Local Government ICT Strategy – Delivering Better Services for Communities

January 2013

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Introduction

This strategy has been developed in response to John McClelland's review of public sector ICT infrastructure and the national strategy, '*Scotland's Digital Future – Delivery of Public Services*'. It takes the main themes and links them to the future direction of Local Government, taking into account the Christie Review and the opportunity for digital services at a time of tight financial constraints.

Although this is an ICT strategy, it is not a technology led strategy aimed at technical specialists. It is a strategy about how ICT can enable Local Government to meet customer demands, reduce costs and address Public Sector Reform; in a nutshell how we can provide better services. It is therefore important reading for those involved in designing and delivering public services.

ICT is changing at such a rate that it is impossible to predict what opportunities technology will present to us in 10 years' time. We could not have predicted the widespread use of tablets, smartphones and social media such as Twitter and Facebook. However, we do broadly know some of the technology themes that will affect society and have highlighted these in the strategy.

In contrast to the apparent rate of change of ICT, many of the ICT systems we use in Local Government just now, our legacy systems, have been in place for many years and are still fit for purpose. This strategy aims to reflect the balance between taking advantage collectively of new opportunities in ICT at points of change and the risk and cost of moving away from existing solutions.

Our strategy has a 10 year vision but our action plan is focused on pragmatic actions that we can take over the next two years. The biggest change will not be from the list of actions but from a change in the way we work, accepting that for many areas in ICT, we should do things once not 32 times. Since we began to develop this strategy, we have already seen changes with many Councils already adopting a "share first" principle.

And of course this concept of sharing is just not within Local Government. As we work even more closely with our Community Planning Partners, sharing of ICT between partners can offer real benefits for our communities, allowing us to offer better joined up services.

The private sector also has a role to play. In Local Government, our ICT services have always benefited from a strong private sector input and this strategy recognises that Councils may choose to deliver some or all of their ICT services in partnership with the private sector.

In summary, we are recommending that we take advantage of ICT technologies, plan and procure better, share future developments and operations, all with the aim of delivering better services to our communities.

| **Lorraine McMillan**	**John Grieve**	**Paul Dowie**
SOLACE	**SOCITM**	**Improvement Service**

Overview

This document presents our vision for Local government ICT and how that vision will be realised. It articulates the outcomes we want to achieve and how we are going to do this. It acknowledges that good practice exists and should be reused wherever it is appropriate. To achieve this we need to have strong governance, the capability to deliver and a set of principles by which we will make decisions.
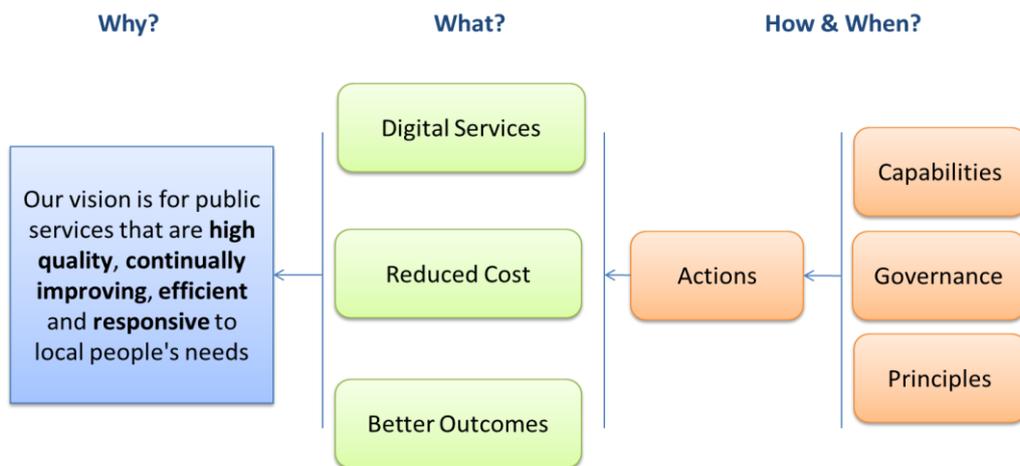
Outcomes

