

# Report

## Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation

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### Part 1

Date: 23 September 2022

**Subject** Annual Digital Report 2021-22

**Purpose** To provide an assessment of the Council's digital work, identify key risks and agree the action plan for 22/23

**Author** Digital Services Manager/Digital Projects Managers

**Ward** General

**Summary** Technology plays a critically important role in effective and efficient service delivery for organisations. Newport City Council relies on IT systems for its effective day to day operation. This is especially the case given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and the vast majority of staff working from home. In addition, the provision of digital infrastructure for the city is another important aspect of the use of technology in the day to day lives of citizens.

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the IT and digital arrangements for the council and identify where action is required to identify weaknesses and deliver improvements. In future years the report will also take into account the new Digital Strategy.

**Proposal** To endorse the Annual Digital Report 2021-22 and proposed actions.

**Action by** Digital Services Manager  
Digital Projects Managers  
Head of People, Policy and Transformation

**Timetable** As reported

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Law and Regulation – Monitoring Officer, and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
- Head of Finance – Chief Financial Officer
- Head of People, Policy and Transformation
- Digital City Board

**Signed**

## Background

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the IT and digital arrangements for the council and identify where action is required to identify weaknesses and deliver improvements.

The benefits of the report are as follows:

- Provide an overview of the council's IT and digital services
- Highlight the importance of digital services to the organisation especially given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, the opportunities they provide and the risks of under-investment
- To compare performance with previous years with the aim of continuous improvement
- This is the third Annual Digital Report designed to complement the Annual Information Risk Report which is now in its tenth year
- Identify opportunities, address weaknesses and develop an action plan

The new Digital Strategy is currently being developed, and future annual reports will report on the progress towards that Strategy.

## Report

This is attached as appendix to this Report and includes an Executive Summary of key highlights. The report covers:

- Work to review the existing [Digital Strategy](#) is progressing
- We partner with the Shared Resource Service (SRS) and governance is provided by means of a number of boards attended by SRS and partners, a Delivery Group plus various internal council meetings and processes
- Groups are in place to support schools in strategic developments and deliver the "EdTech" project funded by Welsh Government
- Of the four performance measures, SRS is green on three and amber on the other one
- The majority of current and on-going projects include a significant technology element - key projects during 21/22 were the procurement of a new finance system, Microsoft 365 developments, Committee Room and Meeting Room Audio Visual Equipment and various cloud migrations
- Whilst core planned work is generally less time-consuming than projects, it is very important to ensure continued effective operation of services especially from a security perspective
- Compliance, Security and Audit work is essential and is covered in the Annual Information Risk Report
- 4 major systems were migrated to the cloud in 21/22 and there are plans for 5 major systems in 22/23 including the finance system
- A successful bid made to Welsh Government as part of the Digital Democracy Fund resulted in better hardware in the Council Chamber and software to support "hybrid meetings"
- Local Broadband Fund – a successful bid was made to Welsh Government to improve connectivity and the provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three adult residential care homes in Newport
- Digital Inclusion – work continues with Digital Communities Wales on Digitally Connected Communities. We are the only council in Wales with accreditation to Digital Inclusion Alliance
- Public Wi-Fi is provided in the city centre, on buses and in a number of public buildings
- There is an important digital element to the council's climate change plans
- The pandemic has continued to provide challenges but the council is in a strong position to continue service delivery. IT systems continue to be vitally important and the strategic move of systems to the cloud is expected to improve resilience, support and availability of these systems

## Financial Summary

There is no specific cost associated with the report. The Funding section of the report identifies the funding of IT/digital costs highlighting additional investment and savings realised.

## Risks

The council, like other organisations, has an increased reliance on IT systems for effective and efficient service delivery and this has been highlighted further by the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. It is crucial that the council delivers in its delivery of IT service. Further details of risks are provided in the report and those identified below represent some high level risks.

Information risks are separately considered in the Annual Information Risk Report which is also being compiled for 21-22.

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Management and development of effective IT services following transition to SRS	H	L	Many of the actions detailed in this report are designed to mitigate this risk including the Digital team's role between the council and the Shared Resource Service (SRS)	Digital Services Manager and Digital team in collaboration with SRS
Cyber security risks around confidentiality, availability and integrity of council data and systems especially given increased home working as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic	H	L	Many of the actions in this report in conjunction with the Annual Information Risk Report are designed to mitigate these risks.	Digital Services Manager, Digital Team, Information Management team in collaboration with SRS
Even greater reliance on IT systems to deliver services due to the huge impact of the Coronavirus pandemic	H	M	Specific efforts to support continued service delivery by facilities for home and remote working. Proactive migration of IT systems to the cloud to improve accessibility, availability, performance and support. SRS data centre move to improve resilience of IT systems	Digital Services Manager and Digital team in collaboration with SRS

\* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

## Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The current [Digital Strategy](#) sets the overall direction for IT and digital solutions and a major review of this will be completed over coming months which will also link to the Council's new Corporate Plan. The actions outlined in this report form part of the People, Policy and Transformation service plan for 22/23 onwards.

## **Options Available and considered**

1. Do nothing
2. Note the annual digital report and endorse its findings.

## **Preferred Option and Why**

**The preferred option is option 2 – note the Annual Digital Report 2021/22 and endorse its findings.** This will provide an understanding of the current position in relation to digital services and give an opportunity to monitor progress on actions identified

## **Comments of Chief Financial Officer**

There will be no adverse financial impact as a result of endorsing this report. The action plan is fully funded from existing budgets which have received investment of more than £1.1m since 19/20 as part of the Corporate Plan to support Digital Aspirations. Collaborative working under the SRS arrangement also leads to efficiencies which further support this plan.

## **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. Any identified risks or issues arising from the delivery of the digital services will be picked up as part of the Information Risk management arrangements and the Council's corporate risk management framework.

## **Comments of Head of People, Policy and Transformation**

There are no HR issues relating directly to the proposals.

The report outlines how the work takes account of the sustainable development principle under the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Improving our digital infrastructure within the Council and within the city will contribute towards the Well-being Goals for Wales, most notably a Prosperous Wales and a Globally Responsible Wales.

## **Comments of Non-Executives**

### Councillor R Howells:

This would have the double benefit of: (1) allowing emails to be checked on the go on the smartphone. At present members can only check when in a reliable Wi-Fi area and have the iPad or laptop with us, both of which are less portable; and (2) It would also provide a specific contact number for each councillor which residents could use (rather than either a personal number, or the generic call centre number).

## **Local issues**

No specific local issues.

## **Scrutiny Committees**

This report was presented to Scrutiny Management Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022. Scrutiny comments are as below:-

- The committee felt that the reports were comprehensive and clear.
- The committee acknowledged the hard work of the officers and the progress and transformation that had been made for both the Council and the city of Newport and its residents.
- The committee highlighted the importance of accessibility, simplicity and ease of use for digital systems and updates.
- The committee asked that a summary of the feedback from resident surveys be provided for information.
- The committee recommended that a definition of the city centre area that is covered by public WiFi be included and noted the importance of quality and accessible WiFi.

- The committee highlighted the importance of scrutinising data services partners and providers. The committee recommended that specific data be included as well as percentages to more easily contextualise information

For next year the report will also report against the digital strategy and with that in mind, Newport Intelligence Hub work has also been added since Scrutiny.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

Equalities is considered in service delivery and is an important consideration in the review of the council's Digital Strategy that will also consider the Socio-economic Duty. The Socio-economic Duty ("the Duty") highlights the Welsh Government's commitment to safeguarding equality and human rights.

The Duty gives us an opportunity to do things differently in Wales. It puts tackling inequality at the heart of decision-making and will build on the good work that public bodies are already doing.

The aim is for the Duty to become another key mechanism in supporting the most vulnerable in our society. By requiring public bodies to make better decisions, ones which place consideration of inequality of outcome which arises from socio-economic disadvantage at their heart, it will further help tackle the uncertainty of EU exit and our recovery from Covid-19, allowing us to move towards the reconstruction of a fairer and more prosperous Wales.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

This report and its associated action plan incorporates the five ways of working as below:-

- Long term – initiatives in IT/digital need to consider the long term and follow a plan as demonstrated in the existing Digital Strategy and the development of a new Digital Strategy detailed in this report. The strategic move to the cloud is one example of this long term vision as is the need to address digital contribution to climate change plans.
- Prevention – preventative measures are key to ensure the effectiveness of the service by ensuring the infrastructure and systems are fit for purpose and appropriately supported and protected. The proactive migration of systems to the cloud is designed to prevent system availability problems. IT systems can provide data to inform better decision making and preventative measures. Initiatives on climate change are also designed to prevent impacts.
- Integration – IT needs to be designed as part of business processes rather than an add-on at the end. The Digital team plays an important role integrating IT into business processes in conjunction with SRS.
- Collaboration – IT delivery relies on the collaboration between the council's IT service delivery partner, the Shared Resource Service (SRS) the Digital team and all council services as well as with suppliers.
- Involvement – the council has contact with internal services, members of the public and businesses in relation to IT delivery. The review and refresh of the Digital Strategy will include wide engagement with internal and external stakeholders. More generally, the council has IT systems to engage with the public including via its web site and bus Wi-Fi

### **Consultation**

Comments from members of the council's Digital City Board will be included within the text of the report in line with their role as key strategic stakeholders.

