ICT Strategy 2020-2025

Technology and Information Services

Contents

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the Council's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy for 2020 to 2025 and how this will support the Council's vision to put Tamworth, its people and the local economy at the heart of everything we do. It will underpin delivery of our strategic priorities focused on supporting 'our people' and 'our place' whilst ensuring our technology supports organisational priorities and associated deliverables in line with our Corporate Plan.

> **TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL: VISION**
>
> **To put Tamworth, its people, and the local economy at the heart of everything we do**

Introduction

There continues to be rapid, significant changes across the public sector. The shape and size of the Council will continue to change but the need to provide high levels of service to our customers will remain and continue to be challenged by reduced budgets. We live in a digital age where demand for public services and expectations of service levels continue to increase. Customers expect access channels, ease of use and service levels they experience online from large private sector organisations and they expect to be able to access their services at times and from places that suit them.

These new challenges will present new opportunities for technology as an enabler to achieve efficiencies, increase the organisation's effectiveness and underpin the Council's vision to put Tamworth, its people, and the local Community at the heart of everything we do. The council needs to ensure it is fit for the future by leveraging the use of technology, information, and insight to deliver affordable, efficient, sustainable, digitally enabled services that better meet customer's needs and expectations.

There has been a continued programme of investment into ICT in recent years giving us a strong foundation for the future and enabling us to work towards delivering services in new, diverse, and innovative ways. The ICT Service is uniquely positioned to support our digital transformation journey. Our workforce is now more reliant than ever on technology, one of the key principles of this Strategy is to ensure the Council's ICT infrastructure remains secure, available, and resilient to the risk of cyber-attacks.

This strategy has been created with a non-technical audience in mind, enabling our ICT vision, principles, strategic themes, and journey to success to be clearly demonstrated. ICT is continually evolving and consequently it is difficult to predict opportunities that advancements in technology will present to the Council over the life of this Strategy. However, broad themes have been identified as the focus for this strategy with three objectives below remaining the focus throughout.

1. **Customer Agenda** - To digitally enable customer access to council services.
2. **Organisation agenda** - To enable a digitally skilled workforce to make effective use and obtain the maximum benefit from ICT.
3. **Technical Agenda** - To provide a robust, reliable, available, effective, and resilient ICT infrastructure which is future fit and value for money. The technical agenda must be accompanied by business process transformation with digital service delivery remaining at the forefront.

Internally, our ICT Continuous Improvement Programme will drive efficiencies through improved ways of working, increasing automation, delivering self-service, and ensuring full exploitation of existing and new technology.

Finally, this strategy highlights the importance of a digital infrastructure in Tamworth – broadband, electronic services, access, and skills. A robust digital infrastructure is a key factor in promoting growth and economic prosperity and working collaboratively and flexibly to meet the needs of our communities, identified as key elements of the People and Place priorities in our Corporate Plan.

This document is not intended to describe every strategic theme or specific programme of work in detail, it is intended to both inform and influence ICT elements of service plans to deliver the Council's Vision and Strategic Priorities. It aims to underpin continued transformation, building on recent progress and successes to help the Council remain resilient and agile for the future, delivering essential public services within a 'new normal'. It should be considered an organic document and as such will be reviewed on a regular basis and reissued as required.

Context

National and local influences as well as legislation inform our Strategy to ensure we deliver ICT services that support the Councils purpose and strategic priorities. Some of our key influencers are –

1. National Influencers

➢ Financial Climate and reduced government funding

The national economic climate is now more challenging than ever with an uncertain future in terms of funding and growth. The Council faces challenges setting its Medium-Term Financial Strategy with significant shortfalls predicted.

➢ Green agenda

ICT have a key role to play in supporting the authority's green aspirations, making a positive contribution to the Greening Government: ICT Strategy. We are a key enabler for Council's transformation programme to digitally enabled services and smart working, reducing journeys by our staff and customers and more efficient use of our office space. We aim to reducing paper consumption from printing, target printer consolidation, improve asset lifecycles, push device rationalisation, re-purpose legacy devices and leverage cloud services to reduce our data centre footprint.

➢ Evolving technology landscape

The pace of technology change has never been greater, our challenge is to understand where we can leverage this to deliver better outcomes for our customers and drive efficiency.

