

Information, Communication Technology & Digital Strategy 2016-2021

Empowered citizens and colleagues,
enabled by technology

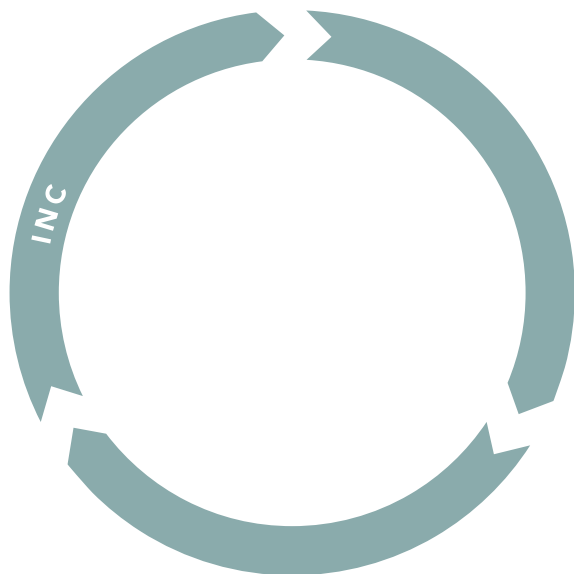
Background

We all want to see a future council built on a shared commitment to understanding people's needs and putting them first. We can use ICT and the latest

Introduction

Council of the Future

The Council of the Future will be built on a shared commitment to understanding people's needs and putting them first. A major change programme across the council will be undertaken over the next four years. This programme will make it easier for citizens to access our services and the information we hold. Our future relies on how we use technology, in the pursuit of knowledge to enable better outcomes for all.



The ICTD strategy and its associated projects and programmes therefore play a key role as 'enablers', supporting the way in which the council will provide services in the future, balancing the need to deliver short term savings alongside strategic long- term investment in technology.

Collaboration is key

The development of the ICTD strategy and supporting analysis will make the way that ICTD is provided across the council more transparent. The focus shouldn't just be technology used within the council, but also on people, communities and businesses.

As well as linking the ICTD strategy to our council business plan, we'll also link it to:

- **Work with partners** – such as the National Health Service (NHS), Fire and Rescue, Police, other central and local government authorities, suppliers and voluntary groups.
- **Devolution** – the handing down of powers to the council from central government, so we can make decisions and spend money for the benefit of citizens.
- **Other strategies** – from within the council, from partners, suppliers, areas of expertise and those from central government.

Ultimately, the redesigned ICTD strategy will provide an effective, efficient and reliable set of services, in support of the council's business plan and future vision.

Aims of the strategy

Our ICTD Strategy will help us to:

- Position ICTD as a vital support for achieving council objectives.
- Define the future ‘minimum standard’ for ICTD.
- Gain approval for ICTD investment and improvement.
- Support the move to a new ICTD operating model and contract.
- Balance the need for savings against investing in service enablers.
- Develop robust governance and assurance.
- Enable collaboration with partners, both citywide and regionally.
- Encourage local and national companies to invest in Birmingham.
- Realise our vision for ICTD of the future.

A combined ICTD strategy

Every technology with potential to transform starts in isolation and digital is no exception. ICT, citizen access, HR, waste and finance etc. each develop a strategy, which then blends into our business plan and future vision.

Why combine ICT and Digital strategies?

Typically, an ICT strategy defines the future use of information and communication technology as-sets whilst a digital strategy focuses on the organisational design, the culture, policies and priorities needed to introduce new and emerging technologies.

Both strategies focus on enabling and optimising the business, so by combining the two strategies we can deliver cutting edge ‘best of breed’ and integrated ICTD services (with partners and suppliers).

We can embed the cultural change needed to:

- Use best practice.
- Improve the performance of our workforce.
- Manage demand effectively.

An independent review carried out by Socitm (Society of Information Technology Management), revealed a number of positive findings, including:

“The only combined ICT & D Strategy that we have seen produced in all the strategy work that Socitm have completed. The most robust, complete and logical ICT & D Strategy Socitm have seen (even if we take other ICT and Digital strategies separately)”.

ICT and Digital design principles

The combined ICT and Digital approach will enable us to make better, more ‘strategic’ investment decisions in technology, based on the ‘simplify, standardise, share’ design principles of the Local CIO Council (LCIOC).