The strategy focuses on the achievement of three outcomes, enabled by ICT that will take us to the vision:
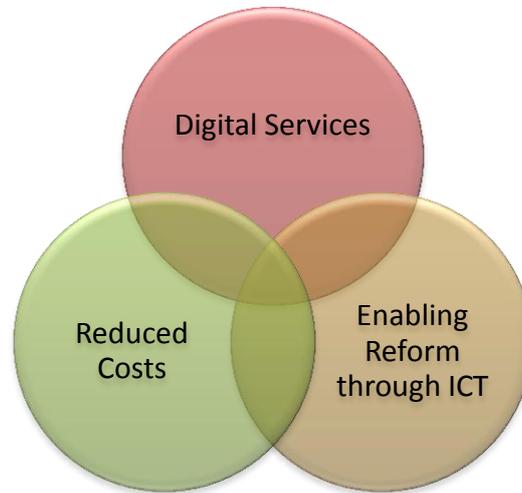
Digital Services - More and more people are expecting their public services to be available through a range of digital channels. Many people in Scotland use digital technologies daily and expect the same sort of applications to be made available in the public sector. Some apparently more complex applications, such as video conferencing, are widely available to the public and have gained acceptance across the generations. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter are established as a method of communication, often replacing printed media.

The website of an organisation is no longer seen as an addition to the services of the organisation but as its customer face. To meet this demand, we aim to have as many public services as possible available digitally across all channels. Access must be secure, especially in terms of sensitive data and on line payments; authentication of identity must be simple; digital services must be well designed, easy to use and they must meet the needs of our customers. Our technology must keep pace with the technologies widely available to our customers – in some areas we should be at the forefront of new applications. There are many examples of digital services from across the UK:

- People can apply for a Blue Badge using a national system that is available on Directgov. This results in a quicker turnaround time for people re-applying for badges whose circumstances are not going to change. Those who use the online application form will only be asked to complete those sections that are relevant to the eligibility under which they are applying.

- Tellmescotland is Scotland's national public information notices portal, offering free online access to statutory and non-statutory public information notices to people living in Scotland. This ensures that all statutory notices are held in one place that is easy to access by citizens, provides greater choice in how Councils inform the public and reduces costs.

- In order for customers to access their own information online, the data held on them by public sector bodies must be correct and shared. North Lanarkshire Council has succeeded in making sure its customer records are both right and shared between its partners so that the customer receives a seamless service.

- Several Councils allow parents to pay online for lunches, school trips and other school expenses using the Young Scot card. This is both quicker and more convenient for the parents and the school. Twenty Councils already use the card for cashless catering.

- More and more Councils have services that can be accessed through smartphones. From reporting faults to making payments, it is becoming easier for customers to access services and more cost effective to deliver them.

Reduced costs - ICT is a cost as well as an investment in better services. We must be sure that we deliver best value by reducing the cost of our ICT infrastructure where possible, and investing in ICT where this can reduce the overall costs of our services e.g. by automating transactional processes. John McClelland's report on Scotland's digital infrastructure identified a number of ways where we can reduce costs by working together across Local Government and the rest of the public sector to share infrastructure and to commission and procure jointly. This is not new to Scotland – we have numerous examples to build on and learn from:

- SEEMiS delivers an effective application to all sectors of the education system on a fully managed service basis. Twenty-eight Local Authorities use the same software and infrastructure. In this case the cost savings are not only related to software but the whole infrastructure and annual management of the system.

- Myjobscotland is the national shared recruitment portal for Scotland's 32 Local Authorities and has achieved significant reductions in advertising costs for Councils as well as reducing the time to process applications.

- Nineteen Councils are using the same CRM software, so 2.4 million Scottish citizens are now having their requests managed by the same common platform.

