

One team



ICT Plan 2018-22



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1. Why do we need an ICT Plan?



Cumbria County Council is committed to improving outcomes for the people of Cumbria. The 2018-2022 Council Plan set out its intention to do things differently and recognise our customers' expectation that digital and online services will be available 24/7. Making best use of technology is an increasingly important aspect of this approach to support our customers to use services in an efficient manner. The Council's ICT Plan sets out the ways in which we will use technology to support 24/7 capability and to increased efficiency. Our ambition is clear. We will optimise the benefits of existing and emerging technologies to support delivery of the Council Plan and, by so doing, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Council services. Emerging and best practice technologies across our services will be sought and we will collaborate with other organisations to ensure benefits are realised.

We will:

- Provide high quality digital services which meet the needs of our customers;
- Use technology to release staff from tasks which can be automated and accelerated;
- Improve our digital offer including the Council website;
- Enhance our ICT equipment, network and systems;
- Support users to make the most from technology.

As part of this overall approach, the Council will need to provide the right services at the right time which improves satisfaction and reduces demand.

ICT is a key enabler of these ambitions. Cost effective and efficient ICT provision will not only underpin the delivery of services but allow services to be adaptable to reflect the changing financial, political and regulatory environment in which the Council operates. Optimising new technologies also enable us to automate and simplify processes and adopt increasing levels of self-service releasing scarce resource for more complex, customer focussed tasks.

The digital and ICT skills of the workforce and Elected Members are also critical if the Council is to operate in a modern and efficient way. The ICT Plan sets out how Members and officers will be supported.

This new ICT Plan builds upon our previous successes in implementing our Digital Strategy and will see a step change, particularly in our use of a new digital platform, upgraded website and the use of technology which enables agile working, collaboration, secure information and improved customer access and services.

In particular the Plan will support the delivery of our Customer Strategy and provide digital services so good they become the customers channel of choice. Putting the customer at the heart everything we do.



2. Our Vision



The Council Plan sets out the outcomes we want for Cumbria; as well as how we will work in the future. ICT will be critical in enabling success in achieving our ambitions. Our vision for the ICT Plan is.....

.....to use technology which supports the delivery of Council services, puts customers at the heart and helps improve outcomes for the people of Cumbria.

The outcomes of the ICT Plan are:

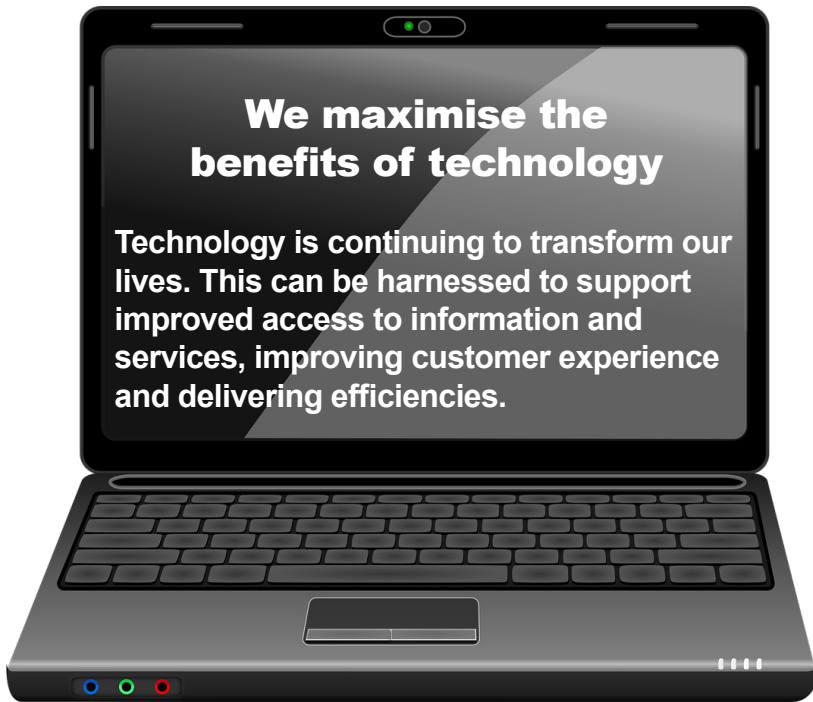
- Maximise the benefits of technology.
- Council services benefit from new ways of working and delivery of services.
- ICT services are as agile, flexible and adaptable as possible which supports efficient, effective and customer focussed service delivery and in particular we will provide digital services so good they become the customers channel of choice.
- Elected Members, officers and customers (our users) are supported and use technology to support efficient service delivery.

