Why Does Digital Matter?

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Digital offers the opportunity for simple solutions to be put in place that solve complex business issues.

WHY?

Being Digital can have a positive effect on our environment by reducing paper, waste, and stopping unnecessary travel.

WHY?

Doing things digitally saves time and money which means our people can be where they are needed the most and limited finances are put to the best use.

Living in a Digital Age where most of the population consume services online each day, Highland citizens expect their Council to provide an online experience that is quick and accessible.

WHY?

By developing Digital, Data and Technology skills of our people and elected members, we can improve services for the public, increase efficiencies, and make sure we all move forward together.

WHY?

Having the skills and resource to collect, manage and utilise Council data and information, allows for informed decision making around future services, for the benefit of our people and our customers.

Making Digital Happen

» **Best Practice**

Digital Strategy Vision

Digital Transformation is recognised as an integral part of the Council's organisational development, is consistently aligned with the corporate vision for the Highland Council and is supported by strong leadership.

It is enabled by an engaged, valued and committed staff with a transformative digital culture where people take pride in constantly learning and evolving to meet customer needs.

Digital tools and transformative digital solutions are integrated throughout the organisation. This is evident across all services.

Digital is led and owned by services teams, supported, and enabled by ICT & Digital Services.

Making Digital Happen

How do we become a digital council?
Three main areas of focus:

Lead >

Leaders as role models for digital, sponsoring and encouraging change, dedicating resources to support digital and data as required.

Think >

Digital is the responsibility for all in the Council, becoming a central part of how we think about providing services and how we change and improve the Council.
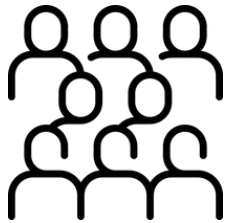
Do >

Clear implementation plans are available for digital, plans for digital development are integrated into service planning and delivery, business change is owned by services, fully supported by the ICT and Digital Services team.

Making Digital Happen

Digital Strategy Delivery:
**three user-focused themes**

People

People:

Development of Digital, Data & Technology Skills (DDaT) is a key part of how we plan to develop our people, and equip them with skills needed for the future, making sure we move forward together.

Insight

Insight:

Making good use of data and information to support plans for change and improvement. Using data and information to support a joined-up approach across the Council, informing the design of services and making sure they are focused on the needs of the people that use them.
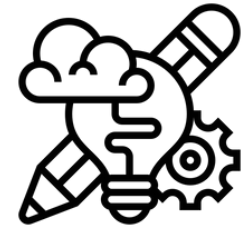
Design

Design:

Putting the customer at the heart of the way we change and improve, with customers being both external and internal to the Council.

Developing Organisational Capability

Digital Foundations	Organisational developmental activities: the building blocks for a digital council.
Digital Strategy and implementation Plan	The Highland Council's Digital Strategy sets out achievable objectives for becoming a digital council. 'Leading', 'Thinking' and 'Doing Digital', are the three key themes. This supporting high-level plan sets out the digital initiatives currently in progress.
Communications & Engagement	Working with our people is key to the success of the Council's Digital Strategy, with Leaders across the Council engaging with their teams. Regular communications come through the Council's well established Change Network, and a variety of other means.
Digital & Data - Service Planning	Best practice shows the development of digital and data must be central to a Council wide approach to planning and providing services. The ICT and Digital Services Team will support this.
Business Intelligence & Data Maturity	The Council's Business Intelligence Vision and the Information & Data Strategy, were published in Autumn, 2022. ICT & Digital Services will continue to work with the teams responsible for business intelligence and data maturity, making sure there is a joined up approach.
Digital Hub	The Digital Hub will be resourced by ICT & Digital Services. It will operate as a centre for excellence, providing support for digital development within Services. Leveraging strategic partners and ongoing external engagement to ensure we learn from sources of innovation and adopt best practice.

