

**DIGITAL
PARTNERSHIP**

Scottish Local Government

Angus Council Digital Maturity Assessment (Leadership and Skills)

Main report



FINDINGS FROM THE DIGITAL MATURITY ASSESSMENT
OF ANGUS COUNCIL (FEBRUARY - MARCH 2021)

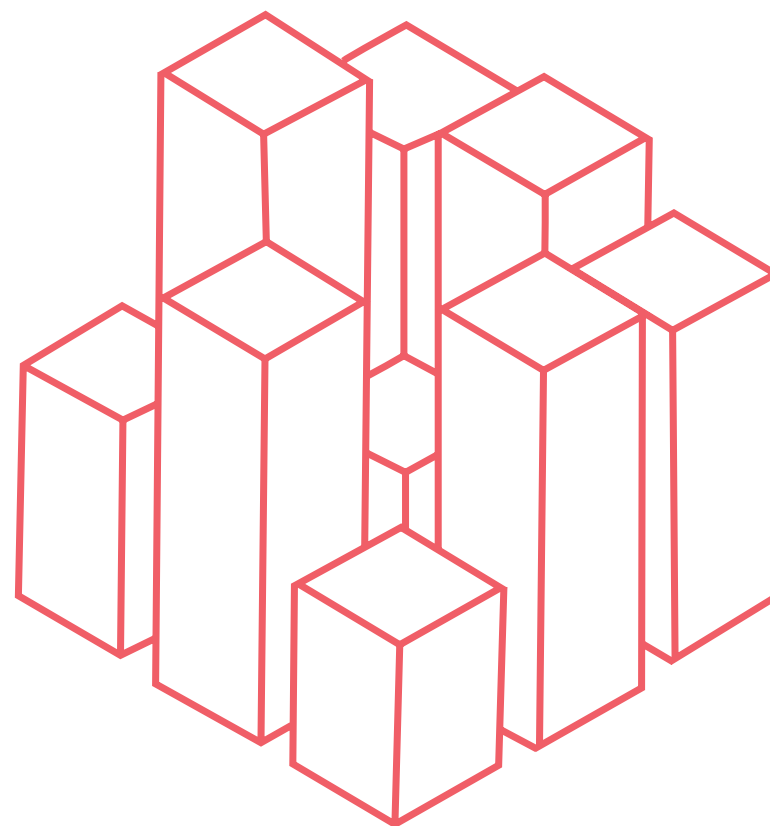
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SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

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Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the way we lived and worked, and how organisations operated, delivered public services and interacted with citizens was rapidly changing.

Since March 2020, the pace of that change has accelerated. Organisations have had to innovate and collaborate on a scale never seen before. Digital technology has become a lifeline, allowing the continued delivery of public services, often to the most vulnerable in society. Its use has also exposed the risk of digital exclusion – not having the skills or resources to access vital public services, maintain learning, and stay connected with others, this includes those that work for our public service organisations.

Digital transformation is 80% about the people and ways of working and 20% about the technology. Therefore, organisations should fundamentally rethink the approach taken to delivering services with people at the heart of this redesign and technology supporting new ways of working. Identifying skills gaps of the workforce and understanding the needs for the future workforce is also a priority.

Citizens today expect more transparent, accessible, and responsive services from the public sector and those expectations are rising. Councils must put the needs of people first when designing services. It is vital that the council does not design and deliver services based on their own requirements, hierarchies and processes instead focus on the needs of the people they serve and importantly the outcomes. Service led, service partnership, service design and user needs are a key focus and ambition for Angus, particular focus around upskilling all staff across the organisation and linking to Council plans and national strategies.

Councils provide a myriad of different services and these can often be accessed and delivered in many ways. We need services to work together to understand problems. By working together in a common way, they can design effective service journeys

that help people out of a difficult situation as efficiently and effectively as possible. Prioritising effective collaboration across service areas and partners will lead to better information sharing, improved accountability and coordination on council-wide initiatives.

Equipping staff with Digital, Data and Technology (DDAT) skills and specialists to re-imagine service delivery will be key to delivering future services to offer the best possible outcomes for residents, the economy and those who work for the Council. Angus operates in a very tight budget envelope so growing the skills of internal teams and careful workforce planning for the modern workplace will be required to keep pace with the changing digital world.

When discussing challenges, the single biggest challenge facing Angus that most respondents highlighted was the availability of resources and finances followed by connectivity and infrastructure in rural areas and ensuring all communities were digitally enabled with nobody left behind.

Angus are an ambitious Council with strong leadership, focused on digital enablement and skills with key foundations already in place well before the pandemic and digital acceleration pre 2020. Building blocks in agile working, agile development, Office 365 deployment and electronic documentation and automation ensured that Angus was in a good position to deliver post pandemic.

