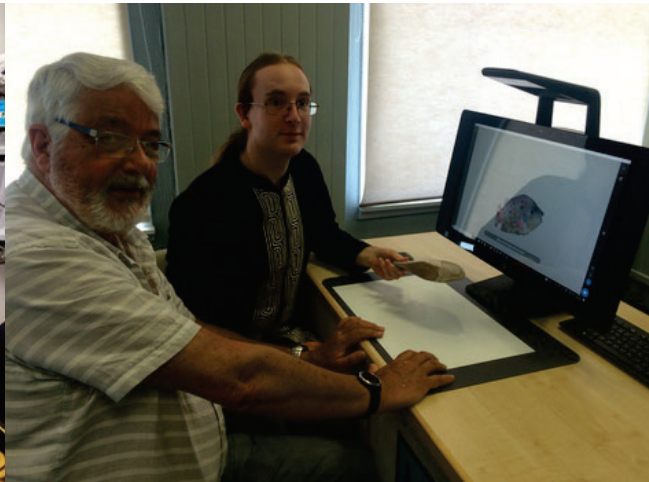




North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath



Digital North Ayrshire

a leading innovative organisation

2023 to 2028

Introduction

North Ayrshire is a Council that is 'Fair for All'. Our mission is working together to improve well-being, prosperity and equity in North Ayrshire. We recognise there is strength in doing things together. We have therefore, engaged with and listened to our staff, customers, learners, visitors, businesses and communities to develop a Digital Strategy that meets our ambitions, vision and mission for the next five years.

Why did we refresh?

The Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically changed the way we work and how our services interact with customers. One of our priorities is to review the Digital Strategy in light of the learning from the pandemic.

What did we learn?

A high volume of our customers have access to online services and are happy to engage in this way. There are however, still gaps in terms of our digital offering and digital exclusion in the form of access to devices, connectivity and appropriate skills and support remains a challenge.

How will we use this learning to improve services?

We will continue to support our customers to increase levels of digital access, by providing more services online and offering more help to access these. We will endeavour to ensure that everyone has the ability and knowledge to participate in the digital world.

Digital North Ayrshire

We recognise that there are many benefits that digital engagement can bring. In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, increased customer expectations on local services, and a challenging financial climate, the Council must strive for innovation and continuous improvement.

North Ayrshire Council's vision is "to be a leading organisation defined by excellent and innovative services" and digital has a key role to play in enabling this.

Digital People

Digital is as much about people as it is technology. It is about how people engage with and utilise technology to enable new ways of living, learning, and doing business. We must embrace digital and reimagine the work that we do for a digital age. Many people no longer simply go online, they live online.

Key Stakeholders



We believe that applying a digital approach allows us to work and learn in a smarter way. We will collaborate with our key stakeholders to ensure we deliver excellent services to all.

Our Engagement



It is crucial that the Digital Strategy reflects the needs and ambitions for the whole of North Ayrshire. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the majority of our engagements have been successfully completed online and where possible face to face group sessions.

Key Engagement Groups

North Ayrshire Council:

- Elected Members
- Executive Leadership Team
- Heads of Service
- Colleagues
- Modern Apprentices
- Customers
- Community Planning Partners
- Scottish Government & Partners
- Tenants' Participation Team
- Community Groups (i.e. Library Groups, Connecting Scotland Participants etc.)
- Youth Cabinet Live

Crucially, our engagement work will continue beyond the launch of the strategy. The strategy is only the start of the journey - we must bring everyone along with us if we are to truly transform as an organisation.

North Ayrshire Statistics

2022 North Ayrshire's People Panel Survey, (622 responses): -

- Overall, 95% of all respondents have access to email or the internet 95% indicated they have access at home
- 66% have access via mobile phone
- 33% have access through work
- 11% access via local library

Digital is the preferred method to receive information (46%)



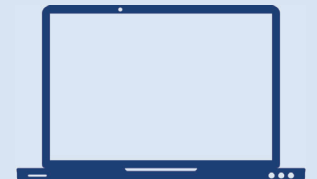
CONNECTING SCOTLAND

The [Connecting Scotland Programme](#) got 60,000 digitally excluded households online at the end of 2021.