Developing Organisational Capability

Strategic Partnership Engagement	Working with partners has been key in developing the Digital Strategy. The ICT & Digital Services team will continue this work, keeping abreast with innovation in local government, sharing information and best practice wherever possible.
Leveraging Key Suppliers	It is essential that the Council makes the best use of its investment in existing technology provided by key suppliers such as Microsoft. The ICT & Digital Services Team will work with Services and strategic suppliers to achieve this.
Digital, Data and Technology Skills (DDaT)	The development of DDaT skills for all of our people and our Members, is key to the progression of digital. In collaboration with People Development, Learn Microsoft launched in January 2023. We continue working together to create learning pathways for DDaT skills. Microsoft Viva Engage, once enabled, will provide the opportunity for a peer-to-peer model of learning to emerge. Support and updates will also come through the Council's Change Network.
Digital - Corporate Workforce Planning	The Human Resources Team have developed the way the Council plans for our future workforce, ensuring new ways of working and digital and data skills are a key part of this activity. The ICT & Digital Services Team will continue to support this.

Current Digital Initiatives

Digital Projects

Projects to take digital forward are already in progress right across the different Services within the Council. More projects will develop and grow as we take the work forward that build the skills of our people, and awareness of digital, data, and service design, making all a key part of activity to improve the Council.

My Council

An ambitious programme to assess and improve our response to customer contact and requests for information and services, applying best practice in the application of digital technologies and the use of data to support an improved customer and staff experience, increase efficiencies and reduce costs.

Connected Customers

This project started in 2020 and provided a new system to improve the way in which manage contact with our customers. The Project team are currently working on improving our digital services through online access to things like Council Tax, and Housing Rent accounts, this also helps to reduce the cost of administering these things, for example, stopping the need for paper bills.

Health and Social Care

The main application that supports our Health & Social Care Service and Adult Social Care in NHS Highland is due to be replaced, offering an opportunity for a review of how the technology used by the Service, and the Partnership can be improved to support the Service Plan and specifically the needs of the people both running and using health and social care services.

Passenger Transport

Two projects that cover the introduction of a new technology to support improvements to the management and delivery of home to school transport service as well as the technology required to support the Councils new in house Bus Service.

Current Digital Initiatives

Managed Print Transformation

The Managed Print Service Project seeks to deliver significant savings by reducing the number of print devices and reducing the print volume usage. This will contribute to the Net Zero journey through reduced consumption of resources, of energy and reduced demand on paper whilst promoting new ways of working through digital.

Maximising Use of our Microsoft Platform

In a joined-up approach, the Digital team, HR and People Development have provided access to 'Learn Microsoft' for our people to self-serve their Microsoft training needs. The Digital Transformation Staff Survey results show high confidence in Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Teams and less confidence in SharePoint, which supports modern ways of working.

Work is underway to migrate file storage from traditional platforms in our data centre onto SharePoint. Working Service by Service, project staff will engage with stakeholders and promote modern ways of working. This will improve security and compliance through moving to cloud storage, whilst reducing costs currently incurred by relying on the data centre. Our people will benefit from increased capability for working collaboratively on documents.

People & Finance Systems

The Council is adopting a new application to replace the applications it currently uses for Financial management, payroll and HR. This will include changes and streamlining of our current business processes to provide an enhanced user experience and increase efficiency

Making Digital Happen
May 2023

● Researching & planning

● Implementing

Digital leadership | **User focused** | **Digital workforce** | **Collaborative** | **Technology & data enabled** | **Innovative**

Audit Scotland's 6 key characteristics of a Digital Council

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Digital Foundations

	May	June	July	August	September
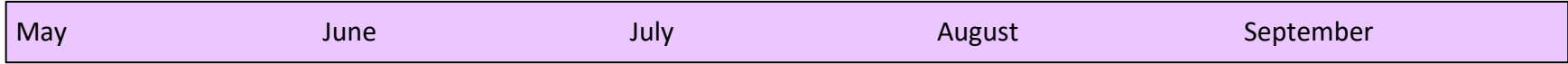
Digital Strategy & Implementation
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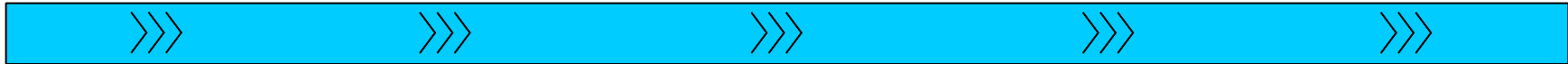
Communications & Engagement
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Digital & Data in Service Planning
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Business Intelligence & Data Maturity
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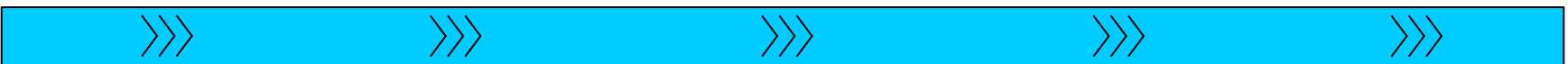
Digital Hub
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Making Digital Happen
May 2023