### **Background Papers**

[Digital Strategy](#) 2015-2020

Annual Information Risk Report 2020/21

Newport City Council's Strategic Recovery Aims in response to the Covid health emergency

**Dated: 23 September 2022**

# Annual Digital Report 2021/22

<b>Created by</b>	Mark Bleazard
<b>Date</b>	19/04/22
<b>Reviewed by</b>	Digital Services
<b>Date</b>	

## Document Control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Notes / changes</b>
V0.1	19/4/22	Mark Bleazard	Initial draft
V0.2	16/6/22	Mark Bleazard	Revised draft
V0.3	18/7/22	Mark Bleazard	Revised Draft for Scrutiny
V0.4	20/7/22	Mark Bleazard	Final revisions for Scrutiny
V0.5	16/8/22	Mark Bleazard	Scrutiny feedback incorporated
V1.0	6/9/22	Tracy McKim	Final amends following briefing, includes NIH

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Background and Purpose</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1.1. Purpose of the Report and Benefits .....	3
<b>2. Current Position</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1. Digital Strategy .....	4
2.2. Organisation and Governance .....	4
IT Service – Shared Resource Service (SRS) .....	4
Digital Services .....	5
Service Areas .....	6
Groups .....	6
Schools .....	6
2.3. Performance .....	7
Performance Information .....	7
2.4. Funding .....	8
2.5. Projects .....	9
Financial System Replacement .....	9
Microsoft 365 (formerly known as Office 365) .....	9
Web Site .....	9
New Normal .....	9
Committee Room and Meeting Room Audio Visual Equipment .....	9
Intranet – Migration to SharePoint Online .....	9
“EdTech” .....	10
2.6. Core Planned .....	10
2.7. Reactive .....	10
2.8. Compliance, Security and Audit .....	11
2.9. Infrastructure, Capital Programme and Cloud .....	11
2.10. Devices and Operating Systems .....	12
2.11. Digital Developments .....	14
Digital Democracy .....	14
Local Broadband Fund (LBF) Bid .....	14
Digital Skills .....	15
Digital Inclusion .....	15
Public Building Wi-Fi .....	15
City Centre Wi-Fi .....	15
Bus Wi-Fi .....	15
Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) .....	15
Document Services .....	16
Robotic Process Automation (RPA) .....	16
Internet of things (IoT) Network pilot .....	16
Mobile Networks and 5G .....	17
2.12. Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery .....	17
2.13. Coronavirus Impact and ‘New Normal’ .....	17
2.14. Climate Change .....	18
<b>3. Conclusions</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>4. Actions Summary</b> .....	<b>22</b>
5. Risk Management .....	24

6. Action Plan.....25

# Executive Summary

## Digital Strategy

- **Work to review the existing [Digital Strategy](#) is progressing well with final version for sign off quarter 3 2022.** This recognises the crucial part technology plays in service delivery and will be aligned to the council's new Corporate Plan

## Organisation and Governance

- **To ensure effective and efficient service delivery, the Shared Resource Service (SRS) remains critical, combined with a major contribution from Digital Services and Service Areas**
- **Additional resources in the Digital team continue to have a positive effect including a successful Local Broadband Fund bid**
- Governance is provided by means of a number of SRS boards attended by SRS and partners, a Delivery Group plus various internal council meetings and processes
- Groups are in place to support schools in strategic developments and deliver the "EdTech" project funded by Welsh Government

## Performance

- **Of the four performance measures, SRS is green on three and amber on the other one**
- **The most significant measure is performance against Service Level Agreement (SLA) which is well over the target of 85% with 94.9% of calls resolved against SLA**
- **This measure has been well over target for the last three years**
- The only amber measure is for call waiting times which will be reviewed further and action taken as appropriate

## Funding

- **Shared Resource Service (SRS) is funded by partner organisations**
- **The council has a number of retained budgets** including capital programme, PC replacement budget and "retained contracts" for major systems
- **Additional budget allocated over last three financial years has made a positive contribution in various areas and is almost £1M extra per annum**
- Schools fund their own IT provision, boosted recently by Welsh Government "EdTech" funding

## Projects

- The number and size of projects identified highlights the important projects carried out and the positive impact they make to service delivery.
- The majority of current and on-going projects include a significant technology element
- **Key projects during 21/22 were the procurement of a new finance system, Microsoft 365 developments, Committee Room and Meeting Room Audio Visual Equipment and various cloud migrations**

## Core Planned

- Whilst core planned work is generally less time-consuming than projects, it is very important to ensure continued effective operation of services especially from a security perspective

## Reactive

- The reactive IT service is often the most recognised IT function, the IT Service Desk
- Performance for reactive incidents is provided in the Performance section of this report
- An initiative to promote self-service logging of incidents rather than by telephone will be promoted.

## Compliance, Security and Audit

- Most of this work is detailed in the Annual Information Risk Report
- This is crucial work, especially in the current environment

## Infrastructure, Capital Programme and Cloud

- **A major project led by the SRS for the migration to a new data centre will be completed during 22/23**
- **4 major systems were migrated to the cloud in 21/22 and there are plans for 5 major systems in 22/23 including the finance system**

## **Devices and Operating Systems**

- All Windows devices are now Windows 10
- Microsoft Office Message Encryption and OneDrive was rolled out to replace current Egress system for secure messaging and large/secure file sharing
- Replacement remote access VPN solution to be rolled out in early 22/23

## **Digital Developments**

- **A successful bid made to Welsh Government as part of the Digital Democracy Fund resulted in better hardware in the Council Chamber and software to support “hybrid meetings”**
- **Local Broadband Fund – a successful bid was made to Welsh Government to improve gigabit capable full fibre connectivity and the provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three council managed adult residential care homes in Newport**
- **Digital Skills – New initiatives in this area including Get Connected courses run in conjunction with Digital Communities Wales**
- Digital Inclusion – Work continues with Digital Communities Wales on Digitally Connected Communities to improve digital inclusion in Newport. Newport City Council is the only council in Wales with accreditation to Digital Inclusion Alliance
- Robotic Process Automation (RPA) – successful migration from “Archive Manager” solution for e-mails. Future opportunities will be considered and a programme for RPA developed.
- The roll out of the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) continues and this is complemented by further roll out of the hybrid mail system
- There remains a need for handling paper documents and the Document Services team carries out this important function
- **Public Wi-Fi is provided in the city centre, on buses and in a number of public buildings**
- The Newport Intelligence Hub (NIH) has seen the council transition from a traditional distributed managed model for information and systems to a centralised model

## **Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery**

- There is an ever-increasing reliance on digital technology to support business activities as identified in Business Impact Analysis during the pandemic
- Increased resilience was a factor in the decision to join the Shared Resource Service (SRS) and this will be improved by the planned data centre move during 22/23
- A more proactive move of systems to the cloud took place in 21/22 and will continue. This is designed to provide greater availability and better business continuity/disaster recovery

## **Climate Change**

- **There is an important digital element to the council’s climate change plans**
- A number of areas have been identified that will be progressed by the Digital team and Shared Resource Service (SRS)

## **Coronavirus Impact and the ‘New Normal’**

- The pandemic has continued to provide challenges but the council is in a strong position to continue service delivery. IT systems continue to be vitally important and the strategic move of systems to the cloud is expected to improve resilience, support and availability of these systems

# 1. Background and Purpose

Technology plays a critically important role in effective and efficient service delivery for organisations. Newport City Council relies on IT systems for its effective day to day operation. Continued effective service delivery despite the vast majority of staff working from home as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the robustness of IT systems although further improvements are planned. In addition, the provision of digital infrastructure for the city is another important aspect of the use of technology in the day to day lives of citizens and businesses.

The actions outlined in this report form part of the People, Policy and Transformation service plan and further detail is incorporated in the Digital team annual business plan.

