
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	21 November 2023
Report By:	Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services	Report No:	LS/114/23/IS
Contact Officer:	Iain Strachan	Contact No:	01475 712710
Subject:	Update on the Digital Modernisation Programme and Delivery of the ICT and Digital Strategies		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the work of the Council's Digital Modernisation Programme. In particular, this report notes the progress in moving to the procurement phase of several projects, the establishment of a cross-service Microsoft 365 Development Sub-group and the promotion of Power BI Analytic tools by the Council's Data Analyst Network to create working data dashboards following the success of HSCP initiatives with it.

1.3 In addition, the report notes the recent use of the Chief Executive's delegated authority to authorise some consultancy work from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve, and also seeks authority to appoint a two year ICT Project Support Officer within the ICT Team, to help support delivery and implementation of the approved digital modernisation projects, funded from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve

1.4 This report also provides an update on the recent Improvement Service led digital modernisation workshop and the work of the ICT Team in delivering the Council's ICT and Digital Strategies.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the update on the work of the Digital Modernisation Programme, and the projects within it.

2.2 It is recommended that the Committee note the Chief Executive's use of delegated authority to authorise the use of £2k from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to commission consultancy work from Talentlink, as referred to at paragraph 4.3 of this report.

2.3 It is recommended that the Committee approve the use of £105k from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to appoint a two year ICT Project Support Officer within the ICT Team, to help support delivery and implementation of the approved digital modernisation projects, as referred to at paragraph 4.5 of this report.

2.4 It is recommended that the Committee note the update on the work of the Council's ICT Team.

- 2.5 It is recommended that the Committee note that updates on the progress of the Digital Modernisation Programme will continue to be reported to the Committee at least every second cycle.

Iain Strachan
Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 At its meeting on 21 March 2023, the Committee noted the creation of a Digital Modernisation Project Board (DMPB), chaired by the Chief Executive, to oversee delivery of the Council's Digital Modernisation Programme. The DMPB meets bi-monthly, and includes representation from the 3 Directorates plus ICT, Legal, Finance and HR, its purpose being to provide support and challenge and ensure that momentum is maintained in the delivery of individual digital modernisation projects. The Digital Modernisation Programme is intended to comprise projects of a more tactical nature that seek to implement digital improvements aligned to specific service requirements, but also aligned to wider strategic objectives.
- 3.2 Linked to this, as part of the approval of the Council's Revenue Budget for 2023/24, on 2 March 2023, it was agreed that £1M of reserves be utilised towards digital modernisation. Specifically, it was agreed that these reserves are to fund investment in digital modernisation within the Council, including increased officer capacity, to improve both internal service processes/efficiency and access to services for the public, with the use of the reserves to be as agreed by the Committee. As reported to the Committee in August 2023, this fund has been consolidated with other reserves and now totals £1.25 million.
- 3.4 In considering the projects that might be included in the Digital Modernisation Programme, relevant service areas will need to prepare business cases, supported by the ICT Team, which would then require approval from the DPMB/Corporate Management Team, and it will also be a requirement that the business cases can demonstrate the following:-
- That there is full service area support for the project, with a commitment to make suitable officer resources available;
 - That the project will support delivery of the Council's wider strategic objectives, including the Council Plan, the Council's Digital Strategy, the Council's ICT strategy and the New Ways of Working Programme;
 - That the project will improve regulatory compliance in respect of information governance;
 - That the project has a clear timescale for delivery;
 - That any anticipated efficiency savings are identified; and
 - That the project will help deliver improvements in service delivery for the benefit of citizens and other service users.

4.0 PROPOSALS

Digital Modernisation Project Updates

- 4.1 There are now a number of projects being taken forward by the Digital Modernisation Programme, and others for which business cases are being prepared. As previously reported to the Committee, the live projects include the replacement of the Secondary School ICT Catering System, the adoption of electronic forms by HR and Payroll (which is funded from the New Ways of Working project) and the replacement of the system used for the handling of corporate complaints. A summary of the projects currently overseen by the DMPB, and their current status is included in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.2 Since the last update reported to the Committee, the Chief Executive has also used the delegated authority granted at that meeting to authorise the use of £2k from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to commission Talentlink, the recruitment portal used by the Council, to undertake a small amount of consultancy work. This work will enhance the module used by the Council to pull through additional contract information from myjobscotland, to automatically populate the employment contracts which are offered to successful applicants, reducing the

work needed by Council staff to complete the contract offers. This will support the work already underway to review the systems and processes used by the HR Team.