Given its successful widespread roll out, there is now a consensus that remote working should be adopted for the long-term although recognised that more work needs to be done with the workforce ensuring that all staff have equitable access to the right tools for their ways of working and roles. Personas and workstyles following engagement with the workforce would support this. Particular focus on frontline services such as depot workers, HSCP workforce and teaching staff will be need to be key priorities.

KEY QUOTES

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Those who are on top of technology are working ahead. We are cloud based. We moved to 365 a number of years ago. Work we are doing on application strategy [IT]. Balancing this against the customer needs - organisation discussions around the impact this has had on workforce. Don't be a magpie and chase the next shiny thing! Not all the technology is beneficial. Needs to be focused on people's lives and outcomes.



Vision and goals should align to council and community plan as well as broader ambitions through Tay Cities Economic Strategy. Digital should be enabler to delivery of existing vision and priorities.



Overall budget is a barrier. We need a better settlement for local government to allow us to implement real change. Focus is on reduction, more budget would allow us to get ahead and implement real digital transformation.



We were in a good place pre COVID and we have learned that we can move a lot faster.



Biggest challenge for us is capacity and finance. Reality is that local authorities do not have the capacity to deliver on this along with business as usual day jobs which are also challenging to deliver under current capacity arrangements. We need to develop specialist areas and knowledge to make these things happen.

DIGITAL MATURITY SCORE

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Outlined in the table below is the Digital Maturity Model describing how this is applied over the 5 stages from **1 Initial & Adhoc (mainly transactional)** to **5 Optimised ("Smart")**

APPLYING MATURITY MODEL TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

Most Councils are in position 1, 2 or 3 on the Maturity Model overall and across the 4 pillars of the Maturity Assessment, they will have differing levels of maturity. Angus Council are here:

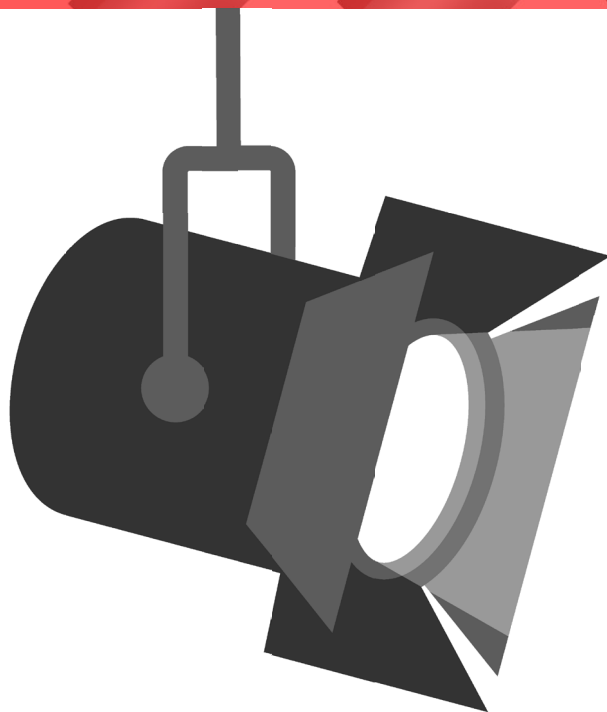
<p>5 Optimised "Smart"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New "smart services" are enabled that are more targeted, proactive and personalised that enable early intervention/prevention; • Decisions are increasingly automated (e.g. artificial intelligence).
<p>4 Managed & Measured "Digital"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services designed around the customer; • Greater use of (real-time and predictive) data analytics to reduce transaction volume; • Seamless integration between partner organisations; • Wide-spread use of smart devices (i.e. IoT); • Focus on digital shifts from the Council to "place" and enabling community empowerment.
<p>3 Defined & Systematic "Data-Centric"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-centric approach to digitisation (e.g. data-driven service design); • Corporate-wide systematic approach to digital service design and innovation; • Initial use of data analytics to enable targeted and preventative services; • Corporate approach to open data and data sharing; • Initial use of smart devices (i.e. IoT) to provide real-time control, and real-time data.
<p>2 Developing & Repeatable "Open"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Online Services - reduction in manual activity underpinning online transactions; • Mobility enable automated job scheduling, management and data capture; • Greater transparency through repeatable approach to open data/shared data; • Repeatable (and open) approach to digitising services (for example a channel strategy and service design) and innovation.
<p>1 Initial & Adhoc "eGov"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic online services for high volume transactions; • Manual job scheduling, management and data capture; • Limited access to data (e.g. open data/shared data); • No consistent approach to digitising services.

The Digital Office have broadly outlined recommendations below but these are very much an initial direction, it would be useful to discuss these with senior leadership to agree the next steps through facilitated workshops to develop a roadmap to supplement Angus Council Plans and the Digital Strategy. The Digital Office have also provided signposting to relevant work underway in other councils and at a national level.