- A single online planning portal is managed by the Scottish Government in partnership with all Scottish planning authorities. This not only reduces the cost of each Local Authorities developing their own online presence but also the annual costs to maintain the system.

- Scotland Excel is the Centre of Procurement Expertise for the Local Government sector in Scotland. This model has delivered significant savings by jointly procuring goods and services.

- Both the Scottish Government and South Lanarkshire Council provide a shared data centre service. Many organisations use these facilities to reduce the cost of running their own data centres. Some Councils also have agreements to use each other's data centres to provide resilience or contingency.

- The Citizen's Account Service provides a secure environment for citizens to access their data. The service ensures that this data is correct and users are validated. This service provides authentication for nearly two million people who have the national entitlement or Young Scot cards.

Enabling Reform through ICT - The Public Sector Reform agenda is based on the four pillars of the Christie Review, i.e. prevention, place, performance and people. ICT is crucial to enabling the reform agenda, and the better outcomes that will result from it. Secure sharing of data is required by partnerships working on a locality basis, enabling the targeting of prevention activity, 'joined up' services to individuals and families by having a single 'view' of them, and also enables the efficient governance of the partnership.

New approaches to preventing poor outcomes for our older citizens will involve further developments of telecare. Advancing personalisation and self-directed support will allow people to choose, manage and control their own services often through an ICT interface. ICT and social media can help us gather people's views in new ways allowing more opportunity for co-creation between the service user and the service. This outcome is most likely to be delivered by innovation and new services, however there are examples already emerging:

- NHS's My Diabetes My Way portal is used to improve the quality of lives of diabetes sufferers through secure online access to improved information using the Citizen's Account Service, offering earlier and better self-management and control of this condition. The aim is to have 10,000 people using the service by March 2014.

- NHS Lanarkshire, North and South Lanarkshire Councils (Social Work, Education and Housing) as well as the Police and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration work together to share data to protect vulnerable children built on a range of information consent and data sharing protocols – Getting it Right for Every Child.

- Harrow's shop4support is a website for people who need social care. People can use the website to view, and commission, free and low cost community based services and activities.

Our strategy is also closely linked to the achievement of:

A reduction in the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production - ICT developments would be expected to make a contribution to reduced carbon emissions, both directly through the purchase of more energy efficient ICT equipment and the sharing of data centres (which are heavy energy users), and indirectly through the reduction in travel for those using on line services.

Digital enabled economy - The strategy is closely linked to the National Digital Infrastructure programme that aims to improve access to fast broadband services to the public and business across Scotland. Improved broadband access will allow more people to use digital public services which can be particularly important for those living in rural areas where access to traditional services is challenging.

Governance and Capability

We believe that there are seven strategic capabilities that need to be in place if ICT-enabled local public services transformation is to be achieved:

Leadership: Clear and engaging leadership will be needed to realise change. Politicians, managers and staff will need to be involved and energised to improve services. Chief Executives and Heads of IT will have a key role to play in building collaboration across services and with partners and delivering redesigned services.

Shared governance: Provisioning of technology to support transformed local public services should be governed and managed at a Scotland-wide or regional level. Formal governance processes and structures will enable adoption of joined-up technology strategies, architectures, delivery plans, risk management and benefits realisation. These structures must also reflect local needs and aspirations.

Organisational change: New models of delivering services will require different skills and capabilities. Those who provide services will need to exploit the rapid changes in technology as well as understand the demands of the business and its users.

Programme management: As highlighted in a recent Audit Scotland report, programme management and change skills will be critical if programmes are to be delivered within cost and realise the benefits. Programme management will include organisational change programme boards and project boards with proper accountability and separation of policy, implementation and audit.

Strategic commissioning: A joined-up approach to the commissioning of services (ICT or otherwise) will deliver increased value through aggregation and rationalisation, and a focus on public service outcomes. Managing risk and innovation can then be balanced against the needs of the citizen, rather than the convenience of the commissioning organisations.