## 1.1. Purpose of the Report and Benefits

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the IT and digital arrangements for the council and identify where action is required to identify weaknesses and deliver improvements.

The benefits of the report are as follows:

- Provide an overview of the council's IT and digital services
- Highlight the importance of digital services to the organisation especially given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, the opportunities they provide and the risks of under-investment
- To compare performance with previous years with the aim of continuous improvement
- This is the third Annual Digital Report designed to complement the Annual Information Risk Report which is now in its tenth year
- Identify opportunities, address weaknesses and develop an action plan

## 2. Current Position

This part of the report identifies the council's current position in relation to digital services.

### 2.1. Digital Strategy

In 2015 the [Digital Strategy](#) was developed which highlights the importance of effective digital services. This report in various ways recognises the increasing importance of IT/digital services to the organisation especially given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. At the time of writing this report, the new Digital Strategy is being drafted. A large amount of engagement has taken place internally and externally. Evidence has been gathered by means of customer surveys and internal stakeholder engagement including the Newport Managers Network of senior managers. It is anticipated that the strategy will be completed in October 2022 following review by Scrutiny Management Committee, Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation and Cabinet.

### 2.2. Organisation and Governance

#### IT Service – Shared Resource Service (SRS)

The IT Service became a partner in the Shared Resource Service (SRS) on 1/4/17 so Newport City council has been a partner for five years. The SRS is also made up of Torfaen County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Gwent Police. There is SRS representation on the various council groups including the Digital City Board, Information Governance Group and New Normal Board. The Digital team provides the link between the council and the SRS. This important relationship continues to develop and further improvements have been made during the last year. As a result of a large amount of collective effort, the partnership is developing positively. As detailed later, this includes a data centre move and a number of collaborative initiatives.

#### SRS Governance Arrangements

The SRS continues with three boards. As suggested by an Audit Wales Report previously, all documents are now available to members of all boards to improve communication and transparency. The three boards are as follows:-

#### Strategic Board

This purpose of this board is to set the Strategic Direction of the SRS. It provides collective challenge to the Business and Collaboration Board around alignment to the SRS Strategy and identifying collaborative opportunities across all partners. It provides collective challenge to the Finance and Governance Board around alignment to the SRS Strategy and assurance to all partners. It provides collective challenge to the SRS Chief Operating Officer to drive forward SRS strategic principles. NCC is represented on this board by the Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation. The Strategic Board provides updates on audits, performance as well as progress on the annual tactical plan. During this year the Board identified global supply chain risks for laptops and network equipment plus challenges of staff recruitment and retention that appear to be partly due to the impact of the New Normal on the industry.

#### Finance and Governance Board

The purpose of this board is to assure the Strategic Board that the SRS is delivering value for money, support the development of a medium term financial plan for the SRS, support the audit programme at the SRS and receive updates from audit in relation to the combined audit programme, provide collective challenge to each other around alignment to the SRS Strategy. It also provides collective challenge to the SRS Chief Operating Officer to drive forward the SRS strategic principles. NCC is represented on this board by the Head of Finance. The Finance and Governance Board provides updates on audits, SRS budget monitoring and agrees annual partner budgets.

## **Business and Collaboration Board**

The purpose of this board is to provide collective challenge to the SRS Chief Operating Officer to drive forward the SRS strategic principles including to deliver effective ICT services from a single combined unit and operate as one SRS, to improve services to provide a solid foundation upon which partner organisations can operate, to ensure the investment in technology is focused on delivery of the corporate priorities of the partner organisations, to develop a capable, professional workforce that can meet the challenges within technology over the coming years and to provide a collaborative platform for public sector organisations to share common ground. NCC is represented on this board by the Head of People, Policy and Transformation and the Digital Services Manager. The Business and Collaboration Board provides an overview of performance, the annual tactical plan together with opportunities for collaborative working across partners on an informal and formal level.

These boards continue to mature with a strong sense of collaboration. All decisions made by boards need agreement by all partners. Developing a strategic, cohesive vision for all partners is challenging despite each partner's commitment to the partnership and its aims. An Audit Wales report into the partnership identified an increased level of consistency of vision and direction.

In addition to the three boards there is also a Delivery Group.

## **Delivery Group**

The SRS holds four weekly Delivery Group meetings with each partner separately. At these meetings, performance data is reviewed with individual partners and work is prioritised for the next four week period. NCC is represented by its client function led by the Head of People, Policy and Transformation. The focus of these meetings is being shifted to more strategic initiatives as operational service delivery improves.

## **Information Security Leadership Board**

Newport now attends a cross SRS partner information governance forum that complements our internal officer Information Governance Group.

## **Digital Services**

The Digital team sits in the People, Policy and Transformation service area and is complemented by the existing Information Management team to form Digital Services. Increased funding for digital was allocated to various areas last year and two posts were created. These posts have increased capacity and capability of the team and are now well integrated in the team. This has enabled a more strategic and wider outlook in terms of the city as well as the council. The development of the new Digital Strategy has been led by these new team members and they have also carried out a large amount of engagement internally and externally. This has made a positive difference and has re-affirmed the importance of technology to all these stakeholders.

The Digital team plays a key role for the council. It provides the link between the council and the SRS for IT work and always aims to add value in the process. It maintains an important relationship with the SRS and undertakes a client management role on behalf of the council including performance management with the SRS. It has a strategic role for the council as demonstrated in its lead on the new Digital Strategy. It has an important part to play in the Digital City Board and New Normal Board. The team also manage a number of "retained" IT budgets including contracts for most large IT applications (financials, HR etc.), a PC replacement budget for the council and a capital programme for major infrastructure updates. The team manages a newly created cloud budget and has led on the migration of systems to the cloud as detailed elsewhere in this report. The new team members aim to contribute to an improved digital infrastructure for the city with a more proactive approach. This is evidenced in a successful bid to the Welsh Government Local Broadband Fund designed to improve dark fibre and wider broadband provision in the city as part of the project's wider aims.

The Digital team also has a more operational/tactical role. This role is around:-

- reactive incidents
- core planned work to maintain the existing IT infrastructure
- projects
- compliance including Public Services Network (PSN)

In all these areas the Digital team manages the escalation and prioritisation with the SRS as necessary, working with services on behalf of the council. It also provides general advice and guidance to the council and plays a key communications role. This role is an important one for the council and the relationship with the SRS which continues to improve.

## **Service Areas**

Service Areas use a number of IT systems to operate their services. Services are responsible for the information stored in their respective systems and to maximise the benefits of technology in conjunction with Digital and the SRS. As detailed last year, additional budget was allocated to pay for necessary system updates that would previously have been paid for by services directly. The Digital team has worked with Service Areas in a more proactive migration of IT systems to the cloud. The review of the Digital Strategy has included a large amount of engagement with internal stakeholders to incorporate their priorities in the strategy and future plans.

## **Groups**

### **“New Normal”**

The “New Normal” Board was set up to develop plans for the longer term strategy of the council as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is with a view to recognising benefits identified during the pandemic and incorporating this into future plans for service delivery going forward. This is chaired by the Strategic Director, Transformation and Corporate.

### **Digital City Board**

This board provides the strategic direction for the Council on digital matters including development and management of the council’s Digital Strategy. The role of the board has been reviewed, its terms of reference updated and future membership considered. When necessary the role of the board is to prioritise large scale projects. The Board is chaired by Strategic Director, Transformation and Corporate and comprises representatives from areas of the Council. This group has membership from NCC and SRS.

### **Digital Champions**

The council has approximately 30 “Digital Champions” who are advocates for the use of digital technology. They provide a key contact point for services using digital technology. They were a key part of the testing for the roll out of the remote access Virtual Private Network (VPN) roll out.

## **Schools**

Schools fund their own IT provision and the majority use the in house schools service provided by the Shared Resource Service (SRS) although a number have provision from other service providers. A strategic group called the Schools IT Strategic Group with representation from schools, the Education service, Shared Resource Service and Digital meets regularly. The group has the following roles:-

- ensure that the ICT Strategic Group is kept informed of digital developments in education, identifying new opportunities and trends
- identify and support opportunities to innovate and share best practice, particularly in the use of Hwb and assist with the provision of professional learning opportunities and development of case studies
- support the ICT Strategic Group in researching what digital technology could help and enhance provision in schools
- provide professional advice from a teaching and learning perspective on the suitability and use of digital devices in schools

This strategic group focuses on the development of the IT provision in schools and recognises the importance of this to effective teaching and learning. Welsh Government provided additional funding designed to improve the infrastructure of schools under the “EdTech” programme. This and other initiatives have been progressed with the Education service, Shared Resource Service and Digital.