SPOTLIGHT

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There are key areas and initiatives in which Angus Council are progressing well on their Digital Maturity journey:

- 1.** It has been recognised that the response to the pandemic has been a game changer, we had a strategy and we were working through this. Since March 2020, Customer Channel Shift was accelerated with most contact rapidly brought online. Workforce mobile working - Angus were well established on this road and were able to pivot quickly to homeworking.
- 2.** Microsoft 365 Rollout well established and mature including with Elected Members.
- 3.** Online Transactions are prevalent including end to end delivery. Many services are online - 2016 introduction of charge of garden bins - this is fully digital platform - end to end. Housing: On call of choice of baseline system, estate agent experience, see houses available for let and put bids in for them. Planning & Building Standards is fully electronic, online and all staff are fully mobile.
- 4.** Cloud first approach.
- 5.** A progressive, empowered digital leadership culture with ambition and appetite to evolve digitally.
- 6.** Commitment to building and developing digital skills and capacity across the organisation through the Digital Champions Accelerator Programme with the Digital Office and SCVO.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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1

Refresh transformation focus and governance

It'll be important to refresh transformation programmes to refocus and jointly agree the future priorities across the whole Council and have mechanisms in place to align delivery with strategic aims. It's essential to understand the future business models required in service areas so that the technological foundations can be developed strategically and adequate investment secured, and more importantly prioritised. Resources with the right skills aligned to these programmes is essential. A refocus in this area will ensure delivery on vision and strategy delivers real benefits and improved outcomes to the citizens of Angus. Appropriate levels of assurance will be needed but not as a hindrance to agile delivery. Many respondents were keen to learn from the response to COVID-19 by delivering at pace.

2

Citizen focused changes to service delivery

The aim of transformational change is to improve outcomes for services users by improving the effectiveness of services to communities. Transformation requires moving away from established ways of delivering services and this can bring considerable challenge. There were comments that although pockets of good practice was evidenced within the Council particularly in relation to training in Service Design in partnership with Dundee and Angus College and the Service Design Academy, this was not embedded, and tended to be adhoc and not systematic across the organisation. Many respondents were also concerned about excluding citizens as transformation accelerated, a robust and embedded design model will ensure that Council services are co-designed with users ensuring inclusivity and equity.

3

Move to outcomes from

Successful projects dedicate time from the outset to fully understand the challenges that need to be addressed. To do this, councils will have to consider how to incorporate some flexibility and freedom into their change and improvement arrangements, to allow some of the early thinking and design work to take place. Angus has a mature approach to agile service delivery however a fixed monetary saving was seen as the key driver for implementing change rather than outcomes against wider strategies. Benefit realisation was identified as many as an area for improvement, particularly iterating and responding to benefit realisation to evolve transformation plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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4

Dedicated transformation resource to support pace of change

There are current concerns that there is not enough dedicated resource in both change and technology implementation and the appropriate skills to support the required pace of change with many people on projects on top of their day job. It is clear from the assessment that there are skilled resources in areas across the Council, although these are within pockets within separate services. Utilising these resources to up-skill staff as well as support transformational activity with increase understanding and agility. Co-ordination of resource and pooling of this resource would increase pace of change. Angus identified that some work has already begun in this area however a gap analysis in relation to these skilled resources against plans and aspiration will be required to fill these gaps. "There are no resources to spend time on developing transformation capability development". Development of a skills capability matrix, also recommended by Audit Scotland, would help significantly in this area, the Digital Office can support this work in partnership with other interested Councils.

5

Collaboration internally and externally

Multidisciplinary teams are key to successful delivery of transformation project, resources with design, organisation development, finance, technology, and business subject matters coupled with user research aligned to strategic outcomes is seen as best practice in delivery of transformation programmes. Teams within Glasgow City Council and Fife Council have been identified as good examples of this. In addition, increased partnering with other local authorities, at all levels of the organisation in the wider Digital Partnership and the Digital Office will accelerate the pace of change for Angus.

6

Citizen and user focused services

Engaging citizens in the delivery of services is a fundamental part of what Christie talked about and is of course integral to public sector reform: Changing the way an organisation delivers by putting a focus on users, introducing new ways of working and using technology as an enabler for change. There is still work required to design service journeys around people and not around how the organisation is structured. Angus must seek citizen participation in projects from day one. Angus must also build on methods of exploring problems that remove service boundaries. The embedding of service design across the council will provide a framework to become more citizen focused and encourage collaboration across traditional service boundaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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7

Collaboration across services areas

There will also be real value in sharing lessons learnt in good practice across the council. Re-use of best practice exemplar projects and skills across services will accelerate the pace of change and grow the skills of the workforce. Communication was a key theme across all service areas, with a particular desire for innovative and digital approaches to corporate communications and engagement.

