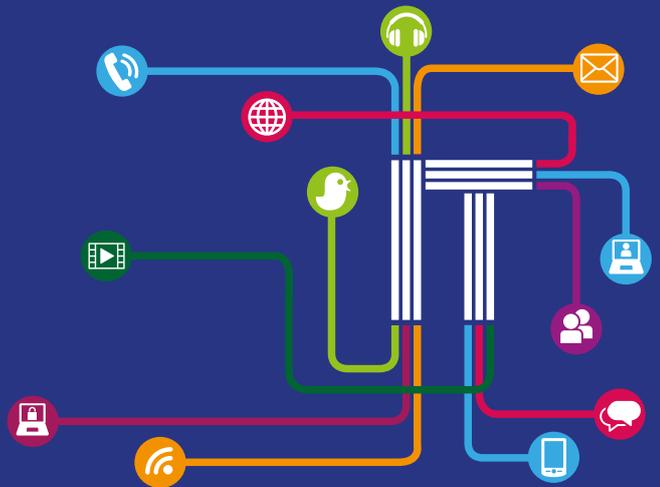
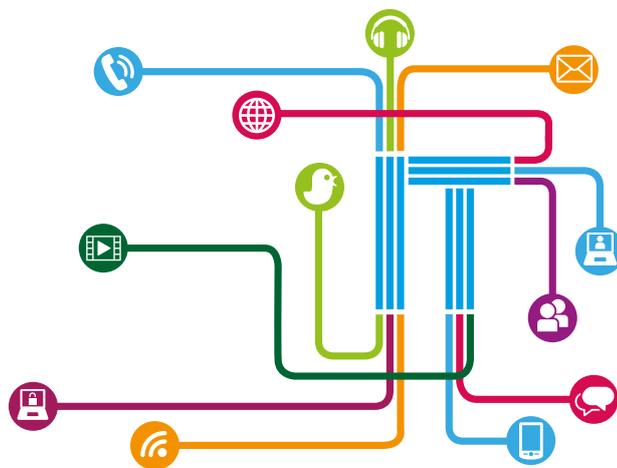


Corporate ICT Strategy





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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document provides an overview of the ICT strategy for Coventry City Council.

1.2. Scope

The objective of this document is to:

- Describe the ICT vision for Coventry City Council.
- Demonstrate the close link between the ICT strategy and the council's business priorities.
- Describe the key strategic areas required to realise the vision and align ICT with the business.

The scope and ambition of this strategy is based on innovation, strengthened governance and working together across all services and partners to achieve its objectives.

2. Executive Summary

Over the past ten years there has been a significant shift in the digital technology we use within the organisation. This technology is now a fundamental and essential part of the running of our Council. Our recent technology initiatives culminated in the delivery of the Kickstart programme and the introduction of new digital tools and technologies to enable us to work in a more agile and modern way.

Building on the success of the previous ICT strategy we are now looking to further strengthen our approach by empowering services to really exploit the transformational opportunities that digital tools and technologies offer, ensuring that we are able to offer the very best service to our customers. Whilst we have bold ambitions for our digital tools and technologies, we will continue to have a robust and proactive approach to our cyber-security measures. Protecting our technology estate, data and our users from cyber-threats (such as hackers attempting to gain unauthorised access to our data or damage our network) will remain a top priority. We remain engaged regionally and nationally in cyber security activity. We align closely to the work of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) with regards to our approach to cyber-security.

In line with our One Coventry approach we must look at how greater connectivity and collaboration with our partners will help us collectively address and tackle wider, whole system issues. This strategy looks to underpin the organisations continued drive for efficiency and transformation through digitalisation. This will be supported by relaunching how the ICT and Digital service engages with our services and how we optimise the delivery of our technology services.

This ICT strategy is complementary to our Digital Coventry strategy but, by design, whilst closely aligned, they are not a single strategy. Our ICT strategy gives specific focus to Coventry City Council and the technology that we use as an organisation whereas the Digital Coventry strategy focuses on Coventry as a place and the wider region.

For more information or for any queries regarding this strategy, please contact:

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2.1. Business Context

The ICT strategy for Coventry City Council is based on the requirements stemming from:

Medium Term Financial Strategy (2019 – 2022)

This sets the financial context for the organisation and describes the budget challenges we face. The ICT strategy is designed to support the organisational wide transformation and digitalisation agenda working towards addressing the budget challenges.