These principles set out its vision to speed up better outcomes and savings for local public services through redesign and digital transformation.

The principles are:

- **Simplify** – the way we operate, in order to add value and drive up efficiency.
- **Standardise** – the way we operate, emulating the best and enabling agility.
- **Share** – collaborate, innovate and inform.

Six key themes

The six key themes

Our vision for ICTD services has been influenced by many factors, both internally from each of the council's directorates and from consulting with several external organisations.

Integrated ICT

Using this method has enabled us to define the required theme objectives and successful outcomes. Each theme is linked to the core values of the council and supports the key aims of its business plan and future vision.

The main features of these themes are:

- No theme is independent; all are inter-connected.
- Together they create a framework for change.
- Together they define a minimum acceptable standard known as 'reference architecture'.
- They will be managed and coordinated internally and will be informed and supported both internally and externally.

The themes are aligned to:

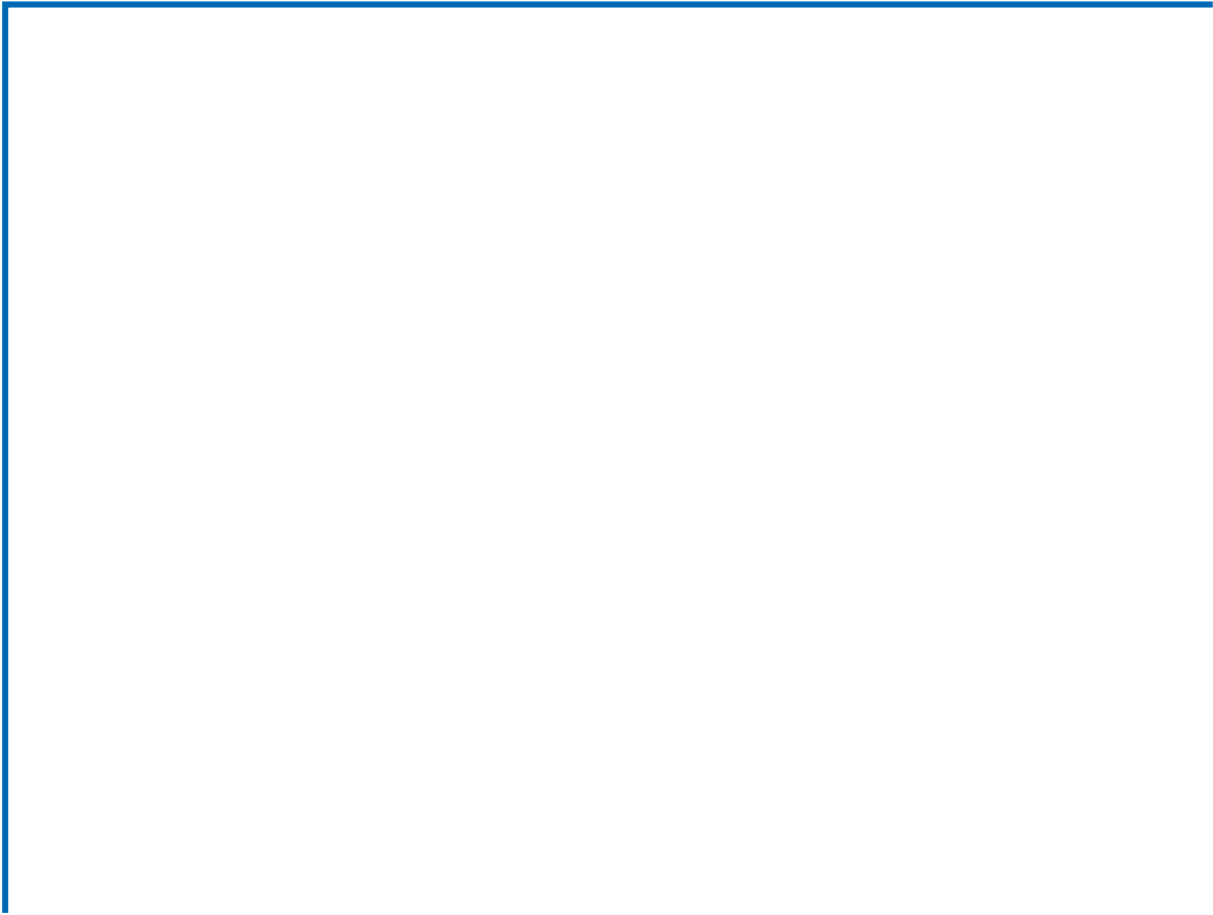
- Our guiding principles.
- The aims of our partners and other stakeholders.
- Industry best practice.