## **2.3. Performance**

### **Performance Information**

The Shared Resource Service has a number of common performance measures across all their respective partners. As such all partners have common targets and are measured on the same basis.

### **Performance Measures**

The SRS has a number of common Performance Indicators (PI's) agreed and monitored across all partners as part of the Service Level Agreement.

#### **Percentage of Calls Resolved Against Service Level Agreement (SLA)**

The performance for the year 21/22 is 94.9% against a target of 85.0%. This equates to 11,167 calls out of 11,764 that met the target. This compares with 20/21 performance of 91.8% and 19/20 performance of 93.0%. This represents excellent performance for reactive calls and is almost 10% above target. This demonstrates that reactive calls are being responded to well and generally resolved within target. Performance is consistently very good throughout the year, exceeding the target in every month with monthly variations ranging from 91.6% to 98.1%.

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

The performance for the year 21/22 as a whole is 78% of those responding were satisfied against a target of 70% so performance is above the target. This is based on 680 completed surveys. This compares with 64.7% in 20/21 and 76.0% for 19/20 so represents an improvement over the last two years. Performance by month ranges from 60% to 93% during the year that represents quite a variation.

#### **Calls Resolved at First Point of Contact**

The performance for the year 21/22 is 78.8% against a target of 70.0% so performance is above target. This equates to 9,266 calls out of 11,764 that were resolved at first point of contact. 20/21 as a whole was 58.8% and 19/20 as a whole was 60.5%. The performance for 21/22 is very good and better than previous years. Resolving calls at first point of contact solves calls quickly without the need to refer to other IT staff and is beneficial to customers and the IT Service alike.

#### **Average Call Response time**

An average for the year is currently not calculated due to a change in system during the year and the need to combine figures. However, figures for the two periods have both missed the target so the overall response would be well over the 90 second target representing amber performance.

The average call response time for the year is currently being compiled. This compares with 5 minutes 27 seconds in 20/21 and 5 minutes 31 seconds for 19/20. This has been a challenge for SRS and it needs to consider how to improve this.

Of the four performance measures, SRS has three green performance measures and one amber. In 20/21 and 19/20 three measures were amber and one green but with the most important, calls resolved against SLA, green during this period. 21/22 represents a positive improvement in performance over this three year period in terms of the four measures and the aim is to maintain and improve performance further.

## 2.4. Funding

As detailed in the organisation section above, spend on IT/digital is incurred in various areas. The majority of the funding is provided to the Shared Resource Service (SRS) that employs IT staff and pays for a number of contracts on behalf of the council. Working with SRS, the council has realised savings by rationalising systems, especially where facilities exist as part of the council's Microsoft Enterprise Agreement.

In 21/22 savings were made for secure file transfer/secure e-mail and from 22/23 savings will be made as a result of changing the remote access Virtual Private Network (VPN) system as detailed elsewhere in this report. The council also has a number of budgets that remain with the council including for major systems "retained contracts", capital programme and equipment spend. The council continues to look to rationalise systems wherever possible.

As highlighted in last year's report, additional funding of £220,000 was allocated in 19/20, £470,000 in 20/21 and £250,000 in 21/22. Over this period a number of improvements have been made as a result as detailed below:-

- PC replacement budget – this is now more sustainable and has improved the equipment being used by staff due to a reduced laptop refresh cycle. It also enables the regular refresh of member laptops rather than capital spend for each new council administration.
- Cloud funding – this funding has facilitated the migration of IT systems to the cloud that provides improved accessibility, availability, resilience, performance and support. Further details are provided elsewhere in the report
- Cyber security – increased funding enabled a solution to be procured and implemented to improve protection against ransomware as well as a policy management solution procured and implemented to educate and engage with staff. A Security Operations Centre (SOC) and Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) was procured on behalf of all partners by SRS designed to increase proactive security measures and implementation has commenced
- Innovation and development fund – this provides support for digital innovation and has been used to provide interactive screens for committee/meeting rooms to facilitate hybrid meetings with attendees in the building and remotely. It has also been used to develop facilities on the Internet of Things IoT network in Newport. It will also make a financial contribution to the Local Broadband Fund if successful
- Digital team resources – two additional posts were created to increase capacity and capability and this has made a positive difference already
- System support fund – this contributes to costs associated with important system updates and removes ad hoc pressures on Service Area budgets
- Robotic Process Automation – a system has been procured and implemented. It is designed to automate activities carried out by IT system users to free up time to spend on higher value tasks than data entry. The system has been used for one specific project to date with further use cases being identified across the organisation

The extra funding provided has made a positive contribution in various areas such as equipment provision, proactive cloud migration, cyber security and a system for Robotic Process Automation. It also provides funding for innovation and development and extra resources in Digital to deliver more for the council. The system and resource improvements should also facilitate cost and efficiency savings to be realised on behalf of the organisation

As mentioned above, schools fund their own IT provision from their own budgets. This has been supplemented by Welsh Government "EdTech" funding highlighted elsewhere in this report

## **2.5. Projects**

### **Financial System Replacement**

Procurement took place for an improved, cloud based financial system for the council. This is expected to improve facilities and streamline financial process. This is a large implementation project that is currently planned to go live on 1/4/2023.

### **Microsoft 365 (formerly known as Office 365)**

Secure e-mail and secure/large file transfer using Office Message Encryption and One Drive for Business was implemented, finishing in late April 21 that replaced a previous system providing these facilities. This enabled annual savings to be made. A project commenced to remove the need for the 'Archive Manager' solution and importing older e-mails into the core e-mail system. This went live early in the financial year 22/23.

Following a successful pilot, the Always On VPN (Virtual Private Network) solution was implemented. This provides a secure, remote access solution for people working remotely. Roll out will complete in April 2022. This has been a successful roll out for the organisation to date and has been positively received. The solution will also facilitate various security improvements due to how it operates. These are planned for 22/23.

### **Web Site**

The council's primary web site, [www.newport.gov.uk](http://www.newport.gov.uk), was identified as needing significant work in terms of the look and feel plus a review of the amount of content. A business case was agreed for resources to support the re-development of the web site and is intended to improve sustainability of the site in future. This is major project that will commence during 22/23 and aims to make a positive improvement to the customer experience of the council's web site. In March 2022, the council's web platform was successfully migrated to a cloud solution that is expected to provide improved features, performance and resilience.

### **New Normal**

The council's New Normal Programme Board has been working on the council's response to the Coronavirus pandemic and future operations, learning lessons from its operation during this period. Technology has provided a key part in continued effective service delivery including Microsoft Teams meetings and hybrid council meetings facilitated by new audio visual equipment in the Council Chamber and meeting rooms. Development of room/desk booking systems commenced and should be completed in spring/summer of 2022. Initial work was carried out to review the council's current telephony systems and a major piece of work is planned for 22/23. Equipment needs for the Civic Centre have been identified in line with the future use of the building.

### **Committee Room and Meeting Room Audio Visual Equipment**

Interactive screens installed last year in Committee Rooms and meeting rooms have been set up to enable Microsoft Teams meetings for those in the building as well as enabling people to join remotely. Screens have camera, speaker and microphones and have been used already. These will assist in future for hybrid meetings.

### **Intranet – Migration to SharePoint Online**

The council's intranet was migrated from an on premise solution to Microsoft SharePoint Online in the cloud. This was a move of platform with a wider re-development of the Intranet required in future to improve functionality and the look and feel of the site.

### **Cloud Migrations**

These include migration to a cloud system for the council's web site, the Mayrise system used in Highways and the system for the democratic process.

## “EdTech”

This funding from Welsh Government has made a huge impact on the digital infrastructure for schools and over the last 3 years in addition to improving their networks schools have also received:

- 1248 laptops
- 6587 Chromebooks
- 401 PCs
- 935 iPads
- 51 Macbooks and iMacs
- 153 charging trolleys
- 262 projectors
- 263 digital screens
- And hundreds of other peripheral devices including monitors, docks, headsets, speakers, webcams, casting devices, splitters and connectors.

### 2.6. Core Planned

As well as larger time-limited projects, there are required pieces of work that are not reactive. This may be to provide additional system features, required updates for security purposes or work as a result of organisational changes. This work is categorised as core planned work. This work needs to be incorporated in to the wider work of the IT Service. Some of this work can be quite small but it can also be more significant despite not being as large as a project.