Procurement and supplier management: Relationships with suppliers to local public services should be aggregated rather than dealt with on an organisation-by-organisation basis. This should serve to reduce costs on all sides, maximising reuse of existing contracts and reducing input-based specifications and single organisation tenders.

Collaborative services: ICT infrastructure (e.g. public sector networks and data centres) and associated services should be aggregated and managed by fewer organisations. Senior professionals managing and running ICT infrastructure and support desks, and technical specialists should be shared. ICT should be put in place to enable organisational change, information sharing and integration, and support the joint communications and systems required for transformation and shared delivery of local public services.

Principles

We set out three principles that we will test our actions against:

> 1. **What we do is customer driven.**
>
> 2. **It will be simple, standardised and, if possible, automated.**
>
> 3. **We will first look to reuse and share.**

Trends and Drivers

The Scottish Government set out its priorities for public sector reform around four pillars:

Prevention - Reduce future demand by preventing problems arising or dealing with them early on. To promote a bias towards prevention, help people understand why this is the right thing to do, the choices it implies as well as the benefits it can bring.

Performance – To demonstrate a sharp focus on continuous improvement of the national outcomes, applying reliable improvement methods to ensure that services are consistently well designed based on the best evidence and are delivered by the right people to the right people at the right time.

People – We need to unlock the full creativity and potential of people at all levels of public service, empowering them to work together in innovative ways. We need to help create ways for people and communities to co-produce services around their skills and networks.

Partnership – We need to develop local partnership and collaboration, bringing public, third and private sector partners together with communities to deliver shared outcomes that really matter to people.

We believe that the technology has a major role in supporting the reform agenda and three outcomes are designed to directly support the four pillars and can be enabled by several technology trends.

Digital Services

- **Super-fast broadband** will provide our customers with a faster and richer experience when using and accessing digital services.

- The rise of **smartphones** continues to present opportunities for our customers to access services anywhere and for our employees deliver services differently.

- **Machine-to-machine** is a broad label that can be used to describe any technology that enables automated wired or wireless communication between mechanical or electronic devices. It allows networked machines to exchange information and perform actions without the manual assistance of humans. This will potentially allow us to make quicker and better decisions on our built environment, assets and other services such as transport.

- Although not new, **'app stores'** present Local Authorities with an opportunity to develop, deploy and evolve common applications on a shared basis.

- A major trend within many organisations is the concept of **bring your own technology.** This is where employees use their devices and/or procure their own software to do their jobs.

Reduced Cost

- **Cloud computing** – the maturing market in commoditised ICT products and services that can be accessed on pay as you go basis where data and applications are stored on a remote server "in the cloud". This will redefine how we procure, manage and deliver ICT services in the future. It also provides the potential to share services without significant organisational restructuring.

Enabling Reform through ICT

- *Mobile technology* – access anywhere, anytime, on any device to information and services, ubiquitously available to elected members, managers, front-line staff and users of services. This will support greater integration of services as employees will not be constrained by organisational barriers.

- Development of '**social business' tools** that help us to collaborate and communicate across boundaries at a relatively low cost. This allows partners to collaborate and share more easily.

- **Business Intelligence** - the ability to collate and analyse different data sets and information in real time to support decision-making now and in the future. This includes intelligent exploitation of huge data sets - so-called '**big data'**.

Gartner predicts that technology changes will also have a considerable impact on how we deliver IT in the future and this will mean different skills and competencies will be required:

- By 2014, 90% of organisations will support corporate applications on personal devices.

- Three out of ten IT functions will become cloud brokers for their organisation.

- By 2015, mobile application development projects will outnumber PC projects by a ratio of four to one.

- By 2016, half of IT provision will be delivered via the cloud.

Governance

Political and officer leadership and governance will be required to drive forward on this agenda. Strong leadership action will be required to encourage sharing and early wins through shared procurement, whilst developing and agreeing an organisational model to facilitate structured sharing in the longer term.