- 4.3 A Digital Modernisation Workshop facilitated by the Improvement Service was held in Greenock Municipal Buildings on 29 August, attended by approximately 20 service managers and team leaders, from a variety of Council/HSCP services, together with the DMPB. The intention of the workshop was to help identify potential new projects, using ideas that are already in practice in other local authorities.
- 4.4 The Improvement Service took the workshop through a range of exercises to establish a “digital baseline” from which to encourage services to reflect and subsequently develop digital modernisation projects to be considered by the DMPB. In the period since the workshop was held a number of proposals have been submitted for initial consideration by the DMPB and are now having business cases prepared. The workshop will also help inform the updating of the Council’s ICT and Digital Strategies, which are due in 2024.
- 4.5 With the number of proposals now being worked on, and status of the projects already underway, it is now felt appropriate to expand the capacity within the ICT Team to support the Digital Modernisation Programme. It is proposed that a two year fixed term ICT Project Support Officer post be recruited to. It had always been the intention to seek authority for this additional capacity, but to wait until the DMPB were confident there was a suitable pipeline of work for them to work on, which it now is. It is proposed that the cost of this post, approximately £105k, is funded from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve, and the Committee’s approval is sought for that,
- 4.6 As the Committee will be aware, the Council has now completed the initial roll out of Microsoft 365. This offers the Council access to Office 365, MS Teams, SharePoint and Onedrive as well as access to a wider range of tools and applications. The DMPB has approved the creation of a cross-service Microsoft 365 Development Sub-Group, which will work across service areas to support the Council in optimising the opportunities afforded by Microsoft 365, and in a way which still ensures the Council is meeting its duties around information governance. The first meeting was held on the 19 October, the group having been established with four main aims:

Security: To deliver a secure environment across the 365 Platform, aligning with the Council’s existing Records Management Policy, extending and replicating the Council Business Classification Scheme into the cloud (SharePoint and OneDrive) and ensuring all relevant Information governance requirements including Freedom of Information and Subject Access Request obligations can be met.

Collaboration: To recommend and develop a strategy for the implementation of Teams, SharePoint and other collaborative tools across the Council. Investigate requirements for external collaboration with trusted partners, develop protocols and checklists to ensure that the security obligations developed above are adhered to as use of M365 collaboration tools grow. Determine best practice and guidance for the successful implementation, management, and control of collaborative arrangements.

Innovation: To investigate and recommend applications and features within the M365 ecosystem that would improve efficiency or otherwise enhance the working practices for individual services or for wider cross service adoption. Determine best practice for existing tools and applications.

Training: To promote the use of the Microsoft Enterprise Skills Initiative learning platform and recommend training paths as appropriate for staff across the Council.

Data Analysts Network

- 4.7 The Council's Data Analyst Network has been tasked with utilising Power Bi, a Microsoft analytics tool, to create dashboards to exploit the wide range of data available on existing Council systems. Innovative work by HSCP staff has demonstrated the powerful nature of the tools available and the relative speed that the system can be built and deployed, with HSCP giving a presentation to the most recent meeting of the DMPB. Additional Power BI licences were included in the annual renewal of the M365 licence subscription to allow wider uptake.

Updates on Delivery of the Council's ICT and Digital Strategies

- 4.8 As previously reported to the Committee, the Council's ICT Team leads on delivery of the Council's ICT and Digital Strategies. As the Committee will be aware, these strategies aim to increase and promote the range of digital services available to employees and customers and to exploit the opportunities digital services can achieve by:

- Improving user experience and interaction with Council Services;
- Reducing cost to deliver services via channel shift opportunities; and
- Improving efficiencies and productivity of services.

- 4.9 The ICT Team has been taking forward a number of initiatives in implementation of these strategies, as follows:-