North Ayrshire Council has made successful bids for devices during all programme phases to ensure our customers have digital access and support. Over 2,000 devices were provided throughout North Ayrshire and details of some of the other organisations in receipt of these are detailed below: -

Organisations: -

- Alzheimer Scotland
- Children 1st
- CEIS Ayrshire
- NHS Ayrshire & Arran
- Lennox Partnership
- The Salvation Army



Scottish Government - Principles of a Digital Nation

The Scottish Government published its new Digital Strategy "[A Changing Nation: How Scotland will Thrive in a Digital World](#)" in April 21. The strategy is jointly owned by local and national government, the principles are the backbone of the strategy and will support a digital nation applicable to Government, but also to People, Place, and the Economy. North Ayrshire has incorporated these principles within our digital strategy.



Principles of a Digital Nation



For more information on the Scottish National Digital Strategy see: [National Digital Strategy](#)

Our Priorities

We have identified the following priority areas as being key to a digital North Ayrshire. Our priorities will determine what we focus on and what outcomes we will deliver.



Our Customers

We will support our customers to become more digital, designing services that are quick and easy to use making digital the preferred choice.



Our Businesses

We will support businesses to improve productivity by adopting, optimising new and resilient digital technology and investing in digital skills for the future.



Our Learners

We will use digital technology to build innovative and creative teaching approaches that will raise attainment across all schools and centres.



Our Visitors

We will promote North Ayrshire as a tourist destination through digital marketing and communication.



Our People

We will develop our workforce to ensure it is empowered, enabled and inspired to realise the benefits of digital.



Our Communities

We will work with our communities to nurture the use of digital technologies and improve digital skills across North Ayrshire.



Principles of a Digital North Ayrshire

Our principles underpin the work that we do and guide how we deliver in our priority areas.



"Digital technologies are transforming the way in which people live their lives in North Ayrshire"

1. Digital First



Our Services will be designed with our people and customers, encouraging and supporting them to use digital as their preferred choice of engagement.

2. Technology Enabled



Our technology will support our people and communities and will take into account the emerging digital solutions.

3. Secure by Design



We recognise that there are many threats to privacy and will ensure the Council's digital services are secure by design.

4. Data Driven



We will use our data appropriately to drive change and innovation, improve service delivery, make informed decisions and improve outcomes for our customers.

5. Digital Partnerships



We will work together with our partner organisations to raise awareness of new technologies, adopt digital and champion innovation.

6. Sustainable Future



To shape sustainable technology development and innovations, we will actively pursue digital solutions, whilst taking into consideration the changing landscape and challenges of sustainability.

7. A Single View of our Customers



We will streamline our digital services and strive to capture a single view of our customer contact to ensure customers can access the appropriate Council services.

8. Collaboration



We will collaborate to ensure we maximise the benefits and outcomes digitisation delivers for our customers, people and communities.

Our Customers



We have both external customers (our residents, learners, businesses and visitors) and internal customers (our workforce). We will put our customers at the heart of the organisation, designing and building our processes and services around them. With increasing demand and a challenging financial climate, our digital services need to be secure, easy to use and accessible to all.

Our Focus

- Design, develop and test new digital approaches with our customers to ensure they are user-friendly and meet their needs.
- Providing easy to access information about Council Services.
- Building a single view of our customers allowing us to offer more efficient and customer friendly services.
- Engaging with our customers to build an understanding of how we propose to use their data to improve the services we deliver to them, whilst ensuring that it is kept secure and that we process that data lawfully.
- Continue to embed better use of technology to help reduce travel and carbon emissions.
- Listening, understanding, and working with our customers; responding to their needs and keeping them informed; making it easy for them to interact and access our services and to actively encourage them to be participants in what we do.
- Ensuring our customers are given the right advice at the right time, whilst maximising benefit entitlements and supporting better outcomes.