➢ Cyber threat

Cyber Security is a key consideration for this Strategy. The threat is ever growing, and evidence suggests that nearly 50% of businesses experienced a cyber-attack or breach in 2019 and 1 in 5 of them experienced a material outcome, losing money or data. Organisations holding personal data are statistically most likely to be attacked, with the most common attacks being fraudulent emails, viruses, and malware. The UK Government is urging organisations to adopt appropriate measures to protect the confidentiality and integrity of systems and information, protecting against the threat of cyber-crime. Our cyber security agenda will remain a high priority.

➢ Central government strategies and initiatives

The Government's Digital Strategy describes Digital by Default as 'Digital services which are so straight-forward and convenient that all those who can use digital services will choose to do so, while those who can't are not excluded'. This Strategy will aim to support this approach, providing a framework for sustainable customer-centric service delivery and engagement using digital technologies. Other key strategies and initiatives considered were National Cyber Security Strategy 2016 to 2021, Government Digital Service (GDS) online resources and initiatives, SOCITIM paper 'Simplify - Standardise – Share' and LGA – Future of Local Government,

Government Transformation Strategy and Technology Code of Practice, latest guidance on Brexit implications and associated GDPR risks.

➢ Partnerships
Ensuring we are positioned to work with our existing partners and peers and foster new relationships with organisations that can support our digital journey

2. Local influencers

➢ The Council's Corporate Vision, Purpose and Strategic Priorities remain the core purpose of this Strategy

➢ Local service strategies will provide insight to fit technology direction with business needs

➢ Consultation with the Councils leadership team, Heads of Service, ICT staff and Members have provided essential feedback and shaped elements of the Strategy

➢ Delivering Quality Services and Reset and Recover Transformation Programmes will be at the heart of our ICT Strategic direction and help shape a Tamworth Borough Council for the future.

➢ A Connected Tamworth - Whilst there is no statutory requirement to deliver superfast broadband, full fibre coverage and 5G infrastructure as part of new planning developments, we will actively encourage early involvement with telecoms providers and work with partners to support expansion of a full fibre connected Tamworth and acceleration of 5G connectivity across the Borough.

➢ Digital Maturity and Inclusion - The Council is on a journey of digital transformation. Exploiting the benefits of a digital approach to service delivery can only be realised by associated culture change and process redesign, addressing all aspects of the service model and not just the technology we use. Collaborating with our communities and partners and sharing information to foster closer relationships whilst maintaining appropriate levels of security continues to present a challenge to the organisation.

We also recognise the importance of digital inclusion and to maintain traditional access channels for those not able to join us and embrace our digital transformation journey, this will be reflected and addressed in our Customer Services Strategy.

➢ ICT will be key to the success of the Council's ambitious Key Strategic Projects such as High Street Regeneration

3. Legislative and Governance Influencers

- ➢ On-going compliance regimes such as
    - o Public Service Network (PSN)
    - o General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
    - o Payment Card Industry Standard (PCI)

- ➢ Best practice frameworks such as ITIL

Where we are now

The Council strives to continually develop its technology to improve delivery of services, operating within financial constraints and increased customer demand. The following are some of the activities that the ICT Service has delivered or supported which demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement.

- Remote working for all office-based staff across the council in response to the global pandemic allowing staff to work flexibly and in response to demand whilst maintaining essential service provision
- Replaced and upgraded a large percentage of our laptop estate and upgraded our key Microsoft platforms enabling staff to work using the latest ICT tools.
- Introduced technology driven collaboration tools, implemented wider use of Teams including successful implementation of online committee meetings. Expedited our Office 365 deployment, enabling staff to keep connected to their teams whilst working remotely and bringing forward our journey towards leverage of Cloud services increasing agility and collaboration of our workforce.
- Contact centre improvements allowing our customers calls to be delivered to the right team first time more of the time
- Development of a new CRM and Customer Portal along with associated process redesign, improving efficiency of front and back office processes and working towards digital transformation and channel shift
- Implementation of a Housing portal providing online tenancy services for our housing tenants with the housing application process to follow
- A 3-year Agreement with Microsoft for Operating Systems and Desktop Productivity software, introducing cloud-based services and paving a path to wider cloud use
- Introduction of a dedicated ICT Training resource to leverage use of existing technology and improve introduction of new and updated ICT systems
- ICT Infrastructure improvements including network, server, storage, backup, and end user device refreshes to ensure availability, performance, and stability of ICT systems.
- Business continuity arrangement with Walsall MBC to improve ICT system resilience.
- Maintain high system availability and network security compliance whilst managing a continually changing ICT environment and growing cyber threat.