The most significant core planned pieces of work are:-

- IDOX Uniform Oracle and system upgrade
- Oracle Financials database upgrade
- Capita One Education updates
- Capita Revenues and Benefits patches and updates
- Electoral register system updates
- Libraries migration from the EDU network to corporate
- Revised telephony directory system following intranet migration to cloud

Most of this work requires some element of downtime. The impact of this is identified with SRS, the system provider and Digital Services and agreed by an appropriate method depending on the potential impact

### 2.7. Reactive

Clearly things don't always work as they should and therefore the IT service needs to respond to incidents that happen in a reactive way. These incidents are logged on a service desk system by the SRS service desk or self-service by users. Incidents are primarily managed by the SRS but the Digital team get involved to escalate and assist with higher priority incidents by exception. The Coronavirus pandemic has caused some challenges given the need for devices to be fixed for instance when a remote fix is not possible. In the main this has been facilitated by prearranged appointments with the SRS. This will need to be considered in the development of the New Normal. Details of the performance in relation to reactive incidents are included in the wider performance information section above. An initiative to promote self-service logging of incidents rather than by telephone will be promoted.

Occasionally major incidents occur that may result in some system down time. These incidents are managed by SRS with support from Digital Services. On these occasions SRS and Digital Services will identify lessons learned and implement any improvements as a result.

## 2.8. Compliance, Security and Audit

As well as core planned work, there is work to ensure compliance with requirements such as the Public Services Network (PSN). This and other work around compliance and audit needs to be scheduled and managed between the SRS and the council. There is a small, more technical security team within the SRS that complements the Information Management team in the council.

As mentioned in last year's report, SRS tendered for a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solution and a Security Operations Centre (SOC) designed to boost preventative measures to protect the council's data and systems. The council and other SRS partners agreed to implementation of these solution. Implementation has started and will be completed during 21/22.

The Information Management team develops and publishes an Annual Information Risk Report that is reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. The report for 21/22 has been drafted and will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

## 2.9. Infrastructure, Capital Programme and Cloud

A major project led by the SRS commenced in 20/21 to move all SRS partners to a new data centre. All the respective partners formally signed off the business case for the data centre move which is a major milestone. For Newport specifically the [business case was agreed by Cabinet in October 2020](#). This means the migration to a new data centre replacing equipment the vast majority of which is currently in Newport's computer rooms. This will provide better resilience and availability including a core network with SRS partners. Some local network equipment in council buildings is still required that will include considerations around the "new normal". This was ordered in January 2022 but delivery has been delayed due to global supply chain issues. The council's capital programme was used to pay for the required infrastructure in the new data centre that is progressing well. It is anticipated that Newport will be live by end of March 20223 which is much earlier than originally planned and a very positive step.

More systems continue to be moved to the cloud and the pace of this migration has accelerated with a more proactive approach being undertaken supported by previous additional budget for cloud services. A number of advantages are expected from the migration of systems to the cloud:-

- Access from any device, location
- Improved availability, resilience
- Improved performance
- Improved support
- Positive contribution to carbon reduction

The main disadvantages are additional costs and reduced control over these services but these need to be considered as part of the total cost of ownership. Based on the council's experience with systems migrated to date, the advantages vastly outweigh the disadvantages.

The migration to the cloud is based on a number of principles:-

- Cloud first
- Highest priority IT systems are targeted
- Review on a case by case basis
- Ultimate responsibility for these cloud systems remains with the council

Cloud migrations go through a comprehensive process to ensure their suitability including appropriate procurement and information governance based on the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) cloud security principles, development of a cloud register and Data Protection Impact Assessments.

Council systems that are currently provided in the cloud are detailed as below:-

- E-mail as part of Microsoft 365 project
- Telephony
- Social Services system, WCCIS an all Wales cloud hosted system
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- iTrent HR/Payroll system is in a MHR cloud environment.
- Payment solution
- Home Care scheduling system
- Income management system.
- iShare web mapping solution

New cloud migrations that took place in 21/22

- Web site and “A-Z” (primary council web site plus customer services knowledge base)
- Mayrise (highways, cleansing etc.)
- SharePoint online (intranet)
- Modern.gov (democratic process management and documents)

Planned Cloud Migrations for 22/23 onwards

- The project to replace the existing financial system to the Technology One solution has commenced and includes migration to the cloud currently estimated as April 2023
- The Paygate BACS system is planned for go live in early 22/23
- The Capita One education management system has been approved for cloud migration with planned go live in late 2022
- The IDOX Uniform public protection system has been approved for cloud migration with planned go live in 2022
- Legal case management system – this project is almost complete with planned go live in early 22/23

## **2.10. Devices and Operating Systems**

### **Devices**

The council now almost exclusively uses laptops for flexibility and mobility. Laptops will always be issued unless there is a specific reason that a desktop device is required in very limited scenarios. The availability of laptops has been invaluable during the Coronavirus pandemic with a large number of staff working from home. Windows 10 is deployed to all devices now. A number of Windows 10 updates will also be required for a large number of devices

### **Microsoft 365 (formerly Office 365)**

The council previously migrated its e-mail solution to Microsoft 365 with e-mail in the cloud. This provides improved collaborative, agile working facilities and information security. The solution uses Microsoft Multi Factor Authentication (MFA). In addition, the Microsoft Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) solution protects against attachments and links sent in e-mails. The e-mail configuration includes the use of Transport Layer Security (TLS) to encrypt e-mail to external e-mail systems set up to the same standard which should include all local authorities and the public sector generally.

Microsoft Teams continues to provide instant messaging/chat facilities as well as video/audio conferencing facilities. These facilities are used extensively and enable the organisation to hold a large number of virtual meetings and informal discussions. This has been invaluable to the organisation given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and the solution is regularly updated by Microsoft with additional features and other improvements. The latest version of the Microsoft 365 client is rolled out to all Windows devices.

## **Devices for Members**

The first Annual Digital Report highlighted the procurement of tablet devices for members. These, in combination with existing laptop devices have provided a good solution for members in carrying out their role and have been especially beneficial. The refresh of member laptop devices are now included within the wider laptop refresh cycle so there is no need for a capital programme for members at the local government elections in May 2022. Tablet and mobile phone devices will be re-issued as necessary for the turnover of members.

## **Digital Champions**

The council has approximately 30 “Digital Champions” who are advocates for the use of digital technology. They provide a key contact point for services using digital technology. They were a key part of the testing for the roll out of the Microsoft Always On VPN solution and a number of other initiatives.

## **Newport Intelligence Hub**

The Newport Intelligence Hub (NIH) has seen the council transition from a traditional distributed managed model for information and intelligence to a centralised model. The service is split into three elements – Geospatial Data Development, Systems Development, Business Intelligence and Education and Schools Management Information Systems.

The system development function encompasses a significant number of cross-organisational services and systems including:

- Transactional HR & Payroll and the digital workforce transformation from an employee and manager self-service perspective
- Public Protection, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing, Housing Renovation Grants, Planning, Enforcements and Building Control
- MI Hub which encompasses interactive dashboards for Corporate and Service Plan reporting and monitoring, performance and risk management

## **Remote Access Virtual Private Network (VPN) Solution**

The council has commenced the migration from its existing remote access solution to Microsoft Always On VPN solution. This will enable all staff who need to work from home to do so. It will provide the ability to carry out password resets and Windows updates due to its “always on” connection type that will enhance security. Staff are able to work from anywhere where a wireless network is available, as if they were sat at their desk, which also reduces the requirement to carry paper documents.

## **Multi-Function Devices**

‘Follow Me’ print is available to all users, who are able to access council printers from any location with a device. A Multi-Function Device (printer/copier/scanner) contract commenced in October 2017 and an upgrade is planned to provide the latest version of the print management solution. Due to the impact of the Coronavirus there has been much reduced use of these devices and consideration will be given to what is an appropriate number of devices in future given the likely changes to the number and frequency of staff attending some buildings. This will be included in procurement for a new contract

## **Secure/Large File transfer solution**

As planned last year, secure and large file transfers are now provided using Microsoft Office Message Encryption and Microsoft One Drive for Business.

## **Xerox Mail “hybrid mail”**

More services have been set up to use the “hybrid mail” system to streamline the production of paper and electronic outputs. This enables documents to be sent to production printers in the print room and then processed through the mail room folder/insert machine. This improves security by ensuring that print outputs are split into envelopes automatically in the folder/insert machine. The system’s use continues to increase led by the EDMS Project Manager with the Digital team

### **Wireless Staff Access**

Wireless Access points are provided in many council buildings. This includes appropriate security controls in place. Major updates planned for 20/21 were delayed due to the impact of Coronavirus and equipment ordered has been delayed due to global supply chain issues.