Our vision:
Digital services so good that they are the preferred choice for all

"I like the fact I can pay my council tax online, have virtual meetings with council staff or third sector organisations to receive support"

North Ayrshire Council is currently working on Accessing Our Council Programme which will support the following principles: -

Single point of contact

Streamlined customer journey

One assessment for means tested benefits

Income maximisation for customers

Centralised debt advice and support

Our Businesses



We will support businesses to improve productivity by adopting, optimising new and resilient digital technology and investing in digital skills for the future.

Our Focus

- Work with partners to support businesses to understand and adopt new digital technologies.
- Support businesses to develop a culture and leadership that cultivates innovation, maximising the benefit of digital technologies.
- Work with partners and support businesses to invest in digital skills for the future.
- Support businesses to create new and additional employment to support business growth generated through digital opportunities.
- Support businesses to understand the necessity for lawful processing of data, the economic value of their data and protect against cyber security risk.
- Aligning our work with National Strategy for Economic Transition and 'A Changing Nation' Digital strategy and the Council's Economic Covid Recovery Investment Plan.
- Play a leading role in the Ayrshire Growth Deal to ensure that digital infrastructure, skills and ambition help to drive future growth.

Our vision:

Productive, technology-enabled businesses with the digital skills required to innovate and thrive

As part of the Council's new Green Deal we will support businesses and community organisations to adopt new innovative practices, models and technologies to reduce their carbon footprint.

[Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy](#)



21/22 Achievements

Completion of Business Advisor training which focused on eight digital themes: Process Digitalisation, Data Analytics, Marketing-E-commerce, Green Technologies, Cyber Security, Digital Skills, Innovation and Digital Leadership and Culture.

Actively working with 13 partners on digital activities, some of our partners include: - Digital Boost, Scottish Enterprise, Business Gateway, The Data Lab, Ayrshire College, University of the West of Scotland, Strathclyde University etc.

The Ayrshire Growth Deal will deliver £14M worth of investment to support world class digital infrastructure across Ayrshire.



350 digital interventions and support provided

50 digital transformation talks completed

102 digital grants supported, leveraging private sector investment

Our Learners



We will use digital technology to build innovative and creative teaching approaches that will raise attainment across all schools and centres. Our staff will have a positive attitude towards digital and a clear understanding of how digital can be used to improve learning.

Our Focus

- To develop the skills, fluency and confidence of staff, parents, and community educators in the appropriate use of digital technologies and to support the development of digital skills.
- To provide a future focussed curriculum by improving the use of technology in learning.
- To provide the required digital technologies which are aligned to and fully supports high quality digital learning and teaching that will lead to raised attainment.
- To continue to gain the Digital Schools Award Scotland accreditation and embed this practice in all our education establishments.
- To work alongside the Secondary Technicians and IT Service teams to develop systems and processes that will support the above areas of focus.



Digital Schools Awards is a national awards scheme to promote, recognise and encourage a whole school approach to the use of digital technology in schools. 12 of our schools have been awarded Digital School status with a further 35 currently being registered for the award.

Examples of our Digital Platforms / Apps



Xpressions App - is a service, providing parents with an app to receive messages from the school.



Satchel:one is a simple online homework calendar your child can use to keep up to date and on top of all their homework.



Glow is Scotland's national digital learning platform provided by Scottish Government and managed by Education Scotland.



Seesaw is a platform for student / teacher engagement and enables the sharing of successes from school with home. The Teacher creates an online classroom where they can post home tasks, reminders or updates on events online for all the children and parents in that class to see.

Our vision:

To be sector leading, providing innovative digital education to prepare our learning communities for the challenge of a rapidly developing and changing technological world

A significant investment has been made by the Council on digital devices:

- 2021-22 - £1.234m for in-school devices with investment of £752k in subsequent years.
- An additional recurring investment of £250k to improve access to digital technology for home-based devices.



