

Angus Digital Work Plan 2018-2020

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Background

Angus Council is on a journey to deliver a digitally enabled council. The digital strategy sets out the vision and our ambition for digital services that are so good our customer prefer to use them.

This Digital work plan supports business outcomes as outlined in the overall Council plan, Digital strategy (https://www.angus.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/digital_strategy_for_a_better_stronger_sustainable_and) and Workforce plan with the programme deliverables under the governance of the Change programme. Digital is so pervasive and disruptive to service delivery that it has become an opportunity to define new service models in all areas of the council and to provide the enabler to improving services, ensuring accessibility and reducing cost of service provision.

This paper outlines the opportunity presented by Digital in the Angus Context, our approach, the guiding principles and work plan. Given the pace of change the Digital work plan will be reviewed regularly.

Opportunity

Angus Council has a number of advantages which position us well for increased digital engagement, ensuring we are accessible for all our customer groups and which support achieving the digital strategy:

- new simple, uncluttered website which is designed to be highly accessible with good mobile rendering
- an excellent record with "Better Connected" a local government survey which includes a user based assessment of site usability and accessibility
- an ambition to be a leading council on accessibility by joint working with local groups and users to guide service design
- Angus have implemented a Customer Service Portal (CSP) system that is ready to be further developed.
- customer demand for automated web transactions is increasing
- Angus do not have a large contact centre, so have the opportunity to leapfrog straight from calls being directed to service areas to the majority of calls being converted to web based transactions
- Angus is collaborating locally via the Tayside collaborative and nationally via the Digital Partnership for Scottish Local Government to accelerate implementation of change.

There are significant opportunities to transform council processes and service delivery, to respond to customers changing behaviours, changing expectations (these expectations are set not by council services but by leading commercial brands) and to give the customer more influence and visibility over the progress of services they consume. This will be done whilst at the same time embedding accessibility into everything we do, maximising efficiency and reducing costs.

In summary the digital opportunities broadly cover:

- **redesigning and automating** processes to take advantage of digital methodologies and opportunities afforded by newer cloud based, configurable application technologies. By streamlining end to end processes and by automating, significant resource reduction is possible, together with better personalisation, improved process quality and reduced elapsed time.
- This is normally combined with a concerted **channel shift** with a phased plan for channel closure for selected services. This involves development of the web channel, self-serve and assisted self-serve through web chat and/or AI chat bots and requires an active and ongoing programme to encourage customers to the automated channels, then reassessing the more expensive channels.
- With this approach we can provide a better service for less resource, to free up staff to help those who need it most and to provide resource to support more complex service needs
- If this approach can be implemented and a high % of processes available are totally automated, then a redesign of the council **business operating model** is possible.
- Technology and data, gathered with users consent, can be used to **personalise and improve accessibility** and service provision. For example information about user preferences can be used to format the layout of pages and content and also advise us on the best method of correspondence to use
- Redesign is supported by use of Information including **Big Data** for process re-assessment and continuous or step improvement. Council applications of Big Data are often linked to Geographical Information Systems (**GIS**) or open data and provide opportunities to link services, customers and locational information to optimise decision making and support provision.
- **Digital Business disruption** is where new technologies are used to significantly reduce the role of the council to a facilitator. These initiatives are more challenging to introduce but can have significant benefit attached. Examples of digital business disruptive models in the council context include directly connecting 'citizen need' e.g. home care with 'provider capability' , individual home care providers, with nominal overhead. Another example is home to school transport where the council provides a digital platform to connect parents with transport providers and thereafter takes a significantly reduced role.
- **Internet of Things** (IOT) in combination with data analysis systems have proved most beneficial in the areas of Healthcare and predictive maintenance with fast growing application to enable Smart Places. The user experience and interface is critical to the success and adoption of the device or service and to benefits realisation. Application of IOT to improve access and delivery of services will be investigated as part of the work plan.