Governance should also ensure that clear links are made with the key reform programmes such as Welfare Reform and Health and Social Care integration which are likely to require

joined up ICT systems and the sharing of data across the public sector. A new ICT Political Management Group has been established by COSLA to:

- Demonstrate leadership by local government and to publicise and highlight what we are already doing.

- Encourage greater joint working and sharing on ICT now by promoting reuse and new procurement standards that encourage ICT sharing.

- Support Scotland Excel to achieve more shared procurement and introduction of contracts that allow sharing.

- Ensure that within 12 months a formal proposition is in place for future sharing and collaboration delivery.

The group is supported by a Local Government ICT Board with membership from SOLACE, SOCITM, Scotland Excel, The Scottish Government and the Improvement Service.

Resource Planning

It is acknowledged that this programme will require resources. It is also recognised that resources are already committed to these actions in many organisations, including: the Scottish Government, Local Authorities, other sectors, the Improvement Service, Scotland Excel, Socitm and private sector organisations. Critical to success will be the effective use of resources between these organisations. A resource plan has been developed and will be implemented as funding is secured.

Approaches to Delivery

In order to achieve the outcomes it is important to consider what actions can be delivered by which organisation. Many opportunities will be exclusive to Local Authorities and are prescribed by the same regulatory requirements, such as Elections Systems, Trading Standards and Non Domestic Rates. Other solutions will require a cross sector approach, such as interfaces to support health and social care integration. Some will require a national approach across all sectors, such as SWAN, broadband and authentication.

National

Local
Authority

Other Sectors

SWAN

Broadband

Authentication

Elections Systems

Non Domestic Rates

Trading Standards

Health & Social
Care Interfaces
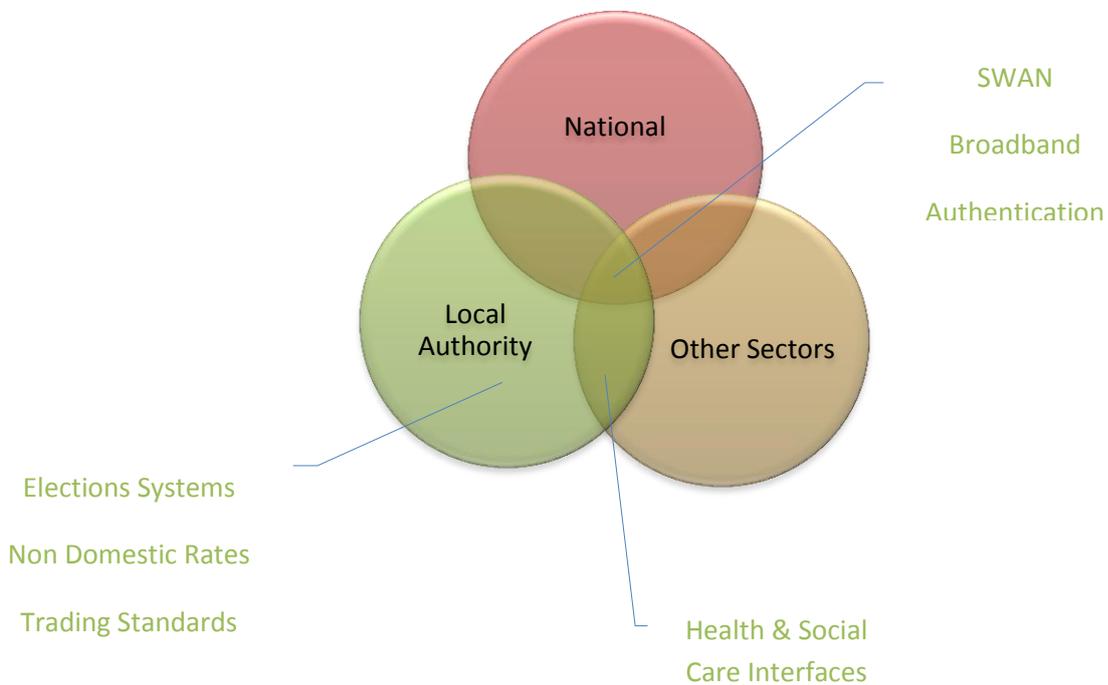
Two Year Plan