Our Visitors



We will promote North Ayrshire as a visitor destination through digital marketing and communication.

Our Focus

- To work with businesses / organisations to create a digitally accessible platform which advises what is available in North Ayrshire.
- Develop a refresh of North Ayrshire's tourism strategic priorities, following completion of Making Waves programme and Regional Visitor Economy Strategy.
- Consider options to support digital infrastructure through Ayrshire Growth Deal project development.

Did you know about our Heritage Trail app?

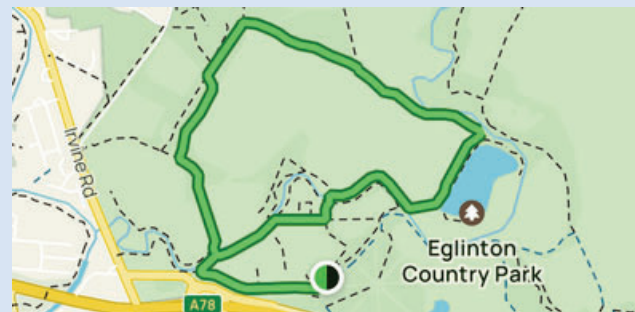
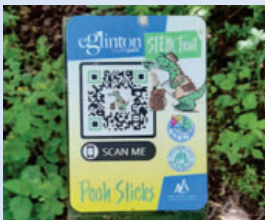
Our app



You can **download** our libraries' app and access the Heritage Trails app. Follow the trail on the move from a mobile phone or tablet.

While visiting North Ayrshire's visitor attractions our visitors will be given a great digital experience e.g. at Eglinton Country Park we have embraced the use of digital technology to enhance our visitor experience, through the use of QR codes: -

- to allow visitors to download maps at various points throughout the park.
- to download orienteering courses and maps which can be held digitally for future use.



Our vision:

Our visitors will have easy access to digital information about our destination

An example of digitisation in 2022 was the creation of a digital interactive website with link to a ticket booking platform for July 2022 Making Waves Festival.



Our People



Our workforce shows a real commitment to continuous improvement and we are recognised as a progressive, forward thinking and innovative Council. Our ambition for our people is to create a culture where innovation and excellence thrives, in a North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All'. It is only through our people, that we will realise this ambition.

Our Focus

- Gain a better understanding of the level of digital skills within our workforce. We will plan, support and increase these skills through our digital leads within our services.
- Encourage our colleagues to seek new, smarter ways of working using technology to improve our services.
- Having a leadership team that embraces digital technology and leads by example.
- Formalising our approach to how and where we work to ensure we have a more resilient and adaptable workforce.
- Continue to use our technology effectively to support our colleagues to work remotely where necessary, which will have a positive environmental impact through less travel.
- Reuse, recycle and procure technologies to support a greener environment.

Our vision:

Colleagues who are empowered, enabled and inspired to realise the benefits of digital



Utilising technology and expanding our remote access infrastructure, the Council has continued to deliver essential services to our customers and our office based staff have now adopted hybrid working.

“New ways of working has made me 'move on' in my thinking about how things can be achieved by the use of digital technology. Meetings are shorter and we are truly paperless! Even better when the meeting papers are on the invite! I actually engage with all staff across my teams more often virtually!”