One Coventry Council Plan (2016 – 2024)

The council plan sets out our vision and priorities for the city. The ICT strategy and associated ICT & Digital Service plan has been designed against the key themes of:

- Globally connected
- Locally committed
- Delivering our priorities with fewer resources
- Managing performance and measuring progress

Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 and beyond

Coventry is set to become the UK City of Culture in 2021. The ICT strategy and associated ICT & Digital service plan seeks to support all of the readiness and preparation activity required for 2021. It should also be noted that whilst the primary focus is readiness for the UK City of Culture, the City is also supporting events such as the Commonwealth Games (2022) and the European City Sport (2019). The ICT strategy seeks to support the readiness for the City to be chosen to run events which feature on the local, national and international stage.

Digital Coventry

The Digital Coventry strategy sets out the Digital aspirations for the wider City. The ICT strategy and associated ICT & Digital Service plan fully supports the delivery of the Digital Coventry strategy and is closely aligned to the Digital Workforce theme.

Our strategy is influenced by wider industry or national initiatives stemming from:

The Local Digital Declaration

This has been co-created by a growing community of organisations, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, working together with a shared vision to deliver more user-centred, cost-effective local public services through open, collaborative and reusable work.

Government Technology Innovation Strategy

Published June 2019 this is a strategy which indicates how central government is planning to innovate service through the use of emerging technologies.

Government Transformation Strategy

Published February 2017 this is a strategy which indicates how central government plans to use digital to transform services and the relationship between citizen and state.

National Cyber Security Strategy 2016 to 2021)

Published November 2016 this is strategy which indicates how the government plans to address national cyber security and resilience

It should be noted that technology is only one component of change: it can only deliver expected organisational benefits and savings in conjunction with:

- Business processes that are efficient and take a “digital-by-design” approach. This means that our processes are fundamentally transformed to take full advantage of the tools, techniques and technologies that the internet-era has to offer.
- Adoption of new ways of working by the end user be that employee, customer or partner organisation

3. Strategic principles

3.1. Our vision

The vision for our ICT strategy is made up of two key principles, both of which focus on building on the technology foundation created by previous versions of this strategy.

Our first principle is:

Coventry-as-a-platform



End-to-end interactions with us are simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity is hidden from our customers and shared across our partners.

We will align with the Local Digital Declaration



As referenced above, this strategy is influenced by the **Local Digital Declaration** of which Coventry City Council are a signatory.

The principles of the declaration are:

- redesign our services around the needs of the people using them
- break our dependence on inflexible and expensive technology that doesn't join up effectively, in favour of modular common components and open data standards
- design safe, secure and useful ways of sharing information to build trust among our partners and citizens
- demonstrate digital leadership, creating the conditions for genuine organisational transformation
- embed an open culture that values, incentivises and expects working in the open wherever we can, sharing our plans and experience, working collaboratively with other organisations, and reusing good practice

(Local Digital Declaration, MHCLG, <https://localdigital.gov.uk/declaration/>)

We will align with the principles of the Local Digital Declaration. We should aspire for all our services to be redesigned to take full advantage of the latest and greatest digital tools and technology available. In doing so we should look to learn from the very best, most useable digital services that people use in their day-to-day lives, bringing those principles to our services.

We are labelling this “Coventry-as-a-platform” as we will strive for end-to-end interactions with us being as simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity should be hidden from our customers and shared across our partners.

We will do this by:

- Using shared and common components such as a standard payment or booking platform as an example. Where components already exist nationally or regionally (or even internationally) these will be considered first for adoption.
- Providing the platforms to enable streamlining of business processes. Allowing them to be redesigned as digital by design making the best use of technology, automating as much as we can.
- Maximising the use of the data we hold ensuring it is accurate, secure and can enrich the end user experience.

Our second principle is:

Our Digital Workforce



Enabling a workforce which has access to the right tools to do its job and is confident in maximising the use and benefits of technology in its daily work

This principle is closely aligned with the corresponding theme of the Digital Coventry strategy.