Researching & planning

Implementing

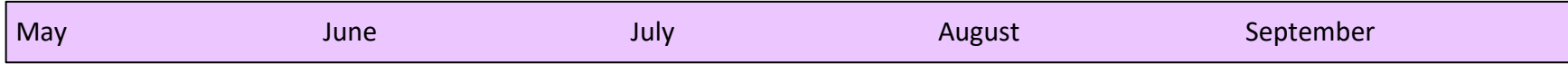Digital leadership | User focused | Digital workforce | Collaborative | Technology & data enabled | Innovative

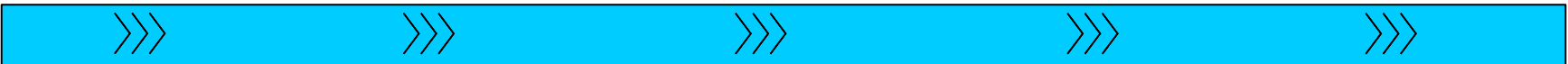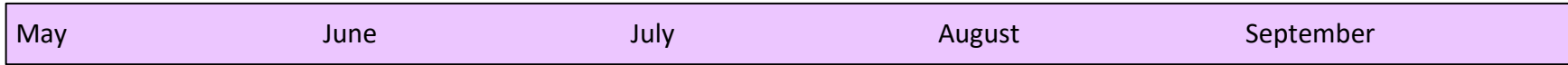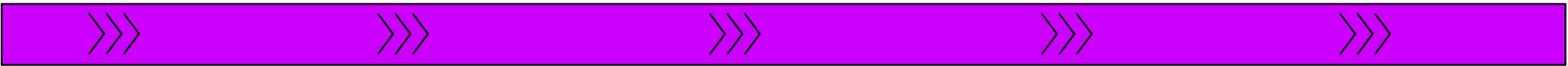**Audit Scotland's 6 key characteristics of a Digital Council**

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Digital Foundations

	May	June	July	August	September

Strategic Partnership Engagement

Leveraging Key Suppliers

Digital, Data and Technology Skills

Digital – Corporate Workforce Planning
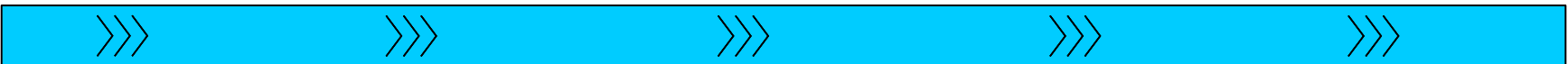
Making Digital Happen
May 2023

Researching & planning (magenta circle)

Implementing (blue circle)

Digital leadership · **User focused** · **Digital workforce** · **Collaborative** · **Technology & data enabled** · **Innovative**

Audit Scotland's 6 key characteristics of a Digital Council

Digital Projects

May	June	July	August	September

My Council
⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ (Researching & planning)

Connected Customers
⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ (Implementing)

Health & Social Care
⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ (Researching & planning)

Passenger Transport
⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ (Researching & planning) | ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ ⟩⟩⟩ (Implementing)