### **Wireless Public Access**

Wireless public access is provided in select council locations and this is protected using appropriate security measures where users can create logins for a limited period. Public Wi-Fi is available in the city centre (Newport City Connect), over 50 public buildings (Newport Community Cloud) and on buses. Gov Wi-Fi is available in various public buildings too.

### **Physical Security**

Major buildings are limited to staff with physical access tokens and alarmed outside of opening hours. As detailed in the physical access policy:

- IT facilities must be located in secure areas protected from unauthorised access
- Any visitors to IT secure areas must be signed in and accompanied at all times
- Computer rooms are subject to additional security measures to protect them from unauthorised access, damage and interference
- Plans are in place to upgrade the system used for door access in the Civic Centre

The policy and Building Access policy also require staff to display identity badges at all times.

### **Mobile Phones**

The council has a large number of mobile phones issued to staff. The vast majority are now smart phones with e-mail, internet access etc. For those that just need calls and texts, basic phones are provided as they are much cheaper. All phones are managed using a Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution to limit access and the ability to wipe phones remotely if required.

### **Tablets**

A relatively small number of tablets are in use across the organisation for specific purposes including tablets for members. These devices are managed using the same Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution as for mobile phones.

## **2.11. Digital Developments**

### **Digital Democracy**

A successful bid was previously made to a Welsh Government Digital Democracy Fund. Work was completed to replace equipment and software in the Council Chamber to improve the facility and enable the use of “hybrid meetings” where some people attend in person and some people can attend remotely. This was first used in May 2022 for the Council’s Annual General Meeting and is expected to provide a modern and powerful solution for future meetings.

### **Local Broadband Fund (LBF) Bid**

Newport City Council submitted a Local Broadband Fund (LBF) bid in December 2021. The fund is provided by Welsh Government. The bid is to improve gigabit capable full fibre connectivity and the provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three council managed adult residential care homes in Newport. The following will be provided in all three buildings: -

- The provision of a gigabit capable dark fibre connection. The scheme will expand the footprint of dark fibre within Newport that will also act as a catalyst for other applications
- The upgrade of in-building infrastructure including routers, Wi-Fi access points and the potential installation of sensors

- An overlay of Internet of Things (IoT) based telecare applications including monitoring and environmental control

The council was advised in April 2022 that it was successful in its bid which is excellent news. The project will be implemented in 22/23.

## **Digital Skills**

Get Connected courses have been run in conjunction with Digital Communities Wales. These are 6 week digital skills courses, initially on a train the trainer basis. 4 cohorts took place in community hubs and centres so the council can deliver in house. The council is represented on the Regional Skills Partnership Board including Newport City Council, Coleg Gwent, Careers Wales, and University of South Wales. They have 6 key strategic priorities around skills.

A Digital Skills Audit for council employees was undertaken with the Digital Team, HR and Digital Communities Wales. The survey will be analysed and included within the council's planned workforce strategy.

Accessibility training was provided for some Social Services employees giving them the knowledge and skills to help people with accessibility requirements.

## **Digital Inclusion**

Work continues with Digital Communities Wales on Digitally Connected Communities to improve digital inclusion in Newport. Newport City Council is a member of the Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales and is the only council in Wales with accreditation to Digital Inclusion Alliance, making a commitment to deliver the 6 key strategic priorities.

Newport has formed a group called Get Newport Online with Digital Communities Wales with membership from the council, Higher Education, Further Education, charities and housing associations. The aim is to improve digital inclusion and deliver digital skills across the city. Investigation will take place about the possibility of a potential tablet loan scheme to improve digital inclusion.

## **Public Building Wi-Fi**

Funded by the council, "Newport Community Connect" provides a free public Wi-Fi service in over 50 public buildings in the city. The Coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the value of this service in digital inclusion. This has been improved by the use of "One Click Connect" to simplify users connecting to the service.

## **City Centre Wi-Fi**

The City Centre Wi-Fi is provided as a concession with a company and this serves the area around the city centre only. Work has been carried out during the year to make improvements in some areas.

## **Bus Wi-Fi**

Free Wi-Fi on Newport buses is provided, funded by the council and Newport Transport. This service has always been well used and the council uses it as a way to engage with the public with short online surveys.

## **Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)**

Much of the information held by the council would conventionally be stored as paper copies, on network file shares or within teams and service areas. The use of an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) provides the council with a modern, efficient, electronic system for managing documents, improving the way information and documents are used and the flow of information around the council.

EDMS has a number of benefits including security, access to information and records management by storing all service related documents securely in one place. EDMS is key to ensuring appropriate retention periods of documents stored in the system.

Developments in 21/22 include

- Housing Strategy implementation now complete
- Environmental Health (Food Team) – in progress
- Highway's implementation – in progress
- System version upgrade

## **Document Services**

Whilst the intention of the organisation is to use digital methods wherever possible, there is clearly a need for handling paper documents and the Document Services team carries out this important function. The team manages mail, print, scanning and paper document storage.

Mail and other items are received by the council from Royal Mail and various couriers/suppliers. Out-going mail is prepared by Document Services and collected via Royal Mail daily. The council has a central print room with digital equipment for printing internal documents, leaflets etc. The contract for the print room equipment was reviewed with Procurement and a new contract awarded. Document Services carries out central scanning for a large number of services using the EDMS system detailed above.

In addition to the central print facilities the council has a fleet of multi-function devices (MFD's) across sites that provide printing, copying and scanning facilities. Print volumes generally are reducing over time and scanning is increasing in a move to more digital ways of working. MFD print volumes have been down as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The exiting MFD contract was extended for a further year and will need to be reviewed again near the end of this period.

The council also has a hybrid mail solution that is designed to simplify and streamline the processes for out-going mail including the ability to send more information electronically. The proportion of documents going through this system continues to increase that in turns reduces the amount of franking carried out. Mail costs via the hybrid mail solution are cheaper than the equivalent franked mail costs which is one of the main drivers for the roll out of this system. The EDMS Project Manager now leads on this work and there has been very good progress as a result and this work is complementary to the work on the EDMS solution.

## **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)**

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) technology is designed to automate repetitive tasks to reduce data entry and streamline routine tasks. It can also be used for data migration and other tasks. RPA has now been implemented successfully for the migration of e-mails stored in the "Archive Manager" solution into the core Microsoft 365 e-mail system. This is a technology that can improve the council's effectiveness and efficiency and budget has been allocated to facilitate its use. Further opportunities for the use of RPA will be considered and a programme will be developed.

## **Internet of things (IoT) Network pilot**

In conjunction with a supplier, the council continues to pilot an Internet of Things (IoT) network that includes trialling sensors connected to the network for various purposes. This is using LoRaWAN technology (Long Range Wide Area Network) with a number of gateways across the city. Specific sensors have been set up for one area and a dashboard created to provide up to date readings and monitor trends. Further applications are planned for 22/23 to make further use of the network and how it can help the council.

## **Mobile Networks and 5G**

[5G networks](#) are starting to be rolled out by mobile operators across the UK and 5G is starting to become available in the area. Whilst there may be some planning considerations when mobile operators want to change their infrastructure, the council has no real influence on the roll out of such networks or general mobile networks. 5G is significantly faster than existing 4G networks and therefore provides benefits to consumers for streaming high quality video and other tasks that need increased bandwidth.

### **2.12. Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery**

There is an ever-increasing reliance on digital technology to support business activities and it is therefore important to maximise the availability of systems. Increased resilience was a factor in the decision to join the Shared Resource Service (SRS) and this is expected to be improved by the planned data centre move now expected earlier than planned within 22/23.

As detailed above, a more proactive move of systems to the cloud took place in 21/22 and will continue. This is designed to provide greater availability and better business continuity/disaster recovery.

Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 the council has a statutory duty to put in place business continuity management arrangements. The council is committed to ensuring robust and effective business continuity management as a key mechanism to restore and deliver continuity of key services in the event of a disruption or emergency. One of the essential components of delivering this commitment is to understand how a disruptive event would impact service areas and their ability to continue their key service delivery. To achieve this, each service area is required to undertake a 'Business Impact Analysis Form For Critical Service Delivery'.

Although the programmed Corporate Business Continuity Management (BCM) work was suspended on the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic in March 2020, to assist the council's preparations and response to the pandemic, each service area assessed the potential impacts of the pandemic to their key business delivery using a Business Impact Analysis template. On the recommencement of this work, it was noted that there has been a significant change in service areas considerations in completing their Business Impact Analysis submissions pre and post pandemic.