Approach

Digital for all

We aim for a high standard of usability for our customers, across all of our online content and services, by following best-practice accessibility guidelines, continuously reviewing site statistics and readability assessments . We also have access to enhanced assessment from organisations like the Digital Accessibility Centre who can further assess our adoption of these guidelines. In line with our principles, services will always be designed from the point of view of the customer, taking into account how varied our customer base can be. Digital service design should benefit everyone, including those who may not access these services directly. This includes ensuring that our services are compatible with assisted digital and proxy methodologies where we facilitate someone to assist a user or to make transactions on their behalf. Our aim is to ensure that our customers get the same standard of streamlined and efficient service regardless of how they choose to access it.

Each project within the Digital Work plan is subject to an Equalities Impact assessment scrutinised by the council's Change Management Governance.

Digital Process Redesign and automation

During 2017 a number of capabilities were implemented including:

- the new website with excellent mobile rendering and integrated forms
- the replacement Customer Service Portal,
- better network coverage for corporate, schools, residents and businesses

all of which has enabled Angus Council to commence redesign and automation of processes.

The initial approach is to redesign and automate processes starting with high volume rules based transactions / transaction sets where estimated benefits are highest. Currently, most online forms used by internal or external customers to transact business result in a level of manual intervention by officers. This ranges from retyping the information entered by the customer into one of the council's applications systems through to an officer checking that the data entered is valid and matching to other information held elsewhere.

Through redesign and automation, manual intervention is minimised or eliminated and customers of the service undertake their own service requests and data entry on a self-serve basis. These new interactions are being co designed with the customer including diverse customer groups specific to our demographic and those with accessibility issues. Web chat / Web bots are being implemented to support customers who require it and to help optimise the design of forms and web pages.

Constructing a Work Programme of Change and Benefits

A set of Digital Process Redesign Principles has been agreed by EMT to set the ambition for digital and to ensure those working on the redesign of processes have clear guidance on expectations.

A work programme of change and benefits is being constructed based on:

- back office opportunities identified via the previous change programme, mainly in HR and Revenues and Benefits
- data on high volume of transactions consuming resource in the contact centre
- volumes from commonly used transactions
- and via workshops identifying inefficiencies and redesign opportunities.

MyAngus My Account

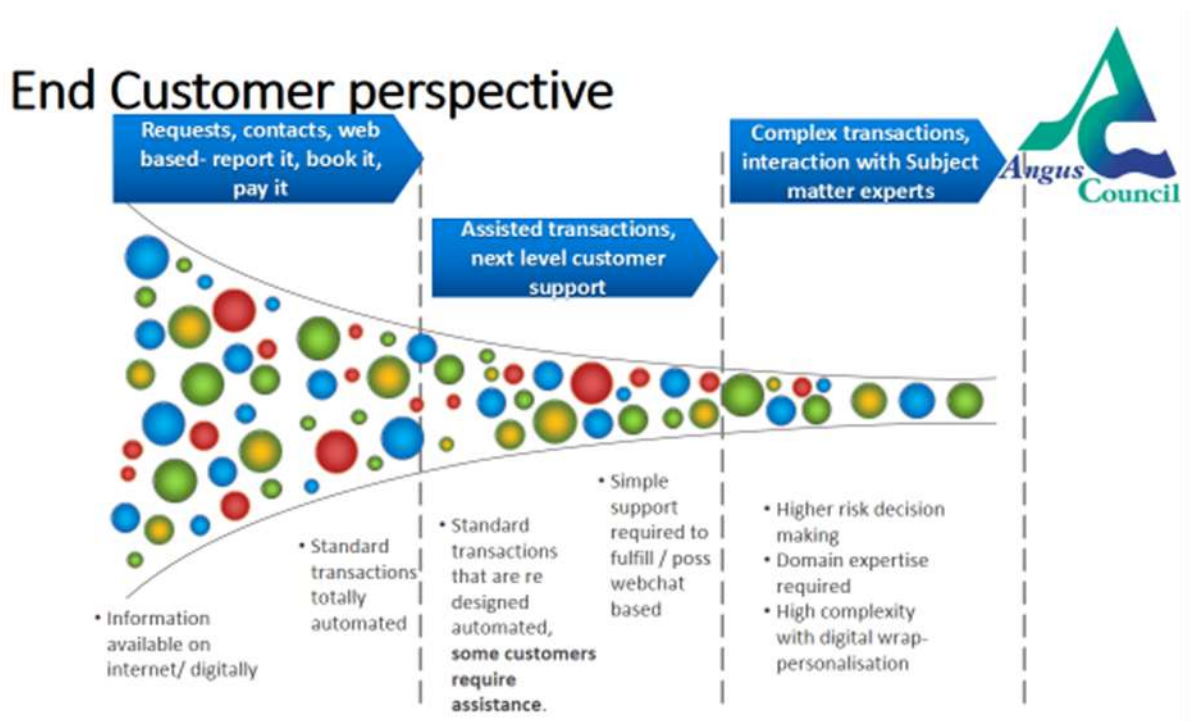
For a large number of transactions the customer can interact through the My Angus My Account. The advantage from the customer perspective is that they do not have to re-enter basic information about themselves to request services or report an issue with the council, they maintain ownership and control of their data and they gain visibility of the progress of all of their transactions.