Theme One

Integrated ICT and Digital services

Objective: We'll deliver an innovative, reliable, flexible, integrated, secure and well managed service.

Technology underpins every area of the council's work; without it we cannot sustain or improve our business. We need to enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of the



Theme Two

Digital facilitation

Objective: We'll help you to go digital.

We want as many of you as possible to benefit from the 'digital economy'. Smarter use of technology can bring fantastic opportunities for local people, business, the council and our partners.

New technology has become part of our everyday lives. Many citizens have broadband at home and can access the internet on phones, tablets and laptops for shopping and using social media such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

For the council this means using digital technology to improve the way services are designed and delivered. It also means we can connect with you in the way you expect us to. We have a real opportunity to make a difference, making sure what's on offer digitally is not only bang up-to-date, but makes the most of the devices and technologies that young and older people enjoy using in their everyday lives.

We will meet our objective by achieving the following successful outcomes:

- **Digital inclusion** - we're working with partners to make sure as many of you as possible (especially from the poorest communities) get access to online services. This will mean more easily available access, training and support to our customers.
- **Digital citizens** - when you use the internet, we'll make sure the online service you get is user-friendly, efficient, designed with you and based on your expectations for using council services.
- **A digital workforce** - our workforce will get the right training to use the right digital tools so that they can provide the right online services in a way that we can all be proud of.
- **A digital city** - we will work with our partners to help equip communities and businesses with the technology they need to enhance their lives. We'll help you get connected and help you learn how to use it, whether you're at school, an older resident, or need our assistance in any other way.
- **Digital collaboration** - we are working much more closely with partner organisations to deliver joined up services. This means our digital systems will change to allow this to happen and we'll continue to talk and work with existing and new partners.

Improved new tenant applications for social housing

Existing way of working

- Citizen picks up a paper form at an office or requests the form by telephone.
- Citizen returns completed form by post.
- Council inputs data to council management system.
- Council assesses eligibility and sends letter with ID for online lettings allocation system.
- Citizen bids online for preferred home - if bid successful, council send offer letter.
- Citizen views home and accepts or

New way of working

Application processing time significantly reduced, all tenancy information is in one place and online, with 24/7 access

Theme Three

Insight

Objective: To boost our capability, to turn data into information and information into insight.

Theme Four

Commissioning

Objective: Enable the council to provide excellent ICTD and value for money.

This involves making the most of our local ICTD suppliers to commission and purchase a flexible, high-performing service at a reasonable cost. The current ICTD contract is provided by Service Birmingham, a partnership formed between the council and Capita, which ends in March 2021. Driven by the ICTD Strategy the ICTD requirements to support future services are being considered as the council transforms to be a more agile and leaner organisation.

Service Birmingham

Service Birmingham supports around 12,500 non-teaching staff at more than 250 council buildings and 400 schools and plays an integral part in all council services. The ICTD it delivers touches every person in the city and beyond. However there is less than five years remaining of the contract and the alternative options for delivering our ICTD service is a major aspect of the ICTD strategy and future council planning.

In evaluating alternative options, we'll take into account:

- Lessons learnt from the current Service Birmingham partnership and other similar organisations.
- The need to have future contracts that are flexible and capable of changing, in-line with the council and without penalty.
- The need to include regular 'value-for-money' market-testing.

- How we can best engage with local ICTD suppliers, to benefit from their knowledge, expertise and skills.
- The need to maintain internal expertise to manage, govern and monitor all new contracts, whether internally or externally provided.

We will meet our objective by achieving the following successful outcomes:

- **ICTD transition** – to a new operating model, that meets the council's business needs, with the best ICTD on the market, that's managed and governed effectively.
- **ICTD investment** – acknowledging that you sometimes need to invest in order to save money.
- **ICTD sustaining thaleet osu11urement**

Theme Five

Governance

Objective: To govern and manage ICTD effectively.

