



Rushcliffe
Borough Council



Rushcliffe Borough Council

ICT STRATEGY 2022-2025

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RUSHCLIFFE - GREAT PLACE ▪ GREAT LIFESTYLE ▪ GREAT SPORT



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INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the Council's strategy for Information Communication and Technology (ICT) over the period 2022 to 2025.

The role of ICT Services is essential to the delivery of all of the Council's services and is fundamental to most business change programmes across the organisation. With advancements in technologies over the past 3 years, and preferred communication methods used by our residents, this ICT Strategy aims at ensuring the Council stay ahead and continue to explore new and better ways technology can help our residents access us and our services in the ways that are right for them.

Whilst the strategy contains broad strategic objectives along with the rationale behind those objectives, including the benefits and deliverables that will be achieved it does not set out to provide a strict formula or action plan dictating the approach (a separate Action Plan demonstrates how the objectives will be achieved and this will continue to evolve). An emerging strategy will therefore exist enabling an agile approach to operational delivery. This will allow the Council to take advantage of technology and digital platforms as they become available and respond quickly to changing times, to better serve our residents in accessing Council services to provide more efficient and economical communication channels.

The ICT Strategy enables the Council to deliver its Corporate Strategy and in particular more '**efficient services**' and improving '**the environment**'.

ICT Services promise and Mission statement is

'To provide excellent customer service, experience, and embrace technology as an enabler for efficient and economical services'



ICT VISION

Our vision is to invest in **people** and **technology** to improve customer experience, increase digital services, and promote the use of Cloud services to provide resilient and efficient ways of accessing Council services. To create a symbiotic relationship between people and technology to remove barriers and use technology as an enabler.

This ICT Strategy will build on the strength from previous strategies and will focus on five strategic themes:

- **People and Smarter Ways of Work** – with a focus on people and their experience when accessing Council services. Investing time to find the correct and appropriate solution, which provides efficient and economical systems across the Council. To bring people along the journey and promote flexible, remote and agile solutions, and digital transformation programmes that take advantage of self-service initiatives, intelligent automation (IA), and artificial intelligence (AI). Key elements is people and the use of technology as an enabler and improving customer service and experience.
- **Business Continuity, Cloud Services and Hybrid Technologies** – continue to improve business continuity arrangements and underpin other strategic objectives and their success. Seek opportunities to use cloud services to improve access and resilience for our residents and staff accessing Council services. Recognising when Hybrid technologies can be used to accommodate for complex and flexible solutions.
- **Information Management and Governance, and Security** – To safeguard Council data by ensuring legislative, central government security standards are followed and using security and privacy by design principles.
- **Think Green!** – to be aware of and help achieve local net zero targets from energy efficiency savings when upgrading existing or implementing new systems. To report on energy usage and seek out opportunities to provide positive impact on carbon reduction.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships** – continue to work closely with other authorities, establishing effective partnerships to share common challenges for efficient outcomes.

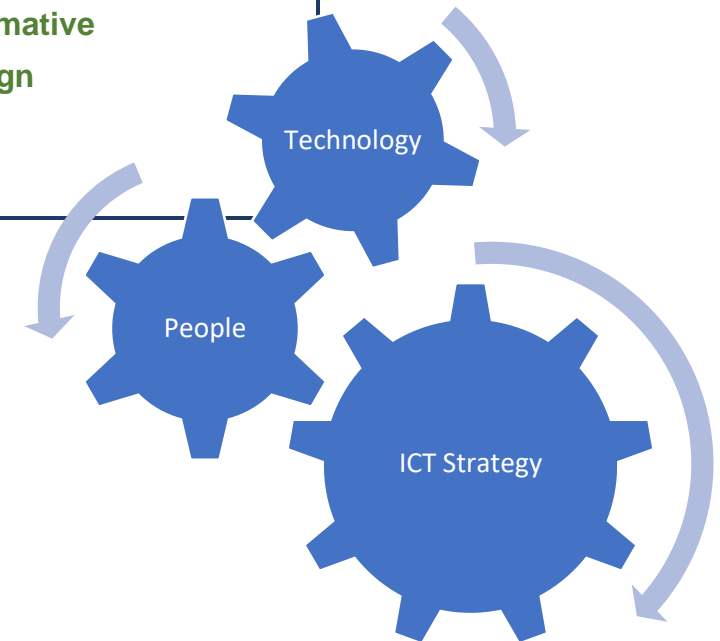


ICT PRINCIPLES

Our ICT Strategy reflects upon the Councils **'Values'**, and **'People Strategy'** created in 2021. These underpin ICT Services key principles to align with the culture at Rushcliffe Borough Council. Those key principles are:

EIGHT ICT PRINCIPLES:

- Value our Customers
- Provide Efficient, and Economical solutions
- Appropriate and Necessary
- Accessible, Simple and Informative
- Technology as an Enabler
- Security and Privacy by Design
- Flexible and Innovative
- Customer Experience





LOOKING BACK

During the life of the last ICT Strategy between 2017 and 2021, the following provides an example of what was achieved:

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW SYSTEMS

- Microsoft Office365 – Increased flexibility, availability and reduced local data store capacity.
- Hybrid Video Conferencing with Teams and Zoom – Provided the ability to host meetings with attendees being onsite or remote. Significantly helped during the COVID19 pandemic.
- Unified Communications Solutions (Microsoft Team) – Increased communication channels such as video conferencing.
- Telephony systems migrated to Cloud Services - Enhanced the Councils business and continuity arrangements
- Digital Services (MyAccount and Self-Service technology)
- Customer Contact Centre CRM System – this is now in the Cloud, providing resilience and availability.

UPGRADING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Storage Area Network and Computing Infrastructure
- Business Continuity Arrangements
- Consolidation of WAN Short Haul circuits
- 100% virtual data centre (no more physical systems)
- Microsoft Server 2016 / 2019 upgrades
- Microsoft Windows 10 upgrade
- Microsoft Exchange Online
- Corporate Firewall
- Enhanced Security Protection
- Improved User Profile Migrations
- Mobile Device Management System
- Managed Internet Access (MIA) bandwidths

The last strategy was able to provide the Council with flexibility, agility and enhanced business continuity arrangements to enable the organisation to react quickly to the COVID19 pandemic. Overnight the entire Council was working remotely with little impact to services.

The ICT Strategy contained 98 strategic actions of which 92 (94%) were delivered. The remaining 6 were deferred due to prioritisation exercises.



People and Smarter Ways of Working

Impact

Provide greater choice and simplicity to how our residents, Councillors and staff use technology as an enabler to increase productivity, flexibility and agility when accessing Council services. Digital transformation programmes during their development phases will use data analysis and customer engagement to influence positive change, investing time in finding the right solution to provide efficient and economical systems across the Council.

Benefits

Using digital by design principles to identify operational efficiencies for example, removing lower valued tasks through intelligent automation of processes, or system integration to increase productivity across the Council. Efficient and reliable services available in and out of normal working hours giving residents and Councillors the opportunity to access council service at their preferred times. By providing more digital ways to access our services will give greater choice to our residents. Using technology as an enabler in digital programmes prevent unnecessary or inappropriate systems being implemented.

Deliverables

- Focusing on people and customer experience to inform digital transformation programmes including the new website.
- Promote Self-Service solutions and the use of MyAccount to provide our residents the ability to access Council services at their preferred times.
- More engagement with our residents and investigate into other communication channels such as SMS and Chatbot technologies
- Promote Digital Services and Transformation programmes in support of the ICT Digital Strategy
- Seek out opportunities for automation of business process, system integration and AI technologies to remove the need for lower level tasks to be carried out by staff
- Promote public speaking with the use of hybrid video conference technologies





Business Continuity, Cloud Services and Hybrid Technologies

Impact

Delivering robust and resilient safeguards ensuring ongoing availability of priority services and a means of recovery in the event of a disaster. Enhancing business and continuity arrangements using investments in Cloud and Hybrid technologies will take advantage of modernised data centres to increase resilient and high availability services to our residents and staff. Cloud platforms remove single points of failure in the event of a local disaster and provides greater flexibility and choice of how Council services are accessed. Moving more systems to the Cloud give flexibility and positively impact on how the Council can provide services to our residents now and into the future.

Benefits

Enhance business and continuity arrangement by removing reliance on a single data centre to increase resilient and high availability services. There are efficiencies gained from fully managed services to support and maintain these systems, releasing valuable resources. Cloud services provide accessible, flexible and agile systems and hybrid systems for compatibility with complex environments.