8

Digital skills

Opportunities to implement and grow a Digital Champion network and essential skills training will be beneficial. Angus are participants in the first SCVO Acceleration Programme for Digital Champions which commenced in May 2021. Analysis of the digital skills in the workforce and taking a systematic approach to the analysis is crucial to progressing in this area along with baking digital skills into personal development from the point of recruitment. The development of specialist digital, data and technology skills will also be important. There is a recognition that staff across the council would benefit from a better understanding of the systems they are using to maximise the effectiveness of their work and give them confidence in technology, particularly for frontline services such as those in education establishments, depots and in the field, as many felt left behind.

9

Equity for all needs to keep up with new ways

As well as undertaking a gap analysis and skills audit of the workforce, a review of the tools and kit required for the new ways of working should also be completed alongside this framework. It was highlighted that some departments do not have access to the right equipment to increase their digital skills or work in new and different ways, particularly some frontline services. The use of personas has been successful with many Councils in this area, again the Digital Office can help with this. "Having the correct "kit" to do the job - software that is relevant to what is needed - communicate with us, ask but actually listen to what is being said".

10

Research and innovation

Creating a culture of innovation would help to tap into the potential this has in reaching strategic aims and benefiting the citizens of Angus. Greater involvement with local City Deals, The Digital Office, CivTech and Scottish Enterprise are areas that could fill gaps in this area. Focusing on engaging with experts with a view to up-skill internal Angus staff. Open Innovation is identified as an area for developing skills. Participation on the Digital Office Open Innovation course in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Strathclyde University could help build and innovation culture.

FULL RESULTS

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Methodology

A series of one-to-one interviews with senior leadership, across all services in Angus Council were carried out during January and February 2021 by a Senior Digital Office interviewer. The purpose of the assessment to determine current baseline for the digital leadership and transformation journey and to identify opportunities and appetite for change. At the same time, an online survey was also sent to wider management groups, closing in end March 2021 and there were 72 responses in total including the interviews (60 online survey, 12 interviews).

The Digital Office combined the information collected from both methods into this report to provide an overview, recommendations, insights, and signposting details of the opportunities.



Confidence levels

Confidence levels of those assessed in relation to their understanding of how digital is transforming services and citizens expectations was above average, however this varied from not at all confident to very high with most stating a generally high understanding of their own service areas with less understanding of wider Council transformational and strategic activity. Only 10% of those responded felt their understanding was low generally. As recommended above greater engagement and communication corporately on what digital transformation can offer the workforce, communities and service areas would continue to strengthen confidence in this area.

The purpose of the Digital Maturity Assessment is to determine current baseline for the digital leadership and transformation journey and to identify opportunities and appetite for change. The Digital Office has combined the information collected through all methods into this report to provide an overview, recommendations, insights and signposting details of opportunities.

SECTION 1: DIGITAL STRATEGY



Overall, responses confirmed Angus Council has an appetite for change and desire to understand the ongoing potential of digital transformation. A recognition that things have changed considerably since March 2020 and the accelerated understanding of digital opportunities along with accelerated adoption of some digital tools has increased digital awareness for Angus and indeed citizen's expectations of Council services.

Angus have been working towards a digital strategy for 5 years, with an aim to be 'A Digital Council by 2020'. An overwhelming 99% of respondents confirmed the Digital Strategy was in place and the Council are currently refreshing their current strategy - taking into account of what has happened with the response to the pandemic, the recent Audit Scotland report and where they what want to be on digital transformation. A key part of this process is identifying where the benefits of things we have done. The Digital Strategy is viewed as a key strategic foundation with a number of other plans aligning to this. Many service plans were cited by respondents (IT Application Strategy, Housing Strategies, Scottish Government Digital Strategy, Building Services & Planning, Employability for example). It was also evident that the majority of respondents do not want to put digital in a box that is separate from other corporate and service plans. Many highlighted examples, such as what role does digital play in child poverty, council efficiency, healthcare and digital technology is an enabler that should underpin these aims.

Post pandemic, there has been a recognition that digital skills development accelerated, Teams adoption accelerated - from Skype and BT Meet Me to Teams. Now the Angus workforce are more skilled, there was a view that they need to capitalise on these advancements and accelerate plans around office workspace, and building on our experienced of last few months. Also, given the uptake of home and flexible working, a review of property assets will be a priority. Huge chunks of working will now been done from home. Opportunities for spaces to be used for collaborative team work and briefings, shifting how Angus uses space. Many identified there could be more space for Social Workers for example. Maximise the digital contribution to all key objectives. Some is explicit such as transactional online, connectivity and digital skills.