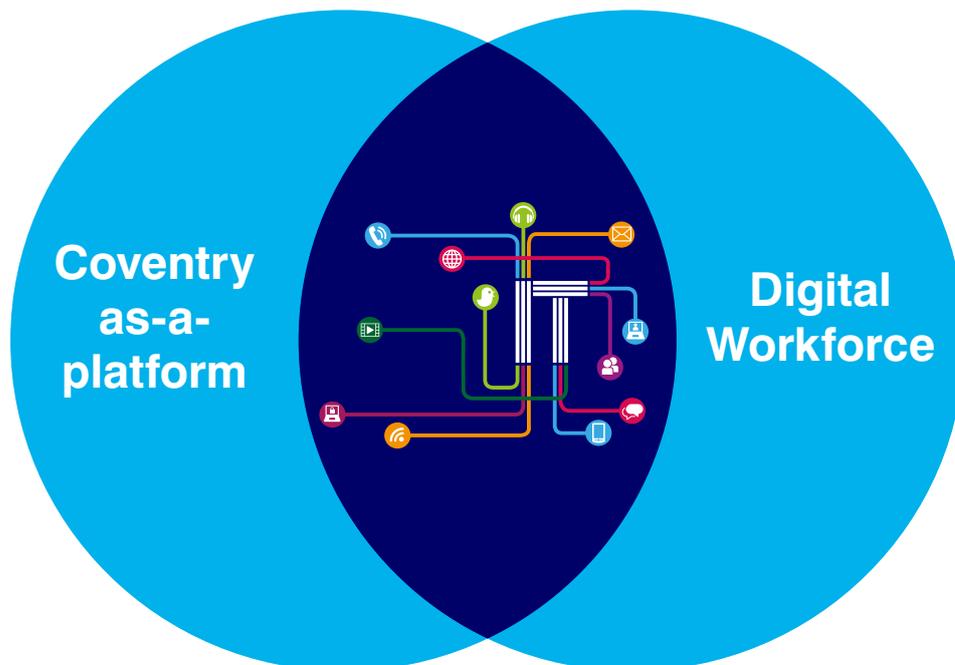
We need to continue a rapid change in culture and mind-set to demonstrate a clear commitment to embracing IT innovation and to provide a clear vision for a more digital future; one that offers a vibrant and exciting environment for not only for our current workforce, but the up-and-coming generation of digital talent.

We will do this by:

- Providing the right technology and devices so that teams can work in different places and can access the systems they need, when they need to.
- Simplifying processes and systems for the benefit of customers and teams.
- Supporting our employees at every level of the organisation to gain or maintain the digital skills, confidence and commitment to adopt a digital by design approach.
- Encouraging and enabling collaborative working across boundaries to deliver services and meet customer needs.

These two strategic principles complement each other in the delivery of a successful, transformational ICT service.

Coventry-as-a-platform seeks to streamline and modernise our processes and systems with our Digital workforce principle ensuring staff have the relevant skills and tools to make the best use of the technologies available.



These principles support our current business context as below:

Medium Term Financial Strategy (2019–2022) & One Coventry Council Plan (2016–2024)

Streamlined, modern processes and systems with staff that can make the best use of technology will significantly contribute to the efficiency and savings targets required. It will also contribute to a culture of ongoing innovation and transformation in line with the One Coventry Council Plan aspirations.

Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 and beyond

Having a successful, transformational ICT service and a suitably skilled workforce will directly contribute to the success of the city readiness activity for UK City of Culture and beyond.

Digital Coventry

Providing staff with the right technology, devices, skills and confidence, fully supports the delivery of the Digital Coventry strategy and is closely aligned to the Digital Workforce theme.

3.2. ICT strategy themes

Based on our vision, this is what we need to do to achieve our objectives. This has been split into themes, each of which, has an evolving roadmap of activity supporting it. The themes will not only address organisational pressures but also be driven and updated by wider technology industry demands and trends. It is important to note that across all our themes the focus is to directly support the One Coventry Council Plan by delivering the very best, easiest to use, efficient and innovative services to our citizens and customers.

Our themes are:

Engage	
Keeping our finger on the pulse of the organisation	We are re-establishing ICT business relationship management with services to ensure ICT & Digital empowers and enables individual service business plans. We look to work closer with our partners, peers and like-minded organisations to share learning, platforms and solutions.
Optimise	
Technology services will work when we need them and how they are needed to work. The stability and security of our technology estate and data will continue to be a priority	We will ensure that the day-to-day operation and use of ICT is optimised in terms of availability, resilience, security and performance. We will do this through consolidating and modernising our technology estate. Reviewing service level agreements and our key performance indicators. We will optimise the systems we use in line with the local digital declaration to ensure that they work across the most popular, commonly used platforms. This will help ensure that integration with partners, peers, stakeholders and like-minded organisation is possible..
Empower	
Helping the organisation make the best use of our technology services. Enabling wider, whole system issues to be addressed through greater collaboration and connectivity with partners	We will ensure that our workforce, including our employee and elected member cohorts, have access to the right digital tools and skills to do their jobs in the most efficient way. This will directly support, benefit and enhance the services we provide to our customers. We will do this by further developing the DigiKnow brand supporting digital skills. Continuing to modernise our technology estate and making greater use of our data warehouse and the organisational insight that this enables.
Transform	
Partnering to help transform our processes and culture in the context of the opportunities of the internet era	We will support a digital process revolution across the organisation making the best, most innovative use of new technology. How we best serve our customers will be at the heart of our transformation and everything we do. We will do this by proactively assessing, incorporating and developing the latest technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Automation, Blockchain, Internet of Things etc.

