

ICT Strategy

2025-
2028



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



1. Introduction

1.1. PURPOSE

This document provides an overview of the ICT strategy for South Kesteven District Council.

1.2. SCOPE

The objective of this document is to:

- › Set out the ICT vision for South Kesteven District Council.
- › Demonstrate the close link between the ICT strategy and the Corporate 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

The implementation of recent technology initiatives enables us to work in a more agile and flexible way. Building on the foundations of the current ICT Strategy we are now looking to further strengthen our approach by empowering services to really explore the transformational opportunities that digital tools and technologies offer, ensuring that we can 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.

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 and use the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) to ensure our defences are matching best practices.

This Strategy looks to underpin the Council's continued drive for efficiency and transformation through digitalisation. This will be supported by working with services to optimise the delivery of our technology services.

2.1. BUSINESS CONTEXT

The ICT Strategy is formulated to meet the business needs based on the requirements stemming from:

Medium Term Financial Plan.

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 contributing towards addressing the financial challenges.

Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out our vision and priorities for the District. The ICT Strategy and associated ICT service plan has been designed against the key themes of:

- Connecting Communities
- Sustainable South Kesteven
- Enabling Economic Opportunity
- Effective Council

The NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) - The NCSC is committed to working constructively with regulators, Lead Government Departments for critical national infrastructure sectors, industry and other stakeholders to help ensure that the most nationally important networks and information systems are subject to effective cyber risk management regimes. This commitment has shaped the NCSC approach to developing the CAF collection.

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.

These are :

ICT platform – end to end interactions are simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity is hidden from our customers.

A Digital Workforce – enabling our staff to have access to the right tools to do their job and be confident in maximising the use and benefits of technology in daily work.

ICT Platform

The principles enable us to:

- 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

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.

The ICT platform principle for end-to-end interactions should be as simple and streamlined as possible. Any process complexity should be hidden from our customers.

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 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.

A Digital Workforce 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.

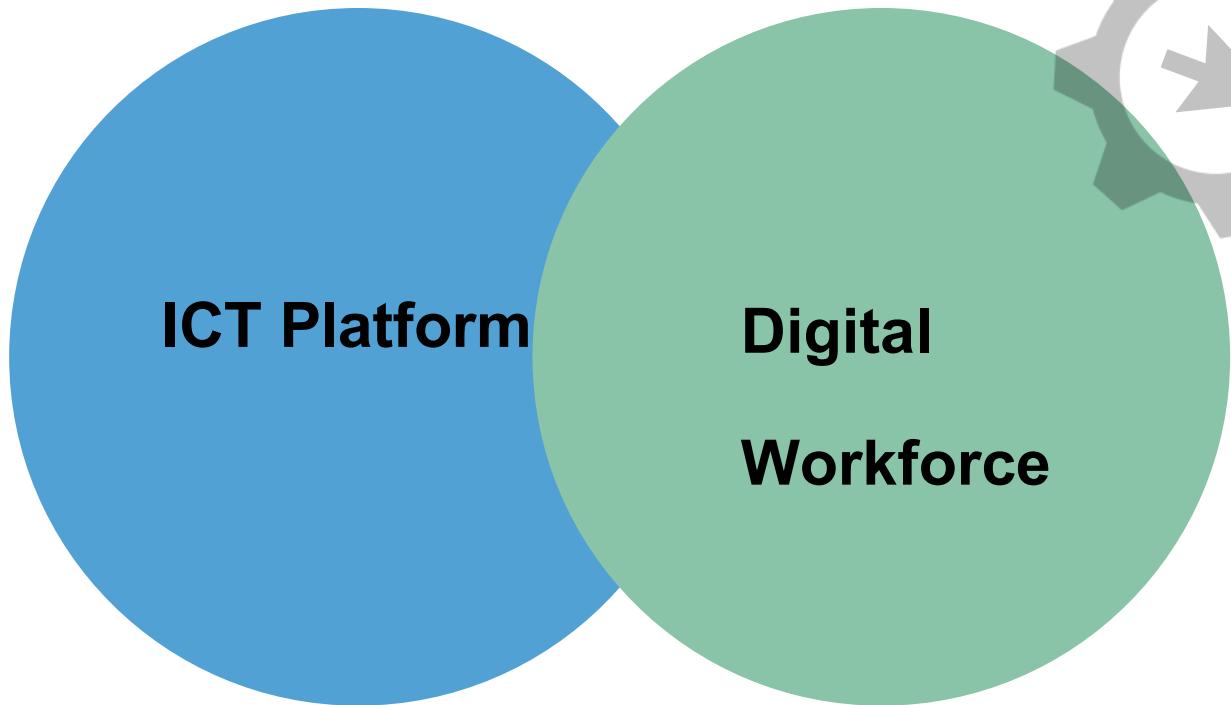
We will do this by:

- 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.

The ICT 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.





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 programme 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 Corporate Plan by delivering the very best, easiest to use, efficient and innovative services to our residents 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 likeminded 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 employees 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 and residents.

We will do this by 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 development plan 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 (AI), Machine Learning, Automation, Internet of Things (IOT) 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. Customers need to view and amend information and apply for services when it is convenient to them.

- Technology Modernisation

Technology and services should be fit for purpose and up to date. Systems, solutions and infrastructures should be standardised where possible.

- 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. Data will only be retained when required and relevant and in line with our GDPR policy.

- Security by design

Data and information security will be at the heart of everything we do, provided by 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, the ICT Service Plan needs to be continually updated, managed and monitored. The Service Plan will be reviewed quarterly and updated annually, linking through to associated project and programme documentation.

IT Strategy Work Programme Plan.docx

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.



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