Customer ownership of their data (where appropriate) and the ability for customers to check on request progress via automated alerts also enables significant reduction in failure demand contacts.

Developments will adhere to accessibility standards and regulations, including GDPR. Discussion has also commenced with Scottish Digital Office on how to better utilise the MyAccount service to capture information about our customers unique needs so that we can tailor our services accordingly.

Channel Shift

In combination with the above a concerted programme of channel shift will be undertaken, resulting in the majority of customer transactions being managed as shown below.



A multi-pronged and nuanced approach will be considered and there may be a number of actions that encourage and support channel shift even within a single process, depending on the customer groups involved.

One Council Approach to Applications

A Council wide review is underway of all software in use across this the Council.

The initial focus is on high spend critical line of business (LOB) applications and these are being assessed against pre-defined criteria with a view to establishing, reviewing and improving the contractual position and reducing expenditure and Total Cost of Ownership (TCO). Applications potentially vulnerable to cyber security attack which require urgent upgrade, retiring or replacing will also be prioritised.

Some underlying "legacy" applications are likely to remain in situ in the short/medium term due to the perceived prohibitive cost of change, the timescales required to change these applications and lack of feasible alternatives. However, the state of relevant underlying applications will be reviewed for suitability and stability in operating with any technology for redesign and automation. This may change the priority of processes in the Digital Work programme.

Of the identified applications, a number have common business functionality across the Council. The strategic approach for these common capabilities are:

- **Case Management;** this is normally provided in Line of Business (LOB) system and where appropriate the customer will have a unified view in My Account and Customer Service Portal (CSP). The My Account functionality and the CSP development will be shared with other councils in particular Tayside Collaborative
- **Customer Relationship Management;** this is provided via the Firmstep customer service portal (CSP) and integrated with webchat and other channels to enhance customer experience and internal efficiencies.
- **Document Management Systems;** this is normally provided in the LOB system. Unstructured data will be managed via Sharepoint as part of Office 365 as a document repository. Sharepoint is being reviewed for suitability for more advanced EDRMS requirements
- **Geographic Information Systems;** this is provided and developed corporately to deliver business and customer requirements, and geographical open data
- **Booking Systems;** this is currently provided in disparate systems or manually, and is planned to be via Firmstep and integrated to the CSP

Customer Digital Capacity

Digital exclusion is a life impacting issue for many residents with adverse social and economic consequences for the individual and the community. Angus Council is proactively working on connectivity coverage and the position is updated regularly at

https://www.angus.gov.uk/community_support/digital_connectivity/projects_under_way_to_improve_digital_connectivity_in_angus