For example, findings indicate that, where before the pandemic, the loss of the main operational building would have provided significant challenges with little mitigation available, the well tested and efficient agile working processes with which staff are now familiar provides improved resilience. However, where remote working is now cited as a contingency measure to mitigate the disruption to or loss of the main operational base, the reliance on the continuity of access to digital infrastructure such as servers, home working and internet and applications whether corporately maintained or by third parties, is now highlighted as essential and a heightened risk.

### **2.13. Coronavirus Impact and 'New Normal'**

A number of areas of this report mention the impact of the CoronaVirus pandemic which had the most significant effect on organisations from "lockdown" which commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. During the 21/22 financial year there were varying degrees of restriction in place but services have continued to operate. It is clear as a result of the CoronaVirus pandemic that digital technology has even greater importance than before, with much increased home working. This places even greater emphasis on the availability and performance of IT systems in this new environment. As detailed elsewhere in this report, the strategic move of systems to the cloud is expected to bring a number of benefits. There are also greater information governance challenges from home working including increased cyber security threats. As detailed elsewhere in this report, a New Normal Programme Board is looking at issues arising from the Coronavirus impact and how the organisation operates in future. This work will continue in 22/23.

## 2.14. Climate Change

The council's Climate Change Plan 2022-2027 includes a digital element and Digital is represented on one of the internal groups that are progressing council plans. This is an extremely important plan for the council and digital will play its part in some of the initiatives. Some initial areas are to:-

- Develop a new digital strategy that fully considers the Council's climate change commitments and net zero aspirations (as detailed elsewhere in this report)
  - Actively considers climate change and associated actions
  - Supports the "new normal" way of working and associated actions.
  - Provide technology solutions that reduce the need for customer and staff travel
  - Maximise the use of digital solutions to reduce paper usage including digitising paper records where possible
  - Minimise data storage to reduce infrastructure requirements and reduce energy consumption
- Migrate to more energy efficient technology solutions including data centre and cloud provision taking advantage of economies of scale in terms of cooling efficiency.
- Maximise the use of digital solutions such as Internet of Things (IoT) network to measure climate change action and carbon emissions
- Providing information and data to facilitate organisational and individual informed decisions around climate change and carbon emissions
- Work with IT Partner, Shared Resource Service (SRS) Wales to consider climate change measures across service delivery and take appropriate actions to reduce energy usage and reduce carbon and waste
- Consider climate impact and carbon reduction when purchasing IT equipment
- Embed reduce, reuse, recycle principles in IT policies and practices

## 3. Conclusions

### Digital Strategy

A large amount of engagement has taken place for the digital strategy and the final version is expected in October 2022. This report again highlights the increasing importance of IT/digital solutions to the organisation, especially given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. At the time of writing, draft themes have been identified with outcomes and how they will be achieved. This strategy is important for the council's future plans and will be heavily linked to the development of the council's new corporate plan.

### Organisation and Governance

The report again highlights the importance of the Shared Resource Service, the council's Digital team and Service Areas in improving IT provision and the impact on service delivery. The SRS continues to mature in partnership with the Digital team, Service Areas and the other partners. SRS Boards are more joined up and effective. Additional resources in the Digital team continue to make a positive impact including a successful Local Broadband Fund bid as mentioned elsewhere in this report. The importance of IT in schools is also recognised and continues to be developed by a strategic group. This is complemented by Welsh Government funding of its "Edtech" programme across Wales that has made a huge impact

### Performance

Performance has been consistently good in terms of calls resolved against SLA during the last three financial year. Two other measures are also now green in terms of customer satisfaction and calls resolved at first point of contact. The time to answer calls remains amber and this needs to be reviewed.

### Funding

This report details the funding for IT services and explains that Shared Resource Service (SRS) funding is provided by partner organisations. Whilst funding is allocated primarily to the Shared Resource Service, the Digital team also manages a number of significant retained budgets. In 22/23 savings will be made as a result of changing the remote access Virtual Private Network (VPN) system as detailed elsewhere in this report. This is part of a drive to standardise systems and maximise the benefits of systems including Microsoft 365. Over previous years nearly £1M of additional revenue funding has been provided. This has had a very positive impact on the laptop replacement budget, cloud funding, cyber security improvements, Robotic Process Automation and digital team resources.

### Projects

The number and size of projects identified in the section above highlights the important projects carried out and the positive impact they make to service delivery. Nearly all projects include a significant technology part and key projects during 201/22 were the procurement of a new finance system, Microsoft 365 developments, Committee Room and Meeting Room Audio Visual Equipment and various cloud migrations.

### Core Planned

Whilst core planned work is generally less time-consuming than projects, it is very important to ensure continued effective operation of services especially from a security perspective. As usual, a number of important updates were made to various systems including to the Uniform system, Education system etc. To some extent cloud migrations may add to short term work but should reduce longer term work as a result.

## **Compliance, Security and Audit**

The majority of this work is detailed in the Annual Information Risk Report so this report makes little mention but this is crucial work especially in the current environment. The Information Management team, Digital team and the SRS work collectively to progress this work to keep systems and information secure. Agreement and associated funding was provided for a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) system and a Security Operations Centre (SOC) led by the SRS for partners and implementation has commenced.

## **Reactive**

The reactive IT service is often the most recognised IT function given that IT systems don't work all the time and a reactive service desk is required to respond to these incidents. This service is provided by the SRS. An initiative to promote self-service logging of incidents rather than by telephone will be promoted. Where major incidents happen these need to be managed by SRS and Digital Services with the identification of appropriate lessons learned and improvements made.

## **Infrastructure, Capital Programme and Cloud**

A business case was agreed by all SRS partners for a data centre move to include core shared infrastructure and this is expected to be completed by the end of March 2023. Local networking equipment will be implemented in 22/23. 4 major systems were migrated to the cloud in 21/22 and there are plans for 5 major systems in 22/23. This strategy will continue with the move to more of a revenue funding model and the more proactive migration of key systems to the cloud.

## **Devices and Operating Systems**

The organisation now has only Windows 10 devices in operation which is a positive position. Versions of Windows 10 are regularly updated by Microsoft and these updates need to be applied to all devices. These updates will be possible when on a remote connection when the migration to the remote access VPN solution is completed which is another important development. Microsoft Office Message Encryption and OneDrive solutions were rolled out for secure messaging and large/secure file sharing.

## **Digital Developments**

### **Digital Democracy**

The hardware and software to facilitate "hybrid meetings" in the Council Chamber was installed and is operational. This follows a successful bid to Welsh Government for the Digital Democracy fund as part of the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

### **Local Broadband Fund**

A successful bid was made to the Local Broadband Fund, representing funding of £210k. The bid is to improve gigabit capable full fibre connectivity and the provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three council managed adult residential care homes in Newport. This is very positive and will commence implementation in 22/23.

### **Digital Skills**

A number of initiatives in this area have been progressed including some train the trainer session for digital skills. A digital skills audit was undertaken for council employees that will feed in to the development of a workforce strategy.

### **Digital Inclusion**

The importance of digital inclusion has become increasingly apparent, especially since the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is an area for further development and is included in the draft digital strategy themes together with digital skills.

### **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)**

The first use of RPA was successful for the migration of e-mails from the "Archive Manager" solution. Future opportunities will be considered with a view to developing a programme for RPA.

EDMS and hybrid mail solution – further progress has been made with both these systems that enhances capabilities of flexible and agile working.

Document Services is an important enabler for mail, print and paper document storage with an increasing move to scanning documents in to the EDMS system.

Public Wi-Fi is provided in the city centre, on buses and in a number of public buildings. This makes a positive contribution to digital inclusion that is part of a draft theme for the new Digital Strategy.

### **Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery**

Increased resilience was a factor in the decision to join the Shared Resource Service (SRS) and this will be improved by the planned data centre move during 22/23. A more proactive move of systems to the cloud took place in 21/22 and will continue. This is designed to provide greater availability and better business continuity/disaster recovery. Business Impact Analysis was carried out in response to the Coronavirus pandemic and this highlighted the increasing importance of digital technology.

### **Coronavirus Impact and 'New Normal'**

The Coronavirus pandemic has continued to provide challenges for organisations including the council. Many of the earlier initiatives mean the council is in a strong position to continue service delivery. IT systems continue to be vitally important and the strategic move of systems to the cloud is expected to improve resilience, support and availability of these systems. The council maintains a strong commitment to digital as demonstrated by the activities detailed within this report many of which facilitate a 'New Normal' way of working.

### **Climate Change**

The council's Climate Change Plan 2022-2027 includes an important digital element. This programme will be managed as part of the plan and will include important contributions from the Digital team and SRS.