Our Communities



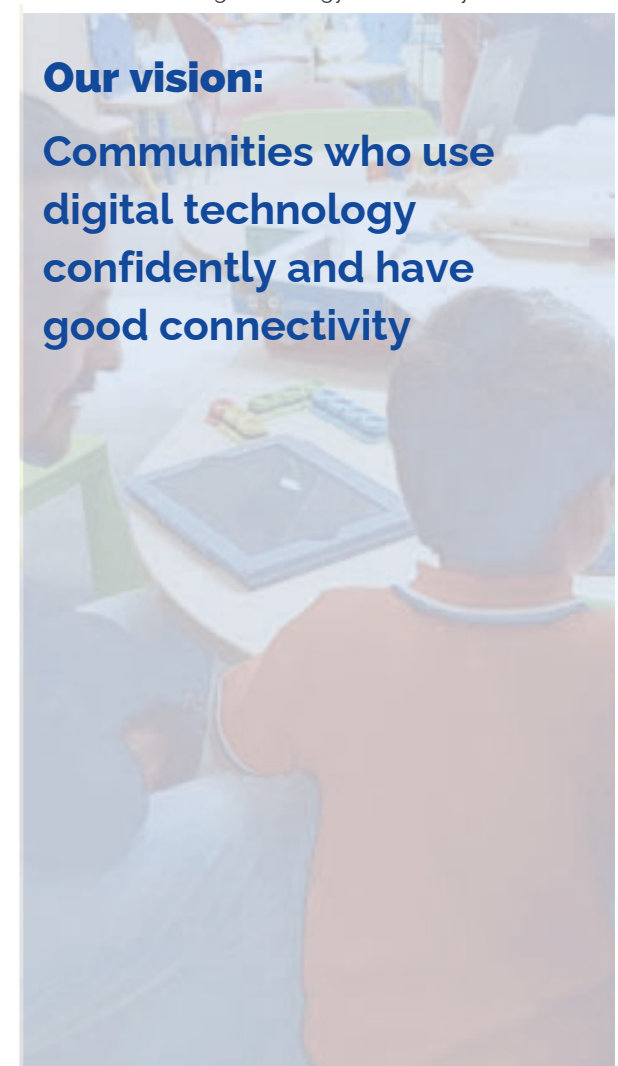
The Council recognises the crucial role digital will play to support a place-based approach and investments. We recognise that having access to a device or using digital services is an important part of daily living and there are clear links between social isolation, poverty and digital exclusion. Digital participation covers more than just access to the internet, it is about the skills to use it safely and the confidence to do so. By providing support we will endeavour to ensure that everyone is able to participate digitally, and we will provide free public Wi-Fi in council buildings, digital infrastructure and resources in schools, support community groups and offer lifelong learning activities which will increase digital participation further.

Our Focus

- Working with partners to improve digital access and remove barriers to digital inclusion across North Ayrshire.
- Developing the digital skills of our customers through training opportunities and mentoring.
- Ensuring we have community leaders who are able to assist those who need help using digital devices and accessing services.
- Promoting the many benefits of being digitally active, especially when it's addressing issues of poverty and health.
- Aligning our work with other relevant strategies where we can enhance learning and digital access.
- Continue to invest in our public Wi-Fi and devices to support our customers to get online.
- Providing access to employability interventions to develop digital skills for future employment.
- Investigate ways to use digital technologies to enhance place-based investment addressing local priorities, support changes within communities and contribute to a vibrant and inclusive economy.

Our vision:

Communities who use digital technology confidently and have good connectivity



Young Persons Guarantee Programme: -

- 100 Chromebooks and 18 months of Wi-Fi has been allocated to young people in North Ayrshire.
- A digital champion has been recruited to support young people engage with services through digital devices and channels.



Libraries – 2021/2022: -

- 57,750 hours of Wi-Fi was accessed.
- 24,121 eBooks and 17,263 audiobooks borrowed.
- 93,464 digital magazines borrowed.

“Thank you very much for providing me with the iPad, it has been a lifesaver”