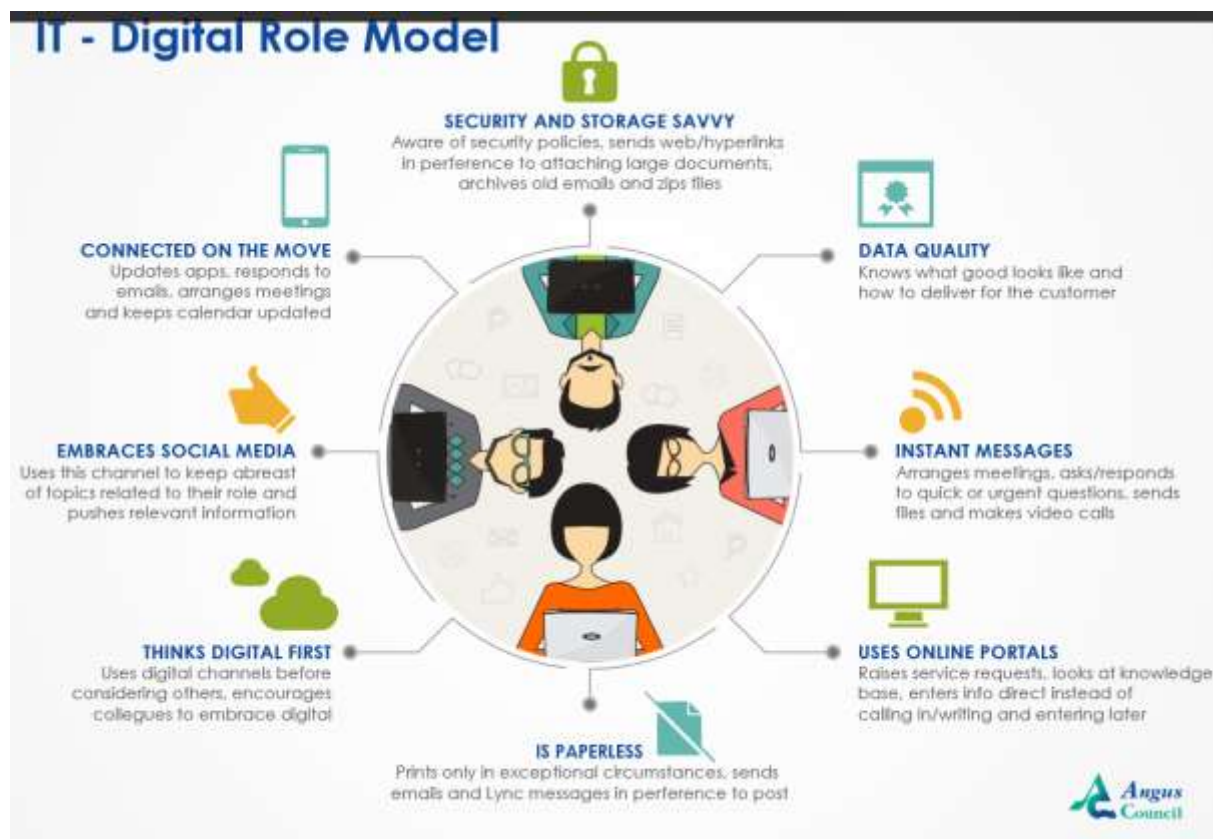
Angus Council is committed to reviewing all digital participation initiatives to assess benefits, examine gaps, and determine future support interventions that may be needed. This will ensure equality from infrastructure through to service design and skills.

Co designed with Customers

Customer Insight in process design and user experience is integral to the success of this programme. Angus Council is working jointly with groups including Voluntary Action Angus, Angus Disability Forum and tenant participation groups to ensure that a diverse range of customer groups are involved in co designing digital services. Given the extent of planned changes, key communication points and channels will be identified and implemented.