The Customer Service Strategy describes how the Council over the next few years will be focused on increasing levels of self-service and making greater use of digital technologies to improve access to our services. Our approach to ICT is critical to enable this to happen.

There are also significant opportunities for us to use technology in more effective and innovative ways, alongside our traditional access points, to create new possibilities for interaction with our communities.

Greater use of technology reduces the cost of our service provision, using automation and self-service wherever practicable and appropriate.

The ICT Plan will support the delivery of these programmes of work by providing supporting technology, infrastructure and customer support required.



Council services benefit from new ways of working and delivery of services

Technology is enabling us to work in an agile, adaptable and responsive manner in order to meet customer need. We will provide elected members and staff with the equipment, systems, processes and information they need to fulfil their roles and to deliver services to the people of Cumbria.

ICT services are as agile, flexible and adaptable as possible which supports efficient, effective and customer focussed service delivery

Customer demand and expectation across all services is changing. Greater use of technology enables the Council to respond to these changes in order to deliver, sometimes in collaboration with other organisations, the services and information people require.



3. Where are we now?

The Council has already made good progress with its use of ICT in recent years which has led to better ways of working and significant savings. As the Council has become smaller, both in terms of overall budget and staff numbers, the reliance on ICT has grown.

5,000+



We now have over **5,000** users of our technology and ICT every day.



different systems to support key council activities.

We have introduced online self-assessments for Adult Social Care to reduce pressure on the workforce, put in place a new Highways Information Management System so customers can report highways faults at a time that suits them. We are introducing a 'my account' function that allows customers to pay for services without having to visit an office or library building.

We've increased on-line transactions by **30%** provided technology to front line staff across all Directorates and automated many customer facing and internal processes.



Investment has been made in new devices, equipment and systems to support agile working, reducing non-productive time and improving communication whilst ensuring data security.

Since **2014/15** annual savings averaging

£4m

have been delivered as a result of the use of ICT.

There is still more to do. ICT and technology needs to continue to be central to service redesign that will help achieve potential additional savings of £4.1M by 2022. Allowing Council services to become more sustainable in the long term, as well as meeting customer expectations about the way services should be delivered.

Benchmarking has demonstrated the provision of ICT at Cumbria County Council provides value for money and we compare favourably on standard performance measures including first-time resolution rates.

