim of information security is to enable the successful delivery of functions, while finding the right balance between the benefits and risks to the processing of information. How information is handled, processed, exchanged, and stored is clearly of importance, as are the ICT systems that employees have come to reply on. Information security must address a range of concerns including: • Physical access to electronic and paper-based information assets. • Logical access to data, systems, applications, and databases. • External and internal access to networks and all other computing resources including cloud resources. • Legislation impacting data and IT systems in all council locations, business units, and teams. • Compliance requirements and standards set out by government, partner organisations, and regulatory bodies. • Consumer and employee privacy rights. • Supply chain security, particularly where a third party holds or processes information on the council's behalf. This Policy sets the strategic position and lays the foundations and framework for effective information security.	Records management is the process used by the council to manage the information it holds throughout its lifecycle, regardless of the format it is recorded in. Effective records management is required to support the council's core functions, provide authentic and reliable evidence of council business, and document historical and cultural activity across North Lanarkshire. This Policy: • Provides a framework for good record keeping practices and ensuring records are managed effectively and efficiently, and the council complies with its statutory and regulatory obligations. • Develops and encourages a working culture that recognises and acknowledges the benefits of effective records management. • Secures a co-ordinated approach to the management of the council's records as a corporate resource. • Defines responsibilities for records management throughout the council. • Ensures that council records are reliable, authentic, and have integrity. • Ensures that records are retrievable as required but also secure so as to prevent unauthorised access, alteration or destruction. • Ensures lawful management of records that includes personal data. • Supports public rights of access to information. • Ensures that records of long-term value are identified and preserved as archives in the council's collections. This Policy applies to all records created or managed by the council and the North Lanarkshire Licensing Board.

Appendix 5: (continued)

Payment Card Industry Data Security Policy Latest version available: Version 1.0 June 2023 Next review due: March 2025	Acceptable Use of ICT Policy Latest version available: Version 4.0 November 2023 Next review due: March 2025	Records Management Plan Latest version available: 2016 Timetable maintained by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland; the council undertakes annual progress update reviews.
The council takes credit and debit card payments for a range of goods and services provided - such as theatre tickets, special uplifts, council tax and housing rents. Card payments must be taken in a way that protects the council and all customers from data breaches and fraud. This Policy sets out the controls the council must use to protect the security of all card payments received and processed. It makes sure staff handle all card information securely and comply with all Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS) requirements. This policy applies to all users of council IT assets who process, view, or otherwise handle payment card data and cardholder details. This includes employees, councillors, contractors, consultants, temporary agency staff, modern apprentices, students, volunteers, and any other authorised third parties.	The council invests substantially in ICT systems that help employees to work flexibly and efficiently. This Policy provides the council's ICT users with guidance on the appropriate use of technology including, but not restricted to, email, internet, PCs / laptops, mobile phones / smartphones and tablets, social media and shared network drives and Microsoft Office 365. It applies to council devices as well as personal devices when accessing council systems and data, e.g. NL Life. The Policy supports the need to keep the council's ICT estate in a safe and effective operational state to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information. This Policy applies to users of council ICT assets including employees, elected members, contractors, consultants, temporary agency staff, modern apprentices, students, volunteers and personnel affiliated with third parties. Individuals using the schools' network and public access through libraries have separate guidelines covering acceptable terms and conditions of use. Elected members have separate guidelines covering various aspects of conditions of use.	Records management refers to all public records, throughout their lifecycle, from creation and acquisition to archive and destruction. Effective management of information and records supports efficiency, consistency, and business continuity and enables the council to deliver a wide range of services. It ensures that the correct information is captured, stored, maintained, and used, then destroyed or preserved in accordance with business need as well as statutory and legislative requirements. Development of a Records Management Plan is required to comply with the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. The Act defines public records as all records created by, or in the possession of, the council to allow it to carry out its functions and meet its responsibilities. This Plan applies to the council and the North Lanarkshire Licensing Board and sets out current records management practice measured against the standards required by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. Council records are managed in three types of records management systems: • Manual filing systems for paper and other physical records. • IT applications and databases for structured electronic records. • Electronic Documents and Records Management Systems (EDRMS) and File Shares for unstructured electronic records.

Appendix 6: Enterprise Architect principles

Type	Ref	Principle	Description
Business Principles	BP01	Primacy of Principles	These principles of information management apply to all services within the council.
	BP02	Reuse before Buy, before Build	Software, platforms, infrastructure and data will be reused wherever possible; purchased as commodity solutions if necessary and only built if there is a unique requirement that cannot otherwise be met.
	BP03	Seek architecture approval	All projects and programmes will be subject to architectural approval at key stages throughout the delivery lifecycle.
	BP04	Maximise value and benefit to the council	Information management decisions are made to provide maximum benefit to the council.
	BP05	Compliance with statutory obligations	Council data and information management processes comply with all relevant internal and external laws, policies, and regulations.
	BP06	Solution cost must be fully understood and demonstrate robustness, affordability, and sustainability	Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) for the expected lifecycle use of the solution is included into all enterprise architectural change proposals from the outset.
	BP07	Solutions have an owner	All solutions must have a named Designated Responsible Owner (DRO) and where appropriate Technical Responsible Owner (TRO).
Covid-19	BP08	The solution enables service delivery during Covid-19	Proposals relate directly to enabling and delivering the council's workforce recovery planning.
	BP09	Workforce change	Proposals consider workforce recovery planning and the Managing Workforce Change Policy, in particular the transition to a workforce less dependent upon dedicated office space and compatible with home working.
Data principles	DP01	Data is an asset	Data is an asset that has value to the council and other parties and must be managed accordingly.
	DP02	Data has an owner	Data will have a named Information Asset Owner accountable for the data quality and currency.
	DP03	Common data definitions	Data is defined consistently throughout the council, standardised, understandable, and distributed.
	DP04	Information security	Data is protected from unauthorised use, disclosure, and change.

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Appendix 6: (continued)

Application principles	AP01	Solutions will be usable	Applications should be simple to use. The user experience should be such that they can focus solely on business activity.
	AP02	Sustainability	All applications must be designed to ensure sustainability of use within the council.
	AP03	Technology independence and certification	Applications should be technology independent and operate on a variety of devices.
	AP04	Systems will talk to each other	Applications will be constructed as a collection of Open Standards based services that use Application Program Interfaces (API), enabling them to be combined to meet business needs.
Technology principles	TP01	Use less software	Technical diversity is minimised to control cost and complexity.
	TP02	Cloud first	The council will adopt a cloud first approach to solutions, in the following order of preference. (1) Software as a Service (SaaS). (2) Platform as a Service (PaaS). (3) Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).

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