ICT Vision, Principles and Strategic Themes

This strategy starts with a vision for the ICT service. This vision is underpinned by guiding principles which will provide a framework within which the ICT service is delivered. It then describes 5 strategic ICT themes, supporting the Council's Vision and Priorities and informing a strategic programme for ICT.

Our ICT Vision

Our vision aims to serve as a high-level statement defining what Technology and Information Services provides for its stakeholders and to support the Council delivering its Corporate Plan.
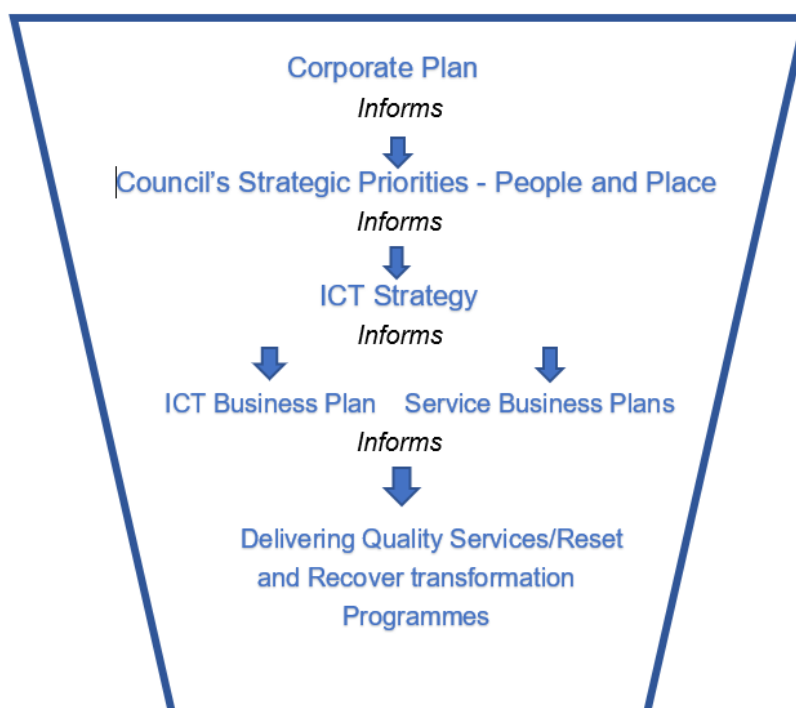
Our vision is to –

> *Exploit technology to deliver change and innovation based on a foundation of secure and flexible ICT infrastructure underpinning the Council's vision to put Tamworth, its people, and the local economy at the heart of everything we do.*

In delivery of this vision, Technology and Information Services seeks to:

1. Lead innovation, inspire change, championing new ideas, processes, and solutions
2. Maximise the benefits of technology to create service improvements and efficiency savings supporting transformation across the Council
3. Support Elected Members, officers, and staff in effective use of technology
4. Ensure ICT architecture is fit for the future to deliver an efficient, effective, and customer-centric ICT service which supports a fully agile and flexible workforce
5. Standardise strategies, policies, processes, and technologies to ensure best practice and facilitate sharing of information and partnership working
6. Align ICT spend with service priorities and ensure value for money and contributing to financial stability
7. Ensure robust ICT Service Management, Business continuity, Information Governance and Information Security becoming a 'trusted' ICT partner, both internally and externally.

The following diagram demonstrates how the ICT Strategy will underpin the Council's Corporate Plan and Strategic Priorities.

Corporate Plan

Informs

Council's Strategic Priorities - People and Place

Informs

ICT Strategy

Informs

ICT Business Plan   Service Business Plans

Informs

Delivering Quality Services/Reset and Recover transformation Programmes

Our ICT Service Principles

These guiding principles represent a service-focussed approach for ICT, designed to set expectations and provide clear direction for service users, provide a basis for decision making and set out what we will do to support the organisation in delivering our vision and priorities in our Corporate Plan. These ICT principles will be used to inform ICT Service Management, Service Plan Activities, and our Technical Strategy for:

→ Corporate and Line of Business Applications
→ Network Infrastructure and Communications
→ End User Devices
→ Security, Identity and Access Management

Our guiding service principles:

- We will adopt a sound but pragmatic governance framework to embed good practice, standards, and process into the service. Our ICT infrastructure will enable a flexible and agile workforce allowing collaboration between our staff and partners.
- We will adopt in principle, a Cloud First approach - Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS), cloud-based or externally hosted, best of breed, secure and compliant line of business applications and systems will be considered in preference to in-house developed/on premise hosted solutions. In-house development can be a viable way to get solutions delivered quickly and directly in line with requirements but should be subject to a sound business/financial case.
- Business requirements will drive the technical solutions we adopt, not the reverse.
- We will actively engage in the business planning process to ensure alignment with this strategy, allow early ICT and Information Governance engagement enabling a full understanding of associated ICT work streams and to explore the 'art of the possible'.
- Priority will be given to investment in technology and services providing the maximum benefit and tangible business outcomes for users in line with the council's priorities and service strategies whilst working within existing financial constraints.
- In line with the approved process identified in the System Review, ICT will seek to.
  - Rationalise and standardise the technology portfolio in use across the organisation to minimise cost, complexity, and technical diversity. Significant customisation of applications or systems will be done only where necessary and be subject to a justifiable business case.
  - Re-negotiate contracts with key system and application suppliers on expiry, ensuring continuity of support and maintenance and value for money.
- Technology decisions will be fully informed and based on an understanding of risks, benefits, and total cost of ownership to the organisation both in the short, medium, and long term. We will aim to reduce the impact on service delivery whenever serious failures occur.
- Technology solutions will be designed and implemented with a customer-centric view. Solutions will be intuitive, usable, fully exploited, interoperable and accessible. We will leverage all available benefits from our suppliers to ensure value for money and quality of service for the organisation.
- We will invest in and develop our staff to deliver an efficient and effective ICT Service that will continue to meet the technology needs of the organisation.

- We will ensure ICT security and compliance standards are maintained. Our approach will aim for a pragmatic balance between usability & security. Our ICT systems, services and processes will comply with legislation, standards, and policies to help protect our information from unauthorised access, use and disclosure.
- ICT will support and champion the use of data to drive decision making through better use of knowledge, information, and insight.
- Corporate application system administration will be managed within ICT to ensure robust security, governance, technical standards, and continuity of service.
- All ICT related budgets and technology spend will be centralised, managed and controlled by ICT to gain efficiencies from a holistic view of ICT spend, understand total cost of ownership, strengthen contracts and better inform delivery of a value for money ICT service eliminating 'Shadow ICT';
- Our systems will have minimal environmental impact with low energy usage.

Our ICT Strategic Themes

Our ICT Strategy has 5 key themes which will support delivery of our Vision and Corporate Plan.

1. Digital by Design - Transforming to a Digital by Default Organisation

> *All services will be digital by design, enabling our customers to access the services and information they need, where and when they need them*

Rational -

- Putting our customers at the centre of digital change and encouraging a choice move to digital access channels. Maintaining non-digital channels for those that need them.
- Digital transactions are more cost effective to process allowing better use of our limited financial resources
- Strategic transformation to digital services must include process redesign and cultural change. Digital transformation cannot take place if the Council's technology, processes, and culture are not aligned. Focus on achieving better outcomes for our customers.
- Our workforce needs to be positioned with the right digital skills to ensure we continue to evolve and innovate. Emphasis on automation and self-service to free up staff resources.
- The wider digital approach can deliver significant benefits to the Council, it's customers and partners, with the potential to:
  - ❖ Deliver better outcomes
  - ❖ Reduce costs and deliver improved value for money services
  - ❖ Stimulate and enable innovation and new ways of working
  - ❖ Re-shape and improve the relationship between the Council, our Customers, and our Partners

Key Activities –

- Portal and CRM development with wider use of intelligent e-forms and access to back office systems promoting a self-service approach
- Further development of the Housing portal including, driving self-service for our tenants in areas such as repairs and lettings
- Widen our use of diverse access channels including social media to improve communications, partnership working and drive efficiencies.
- Explore wider use of government digital services

Outcomes and Benefits -

- 24/7 customer service
- Easy and consistent access with end to end digitally enabled processes
- Reduced back office processing leading to less failure and improved data validation
- Resources targeted where they are most needed
- Better informed customers

2. Working Smarter

> *Adopt technology, organisational culture, and behaviours to support a fully agile, flexible and a collaborative workforce.*

