Appendix 4- Denbighshire County Council Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025) progress delivery update- September 2024

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
1	Aligning systems and technology to deliver online services	• A new Registrars certificate ordering and booking system has been implemented and DCC are in a position where we could take the next step to providing online services to residents/customers subject to approval by the Superintendent Registrars. • A new online portal has been implemented for Planning allowing the searching of and commenting on planning applications. This went live in May 2024. • An education portal for admissions is scheduled to go live in September 2024. • Plans to implement a new CRM have commenced. We are looking at technologies and platforms that can deliver more than simple CRM functionality such as offering the ability to create bespoke applications and forms and simplify integration. This is also an opportunity to reduce the number of applications the Council purchases and introduction of single-customer sign-on. • Market research has taken place for an integrated HR and Payroll application. This will continue and will inform the procurement strategy. • The Council has advertised an Invitation to Tender for a new Social Care system. Subject to final political approval, this system will bring opportunities for increased online services such as online submission of referrals. • The new social care finance application currently being implemented will include a provider portal allowing organisations to view documents and submit invoices and related data to the Council. • The replacement corporate finance system went live in April 2024. • A new corporate website went live in 2019.

Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
	• New mobile applications have been implemented in Youth Services and Children's Social Care.
	• ICT will be supporting an all-Wales implementation of a new Library Management System (LMS) over summer and autumn 2024.
	• The Council went live with a new Operations Management System for Waste and Recycling in summer 2024 which integrates with our CRM system, allowing for efficiencies in how enquiries and requests are processed. This is a single system consolidating what was previously at least three applications into one i.e. refuse, garden waste, contaminated waste.
	• The implementation of the Housing Management System allowed the consolidation of two separate applications into one. This also gave rise to providing direct access to systems for trade operatives in Housing Repairs and Maintenance.
	• An information systems strategy is currently being developed with Housing Services and this is expected to be published in the Autumn of 2024.
	• Implementation of a new Coroners management system which allows online reporting of unexpected deaths. This went live in 2020.
	• A new Case Management System (CMS) for Legal Services went live in 2024.
	• A replacement system to manage FOI, EIR and SAR was implemented in 2022.
	• A digital preservation for the long-term storage of digital records is due to be implemented, potentially providing means for members of the public to search for records online.
	• The implementation of Microsoft Teams has led to efficiencies in travel time and spending and has led to other benefits including staff wellbeing.

	Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
		• Implementation of webchat functionality for Council Tax which has led to a channel shift and a reduction in processing time for enquiries taken via that channel.
2	Corporate approach to ICT procurement	• ICT procurements are channelled via ICT and require ICT sign-off, however, the timeliness of requesting ICT involvement is not always early enough in the process. • Some Service-led projects do not always utilise sufficient ICT expertise which can lead to less desirable outcomes. More work is required in this area. • Procurement and ICT Teams have developed good, well-established relationships. • An internal audit investigation into ICT procurement concluded in 2024 and the service was judged to be of medium assurance.
3	Reshaping how the Council works through technology	• Please see comments in row 1 ("Aligning systems and technology to deliver online services")
4	Addressing digital exclusion and supporting Denbighshire's digital economy	• The Community Resilience Team have been working closely with Cwmpas and their Digital Confidence Denbighshire project (https://cwmpas.coop/digital-confidence-denbighshire/), promoting the work they do and arranging digital drop-in sessions in our Community Centres. • The team are also part of eCymru (https://ecymru.co.uk/) which is a housing portal for tenants to join and access several different courses or sessions across Wales. A Digital Skills Audit has been carried out with our social housing tenants to see if they need any digital help, such as keeping personal information safe online or general digital skills. • This Digital Inclusion work aims to achieve three goals: 'Access to connectivity', 'Access to devices/ provision to access the internet' and 'Skills and confidence to navigate the online world'.

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		• As part of this work, the team have a dedicated Digital Officer working closely with Openreach and local communities to look at options to improve available internet speed. A progress report on this work was presented at the Performance Scrutiny Committee in April this year. Report can be read here: Broadband Connectivity Report.
5	Resilience and Business continuity	A lot of investment has taken place to improve Denbighshire's Business Continuity and Resilience. Over the past five years we have seen the following improvements as well as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic: • In response to the pandemic, Council employees demonstrated their ability to rapidly adapt and make use of new technology; continuing to provide services for residents whilst moving to remote working arrangements. • Improved our Disaster Recovery (DR) by moving away from the traditional approach of using third-party companies to provide this to delivering it in-house across our two datacentres in Ruthin and Rhyl. • Introduced a new backup and recovery hardware across our datacentres removing the need for tape to be used in the event of DR making it quicker and easier to restore systems. • Development of a Cyber Security Strategy to underpin our Digital Strategy which sets out our approach for protecting our information systems and the data they hold to ensure the services we provide are secure and our residents, businesses and stakeholders can safely transact with us. This includes achieving a balance of embracing digital opportunities, including making information more widely available and accessible, whilst ensuring that the right levels of protection are in place.

Key areas of Digital Strategy (2019 – 2025)	Progress update (September 2024)
	• Cyber Breach Ransomware Workshop provided by WLGA to be able to better respond to a cyber security incident. • Investigation of Ransomware technologies to better prevent attacks. • From 2024 and the rationalisation of buildings we are looking to move to Wireless as a primary method of connection.

6 Collaborative advantage	• Collaborative procurements have or are being undertaken for the following services:
	
	    o Education Management System
	
	    o Library Management System
	
	    o Additional Learning Needs System
	
	    o Legal Case Management System
	
	    o EdTech Dynamic Purchasing System
	
	    o Social Care Case Management System
	
	    o Social Care Finance System
	
	    o Blue Badge System
	
	    o Hybrid Mail Solution
	
	    o North East Wales Archives Services (NEWA)
	
	    o Multi-Function Device Contract
	
	    o Public Protection Case Management System
	
	    o Data Centre Framework for the procurement of services, hardware and maintenance.
	
	    o Computer Network Framework for the procurement of services, hardware and maintenance.

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		• ICT will continue to consider collaborative procurements as and when appropriate. This approach is supported via the shared Procurement Team with Flintshire County Council, which enables us to be well-informed of any future procurements taking place and opportunities to collaborate on between, at least, the two Councils.
7	Prioritisation and managing expectations	• ICT and Digital Services Department continue to deliver as effectively as possible with ever reducing resources. • Work is needed in this area to ensure that the prioritisation of major projects is transparent and decided by senior management in collaboration with ICT. • Competing priorities and difficulties in managing and meeting service expectations is expected to continue.