Employees Digital Capacity

As we move towards more digital processes and automation we will ensure that our employees are supported to become digital role models (see below) and are skilled to operate and support digital processes. Focussed digital “how to” training will be made available to staff based on survey results identifying gaps in skill set.



For employees involved in the process redesign and digital automation, capabilities are being developed in:

- front end design/ UI design
- business analysis/ process redesign/ process optimisation
- application, technical and business architecture

- technical integration skills
- project management with agile product implementation skills and digital domain knowledge and experience
- knowledge and experience of customer/ user journey mapping

Guiding Principles

The following principles will be used to guide digital services development.

DIGITAL PROCESS REDESIGN – Accessibility Customer and Efficiency Principles

All reviews should start from the basic question “Do we have to do this?” We should continue to carry out processes that either add value for the customer or are a statutory duty. Any new processes that are introduced will be accessible and online first. All reviews should consider whether the process is best undertaken by the Council or whether there are other bodies who could more effectively carry out the process.

Web based transactions must adhere to accessibility, consistency and usability guidance and products or services purchased to implement change must conform to these standards. Transactions must be designed and tested to ensure an intuitive and easy experience for a diverse range of customer groups. Common components (such as payments or bookings) should be reusable across a number transactions. Changes to transactions must be easy to make and based on evidence of improved customer experience or reduced cost of transaction.

Process design should consider whether additional services can be offered at the point of contact e.g. to provide the customer with a more complete end to end service appropriate to their needs or potentially upselling – “can we offer you (paid for) advice” for example enhanced professional advice from areas such as planning.

Transactions should be designed from the point of view of the customer using Customer Insight, and engineered to minimise the time the customer has to wait for a decision/outcome. Where insight does not exist it must be obtained before finalising a process. All transactions must be simple to understand and be based on Pay for it, Report It, Request it. Transactions should “get it right first time” and, where possible, give the customer an answer immediately. As a minimum customers must be advised when they will get an answer. Transactions must be tested by diverse customer groups before launch.

The first stage of any process review is to understand where the cost and “failure” is incurred in the process both in total and for each element. This information, together with an estimate of savings and potential benefits is to be used to prioritise process review effort. Processes should be as automated as possible and call on specialist staff where essential.

To eliminate failure demand we must be clear what we are offering the Customer. Where a transaction cannot be completed at the point of request the customer should receive notification updates on progress to avoid the need for the customer to chase.

All transactions should require the customer to pay for the service up front, preferably online. Processes must not be designed incorporating deferred payments by other means. (Applies to non-statutory services)

All external transactions should be available as web based and customers will be encouraged to use these channels. We aim to remove the barriers that stop people from enjoying equal access to the convenience of web based transactions including extended hours availability.

For those less able to use web based transactions assisted Digital services will be made available for example in these circumstances staff will use the Web on behalf of the customer or assist customers to use the Web based transactions.

All internal processes should be electronic where feasible and automated such that human intervention is only factored in where required e.g. where judgment based decision making is required.

No process should be designed to require paper document generation or forms usage unless there is an accessibility or statutory requirement

“To Be” processes should be generated to minimise service delivery costs (using risk based assessment where necessary) and ensure that ongoing cost monitoring is built into the process. Processes must be designed to build in metrics to enable monitoring of customer experience, cost and process improvement.

Work Plan

The initial work plan and Financial Savings have been determined by the Angus Change programme and are summarised below.