Rational -

- Our existing technology, business and working practices place certain limits on our effectiveness. Many of our main systems are not available on mobile technology, a large proportion of our mobile technology is not fit for purpose, our data is not easy to share, and we do not fully exploit the benefits of some of our existing mobility technology.
- Technology needs to be easy to use, accessible when and wherever our staff require and adaptive to meet user accessibility requirements allowing consistent user experiences.
- Our workface, front line, and back office, need to be equipped with the right technology, skills, and behaviours to exploit agile and flexible ways of working, carrying out their roles from the most effective location and at the most effective time.
- Significant inefficiencies result from inadequate or underutilised access to systems, data, and communications tools for staff to work effectively whilst away from the office.
- Staff may introduce working practices that present risks to information security as they find workarounds to overcome system failings.
- Leverage ICT partners and 3rd parties to deliver elements of infrastructure support and maintenance and to support infrastructure improvement projects where this is best fit and value. This model will enable smarter, more flexible use of limited resources within the service, focussing on delivery of key projects to support the Corporate Plan.
- Changing organisational culture and behaviours towards smarter, collaborative, and agile working practices needs to be adopted and driven by the Councils leadership team and Council members.
- Using people's strengths and helping to improve their weaknesses and providing technology related training/development opportunities to help fill knowledge gaps all help to create positive culture and behaviours, while at the same time making best use of technology resource.

Key Activities –

- Mobile phone contract review/replacement
- Drive up mobility and agility of our workforce
- Work towards single identities and authentication
- Device agnostic system access
- Upskilling our workforce to exploit our existing and new technologies using a 'train the trainer' approach
- Equip our office space with tools to enable collaboration and conferencing with remote colleagues and partners i.e. secure Wi-Fi, hot-desking, technology equipped meeting rooms
- Continue to develop and encourage use of our productivity and collaboration tools
- Leverage use of Teams, Sharepoint and OneDrive for the Council's unstructured data
- Investigate use of Government Initiatives such as the Digital Services - Pay, Notify and Verify
- Deployment of self-service tools for ICT Service Desk access to better meet the needs of agile and flexible working
- Equip members with flexible ICT and the skills to maximise use
- Wider use and exploitation of Civica EDRM, aspiring to paperless processes by default.
- Explore opportunities to mobile enable access to more of our back-office systems for staff
- Explore opportunities for sharing technology services with our partners

Outcomes and Benefits -

- Work collaboratively with anyone, anywhere
- More effective and efficient use of our office space
- Fully agile workforce
- Share and inform securely
- Our workforce access their data and information using the right technology aligned to their working patterns and location.

3. Better use of Business Intelligence, Knowledge, and Insight

> *Leverage the information and intelligence we hold to better inform our decision making and deliver improved outcomes for our customers*

Rational –

- Central to the theme of Digital by Default is the emphasis on managing the data we collect, gaining value from turning it into information, adding intelligence and insight to better inform change and support our corporate priorities to ensure our decisions are driven by evidence and knowledge.
- Using data to empower and enable our customer service team to direct resources more effectively
- Open data principles along with the transparency framework supporting and reducing Freedom of Information (FOI) requests
- Increase data sharing internally, across our services and with our partners and in support of central government initiatives, embracing the principles of openness and transparency whilst maintaining security and integrity of our information.
- Single version of the truth - there is a single version of people and property data, shared across Council applications, reducing unnecessary duplication, rework, limiting errors and improving process efficiency.
- Standardising and cleansing our datasets, duplication and inefficiency will be removed, ensuring that data can be presented accurately.
- Collect information once and re-use wherever possible striving for accurate and consolidated records
- Know exactly what information we hold and the value we can gain from it, identifying core central data sets for the organisation

Key Activities –

- Develop our Knowledge and Insight hub
- Digitise our Street Scene Data
- LLPG single address data source for all systems
- Promote use of GIS as a corporate resource
- Data discovery, Classification and Marking
- Develop a single consistent set of views of customer information with efficient update of records consistently across systems where required
- Review our business intelligence tools to ensure data can be presented in useful, meaningful formats
- Simplify, standardise, and share approach to new systems, facilitating data sharing, interoperability with internal systems, external partners and support for central government services, processes, and initiatives.

Outcomes and Benefits -

- Overall data quality is improved
- Fully informed decision making

- Know our customers better
- Target investment and resource more effectively
- Measure success and learn from failure
- Share and collaborate with our customers and partners

4. Strong Governance, Security and Compliance

Ensure robust ICT governance, data security and compliance exist to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of our information.