Making Digital Happen
May 2023

Researching & planning

Implementing

Digital leadership

User focused

Digital workforce

Collaborative

Technology & data enabled

Innovative

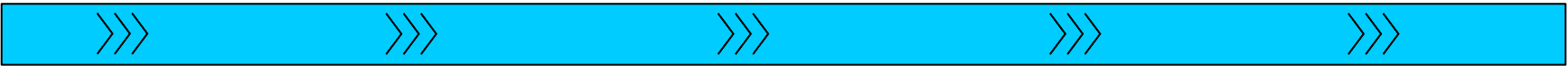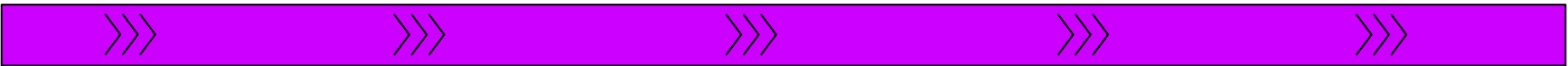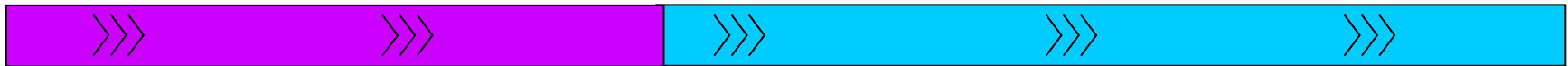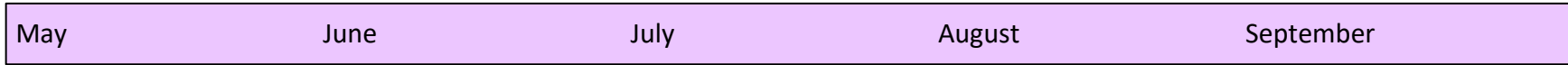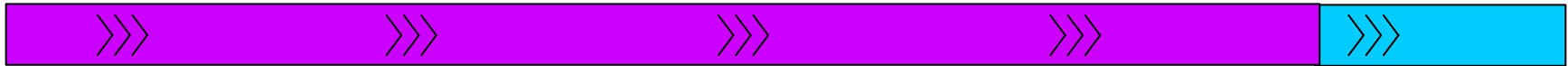**Audit Scotland's 6 key characteristics of a Digital Council**

The Highland Council
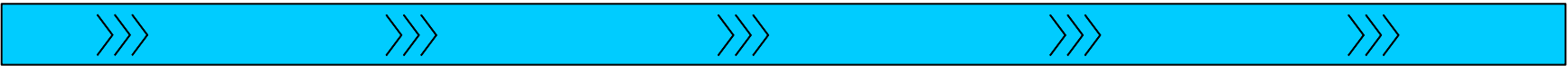Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

Digital Projects

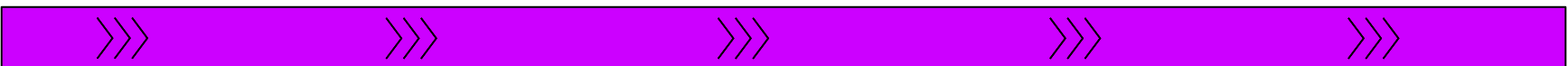| May	June	July	August	September

Managed Print Transformation

Maximising use of our Microsoft Platform

People & Finance Systems

Making Digital Happen

What does it mean for me?

Citizens

As the Council takes its plans for digital forward, citizens should expect an experience with their council, similar to how they engage with their bank, retailer, or social media platform.

Citizens should anticipate that through digital technologies, the Council is easier to transact with, and be assured that alternative ways of accessing services and information are available where digital is not suitable.

In developing its use of data and technology the Council can release more resources to support in-person service delivery for those situations or people that really need it. The Council will use data, information, and technology to improve services and save money, protecting front-line services, especially to the vulnerable.

Citizens can expect that their needs will be considered first where the Council is looking to change and improve service delivery through more effective use of data, assessing demand as well as promoting greater participation in the changes to the way services are provided.

Making Digital Happen

What does it mean for me?

Our People

Our people will be supported in the development of their own Digital, Data & Technology skills (DDaT), with easy access to both self-learning and supported learning.

There will be more opportunities for peer-to-peer support with digital and data skills as we introduce new technology that provides space for asking questions and sharing knowledge.

Our people can expect that DDaT skills will form part of the Council's approach to developing the workforce for the future, ensuring that we all move forward together.

It is recognised that significant parts of the Council's operational service delivery are manual, but the Council will look to understand, and develop, the role of technology in supporting people to carry out their roles.