92,106 users of Wi-Fi across 17 Wi-Fi sites in 2021 / 22

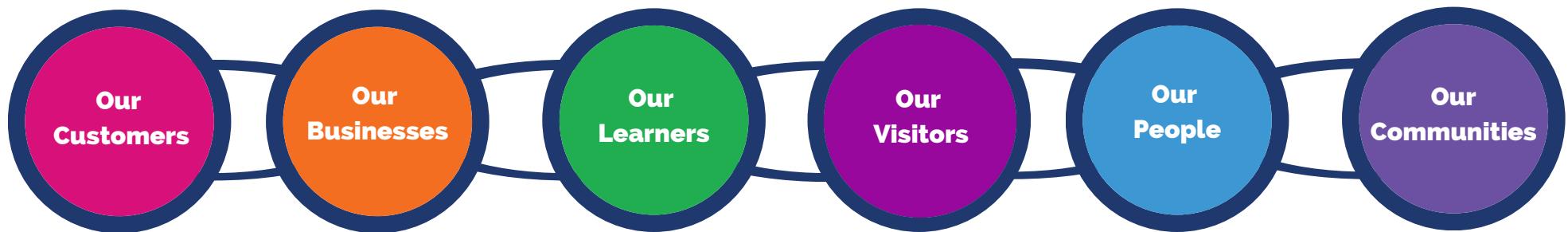
Summary

This Digital Strategy sets out our vision for North Ayrshire Council to continue to be an innovative leading organisation. The last few years has dramatically changed the way the Council works and how our services interact with our customers. This has given us the opportunity to rapidly progress digital transformation.

A large volume of our customers are happy to transact with us online, but we also recognise the social and economic impact of those who are digitally excluded, therefore this will be a key priority for the Council.

Our strategy sets out our key priorities, principles and actions that will allow us to fulfil our vision and progress in a digital world. The following actions will support and accelerate our journey towards a digital North Ayrshire that is inclusive, accessible, sustainable and fair for all.

North Ayrshire Council Supports: -



“The last few years has totally changed our approach, by enhancing the use of digital and pace of implementation. Digital formats have allowed better use of staff time, reduced our impact on the environment and most importantly demonstrated that services can be delivered in this way.”

Our Customers - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Take a customer centric approach in the delivery of all our digital services; we will not assume that our current solutions are the best and will be open to improvement</p> | <p>Review of our online digital services to identify opportunities for improvement and promote to customers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital uptake reporting • User accessibility testing • Complaints • Customer satisfaction |
| | <p>Relaunch web chat.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web chat analytics |
| | <p>Implement Customer Services Digital Team to monitor and support digital access.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital uptake reporting • Complaints • Customer satisfaction |
| | <p>Implementation of My Account.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of existing account holders sign up for My Account • Number of new My Account registrations • Use of My Account by registered customers |
| | <p>Investigating robotic process automation opportunities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of business case • Number of processes identified for process automation opportunities |

Our Customers - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|----------------------|---|---|
| | <p>Making appropriate and better use of our data using data analytics and increasing the use of business intelligence to improve access to data across the organisation to focus on delivery and better outcomes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of reports created and their usage |
| | <p>Streamline referral pathways to ensure customers gain access to the appropriate support service.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals |
| | <p>Website – Accessibility and usability.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website satisfaction • Siteimprove Accessibility Checker Tool • Customer Journey • Focus groups – lived experience testing |

Our Businesses - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|--|---|--|
| <p>To support businesses to improve productivity by adopting, optimising new and resilient digital technology and investing in digital skills for the future</p> | <p>Conduct Digital Pillar talks with businesses and create digital action plans.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of digital pillar talks undertaken • Number of digital interventions • Number of enterprises supported • Number of digital partner referrals |
| | <p>Work with Scottish Enterprise to deliver the recently developed Digital Diagnostic Tool.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses supported |
| | <p>Use the Shared Prosperity Fund to help support further digital adoption and enhance skills.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses supported • Number of interventions (grant and consultancy) |
| | <p>Use the Digital Growth Fund to deliver £100k of digital support covering digital enhancements and the provision of expert digital consultancy support.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses supported |
| | <p>Deliver Business Gateway Digital Boost support.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses supported |
| | <p>Working with Skills Development Scotland to promote and encourage uptake of digital apprenticeships.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals to Skills Development Scotland or skills partners relating to digital apprenticeship |