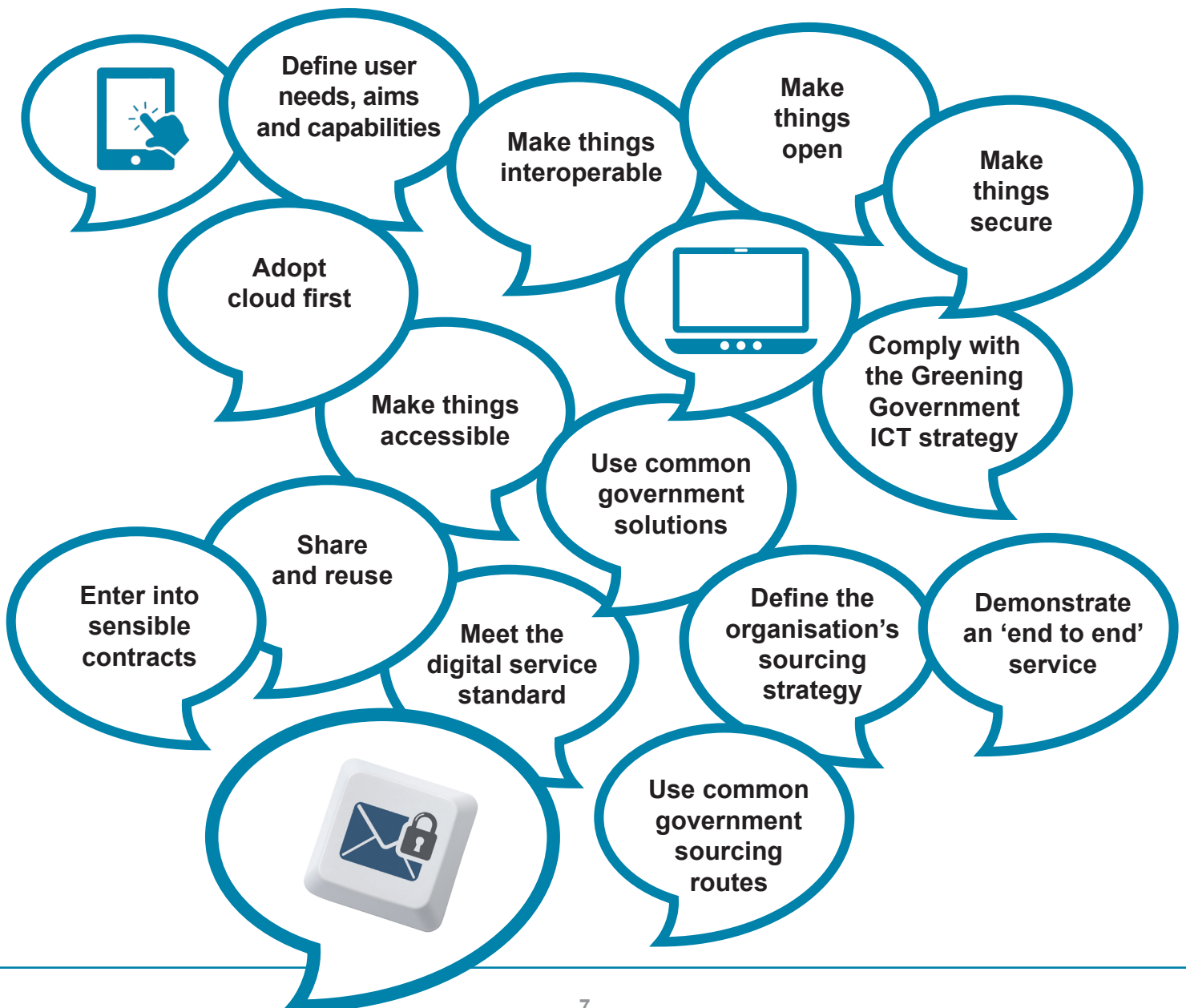
4. Where do we want to be?



Our vision is.... **to use technology which supports the delivery of Council services and, puts customers at the heart and helps improve outcomes for the people of Cumbria.**

Investment in the use of technology will continue. Core systems will be subject to an ongoing procurement programme which will seek to reduce cost and utilise cloud hosting and new cost-effective, secure and accessible technologies. Investment in replacing and upgrading equipment, including mobile devices and applications, the use of collaboration tools and the continued roll-out of video conferencing capabilities will also be undertaken. Business cases, with clear benefit realisation plans, for the use of capital funding will be used to support the adoption of new technologies.

The Government’s Digital Services ‘Technology Code of Practice’ and its principles provide a tried and tested national approach, which we will adopt. They will act as a foundation for making decisions on how technology will be used within the Council. The principles of the Government’s Digital Services ‘Technology Code of Practice’ are as follows:



Not all of the principles will be applicable initially to every instance but each one along with the Design Principles which underline the Customer Strategy, will be considered, when looking at ICT, technology and the implementation of technical solutions. Each of the principles and what this will mean for the Council is set out in more detail below:

- **Define user needs, aims and capabilities:** The ICT service will take steps to ensure it understands the needs, aims and capabilities of each user group so that appropriate equipment and systems are provided. Training needs will also be identified and assessed.
- **Make things interoperable:** When implementing any new system or process or when working with partner organisations such as those in the NHS, we will assess and, where practicable take measures to ensure inter-operability.
- **Make things open:** Consideration will be given to the use of new cost-effective, secure and accessible technologies when implementing any new systems. Open access will also be encouraged so long as the highest standards of data security are not compromised.
- **Adopt cloud first:** The Council recognises the benefits to be gained from the use of cloud based technologies and is taking a managed, risk based approach to using cloud hosted systems.
- **Make things accessible:** Our approach to ICT will aim to ensure systems and information is accessible to elected members, staff, partners and customers.
- **Share and reuse:** We will optimise the investment made in our assets by extending their user life and, within data security constraints, re-use where appropriate.
- **Use common government solutions:** We will utilise developments, systems and approaches set out by national government, such as GOV.delivery and information security standards, such as continuing our accreditation to the Public Sector Network as this enables the Council to provide on-line services such as Blue Badge applications and to securely share information with our colleagues in health.
- **Meet the Digital Service Standard:** The Council will meet the Digital Service Standards as applied to local government service delivery.
- **Comply with the Greening Government ICT Plan:** As above, we will comply with the aspects relating to local government and take active steps to ensure our ICT provision minimises any environmental impact.
- **Define the organisation's sourcing strategy:** The ICT service will work with colleagues in procurement, finance and legal along with front-line Directorates to improve the procurement of our equipment and systems. Our contracts will then be proactively managed to ensure they deliver added value.
- **Demonstrate an end to end service:** ICT will provide end-to end support, from the provision of the underlying ICT network architecture through to end user support and we will measure and report on the performance of each element of the service.
- **Use common government sourcing routes:** ICT will work with procurement to utilise existing sourcing routes, including those frameworks offered by the Crown Commercial Service and other pan-Government buying organisations, where it is appropriate to do so.