Deliverables

- Invest in Cloud Services and make use of Hybrid technologies where appropriate
- To improve resilience and high availability services across the council
- To increase productivity of existing resources
- Continue to enhance business and continuity arrangements and backup infrastructures
- Provide flexible and accessible services to our residents
- Focus on efficiencies gained from Cloud Services





Information Management and Governance, and Security

Impact

Safeguarding Council data by ensuring compliance with all relevant legislative, financial and central government security standards. Improving maturity of the management and governance of information assets and delivering appropriate arrangements to ensure compliance with such as the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Enhancing security and monitoring to better address cyber security threats. Ensuring our information assets are effectively managed in line with all relevant legislation through the deployment of appropriate technical controls, standards and solutions.

Benefits

Ensures Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability (CIA) of our data and the management of risks related to Council services, and use security and privacy by design principles. Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and good practice standards (e.g. ISO 27001). Increase visibility and reporting of active cyber threats.

Deliverables

- Maintain compliance with legislative, financial and central government security standards (i.e. PCI/DSS, PSN Code of Connection, UK GDPR), ensuring standards are applied in a proportionate way so as not to restrict our ability to deliver flexible services
- Implement appropriate software/ procedures to support archiving and retention in support of the Information Management strategy
- Continue to comply with security standards such as Cyber Essentials and enhance the organisational awareness in relation to the increased level of cyber threats
- Ensure appropriate technology is deployed to offer privacy and protection of our data





Think Green!

Impact

The Council are committed to **the environment**, which the Climate Change Strategy 2021-2030 sets out goals to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. ICT Services are fully committed to playing our part in protecting the environment today and enhancing it for future generations. Taking steps to ensure that, where possible, systems provide a reduce power output, and our supplier chains follow the same principles to reduce their own carbon footprint. Progress is monitor through the Rushcliffe Borough Council Carbon Management Plan.

Benefits

Help reduce the overall carbon footprint for the Council to work towards a greener future and meet our carbon neutral targets. ICT Services operational costs reduce with minimal energy consumption.

Deliverables

- To include an assessment of suppliers carbon footprint as part of the selection process
- To reduce, where possible, energy used by utilising the most energy efficient ICT technology available
- Make informed decisions to change the way systems operate, which can have a positive impact on energy consumption
- Use suppliers who specialise in breaking down components for recycling, or repurposing for selling on





Collaboration and Partnerships

Impact

Working closely with other authorities to overcome common challenges, pull together resources, experience and knowledge to establish efficient and effective solutions. Implementing shared services to reduce costs and create opportunities for greater resilience.

Benefits

Improvements to service delivery through common services and technologies. Increased flexibility/resilience and opportunities to share resources. Alignment of procurement opportunities to achieve economies of scale. Membership of local and national groups provide opportunities for knowledge share and advanced warning of experienced cyber threats.

Deliverables

- Alignment of procurement opportunities and contracts to create savings
- Promote digital services and technology alignment (Systems/Infrastructure/Security)
- To be members of local and national groups to share knowledge and experiences
- Investigate into shared services and multi-tenanted Cloud solutions
- Promote training across partnerships for common services
- Establish greater resilience of service





ICT Governance

ICT Governance Arrangement

The portfolio of projects and programmes resulting from this strategy will be managed in accordance with the established governance arrangements; ICT governance is made up of five strands namely:

risk management	strategic alignment
performance measurement	resource management
value delivery	

RISK MANAGEMENT

The ICT related projects that the Council implements are often expensive and delivered over a number of months, so it is important that sound risk management is in place both in managing projects and the day to day operation. Using the PRINCE2 project management methodology helps to mitigate the risks by enabling the Council to consistently work to identify the risks associated with a given project and regularly report on progress to the programme board.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Key to achieving strategic alignment is good communication and a good relationship between ICT, Service Managers and Lead Specialists. Regular

business account management meetings facilitate this relationship. The aim is to ensure that ICT systems are only developed once a full understanding of appropriate business strategies exists and that any investment is able to support the planned development of the business with the underlying objective of improved and efficient services delivered to customers.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

In order to ensure that the ICT service delivers solutions on time and is able to support those solutions, a series of internal service level targets are in place. These targets are used to ensure openness and transparency exists. Monthly reports are sent to the

Executive Management Team (EMT) and are considered by the programme board. Reports are also fed through to Cabinet Members on an annual basis.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resource management covers the service in a number of areas. It is not only important to ensure that there is enough ICT resource with the requisite skills to deliver the project management, the technical installations and the support of new systems / solutions but it is also essential that capacity exists within the service area to enable successful change/implementations to take place.