Our Learners - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|---|---|--|
| <p>To use digital technology to build innovative and creative teaching approaches that will raise attainment across all schools and centres</p> | <p>To continue the delivery of the programme of digital device replacement across all schools and centres to ensure access for all.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Device ratio in classroom • Devices appropriate to learning • Technology age profile/fit for purpose |
| | <p>Roll out and embed the Digital Schools Award to all education establishments.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of schools who gain the award |
| | <p>Build and extend family digital learning opportunities across all localities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of opportunities • Number of participants • Customer satisfaction |
| | <p>Build and extend IT professional learning programmes for all teachers and educators.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of courses delivered/participants engaged • Customer satisfaction |

Our Visitors - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|--|--|---|
| To support communications, marketing and businesses through digital technologies | Adopt regional Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans published and available online |
| | Interface user actions on visitor economy with wider regional economic partnership to influence regional economic strategy and digital workstream. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of opportunities |
| | Progress development of Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plans under Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund funding (and thereafter progress any identified interventions through future Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund funding rounds). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainland and Island Strategic Tourism Infrastructure plans in place Number of RTIF funded projects |
| | Compile an annual visitor management plan for 2023 – including promotion and digital solutions and communications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan published and available online |
| | Work with industry partners to support infrastructure development including digital. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of infrastructure development projects supported |

Our People - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Our workforce shows a real commitment to continuous improvement and we are recognised as a progressive, forward thinking and innovative Council. Our ambition for our people is to create a culture where innovation and excellence thrives, in a North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All'. It is only through our people, that we will realise this ambition.</p> | <p>Relaunch the Digi Guru initiative – creation of digital champions within Services to support and enhance digital skills across the organisation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of initiatives • Attendance reach across the Council of each initiative • Feedback and satisfaction results |
| | <p>Deliver face to face and online cyber training, and cyber learning events.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of initiatives • Attendance reach across the Council of each initiative • Feedback and satisfaction results • Cyber exercise results |
| | <p>Continue to utilise digital technology to support business process improvements.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adoption of Microsoft 365 tools, including forms and automation tools by services • The number of business process improvements implemented across the Council |
| | <p>Continue investment in our digital infrastructure.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the ICT and Education Digital capital programmes |

Our Communities - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Communities who use digital technology confidently and have good connectivity.</p> | <p>Work with strategic partners to capitalise on 4G/5G connectivity initiatives within communities and enhance economic benefits.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many initiatives have been implemented |
| | <p>Promote and embed digital opportunities as part of 'business as usual'.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of opportunities • Number of participants • Customer satisfaction |
| | <p>Identify gaps for digital access within Community Halls and Centres.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of opportunities • Number of participants • Number of sites upgraded |
| | <p>Develop mentoring opportunities, e.g., Digital Leaders.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Digital Leaders/volunteers • Number of voluntary hours undertaken |
| | <p>Collaborate with Digital Scotland to maximise the benefits of the Reaching 100 programme for all, and work with suppliers, to understand their commercial roll out programmes and help raise awareness of broadband voucher schemes to fill the gaps.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in uptake of vouchers |
| | <p>Establish a new internal Digital Innovation Hub to share knowledge, collaborate and find new ways to use digital technology and data to improve our services, our places, our communities, and the well-being of our residents.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and the number of initiatives started |

Our Communities - Action Plan

| Priority Description | Key Action 2022/24 | Metrics (How we will measure this) |
|--|--|--|
| North Ayrshire is well-connected with effective infrastructure | Explore new ways to use our digital platforms to improve how we engage with our customers and raise awareness of regeneration activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement stats • Customer satisfaction |
| North Ayrshire is well-connected with effective infrastructure | We will utilise baseline data to inform future plans for active travel and behaviour change activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in data sources and usage • Informed decision making • Customer satisfaction |
| North Ayrshire is well-connected with effective infrastructure | Continue to use data to inform and monitor place-based investment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in data sources and usage • Informed decision making • Customer satisfaction |
| A sustainable environment | Utilise digital technologies to raise awareness of sustainable and active travel options and improve access to journey-planning tools and information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagements stats • Number of people signed up to journey planning tools • Customer satisfaction |
| Adult Learners - inclusive, growing and enterprising economy; opportunities for adults to learn digital skills for future employment | Create additional digital learning opportunities to contribute to a diverse and inclusive digital economy for the future. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants achieving digital skills |
| Adult Learners - inclusive, growing and enterprising economy; opportunities for adults to learn digital skills for future employment | Develop further online learning opportunities to develop skills for future employment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of courses delivered/ participants engaged • Customer satisfaction |