In order to achieve our vision, realise the outcomes, ensure the most effective governance, and build the required capabilities we have set out a number of specific actions. While this strategy does not recommend specific technical solutions, all actions need to be considered in the light of the emerging technology trends presented in the previous section.

These actions are grouped around the three main outcomes and governance. This action plan will be developed to include specific initiatives and timescales. Each action will also be mapped against the national benefits and measurement framework.

	ACTIONS	Linked Initiatives	Responsibility
1	**Digital Services**		
A	Implement more digital services.	Customer First/Channel Shift	Richard Stiff (SOLACE)

Irene McKelvey (SOCITM) |
B	Present options to co-ordinate how we segment our customers and how we gather the data required to make decisions on how we deliver services.	Customer First/Channel Shift	
C	Have one way to give our customers easy and secure access to their information and services across public sector agencies.	Scotland's Digital Future	
2	**Reduced Cost**		
A	Develop national or cluster contracts with suppliers for key business applications.	Scotland Excel	Michelle Morris (SOLACE)

Kay Brown (SOCITM)

Dorothy Cowie (Scotland Excel) |
| **B** | All councils to amend their contract terms for future procurements to allow sharing and hosting of applications. | Scotland Excel | |
| **C** | Build a shared infrastructure. Starting with the delivery of a Scottish Wide Area Network and a more cost effective approach to data centres building on existing initiatives. | Scotland's Digital Future | |

	ACTIONS	Linkages	Responsibility
3	**ICT Enabled Reform**		
A	Assess the value of developing shared platforms to deliver self-directed support.		Paul Dowie (IS) Charlie Anderson (SOCITM)
B	Develop a framework for public sector reform initiatives.		
C	Ensure that we share data and have a single view of the customer, particularly with regards to health and social care integration.	Scotland's Digital Future Data Sharing Board	
D	Create common platforms around technologies that help our employee to work 'anywhere and at any time'.		
4	**New Governance and Organisational Change**		
A	Political leadership: Proposal for a Cosla leadership group for the first two years to drive change.		Lorraine McMillan (SOLACE) Colin Mair/Paul Dowie (IS) Dorothy Cowie (Scotland Excel) Kay Brown (SOCITM)
B	A new delivery model will be developed for the sharing of services, to coordinate existing sharing across Council and to commission strategic solutions.		
C	New procurement model: Scotland Excel will lead on procurement of ICT working closely with the national cross sector organisation and Scottish Procurement.	Scotland Excel	
D	Approach to organisational change: Identify and acquire the skills needed to run ICT based on customer needs and collaboration.	Socitm	
E	Develop the skills of our workforce to meet new demands and expectations including a 'top talent' skills development scheme.	Scotland's Digital Future	
F	Strategy and policy: Co-ordinate ICT strategy policy development across all Local Authorities.		
G	Establish a benefits and measurement framework to measure the outcomes.	Scotland's Digital Future	
H	Set up Innovation and Knowledge forum.		

Appendix 1: Local Government ICT Board

Acknowledgement should be given to the members of the Local Government ICT Board who contributed to the development of the strategy:

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Charlie Anderson (SOCITM)

John Grieve (SOCITM)

Paul Dowie (Improvement Service/COSLA)

Dorothy Cowie (Scotland Excel)

Julie Kane (Scottish Government)

With support and input from:

Simon Haston, Programme Manager, Improvement Service

Martin Ferguson and colleagues, SOCITM

Derek Walker, East Renfrewshire Council

Martin Brown and Tom McHugh, Improvement Service

and many colleagues across Scottish Local Government.