VALUE DELIVERY

Once a solution has been delivered, ensuring that the organisation is realising the improvements and efficiencies that were highlighted in the business case supporting the original investment come under the strand of value delivery – Benefits realisation is reported on a monthly basis to senior management.



ICT Governance

The Role of Executive Management Team and ICT Services

The role of EMT and ICT Services is to ensure that the RBSi portfolio is effectively monitored, that the direction of travel of the ICT Strategy is monitored, that expertise is coordinated from all areas of the business aiding strategic alignment, that a communication channel is facilitated to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to engage and that resource can be utilised to deliver service improvement through business transformation and deployment of appropriate technologies.

The Role of Cabinet Members

Cabinet Members ensures that ICT Services deliver in the best interest of the Council and its residents. To influence the policies and decisions made by the council in delivering public services. Strategic alignment remains in place and strategic actions are monitored to ensure expected outcomes.

Rushcliffe Borough Service Improvement Portfolio

The Rushcliffe Borough Service Improvement (RBSi) Portfolio is part of the ICT governance framework and is used to ensure that there is a mechanism in place to manage the portfolio of ICT developments and service improvements.

Portfolio Management

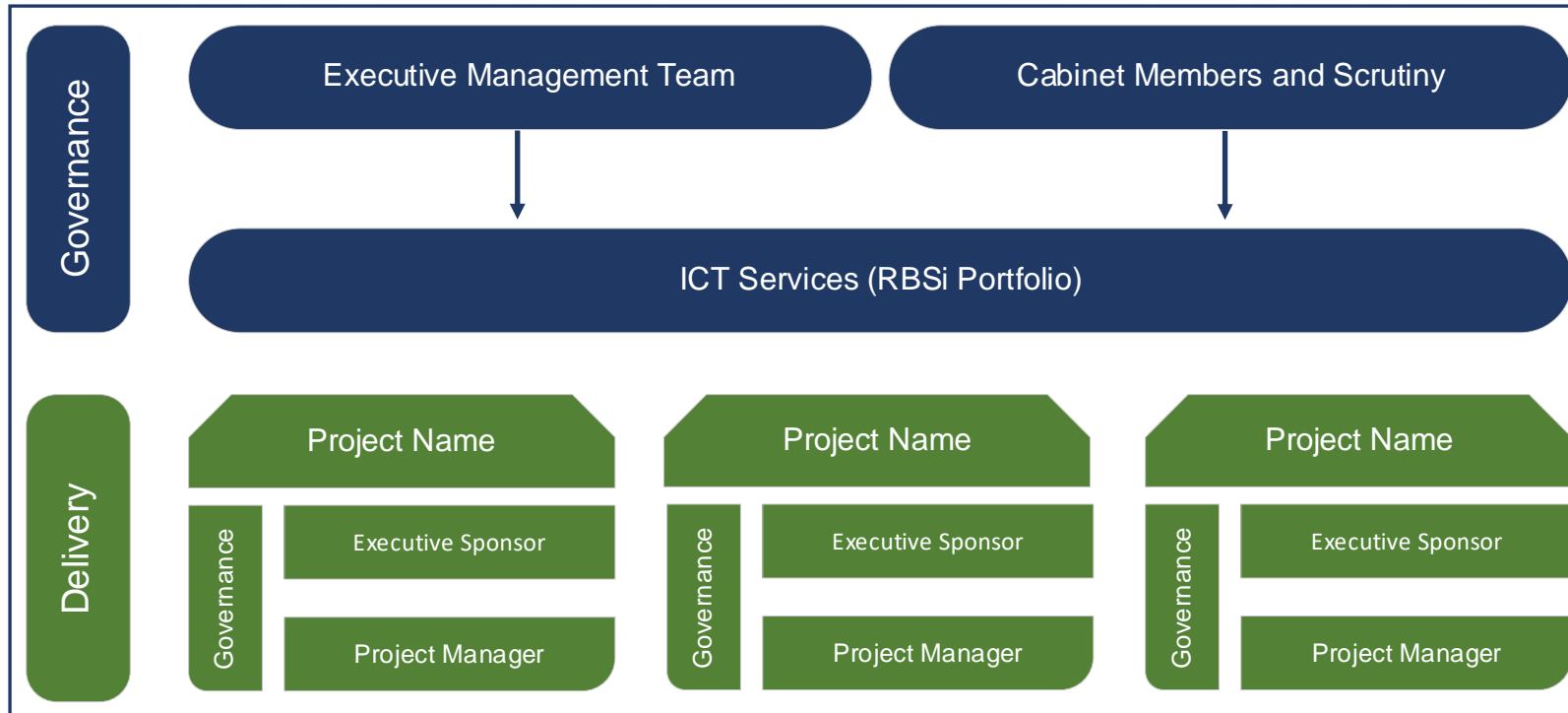
The RBSi portfolio and the reporting mechanisms associated with the programme (for example the RBSi Portfolio Highlight Report) ensure that openness and transparency exists. Using a simple to understand traffic light system (Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status) Executive Managers and the programme board can see immediately where issues exist and are able to react in order to apply the appropriate measures to address the circumstances