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Digital First

Making Digital Your Preferred Choice

Free School Meals - Digital Case Study

During the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic customers who were eligible for means tested free school meals received quality food parcels delivered to their home. As the pandemic continued, we adapted our approach to ensure community need and demand were still met.

- In order to continue to support our customers during that period we introduced electronic vouchers for food which could be redeemed at a supermarket of their choice.
- The majority of our customers were happy with this and were able to redeem the vouchers with no issues.
- Our Customer Services Advisers were able to assist customers experiencing more difficulty, to use their smartphones to access these vouchers.
- We were also able to give advice on low-cost unlimited data plans which enabled access to the internet for those on a low income.



"Customer A' was able to arrange an unlimited data plan and in turn had internet access so that she could not only redeem the supermarket vouchers, but she was also able to go online for help and advice in relation to Covid-19. Meantime, whilst waiting for the new data SIM, we arranged for the voucher to be redeemed on her behalf at a local hub where she was able to collect food."

Customer Service Adviser, Contact Centre



1,192 food vouchers
provided to the
value of £29k



Eglinton Country Park - Digital Case Study

Over the past decade our staff have utilised digital technology to play a greater part in supporting our customers' time outdoors and how it can enhance their interactions with nature. We have introduced new digital ways for our customers to connect with nature, adding value to their time outdoors and to learn and understand about the environment around them.

At Eglinton Country Park we have embraced the use of digital technology to enhance our visitor experience:

- Through the use of QR codes, to allow visitors to download maps at various points throughout the park, and to download orienteering courses and maps which can be held digitally for future use.
- The Heritage App allows visitors to follow a trail and learn about the building heritage and history of the park.
- The Augmented Reality App triggers leaping salmon at the fish pass.
- By developing a digital education resource programme for 2022, schools and groups will enjoy supported learning - initial topics will include the history of Eglinton and Biodiversity.
- ID apps – through our partnership with Southwest Scotland Environmental Information Centre (SWSEIC) we promote and deliver training sessions on I-Record and iNaturalist to support Citizen Science projects. This allows anyone to record their sightings of fungi, flora & fauna into a national recording database to monitor biodiversity at a national level and track changes.



“In response to the Covid-19 pandemic our use of social media has increased significantly allowing us to continue our engagement with customers to enjoy and appreciate what was on their doorstep or through their window. We launched our Instagram site to encourage people to share their experiences of nature and to promote them to go outside to explore new areas.”



Syrian Refugee Online Learning Case Study

Additional support was required to help Syrian families gain access to devices and acquire digital knowledge and skills, whilst overcoming language barriers.

- The Council recruited bi-lingual volunteers to help with digital literacy by setting up virtual calls to support online learning and language skills.
- A bid was made to Connecting Scotland for digital devices with 2 Chromebooks per Syrian family being provided.
- Video tutorials were provided in community language to support Chromebook set up and virtual calls.
- There was an increase in participation of online classes with a large group of people taking part in virtual calls which helped the families adapt to our communities. increase their employability and volunteer opportunities and do basic things such as get a doctor's appointment



"I was helped by the volunteers to use the computer and activate my virtual meetings, this has made a big difference in my daily life as I begin to comprehend the language faster than before."

Ahmad, ESOL Learner

"The volunteers help us well, had it not been for the study classes held virtually, we would have learned nothing of the English language. "

Bothania, ESOL Learner

"The volunteers helped me very well. I am now able to use my computer and watch YouTube to learn."

Ibrahim, ESOL Learner