5. How will we get there?

There are several interlinked strands to the work we will be undertaking – all using the principles to shape the approach to delivery. Collectively these will support our journey to provide digital services so good they become the customers channel of choice.

1

Provide a fit for purpose ICT service to support Cumbria County Council to deliver services to its Customers, Suppliers and Partners.

- The use of technology actively supports the delivery of the Council Plan and our ICT service will seek to provide equipment, systems, processes and programmes which improve our service delivery.
- **What are the outcomes / measures of success?**
 - Elected members and staff have fit-for-purpose ICT equipment and systems that meets their needs and facilitates continuous improvement in service delivery.
 - Ensured access to ICT, information and data by providing a robust, secure and resilient infrastructure.



2

Achieve risk reduction and increased information security whilst providing effective service provision.

- The Council holds a great deal of sensitive and confidential data which, in the wrong hands, could be misused but which is essential to our ability to deliver services. With an increasing risk of cyber-attacks and the damage caused by data breaches, the Council will take all appropriate and necessary steps to effectively secure the information we hold. This will ensure that the Council is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- **What are the outcomes / measures of success?**
 - Elected Members and council staff will have the relevant information available 24/7 to be able to deliver services;
 - Only appropriate electronic data is held by the council which is stored in a secure manner.
 - Comply with legislative and regulatory requirements including the new General Data Protection Regulations and Public Sector Network accreditation.
 - Providing a robust technical infrastructure which supports business resilience and mitigates the risk of cyber attacks.



3

Build strong, lasting relationships with key public sector partners, technology suppliers and other organisations.



- The world of ICT is continually developing and changing and the Council can benefit from the use of emerging technologies. We recognise more can be done by working with partners (such as NHS organisations where we effectively collaborate to support integrated health and social care), the Police and the District Councils. Our suppliers also have a vital role in ensuring our third party systems remain fit for purpose and reflect the latest developments, including cloud hosting.
- **What are the outcomes / measures of success?**
 - Improved awareness and use of emerging technologies that will benefit the service provided by the Council;
 - Collaborative approach to the implementation of technology which will improve the commissioning of new services and help deliver efficiencies.

4

Use a range of measures and practices to achieve overall financial savings whilst maintaining or improving quality of service.



- We must continually evidence effective and efficient use of resources, both within the ICT service and in our work to support delivery of the efficiency savings required in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- **What are the outcomes / measures of success?**
 - Use of industry benchmarking tools;
 - Budget management to demonstrate comparable value for money;
 - User satisfaction and first-time resolution rates.

5

Source and provide appropriate technology and best practice to enable business transformation whilst maintaining flexibility to adapt to legislative, national and local drivers.



- Appropriate methodologies will ensure that changes to how the services underpinned by ICT are reformed in a proficient manner. Whilst the services are reformed, an assessment will be carried out to ensure appropriate and fit-for-purpose technology is employed to support this.
- **What are the outcomes / measures of success?**
 - Delivery of a further range of key council transactions online, ensuring full end-to-end process redesign and automation;
 - Introduction of the Customer Experience Management system and improved website to improve access, enable self-service and reduce the cost of delivery.

6. Delivering priority projects

With increasing demand and expectation on ICT, our programmes will be prioritised in line with the outcome ambitions in the Council Plan. This includes a range of collaborative and integrated projects where we will work with our public sector partners to enable efficiency savings and improvements in customer service.