Project	Scope	Benefits	Timing
PRPA (Process redesign and Process Automation) Phase 1	Redesign and automation of circa 20 linked/ dependant processes identified as high benefit in the following areas: Revs and Bens HR Communities PIA (Privacy impact assessment) for each process	Financial savings Faster end to end customer experience/ internal efficiencies Less errors and failure demand	2017-Q4 2018
PRPA (Process redesign and Process Automation) Phase 2	Redesign and automation of further circa 20 linked/ dependant processes. Outline benefits identified PIA(Privacy impact assessment) for each process	Financial savings Faster end to end customer experience/ internal efficiencies Less errors and failure demand	2018-2019
Customer Digital Capacity	Work with partners to improve digital participation and support those who are not digitally engaged Customer groups engagement in co design Digital Connectivity projects: e.g. Craigowl , Full Fibre network, 100% broadband	Social inclusion/ economic advantage Accessibility/ usability/ increased take up of digital services Social Inclusion/ economic advantage	2018-2020
Digital Gaps and Contact Centre Replace CRM with CSP Webform Replacement Webchat introduction Report it	Deployment of single forms/CSP product with modern, integrated system. Replacement of legacy forms and further automation built in where feasible. Delivery of webchat to allow assisted digital delivery. Delivery of reporting against assets. E.g. streetlights, roads.	Enabling better customer support/reduced security risk/system alignment Accessibility/ Enabling/process efficiencies Accessibility/Reduced avoidable contact/increased digital uptake Accessibility/ Enabling/reduced avoidable contact/process efficiencies	2017-Q1 2018 Complete Q1 2018 Q1 –Q4 2018 Q2-Q4 2018

Project	Scope	Benefits	Timing
My account enhancement	Customer view of their own data. Paperless billing.	Accessibility/Enabling/reduced avoidable contact/process efficiencies	Q2 2018
Garden Waste Payment improvement	Addition of Direct Debit option.	Usability/Direct debit inertia/increased revenue	
Webform updates	Review and update in line with GDPR legislation.	Legal compliance/ Accessibility	2018
Replace Victoria forms	Removal of Victoria Forms product in order to use Council integrated solution.	Accessibility/System synergy/reduced revenue spend.	2018
Business Support Review Digital Workplan	Prioritised view of changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • required to streamline processes to reduce effort/waste • identified that could provide significant benefits via web 	Financial savings Faster end to end customer experience/ accessibility/ internal efficiencies Less errors and failure demand	2018-2019

Project	Scope	Benefits	Timing
<p>One Council Approach to Applications Workstream 1 & 3</p> <p>Workstream 2 & 4</p>	<p>Workstream 1: contract and budget review for council key applications Workstream 3 : applications utilising technology unable to meet security requirements and /or are costly to convert to an environment which enables Agile</p> <p>Workstream 2: is identified common components required based on business case/ savings and customer demand plus components required for Angus to be digital council. High priority common components are Bookings and Payments facility Other key functionality required subject to business case: Asset Management, FOI and Legal case management.</p> <p>Workstream 4: Access Databases review to establish operational, financial and security risk and planned mitigation</p>	<p>Financial savings Reduced security risk/ improved services availability</p> <p>Enabling/ Better customer experience/ Financial Savings/ improved services availability</p>	<p>2018-2020</p> <p>2018-2020</p>
<p>Communications and Engagement plan</p>	<p>Communication plan engaging Customer, staff and partners. Customer Insight sought and actioned from design phase to implementation</p>	<p>Engaged workforce/ Better customer experience</p>	<p>Q2 2018 onwards</p>
<p>Digital Capacity Employee Digital Training Digital development Capability</p>	<p>"How to" training based on survey of current confidence levels and abilities. (Note number of other initiatives underway as part of workforce plan)</p> <p>Training/ skills development from experienced practitioners using specific Angus examples and developing reusable training material</p>	<p>Digitally competent workforce</p> <p>Appropriate skills for digital development</p>	<p>Q2 2018 onwards</p> <p>Q2 2018 onwards</p>

Project	Scope	Benefits	Timing
Digital Measures	All measures outlines in Digital strategy base-lined, updated and monitored with stretch targets refined as strategy progresses	Financial savings/ customer satisfaction/ economic advantage	Q2 2018 onwards
Future Capability review	Digital Opportunities to be reviewed and business cases developed inc. further AI, IOT and Big Data	Financial savings/ customer satisfaction/ economic advantage	2018-2020