Rational -

- As the inevitable growth of data occurs across the Council, effective tools and processes must be in place to ensure the data is managed responsibly and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Managing our data and information securely, lawfully, efficiently, economically, and effectively whilst at the same time maintaining privacy and protecting customer data in line with the GDPR.
- The need to continually improve our cyber security defences in line with constantly evolving cyber-based threats at all levels alongside a continuous staff awareness programme.
- A standardised and adopted ICT policy framework ensuring robust ICT governance
- Achieving on-going compliance obligations strengthens network and information security

Key Activities

- Cyber Essentials accreditation
- Review Cyber Security Governance
- Cyber Security Practitioner training/accreditations
- Proactive Vulnerability Scanning/Security Incident and Event Management (SIEM)
- Continued PSN Compliance
- Annual IT Health Check
- On-going PCI Compliance
- On-going review of our ICT Governance Framework
- On-going GDPR compliance
- Staff awareness programmes for GDPR and Cyber Security
- Review/refresh endpoint device cyber defence
- Align our information security to National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) best practice
- Complete and maintain comprehensive Data Audits
- Implement and promote a Privacy by Design approach
- Leverage information governance business rules and policies in Office 365 to manage use, ownership, and retention of our unstructured data.

Outcomes and Benefits -

- Compliant with legislative requirements
- Effective network and information security, protecting our systems and data against cyber threat
- Customer confidence using our digital services and handling their personal data
- Only appropriate electronic data is held by the council which is stored in a secure and compliant manner.
- Our evolving technology portfolio and digital transformation is supported by sound ICT governance
- Our workforce can use technology in a safe, secure, and compliant manner

5. Future Fit Technology

A modern, flexible, and effective technology portfolio that supports delivery of the Council's Vision and Strategic Priorities, driving innovation and supporting efficient business operation and smarter working whilst maintaining value for money.

Rational -

- Exploiting use of existing technology, sourcing based on best of breed – bespoke solutions only where a business justification exists. Harness emerging technologies to provide innovative new solutions and ways of working
- Pragmatic cloud first approach – always where appropriate, practical and financially viable. Cloud adoption should be carefully planned, ensure risk is managed and compliance obligations met
- ICT must be well maintained, available, scalable, reliable and resilient.
- Continually review ICT contracts to ensure they are business and technology fit, value for money, meet expectations and are secure and compliant
- Continually develop skills and competency in our technical staff, ensuring the ICT service is appropriately resourced to support and deliver effective and reliable change.
- Plan and manage a capital programme of investment in ICT effectively
- Rationalise, standardise, and consolidate our technology portfolio to reduce management overhead and increase our ability to adapt to new business requirements and transformation programmes
- Device agnostic applications enabling a fully agile and flexible workforce

Key Activities –

- On-going, estate wide system review ensuring our ICT contracts are fit for purpose

- Cloud readiness assessment and subsequent move towards cloud hosted infrastructure, applications, and services where this offers real benefits and where it is cost effective to do so.
- Ensure our data centre environment is fit for purpose for our on-premise hosted services
- Ensure our ICT Disaster Recovery arrangements are robust and fully tested
- Understand knowledge gaps and individual reliance to develop skills and competency in our technical staff using a range of training resources
- Bring ICT infrastructure, operating systems, and productivity tools up to date where required and ensure programme of on-going review, refresh, and upgrade.
- Work in partnership with procurement to leverage use of frameworks and agile and effective ICT procurement processes to better meet demands of rapid technology change.

Outcomes and Benefits -

- Utility pricing model of cloud services - pay as we use, improved cost and utilisation transparency
- Adaptable, flexible, fit for the future technology portfolio
- Available, reliable, and resilient ICT systems
- Flexible, on demand capacity and services
- Access across multiple devices
- Value for money and fit for purpose ICT contracts and 3rd party agreements
- Up-skilled ICT staff, allowing full use of our internal resources

Our Journey to Success

Our technology plan and roadmap of activities this strategy informs will be delivered over 5 years. Our technology plan will feed into annual ICT business planning setting out activities contributing to the delivery of our ICT Strategic themes. As our organisational transformation programmes start to take shape, our technology plan with a detailed technical roadmap and projected capital and operational funding requirements will develop, accompanying the timeline of activities in this Strategy.