Some mentioned that they felt the digital strategy was not well embedded in the organisation, however **65%** of respondents agreed that the council has a clear strategy, aligned with or part of the corporate strategy, for implementing digital approaches to help drive transformation. The Angus Health and Social Care Partnership also does not feature as strongly as it could in the digital strategy - for example telehealth, Near Me, digital engagement, and other preventative technologies (ARMED, AZTEC). How can Angus improve uptake of some smart devices for? How can Angus use data to predict service needs?

However many respondents from the wider organisation highlighted that it is difficult to know what the corporate digital priorities are and how these align with service priorities. Only **56%** of respondents were able to agree that their service areas had a clear strategy for implementing digital. More work is needed to bring to life corporate plans and strategies and make these accessible for all those who work for Angus. Clear service plans aligning to corporate aims with digital underpinning actions should be a priority for moving forward.

Only **35%** of respondents were able to confirm that benefits of digital projects within service areas were being measured and tracked in line with the digital strategy and the digital strategy was updated based on outcomes of benefit realisation. Whilst many were able to advise that some level of benefit tracking was evidenced, this tended to be bottom up or financial benefits alone, rather than long term outcome focused transformation. The approach to transformational and iterative benefit realisation linked to transformation plan and digital strategy should be reviewed to ensure benefits are identified and measured to understand true economic impact, citizen outcome as well as financial efficiencies.

DIGITAL STRATEGY SUMMARY



- The previous Digital Strategy 'A Digital Council 2020' has significantly progressed Angus Digital Maturity, the revised strategy will build on these building blocks.
- Governance with board structure and prioritisation of projects should be renewed in line with the refreshed Digital Strategy, workforce plans and Council renewal plans. The majority of respondents identified there were boards in place but highlighted links to overall transformation plans and service plans was fragmented.
- Recovery and renewal plans along with the Digital Strategy are relatively new, consider transformation programme/s which set out plans to deliver new business models, key milestones and underpinned by clear technical foundations.
- With 54% of respondents suggesting there is no plan to accommodate digital user needs, there is a requirement to review investment in digital in a structured way;
- Review levels of investment required (technology, people, skills) to deliver transformational activity with transparent mechanisms for prioritisation. More time and investment needed to further advance digital evolution.
- Focus required on benefit realisation which would support prioritisation; benefit realisation must be outcome focused and not solely on financial benefits.
- Challenges around connectivity. Connectivity with other services and underpins broader corporate strategies. Many highlighted 4G and broadband concerns as this can be variable - this remains a challenge around geography and infrastructure. Angus have a connectivity plan - broadband connection to all households and buildings, particularly remote and rural areas. A key priority and more to be done in this field.

Our school drivers include digital goals. This includes purchasing more digital devices, embedding the use of digital devices in our literacy and numeracy lessons, improving the use of digital devices to support individual needs, increasing staff expertise of Teams, glow and the main digital programmes used in school. We have a digital working group looking at a progression pathway from early level to second.

Culturally we have gained confidence.

In post Jan 2020 - looking forward 10 year curriculum particularly secondary schools. Digital Hubs, remote learning for all secondary. We did not have a digital strategy (we attempted this a long time ago, not about learning, but IT - this is wrong) We need a digital learning strategy which we are working on.



SECTION 2: TRANSFORMATION & CULTURE



For councils to embrace digital transformation and become digitally mature, their methods and capability for delivering transformation as opposed to improvement should be consistent and well understood. They should have a focal point for developing the skillset required for transformation and a longer term plan to embed this across the council. All transformational activity must be centred around the customer experience through methodologies such as the Scottish Approach to Service Design or Design Thinking. All service areas across the council must come together to work on service design and transformation. Governance structures for transformation (including investment) should support collaboration across service areas with sufficient resources available for both service redesign and technology implementation (to support required pace of change).

As Angus Council has a well established culture of agile project delivery along with progress against the aims of becoming a digital council by 2020, there is evidence of great strides in transformation and culture however teams should guard against complacency and instead view digital transformation as an evolution and an ongoing journey. There were many comments that digital transformation had been achieved or completed as services were increasingly online.

“I wouldn’t say we have a vision for digital transformation as we’ve already done it. My area had already largely undergone our digital transformation and had gone paperless prior to COVID. The past year has just reinforced how necessary that move was and has seen us consolidate our electronic and remote ways of working”.

Of those who took part in the assessment, **41%** agreed that adequate provision for implementing digital technology has been agreed in the financial plan, the majority of respondents acknowledged that the appetite and ambition was there however resource constraints prohibit doing more.

58% of respondents felt there was adequate resources for change management and service redesign within the Council. Whilst agile delivery methods were well understood and utilised, key skills gaps were highlighted in data literacy (ability to read, work with and analyse data) and open innovation while service design was a developing skill. It was acknowledged that some work has been done with communities but that there are real opportunities here to engage with them better using digital solutions.