ICTD is not just a commodity that's something we buy in - strategic ICTD is a key enabler for the council. Since the start of Service Birmingham, wherever possible we've tried to introduce new ICTD, automate business processes, make new efficiencies, lower operating costs and strive for excellence where we can. As we move to a new leaner, more agile council which is supported by the best ICTD, robust governance, assurance and planning is needed to ensure that the planned investments are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the council. We will work to recognise and ensure that the ICTD supports our needs, helping to identify requirements by working in partnership with clients and helping to develop and deliver solutions. Investment decisions will deliver business priorities; achieve best value and economies of scale, whilst avoiding duplication.

ICTD will support the council in working to address the financial challenges we face as an authority. Driven by the ICTD strategy and its six key themes, a five year investment plan, identifying enabling projects is currently being developed. This will include monitoring the planned expenditure of the ICTD service. An 'invest to save' approach is one of our guiding principles in the review of any proposed spend on ICTD. This ICTD strategy forms part of a wider portfolio of documents that collectively form our governance framework for ICTD. The final version will contain a technical roadmap that will help to ensure that we have absolute clarity about the choice of technologies we are using and when they will be delivered.

This approach is critical; to avoid poor decision making around the choice of new systems, whilst supporting the future consolidation and rationalisation of existing ICTD. Collectively this helps to ensure that any investment made in ICTD is maximised and aligned with the council's ambition.

We will meet our objective by achieving the following successful outcomes:

- **ICTD Intelligent Client Function (ICF)** - monitoring how the council's ICTD contract is run and performs. Our highly skilled team will expand to become a 'centre of excellence' led by a new senior head of ICTD. This team will make sure we get the agreed levels of service from our current and future suppliers.
- **Aligning business and ICTD strategies** - ensuring we provide ICTD that is innovative, reliable, flexible, integrated, secure and well managed.
- **Robust governance and assurance** - building on existing governance to ensure everyone, from colleagues to suppliers, comply with corporate policies and standards.
- **Maintaining compliance** - maintaining excellence by managing and monitoring compliance across business, systems, technology, data, security, the Public Service Network (PSN) etc.

Theme Six

Innovation

Objective: We will innovate and bring in new methods, ideas and solutions.

Innovation is crucial to the continuing success of the council; we must be able to introduce new products or solutions to either address existing business problems more effectively or maximise new opportunities to cut costs and improve services.

Local government is undergoing major changes; money from central government continues to be cut, whilst local fundraising opportunities are increasing. This has led to a major rethinking of how we can deliver future council services. As an organisation seen traditionally as a welfare provider, the council now needs to adjust to a role in boosting economic growth and ICTD will need to support this.

The Innovation theme is about how we look at existing and new challenges and identify how ICTD can support such major changes in the supply and demand of services. The supply side is about gaining awareness of what local, national and global partners can contribute. The demand side is about closer collaboration with stakeholders (workforce, citizens, businesses and visitors etc.) to understand what they need.

We will meet our objective by achieving the following successful outcomes:

- **An innovation lab** - (as part of a wider city Innovation Hub) will be created, to inspire and enable people both within and those connected to the council. It will help us rethink our systems, promote new ways of working and encourage entrepreneurship.
- **An innovation portal** - will be developed so that our customers can put forward innovative business and technological ideas and solutions that meet our key challenges. We'll break down the barriers to putting new ideas in place by focusing on thoughts and inspirations and recognising and rewarding individual or group contributions.
- **Guided and sustainable innovation** - we'll ensure that the environmental, social and financial impacts of innovations are always fully taken into account, right from first idea, through to research and development and eventual service delivery. We'll support research and development via innovative and agile services, such as the creation of a 'cloud'-based platform to enable a fast response to a great idea.

Delivering the strategy

ICTD, like all services across the council must achieve significant savings, balancing the need for tactical, short-term savings, against the need for strategic long-term investment in technology. To support the council's objectives and those of the ICTD strategy and its six key themes, the redesign of ICTD services will provide innovative, reliable and flexible systems for the council. Efficiencies will also be achieved from improved control of ICTD projects and a more strategic approach to investment in technologies that deliver savings to the council. As well as improving and maintaining the efficient, day-to-day running of the council's ICTD service, two major programmes of work will focus on designing and putting in place a new ICTD operating model to support the council as it undergoes radical change to meet its financial challenges.

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