- Further to the update provided in the previous report to the Committee, the implementation of Microsoft 365 for Corporate Services and Schools is now complete. The next phase will focus on collaboration and developing apps and tools from the wide range available within the Microsoft 365 environment, overseen by the Microsoft 365 Development Sub-Group;
- A new self-service password reset function will shortly be rolled out, through Microsoft 365, to enable Council/HSCP staff to reset their Microsoft 365 passwords from any internet connected device at any time of day. This will allow accessibility "anytime anywhere" and enable staff to reset their own passwords outside of the service desk's standard opening hours, which will in turn reduce workload for the service desk and support those staff that work on a remote/hybrid basis under the Council's revised Flexible Working Policy;
- Migration to a new corporate data storage solution is now complete, providing additional capacity and security and improved performance;
- The PC refresh programme continues to focus on the School Estate, a full hardware refresh having been completed for the Corporate Estate in 2021/22. There were 270 PCs refreshed over the summer break, to finalise the refresh of all of the High School computer suites. The refresh of senior manager and office staff equipment and classroom based PCs was also completed in the first term of the new school year;
- Replacement of the current schools Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) network pilot has successfully concluded in one High School (Inverclyde Academy) and one Primary School. (St Johns). A phased roll-out to the remaining schools is now underway, with the Port Glasgow Community Campus getting access to the new BYOD system on 6 November 2023. A rolling programme will follow over subsequent months with the aim to have all High Schools active early in the New Year. A rolling programme for Primary Schools will follow. Additional work to provide access to this network for interactive whiteboard replacements, will be trialled at the same time, to provide additional functionality;
- A major upgrade to the Council's telephony system has been completed. This will allow future enhancements and integrations with existing and proposed system developments;
- The Council's EDRMS (electronic document and record management system) has been upgraded;

- A number of improvements to the Council's cyber security arrangements, have been implemented, with additional actions in progress.
- The current Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) contract is concluding and the contract for SWAN2 has been awarded to BT. ICT have evaluated the new contract with a view to continuing as members of this group, and contract negotiations are underway.

4.10 A proposal to move to a cloud based service desk tool is also being assessed as part of the wider Digital Modernisation Programme. As above, this will also allow accessibility "anytime anywhere" and introduce a significant element of self service, allowing staff access to report issues outside of the service desk's standard opening hours. It will be possible to extend the functionality across a wider range of services if required, such as Facilities Management, providing Council/HSCP staff with a single point of contact for a number of internal service related issues. However, further work will be required post adoption, to understand what that might entail, and how that might be rolled out.

4.11 The Committee will recall that at its meeting on 19 September it approved the creation of 6 savings workstreams, including a Digital & Customer Services Workstream. As noted at paragraph 3.4 of this report, it is a requirement of any business cases being considered by the DMPB that any anticipated efficiency savings are identified. As such, it is expected that the work of the Digital Modernisation Programme will actively support and feed into this Workstream. The Committee will, though, note that there is a separate report on this Agenda in connection with the 2024/26 Budget in which is recommended that the Committee approves certain reduction in the Capital Programme, including a 10% (£59,000) reduction in the ICT allocation.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources	X	
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Digital Modernisation Reserve	Talentlink (HR Contracts)	23/24	£2k	-	Funded from Digital Modernisation EMR £1.254m
Digital Modernisation Reserve	ICT Project Support Officer	23/25	£105k	-	Funded from Digital Modernisation EMR £1.254m. This post has not yet been recruited to.

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
-	-	-	-	-	-

5.3 Legal/Risk

The adoption of new digital ways of working, such as referred to in this report, will help the Council ensure compliance with its regulatory duties, in particular around information governance and records management and help mitigate the risk to operational delivery that is posed by some current working practices. There are, naturally, risks associated with the adoption of new systems. These risks would need reviewed, and suitable mitigations put in place. However, the Council also needs to consider the risks of not progressing such initiatives, including with information governance compliance and Council service delivery but also staff retention. The DMPB has a risk register which is reviewed at every meeting.

5.4 Human Resources

The development and implementation of modernisation and digitalisation will help the Council maximise the potential of its staffing capacity. To facilitate this, there is a need to increase understanding and awareness of these opportunities and thereafter ensure that appropriate resources are available to allow these opportunities to be grasped. The funding and governance approved for the Digital Modernisation Programme will help address this.

5.5 Strategic

Increasing investment in the development and roll out of modernisation and digitalisation projects will support a number of key strategic and policy directions of the Council. This includes supporting delivery of the Council’s Digital Strategy (2021 – 2024), which recognises the need to increase and promote the range of digital services available to employees and customers, and to exploit the opportunities that digital services can achieve by (i) improving user experience and interaction with Council services; (ii) reducing cost to deliver services via channel shift opportunities; and (iii) improving efficiencies and productivity of services. In addition, the Digital Modernisation Programme will help support delivery of the Council Plan (2023-28), and in particular Theme 3 (Performance), by helping the Council achieve the provision of high quality and innovative services, giving value for money.

5.6 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

Although a DPIA was not required for this report, adoption of certain digital solutions will assist the Council in ensuring it is meeting its obligations around the storage and use of personal data. A DPIA would also be required prior to adoption of certain solutions, to ensure that any personal data was suitably protected, such as employee records.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Corporate Management Team and the DMPB have been consulted on this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A.