Whilst it was recognised there was evidence of good transformation and change projects it was also strongly noted that there was a heavy reliance on teams to complete change management on top of day jobs without the time and space to devote to this properly.

“We have a change programme yet change is glacially slow. The focus of our change resource is on managing the programme not delivering change. Change is left to services who have inadequate resource to meet service delivery priorities. The organisational behaviour is that change is a luxury delivered off the edge of a desk as an add-on, notwithstanding the existence of a change programme”.

SECTION 2: TRANSFORMATION & CULTURE



The majority of respondents spoke positively of the organisational culture of the organisation, mentioning digital focus, inclusivity and progressive as key values they identified as part of the way Angus works. A keen focus on delivering for the people of Angus while supporting the wellbeing of the staff. The ambition of Angus was evident throughout the responses, which was felt as hindered mostly by capacity and availability of funding and resources.

There are considerable opportunities and appetite for change in Education.

“Lots of paper based processes, very confident about how we will digitise. Hybrid and enable digital learning, learning in person is then much richer. Skillset of the staff needs to change (even back to education at university for teachers). Resourcing, teachers do not have laptops in their classroom. Standalone PCS, not mobile or remote and this is not enough to support ongoing transformation and upskilling. Young people do not have devices we have given them. (Brechin Google school the exception). Level of investment is impossible currently. Commitment nationally and locally that all teachers and pupils. Licensing for SEEMIS (everyone needs all of the tools).”

Opportunities around user-focused design and use of data was a key theme by respondents as next steps in the digital transformation journey. Data - how do we use data better - no single unified data tracker. We have SEEMIS among other things. Corporate performance team (working on Pentana). Tracking tool we have the vision, need someone to support building this. Data intelligence and modelling - dashboard for schools and whole of Angus - measures, draw information together to target improvement. questions around what data we should gather. This is a large undertaking.

TRANSFORMATION & CULTURE SUMMARY



Key examples of transformation projects underway:

- **Tay Cities** - Digital work (infrastructure based and cutting edge of innovation) £1mil City Deal and this is split in 2 (matched with LFFN money - fibre, connecting rural schools R100 vouchers) Innovation around masts - working local wisps (not spots) developing this as a project, working with communities to bring them with us. Linking to broader Deal ambitions. IOT - we now have 60 farms in Angus, barns will have IOT network points. Using data from this as well. Agritech projects.
- **5G** - and how can this be developed within Angus, working with BT - looking at smart ports (Montrose) major manufacturing processes (Baker Hughes, GSK). Opportunities that 5G bring to manufacturing and generally supporting clean growth agenda.
- **£1mil Angus Fund** - drone project - working with civil aviation- drone connections -wind farms (onshore agricultural) - potentially looking at testing onshore drones. Working with Scottish Enterprise to move forwards with Angus.
- **Internally, work with our IT service to utilise innovative systems** (Hive -use this for recognition events), Pentana (to use more broadly, not just indicators or risks but how this joins up and make decisions. Appraisals are also linked to Pentana - iterative development ongoing. Northgate (housing), applications need streamlined, piece of work underway to look at procurement in Tay City area. Bigger bang for buck. Aligning services.
- **Social Care:** "Use of virtual panels and child planning meeting to progress children's plans, development of My Views App to support children and young people's engagement ensuring their views are heard and listened to. During Covid-19 restrictions, where physical contact has not been possible, social workers have engaged with families to identify alternatives such as video recordings and calls and in some cases we have supported families financially to ensure they have the mobile data allowance to engage in this way".
- **HSCP:** Remote patient monitoring, Florence 'Flo' app. Near Me (60% on Near Me or telephone). Remote consultation has been hugely positive especially the most recent lockdown.



SECTION 3: DIGITAL SKILLS



Digital skills are key life skills enabling people to realise financial benefits and access vital services. While councils have been working on ensuring citizens have the right digital skills, particularly post pandemic, there remains work to do with the wider workforce. Overwhelming responses confirmed that not enough has been done to understand the skills of the workforce or indeed the skills required for the modern digital workplace.

The business areas need to review how people work and what approach would work best for the citizen. Changing the hierarchical structure of service areas enables greater employee empowerment. There are good examples in other councils around the creation of digital champions or change champion networks and communities to support and mentor others.

As the Council accelerates adoption of Microsoft 365 and the opportunities, in particular around SharePoint and the Power Platform, this has for transforming the way people work this, training, support and mentorship will be even more crucial. Good examples of how digital champions can support the implementation of new technology can be seen at Aberdeen City Council and North Ayrshire Council. Materials available within Digital Office Teams community.

With **65%** of respondents agreeing there are appropriate levels of digital skills within the council, this suggests training and all-round upskilling should be made more of a priority moving forward.