4. Technology principles



Our Corporate Technology Standards shows details of the specific technical standards for the technology of the organisation. These directly support the following overarching technology principles

Most appropriate technology provision

Technology services be that systems, infrastructure or platforms will be provided in the most appropriate way. A cost, benefit and risk analysis will be undertaken for provision decisions including our resilience and availability requirements, alongside reviewing the environmental impact of how the technology is provided. Cloud services are a preference but must pass the cost, benefit and risk test.

Digital innovation

We will adopt a healthy risk management approach with regards to Digital innovation actively seeking out new approaches to our technology. All innovations must be able to demonstrate that they will increase efficiency or offer new business models.

Ready for a modern digital world

Services that are customer facing will be digitally enabled with an ICT & Digital service that can support the 24/7 nature of digital self-service.

Technology consolidation

Technology services will be provided from much fewer, but fit for purpose, up to date and standardised systems, solutions and infrastructures.

Data to allow us to always improve our outcomes

Duplication and inefficiency will be removed by streamlining, standardising and cleansing our datasets, making sure that data can be presented accurately, clearly and that it can flow between systems where required – taking full advantage of our data warehouse

Security by design

Data and information security will be at the heart of everything we do along with our ever evolving and advancing strategies and activities to protect us from cyber threats.

5. How and what will we deliver on this strategy?



Due to the amount of change required and the pace at which technology evolves, this strategy and associated activity roadmaps and plans need to be continually updated, managed and monitored. This is required to ensure that the roadmap and technology direction of travel remains relevant and in line with the organisational needs. The **ICT & Digital Service Plan** will be updated quarterly, linking through to associated project and programme documentation. It will be the centralised location for updates against ICT roadmap activity.

With this revision of the strategy we are also introducing a focus on what we are calling Business Digital Enablers.

Technology is one of the foundations to digital transformation. However, transformation, business change or service redesign cannot be delivered through technology alone. The benefits of digital technologies stem from how they are integrated with people and processes, leading to business change and innovation.

But given the speed of innovation in the digital marketplace, keeping pace with change and understanding how they can enable service transformation is difficult.



Our **Business Digital Enablers** document looks at the current digital technologies available to business and service areas. It is intended as a reference guide to structure strategic decisions with services on how to integrate these digital technologies in to their future service delivery models. We will update this document quarterly in line with the ICT & Digital Service Plan.

6. Jargon Busting

We appreciate that technology strategies can use phrases or terms that might not be very familiar. We have tried to keep the jargon to a minimum but below is a table which seeks to explain some of the more technical terms we have used.

Artificial intelligence

This describes development of systems and computers that can independently think and learn like humans do. Examples of artificial intelligence include customer facing chat bots where customers visit a website and can interact, via a chat window, with an artificial intelligence engine that appears to be a customer services agent by answering questions and providing advice.

Blockchain

Blockchain technology is a way of transferring data or records (blocks) in a very secure and transparent way. One of the best known examples of Blockchain is BitCoin and cryptocurrency. There are lots of potential use cases for Blockchain. At present HM Land Registry is investigating if it could improve the land registration and property buy-sell process using the technology, and the Department of Work and Pensions is assessing if it could help benefit claimants to manage their money.

Cloud

This describes the delivery of different services or systems through the internet rather than servers installed on our own local network. Examples of cloud technologies include Office 365 (our email, intranet, skype for business).

DigiKnow

This is Coventry City Council's Digital Adoption/Training/ Skills brand for staff.

Information & Communication, Technology (ICT)

ICT is a term used to describe the technology used in the processing of information or providing communication functionality. The term Information Technology (IT) is also commonly used. In general ICT is a description covering end user devices (laptops, printers, phones etc.), the systems we use, and all the infrastructure behind the scenes that makes all of our computers work (servers, databases, our network, Internet connections etc.)

Internet of Things (IoT)

This describes connecting devices such as sensors or "smart" appliances to the internet and letting them communicate with us, each other or other applications. Examples of Internet of Things includes connected bin sensor to report when bins are full, connected animal traps to report when traps have been triggered and air quality sensors. These are all pilots that are currently in progress across the organisation.

Machine learning

This describes the development of systems and computers that can be programmed to perform specific tasks without specific instructions, but they learn from patterns within the data they are processing. Examples of machine learning include improving data quality by machine learning reviewing large sets of data to find and highlight anomalies or errors.