Our people should expect that leaders throughout the organisation create a culture of innovation, with digital becoming a core part of plans for change and improvement. They will be encouraged to take responsibility for improving service delivery, developing their own digital skills and will have access to the right tools, data, and resources.

Ambitious   Sustainable   Connected

Making Digital Happen

What does it mean for me?
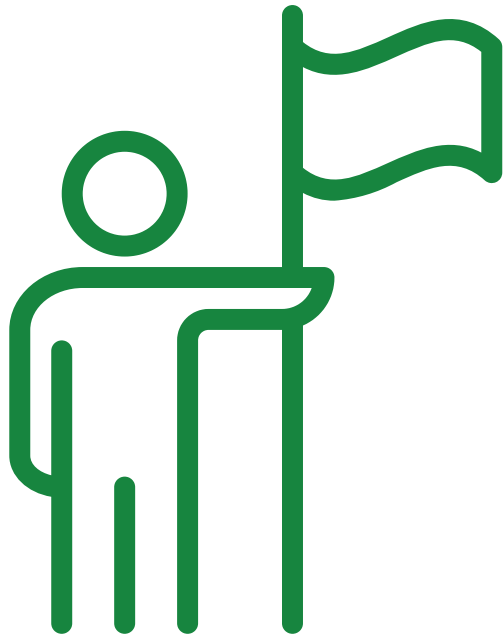
Leaders

Digital transformation is the reimagining of business in the digital age and effective leadership is fundamental for its development and success.

Leaders set the tone for the culture within an organisation, and digital leadership focuses on creating the environment where our people can be innovative in the way they deliver services to the public.

To develop our approach across the organisation there must be much wider responsibility for Digital transformation, it will be central to both planning and providing services.

Sponsorship for digital must come from the Council's Executive Team with leadership for digital being adopted at all levels within the Council.

Leaders understand that digital is as much about people and process, as it is technology. This means that support should be given to develop digital skills across the organisation, with sufficient resources aligned to a core digital team. Within Services, teams will be inspired about the benefits of digital transformation and all development work will start with an understanding of customer needs.

Making Digital Happen

What does it mean for me?

Elected Members

The Highland Council is moving forward with its plans for digital and citizens expect a similar experience to how they engage with their bank, retailer, or social media platform. Elected Members roles are evolving to keep up with these demands, whilst helping to support better outcomes through these new services and channels.

Members have a key role to play in digital leadership, supporting the Council's Digital Strategy, and the resources required to deliver it.

Members recognise the potential of digital to help and support our citizens. Digital can improve how we the Council, support citizens needs and engage with them to make improvements.

Digital can drive efficiencies through innovation, ensuring the Council can continue to meet the needs of its citizens, especially the vulnerable, by making the most of the resources it has. Members should expect to have the right tools and technology to carry out their role, with access to training and support, to develop their own digital skills. As the Council develops its use of data, Members should expect to see timely, accurate data, evidencing how digital is improving outcomes and citizen engagement.

Digital Strategy: an informed approach

The Highland Council

Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

The Highland Council's Digital Strategy is founded upon The National Digital Strategy for Scotland and is aligned with the six key characteristics of a digital council, defined by Audit Scotland in their 2021 report.

A changing nation: how Scotland will thrive in a digital world

Audit Scotland: Digital progress in local government

The ICT & Digital Services Team continue to work in partnership with the Digital Office for Local Government, in both the delivery of the Digital Strategy and the implementation of current digital initiatives. The Digital Office operate in alignment with both the National Strategy and Audit Scotland.

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
DIGITAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT LEADERSHIP AND SKILLS

We need to hear from you!
Digital Transformation Staff Survey

Key insights were captured from council staff in 2021-22 through the Digital Transformation Staff Survey and the Digital Maturity Assessment (conducted by the Digital Office.)

Microsoft

We continue to work with our key supplier Microsoft to increase the adoption of Microsoft tools across the council and encourage working smarter, not harder.

Key external Engagement:

For learning and innovation:
Improvement Service, SOCITM, COSLA and the SCVO.

Best practice gathered from:
Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council, Dundee City Council, The City of Edinburgh Council, Fife Council, Glasgow City Council, North Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Borders Council, Shetland Islands Council, West Dumbartonshire Council and West Lothian Council.

Ambitious   Sustainable   Connected