## 4. Actions Summary

### Digital Strategy

The council's existing Digital Strategy is being reviewed and developed and is now due to be completed in quarter 3 2022.

**Organisation and Governance** - the relationship between the council and the Shared Resource Service (SRS) is one that aims for continuous improvement in partnership working. The SRS will be a vital part of the delivery of the new Digital Strategy. The Digital team also has an on-going role to engage with other services and contribute to their respective plans and strategies. The "EdTech" programme will continue to make improvements in schools.

**Performance** - one measure in relation to time to answer calls is worse than its target and this will be looked at. The Digital team will work with SRS to review performance and take actions as necessary.

**Funding** – savings will be pursued wherever possible, especially in relation to Microsoft 365 facilities that may enable system rationalisation. This will include the migration of remote Access VPN solution in early 22/23 but other opportunities will be taken where possible. The aim would be to re-invest where savings are identified given the importance of technology.

**Projects** – in 22/23 there will be a number of important projects including the finance system migration and various cloud migrations.

**Core Planned** - core planned work is required to ensure systems are kept up to date and will continue with necessary updates.

### Compliance, Security and Audit

Implementation of a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) system and a Security Operations Centre (SOC) has commenced and will be completed in 22/23 across all SRS partners.

**Reactive** - incidents are logged on a service desk system by the SRS service desk or self-service by users. SRS and Digital will continue to manage and escalate incidents as necessary based on priorities. An initiative to promote self-service logging of incidents rather than by telephone will be promoted.

**Infrastructure, Capital Programme and Cloud** – SRS will complete the data centre move for Newport and will carry out the council's local network infrastructure refresh in key sites. The council plans to migrate 5 key systems to the cloud including its core financial system. The council continues its proactive move systems to the cloud.

**Devices and Operating Systems** – Windows devices will be updated to later versions to stay up to date. The Microsoft AlwaysOn VPN solution will be rolled out as the remote access solution, replacing the current solution that will result in costs savings.

### Digital Developments

Local Broadband Fund – the project is to improve gigabit capable full fibre connectivity and the provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three council managed adult residential care homes in Newport will be implemented.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) – future opportunities will be considered and a programme for RPA developed.

EDMS – further roll out across services is planned along with the council's hybrid mail system.

Public building Wi-Fi usage and costs continue to be reviewed in the light of the importance of digital inclusion.

The contracts for Multi Function Device (MFD) contracts will be reviewed again. Use of the LoRaWAN network will be reviewed and further roll out considered.

**Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery** - business continuity will be improved by the planned data centre move and further cloud migrations in 22/23.

**Coronavirus Impact and 'New Normal'**

The reliance on and use of technology needs to be monitored to ensure technology continues to support the "new normal".

**Climate Change**

The digital elements of the climate change plan will be progressed as part of the council's groups working on this plan.

## 5. Risk Management

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Digital Strategy is not up to date/relevant	M	L	Review and update Digital Strategy with stakeholders	Digital Services Manager (DSM) and Digital Projects Manager with internal and external stakeholders in partnership with SRS
Funding of service is not sufficient to meet the organisation's demands and aspirations, especially given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic	M	L	Additional funding now allocated to areas of need	Digital Services Manager (DSM) and Digital Projects Manager in conjunction with Head of PPT / SRS management
Delivery of IT Service by Shared Resource Service (SRS) provides less control	M	M	Develop relationship with the SRS further and contribute to its strategic direction and governance. Develop client side role to provide strategic input and performance monitoring. Continue to contribute to the delivery of projects, core planned and reactive work	Digital Services Manager (DSM) and Digital Projects Manager in conjunction with Head of PPT/ SRS management
Critical IT systems are not available to services	H	L	Data centre migration in 22/23. A more proactive move of systems to the cloud will provide improved availability and resilience	Digital Services Manager and Digital Projects Manager in conjunction with SRS and services
Appropriate devices and operating systems are not available	M	L	Laptops remain the standard and Digital Strategy will consider future needs. Windows 10 updates to take place for devices	Digital Services Manager (DSM) and Digital Projects Manager in conjunction with in conjunction with SRS

## 6. Action Plan

Action	Deadline
<b>Digital Strategy</b>	
<b>Review</b> - Digital Strategy to be reviewed and developed for publication	Oct 22
<b>Organisation and Governance</b>	
<b>SRS Boards</b> - represent Council at Shared Resource Service (SRS) Board meetings	On-going
<b>Relationship management</b> - continue to develop relationship between Council and SRS especially in relation to the planned deliverables in the revised Digital Strategy.	On-going
<b>“EdTech” project</b> - work with Education service and SRS in delivery of Welsh Government “Edtech” funding for 22/23	Mar 23
<b>Education/schools support</b> – support Education service, schools and SRS in development of digital strategy for schools in Newport	On-going
Digital team engagement with services and contribution to other plans and strategies throughout the organisation	On-going
<b>Performance</b>	
Monitor and manage performance between SRS and Digital team	On-going
Follow up on call response time performance with SRS to identify areas for improvement	Oct 22
<b>Funding</b>	
<b>Savings and re-investment</b> - identify areas for savings to enable system rationalisation and further re-investment where possible	On-going
<b>Projects</b>	
<b>Management/support</b> – Management/support of projects in conjunction with SRS and Service Areas	On-going
<b>E-mail Archive System Migration</b> – migration of e-mails to the core e-mail system from ‘Archive Manager’ solution	May 22
<b>Major projects</b> – include finance system migration and various cloud migrations	On-going
<b>Core Planned</b>	
<b>Core planned work</b> - management of core planned work in conjunction with SRS and Service Areas	On-going
<b>Compliance, Security and Audit</b>	
Implementation of SRS partner procured Security Operations Centre (SOC) and Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) system	Mar 23
<b>Reactive</b>	
Work with SRS and Digital to escalate as necessary	On-going
Digital team and SRS to promote self-service logging of incidents rather than by telephone	Sep 22
<b>Infrastructure and Capital programme</b>	
<b>Data centre move</b> – data centre migration to be completed	Mar 23
<b>Capital programme</b> - work with SRS on this project to improve resilience	On-going
<b>Cloud services</b> – proactively look to migrate systems to the cloud as with cloud the preferred option when practical and affordable	On-going
<b>Cloud services</b> – migration of new financial system, Education management system, public protection system, BACS system and legal case management solutions to cloud provision	Mar 23
<b>Devices and Operating Systems</b>	
<b>Microsoft 365 Always On VPN solution implementation</b> - roll out of remote access solution for all users	Apr 22
<b>Windows 10</b> – version upgrades to take place facilitated by roll out of Always On VPN solution	On-going

<b>Devices for members</b> – roll out of appropriate laptops as part of refresh cycle and re-issue of tablet and mobile phone devices as appropriate	May 22
<b>Mobile Phones</b> - the existing mobile phone contract will be reviewed based on new normal requirements.	Feb 23
<b>Laptops</b> – laptops are the preferred replacement devices unless there is a strong and specific reason to have a desktop device	On-going
<b>Digital Developments</b>	
<b>Local Broadband Fund</b> – implementation of gigabit capable full fibre connectivity and the provision of in-building assistive technology and telecare services to three council managed adult residential care homes in Newport.	Jun 23
<b>Digital Skills</b> – develop a programme to improve digital skills	Dec 22
<b>Digital Inclusion</b> – consider development of a tablet loan scheme	Dec 22
<b>Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)</b> - continue roll out of (EDMS) through organisation	On-going
<b>Document Services</b> - continued management of mail, print, scanning and paper file storage	On-going
<b>Hybrid Mail Solution</b> – roll out across further areas of hybrid mail solution to streamline process for mail	On-going
<b>Multi-Function Devices</b> – review of existing Multi-Function Device contract and future plans in the light of “new normal”	Aug 22
<b>Public Buildings Wi-Fi</b> - review of options for public buildings Wi-Fi provision	On-going
<b>Internet of Things (IoT) LoRaWAN network</b> - consider extension and future roll out as appropriate	On-going
<b>Robotic Process Automation (RPA)</b> – future opportunities will be considered and a programme for RPA developed.	Dec 22
<b>Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery</b>	
<b>Improved Business Continuity</b> – data centre move and cloud migrations to improve business continuity	On-going
<b>Coronavirus Impact</b>	
Review IT provision and implement changes required as a result of the “new normal”	On-going
<b>Climate Change</b>	
<b>Digital Strategy</b> - fully considers the Council’s climate change commitments and net zero aspirations	Oct 22
<b>Climate Change Digital Elements</b> – develop and progress digital elements of the council’s climate change plan	On-going