Of those asked **59%** agreed that developing digital skills among elected members is part of the council's vision, which signifies that there needs to be a more collaborative joined up approach to digital skills across the organisation. While elected members currently have digital autonomy through their own devices it is widely accepted that all staff members need to be aligned with the same strategic plan when it comes to digital innovation. There were key areas, around elected members and other frontline field workers, that require more intervention and generally it was recognised that some analysis of baseline was required, particularly across non-corporate teams.

As mentioned in the recommendations the council needs to develop specialist digital, data and technology roles and skills to prepare for the modern digital workplace. In addition, as automation enables staff to work in different ways or different roles, the softer skills such as creativity, coaching, mentoring, collaborating, testing and experimenting will become much more important.

Only **12%** of respondents felt their service has a clear understanding of how the core skills would be affected by digital and only **36%** stated there had been assessment on the digital skills needs across their service.

Indicating that while good practice was evident more could be done to understand the gaps and utilise Champions networks and national initiatives to bridge the divide. Undertaking a gap analysis across each service area will identify the skills needs from essential to technical. Underpinning this with a strategic workforce plan and associated organisational development interventions will accelerate maturity in this area.

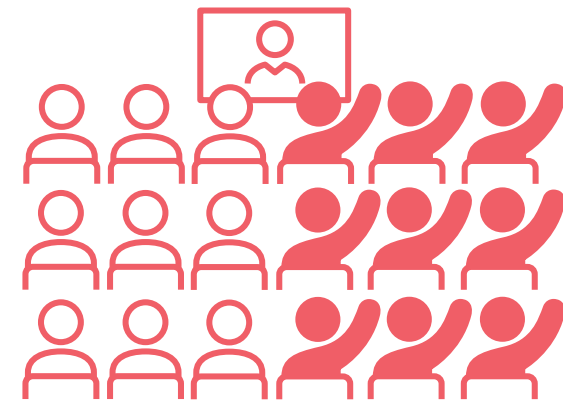
DIGITAL SKILLS SUMMARY



- Of those asked only 27% agreed that developing digital skills among elected members is part of the council's vision, signalling a need for furthermore collaboration. Digital skills audit and training and development to be rolled out to include Elected Members as key digital leaders in the organisation.
- Active senior leadership role models driving new ways of working and behaviour are evidenced within the Council with every respondent either strongly agreeing or agreeing that it was important to act a role model for digital upskilling.
- Reviewing workforce plans and identifying gaps in skills now and in the future as service delivery models change should be a key priority.
- A Digital Champions programme would support ongoing transformation agenda and achieve aims of the Digital Strategy, this was identified by most respondents as a key action to take forward to improve digital skills.
- Digital must be central to the workforce of the future, incorporated into workforce plans, personal development plans and recruitment; Fife Council have already started work on this and are seen as exemplar in this area.
- A blended approach to learning incorporating digital champions and a variety of tools (Aberdeen City, North Ayrshire, Dundee City Council and Perth & Kinross Council are good examples of this).

Digital may be seen as a priority, but encouraging staff to develop their digital skills is not apparent, there has been no movement with the Council's Digital Transformation Strategy in terms of staff development, and the digital skills requirements of our entire workforce have not been mapped to aid L&D.

Ensure everyone has the correct equipment to use their digital skills.



SECTION 4: RESEARCH & INNOVATION



Councils can no longer deliver services as they have always done. With increasing budget pressures and rising demand, they need to find new ways of thinking to evolve services, working with partners, using new technologies, and empowering staff with skills to support these changes. Innovation is an overarching approach – a different mind-set – which will facilitate all of this, and which works in synergy with other projects in the Digital Leadership programme to offer a holistic approach to problem solving’.

Changing to a culture of innovation can be challenging. It requires a clear and consistent approach that is understood at all levels of the organisation. There are key factors in achieving this: using early case studies to build understanding, training champions to spread the approach and understanding that not all projects will succeed. Innovation can transform how an organisation develops and delivers its strategies and services, and change the workforce culture, motivating and encouraging staff to think differently, building a culture that is creative and encourages some risk taking to achieve deliver better outcomes.

Building an innovation environment where trying out new ideas and solutions is made easier will help grow understanding of customers, services to embrace their problems, enhance staff motivation and build new skills internally. It will also expand the range of partners a Council can work with, and the opportunities made available through funding sources and new skills for all.

96% of respondents said time and cost was the main barrier to developing innovation across services. Even though there are widely known funding difficulties across local government, such evidence suggests that funding should be prioritised more along the lines of exploring new innovative

ways to deliver public services to all, incorporating fresh ideas on how best to deliver public services in an increasingly digital world. There is merit in refocusing the council’s recruitment and learning and development strategies to enable, encourage and develop creative and innovative talent.