Business Account Management Meetings

In order to maintain a close working relationship between the ICT function and the business, regular account management meetings are organised. These are quarterly/annual meetings between the Chief Information Officer and Executive Managers, with Service Managers and Lead Specialists.



ICT Governance Framework



Performance Management and Progress Monitoring

A number of measures are in place to ensure that regular performance management and progress monitoring is carried out.

The ICT Services Quarterly Update reports contain details of security incidents, data breaches, operational risks, security accreditations, and project progress.

The RBSi Portfolio Highlight Report is produced monthly for larger, critical, or high profile projects. The report is used to monitor progress giving full transparency to the state of projects and programmes contained within the portfolio. The Service Plans for ICT Services contain local indicators, which are monitored throughout the life of the portfolio. A percentage is recorded to indicate how much of the portfolio has been delivered.



Consultation

Consultation

This strategy has been developed in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for ICT (i.e. Finance and Customer Access), Executive Managers, Service Managers and Lead Specialists as part of a consultation activity feedback through our Service Manager Team (SMT) and Executive Management Team (EMT) meeting. All service areas were represented and feedback was captured and has been used to inform the new ICT Strategy.

Communication, consultation and engagement occurs throughout the life of our ICT Strategy, which is captured through the following activities.

Activities	Communication	Articles in Staff matters and Councillor Connections (Monthly/Quarterly)	ICT Corporate Email Messages (Quarterly)	ICT Corporate Screen Saver and Business Signage Messages	ICT Performance Reports (Monthly)	Strategies, Policies, Guides, Leaflets and Plans	Members Options and Computer Advice Guides
	Consultation	Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire and Feedback (After call closure)	System Reviews (Annually)	Business Case Development (As required)			
	Engagement	Account Management Meetings (Quarterly/Annually)	ICT Induction (As required)	Supplier Contract Management Meetings (Quarterly/Annually)	ICT Training Workshops (As required)		
Supporting Arrangements	Strategy / Governance	Articles in Staff matters and Councillor Connections (Monthly/Quarterly)	ICT Corporate Email Messages (Quarterly)	Members Options and Computer Advice Guides			
	Information	At a glance leaflets	ICT Business Continuity Plan	ICT Guides	ICT Intranet Pages	ICT Security Policy Centre	Corporate Project Management Approach
	Standards / Methodologies	PCI-DSS	Cyber Security Standards	ITIL	ISO 27001	PSN Code of Connection	



Action Plan and Resources

This ICT Strategy is an emerging strategy to provide agility and flexibility to meet new demands during its life. Below are the actions that will delivery the core strategic objectives.

- Enhance the Councils backup and recovery environment by 2023
- Refresh and update the Councils main website by 2023
- Support the launch of the new Crematorium due to go live in Autumn of 2022
- Enhance ‘MyAccount’ portal to increase services and provide personalised information by 2024
- Move business systems into Cloud Services where appropriate by 2025
- Replacement of the Councils main Storage and Computing environment by 2025
- Assess existing energy usage in the Councils data centre with an aim to reduce power by 2025
- Continue to delivery the Infrastructure and Digital-by-Design programmes by 2025

Capital programme available for the life of this strategy is:

Financial Year	Budget
Year 2022/23	£ 230,000
Year 2023/24	£ 230,000
Year 2024/25	£ 230,000
Total	£ 670,000

As this is an emerging strategy, there will be changes that will have impact on the Actions and the Capital Programme.