Health and Social Care Integration

The Council recognises the ways in which technology can support better integration of health and care systems which can dramatically improve the health outcomes of vulnerable people. Integrated data and interoperability helps simplify care pathways for those most in need, reduces the number of contact points and hand-off's between local government and health partners, makes better use of scarce resources and speeds up the processes involved. Ultimately the more intelligent use of ICT enables residents to maintain independence and helps ensure they are provided with the support and services they need.

ICT have been working with counterparts in the health and social care sector to integrate a number of ICT services and share resources to deliver a number of joint solutions. This will help provide more streamlined health and care processes and share ICT knowledge.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service

As blue light services work towards the Government's mandate of greater joint working, the Council is contributing to closer partnership working through the development of initiatives such as the Furness Blue Light Hub in Ulverston.

This will bring Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, North West Ambulance and Cumbria Constabulary together which will require the sharing of sensitive information securely and the application of interconnected cross organisational technology.

The Emergency Services Network will be used to deliver a more adaptable emergency communications network which will incorporate broadband data services that will allow blue light partners to share more information than ever before. This co-designed service will support blue light services to be more resilient and provide greater data security when services attend challenging situations.

Services provided by the Council's ICT team will be vital here in working with partners succinctly to ensure connectivity between different organisations' technology and effective data sharing to allow blue light partners to provide safe, responsive and efficient services to Customers across Cumbria.

Digital Inclusion

The Council recognises not everyone is able to access or possess the skills or confidence to access public services on-line. Digital exclusion is particularly concerning with the geographical, technical and demographic challenges in Cumbria. We will therefore develop and implement a Digital Inclusion programme where we will work with communities, third sector and other partners such as Citizens Online to run digital events and establish a network of 'digital champions' which can help provide support and guidance in our journey to ensure digital is so good it becomes the customers channel of choice.

7. Support for users



Elected Members

We recognise how technology can support Elected Members in their roles and we will strive to provide equipment, services and systems which meet their needs. We will also support them in their role as digital and community champions in their divisions and provide training, advice and support as required. For this to be successful and effective, a proactive approach to engagement will be applied so that members are consulted and involved prior to any changes in the provision of technology. The newly formed ICT Members Group will assist in this process. This is a sub-group of the Member Development Group and will provide a mechanism for the needs and views of members to be considered and where members will be able to engage, influence and test emerging technologies prior to implementation in the Council.

The ICT Plan is also aligned to the Workforce Plan and we will, where required, invest in training to upskill users so they can make best use of the technology provided.



Internal Customers (Council Staff and Partners)

- Provide reliable ICT infrastructure which supports increased agile working.
- Ensure a secure ICT network that is responsive to new emerging cyber-attacks.
- Maintain and improve ICT support services that helps staff to deliver the Council's services at full capacity.
- Deliver risk managed and appropriate new technology which supports staff to work in a smarter and more efficient manner.



External Customers

- Provide better digital infrastructure that aligns to the changing preferences of the Council's customers' with the refresh of the Council's website, to make it more user friendly as an example.
- Rationalise existing contact channels such as telephony to ensure that when customers contact the council the process is as simple and user friendly as possible.
- Increased availability of self-service functionality such as 'my account' so customers can access the services they need at a time that is convenient to them.
- Where appropriate, develop joint infrastructure, networks and systems to support collaboration.



8. Delivering the plan

The Plan and the outcomes it seeks to support will be delivered over 4 years. There will be an Annual Delivery Plan setting out key deliverables and milestones for the coming year. This will be reviewed and refreshed each March to set out an ambitious and comprehensive programme.



Our approach to equality



The Council is committed to ensuring it meets the Public Sector Equality Duty in order to provide equality of opportunity through access to services for all and delivering services which meet the needs of the Council's customers; foster good relations by understanding the communities the Council serves and deliver meaningful engagement; eliminate discrimination through the Council's operational and work place policies and procedures.

To support the delivery of this ICT Plan, the Council will build on its existing approach and publish an Equality Action Plan which will set out the objectives and related activities which will be undertaken to meet our commitments. The Action Plan will be informed by the Council's annual Equality Needs Analysis.

This approach will enhance the visibility and accountability for ensuring we meet our commitments.

If you require this document in another format (eg CD, audio cassette, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone **01228 226514**.

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