ICT Capital Plan

The Council has an on-going program of capital investment to continually develop and improve ICT infrastructure and applications to support new or changing needs of the organisation. This includes a Technology Refresh capital programme to deliver business plan activities and cyclical hardware replacement supporting key elements of our ICT Strategic themes.

Future Funding

ICT capital and operational budgets will be under increased pressure through the life of this strategy. Funding will be required to deliver our ambitious technology plan and organisational transformation to achieve the desired outcomes for the Council and our customers. Some of the activities supporting our ICT strategic direction will require additional funding or operational budget policy changes where they cannot be accommodated fully within the existing budget allocations or ICT capital Programme. Projected additional funding requirements will be identified as our technology plan develops.

Project Roadmap

The table below highlights some of the key projects over the next 3 years of the Strategy. Due to the rapid pace of change and the rate at which technology evolves, this strategy and associated activity roadmap and business plans need to be continually updated, managed, and monitored to ensure that our direction of travel for technology remains relevant and in line with the organisational requirements.
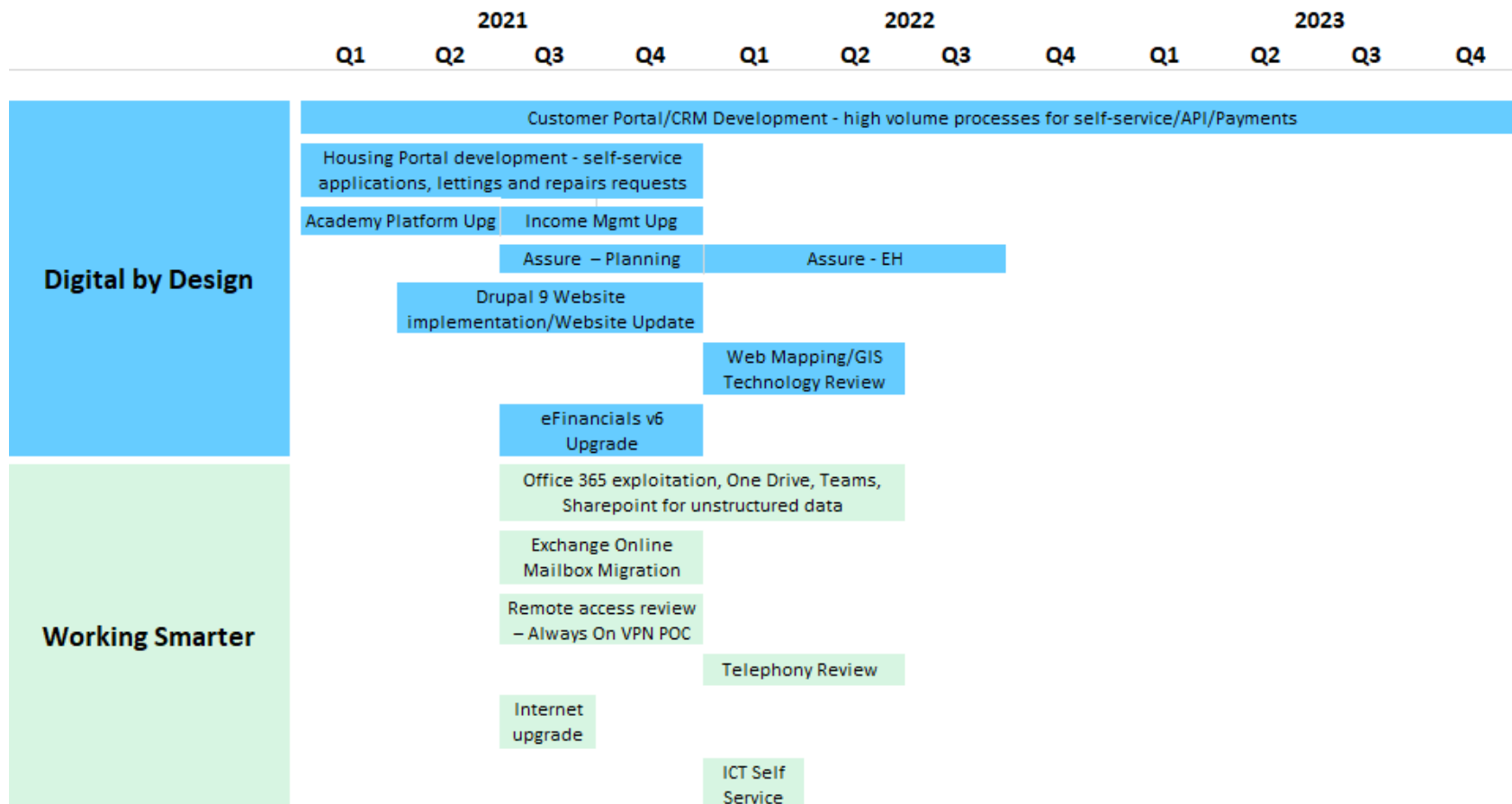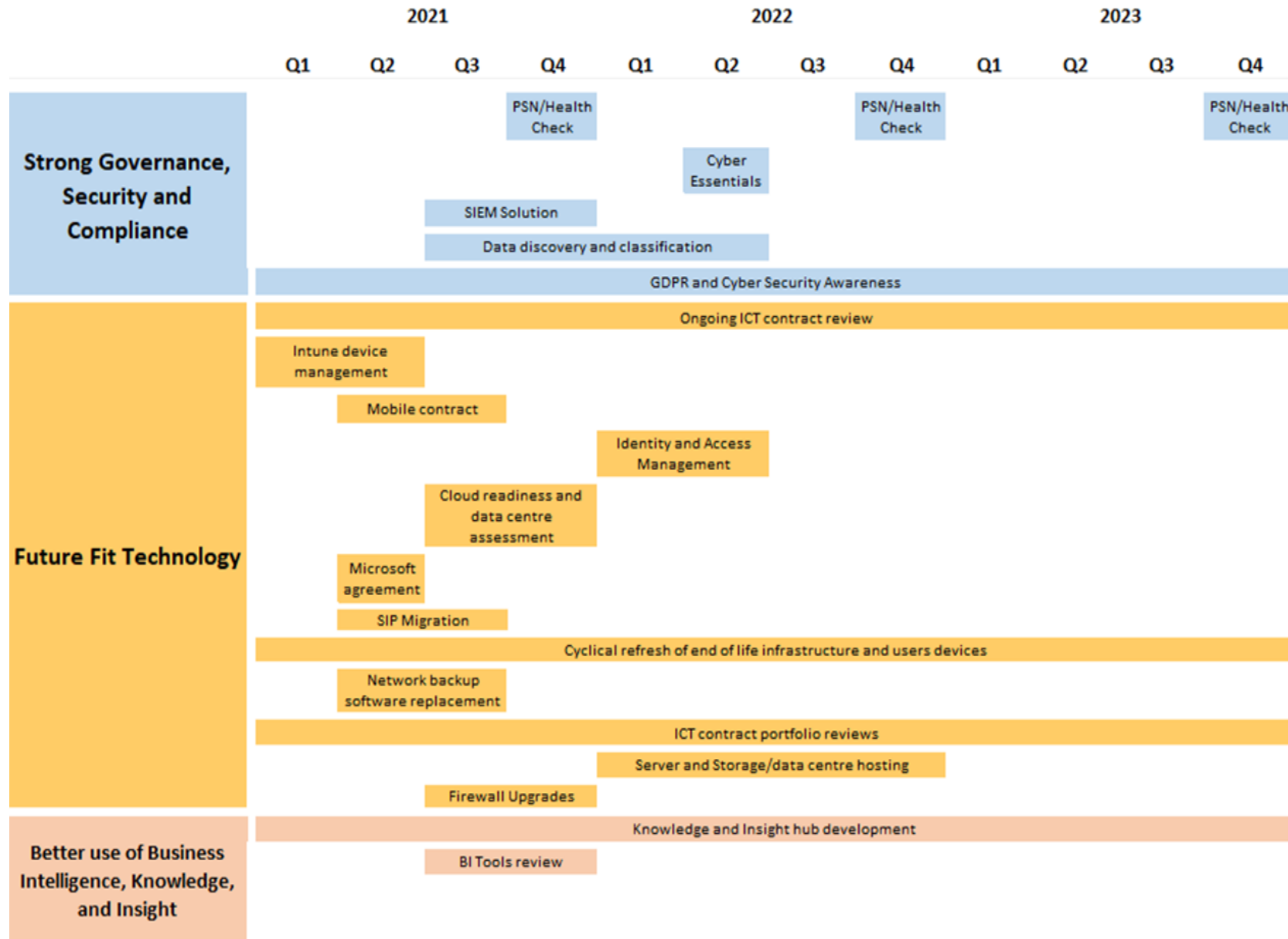
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