It was clear from the assessment that Angus utilises many networks to collaborate and understand innovation and research locally, nationally and globally. Many sited wide-reaching organisations in academia, public and private sectors in understanding research and innovation. The Digital Office and wider Digital Partnership were also highlighted as key to supporting research and innovation. There are well established communities of practice in Education (ADES, Education Scotland, SDS, Dundee & Angus College) and Social Work as well as Planning/ Building standards. Professional bodies such as SOCITM, SLAIG, SOLAR, SPDS, LGIU or APSE help Angus tap into research and opportunities for innovation through their networks.

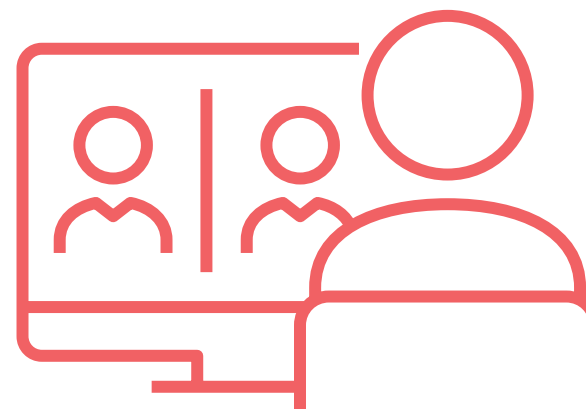
Overall, there is a lack of specific roles within Angus to focus and lead on how they can develop an innovation culture. There is a need to explore whether there is sufficient time, risk appetite, understanding and priority to do this. Given the significant investment and success with Agile methodologies, Angus should grow innovation expertise alongside this delivery vehicle.

To maximise innovation opportunities as well as grow much needed DDAT skills, we would recommend joining up approaches, skills and opportunities, across the workforce in Angus, the innovation hubs and wider collaboration with neighbouring authorities. Many of those participating in the assessment felt that there was too much reliance on the central digital/IT team sharing ideas around research and innovation. Glasgow City Council has good examples of this with their Centre for Civic Innovation in the Tontine Centre.

RESEARCH & INNOVATION SUMMARY



- Key innovations within Angus; Housing 'Estate Agent' digital solution, use of Flo and Near Me, early use of drones.
- Staff can manage complex environments through maximising cloud storage and data analytics.
- Develop council wide challenges which may be suitable for open innovation providing opportunities to engage with academia and innovation centres.
- Continue to strengthen networks around Tay Cities Deal, partnership with The Service Design Academy and Dundee and Angus College and maximise the benefits from these collaborations.
- The Local Government Digital Partnership offers a concierge service to introduce councils so they can start innovating together. This has proved very popular amongst the Partnership with regular requests to match up areas of expertise.



OPPORTUNITIES

DIGITAL PARTNERSHIP

Scottish Local Government

A full list of key themes which we can use to support a facilitated session are available. The key themes were:



Additional mobile working ensuring staff have the right tools for their roles, both software and kit



Integrated digital solutions was seen as critical to delivery, particularly in the HSCP



Reorganisation of governance to align strategy and vision with transformation plans that have multi-disciplinary teams with the right skills aligned to actions and outcomes



Refresh of Digital Strategy and Roadmap to align with the Scottish Government Digital Strategy published in March 2021



Developments in schools including the way we learn, support pupils, teachers and parents



Development of data driven decision making and innovation



Opportunities in education such as Digital classrooms, Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR)



Digital skills - understanding the skills needs and additional training plus focus on DDAT skills and a Digital Champions Programme



Embedding Service Design principles across the workforce and developing coherent plans for understanding the digital needs of our communities

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Reports

[Explanation of the Digital Maturity Model](#)

[How Digitally Mature is Local Government - Summary](#)

[How Digitally Mature is Local Government - Full Report](#)

[Essential Digital Skills Toolkit](#)

[Audit Scotland Digital Progress Report 2021](#)

[Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services - 2011](#)

[Audit Scotland Good Practice Guide](#)

[Audit Scotland Digital E-Hub](#)

[Audit Scotland - Digital Progress in Local Government Report](#)

Newsletters

[Digital Partnership Newsletters](#)

[Driven by Data Newsletter - Recovery and Renewal, Scottish Local Government - August 2020](#)

[Blog: Digital Maturity Progression - March 2021](#)

[Digital Partnership Insight Service - February 2021](#)

[Digital Partnership Insight Service - West Dunbartonshire, Trickle Programme - July 2020](#)

[Digital Partnership Insight Service - Renewal Plans after COVID-19 - June 2020](#)

[Digital Partnership Insight Service - Remote Working - May 2020](#)

This report was produced in June 2021. For further information or if you have any queries, please email info@digitaloffice.scot.

**DIGITAL
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Scottish Local Government

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