

Integrated Digital Service Update

Date: 22 July 2024

Report of: Chief Digital Information Officer (Interim)

Report to: Scrutiny Board – Strategy & Resources

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report provides an update on IDS Digital Strategy and describes progress made within the service since IDS last reported to the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board in 2021.

The report describes changes to structure within the service and the introduction of an augmentation framework to address recruitment and retention issues.

The report provides a brief update from the various services within IDS to highlight achievements and the development of the forward-looking technology direction taken since 2021.

The report provides an update on the key risks that IDS report to CLT and to Executive Board.

Recommendations

- a) Scrutiny Board to note the changes within IDS structure during 2024.
- b) Scrutiny Board to note the progress made within IDS as described in the report, note the future technology strategy direction and the approach to culture within the service.
- c) Scrutiny Board to recognise the ongoing challenges to recruit and retain skilled technical specialists and how this is being addressed.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides an update to the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny board on progress made within the service since it last provided a general update in 2021, noting that Corporate Governance and Audit Committee also receive annual reports about digital governance.
- 2 The Integrated Digital Service (IDS) underpins the delivery of services by the Council, ICB (Leeds place), GP practices and other partners to the citizens, businesses, and visitors to Leeds, helping to deliver the city's ambitions.
- 3 IDS provide a range of services including 'lights on' support, project change delivery, proactive protection against cyber-attack, management of our information compliance regime, digital leadership, data analytics, digital learning, and management of line of business applications.
- 4 The vision and future direction for Digital is a key enabler in the ambition for the city and Scrutiny board are requested to review and input to the proposed future vision and plans.

Governance

- 5 Since IDS last reported to Scrutiny in 2021 new governance has been introduced with the aim to improve how digital decisions are made within the Council and to improve prioritisation of programmes and projects across the Directorates.
- 6 A Design Authority has been created within IDS which reviews all new work and ensures IDS Design Principles are met.
- 7 The IDS Digital Principles focus on creating user-centric, intuitive, and multi-channel solutions that are reusable with minimal customisation. They emphasise the importance of realising cashable savings, leveraging technology and automation, simplifying operations, and ensuring compliance with security and regulatory standards. The principles also advocate for risk assessment, reducing legacy investments, and transitioning to cloud platforms.
- 8 A new Digital Board has been introduced which is attended by Chief Officers from each Directorate.
- 9 The Digital Board Terms of Reference (TOR) outline the strategic direction for the Digital Board, ensuring digital enablement aligns with the City Ambition and Council's organisational plan. The TOR emphasises making digital services easier, cheaper, and faster for citizens and staff. It also focuses on building and assessing Digital Roadmaps, promoting digital efficiency and transformation, and approving future developments based on robust Digital Principles.

Finance

- 10 IDS manage three capital schemes.
 - Essential Services Programme (ESP)
 - Cloud & Application Compliance Programme (CACP)
 - Digital Efficiencies Programme (DEP)
- 11 Further information on the IDS capital schemes [are published online](#).

Service Desk & Member Support

- 12 IDS previously reported to Scrutiny in March 2024 on IDS Service Desk performance [the report presented is available online](#).
- 13 IDS recognised during 2022 that there was a gap in terms of dedicated IT Member Support. As such in January 2023 a new role was created of P02 Member Senior IT Support Officer. This

role is responsible for supporting Members with any IT related issues that they may have that cannot be resolved by the IDS Service Desk.

- 14 IDS also have a drop-in clinic based in the Civic Hall behind the Portland Crescent entrance where Members can call in for support with IT issues.
- 15 The 100% Digital are in the process of creating a training offer in conjunction with HR which will be offered by the Be Your Best programme. A specific tailored offer to Members will be developed and delivered.
- 16 IDS also provide a dedicated phone line (0113 376 0432) for use by Members to assist with issues they may have.

Structure Changes

- 17 Since the last update there has been significant changes within the service. On the 30th of January 2024 the Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO) left the organisation and Andrew Byrom was appointed as interim CDIO.
- 18 In recent months, the Interim CDIO has been working with the IDS SLT, the Director of Strategy & Resources and the wider service on a reset and baseline of IDS. This has included creating a new Technology Strategy approach with the Chief Technology Officer, for engagement with CLT and being incorporated into the organisational plan.
- 19 IDS are working with other services within the Strategy & Resources directorate to develop integrated ways of working, to better support Directorates in their decision making and Financial Challenge targets.
- 20 There have also been changes within the Strategy & Resources directorate with some teams within IDS moving to other areas. The Programme Management Office and Digital Transformation teams have moved to Strategy & Performance and the Information Governance team have moved to Legal Services, with colleagues from these services remaining connected to IDS developments.
- 21 Additionally, the IDS Sourcing team have been aligned into the Head of Procurement for day-to-day management and support but have been retained on the IDS structure. This change has been made to provide additional capacity for the interim CDIO who has previously managing these teams.
- 22 These changes have been made to provide single lines of accountability within the Strategy & Resources Directorate.
- 23 Further changes have taken place within IDS to flatten the JNC level management structure with the removal of some JNC posts to provide a smaller and more effective team. This gives more responsibility to a smaller SLT team within IDS and will facilitate more agile decision making and a clearer reporting structure for staff.

Technology changes

- 24 The Digital technology that Leeds City Council deploys must have a transformative effect on the organisation and is central to helping the organisation become more efficient and underpins the plans within the Financial Challenge to make financial savings and best utility of Digital.
- 25 The IDS technology strategy is evolving and building on the work from the previous CDIO who started a direction to move to multicloud (Azure, AWS, GCP) and the use of platforms and maximising use of products like the Microsoft PowerPlatform.

- 26 IDS are continuing to adopt a platform approach to delivery which means developing horizontal solutions that can be leveraged across multiple service areas rather than purchasing solutions which are designed to meet just one specific business need. IDS will use pre-built accelerators to improve platforms when it's impractical to build in-house. We will only purchase business specific solutions when it's not effective or efficient to build within our platforms.
- 27 IDS have a strategy to modernise and rationalise our legacy application estate by reducing the number of systems that office and frontline staff use. We are doing this by identifying where we can move similar workloads together using the same platform or same solution to meet the needs of the service area. An example of this is to reduce multiple asset management solutions and combining similar types into one system & retire old systems. We aim to identify the 'corporate' system of choice that will be supported to meet each of the different product categories we have across all service areas. Any new solutions will fit in & work along with our existing investments.
- 28 IDS are maximising the use of existing investments in licences on platforms to ensure the Council drives value. As an example, all staff have access to the Microsoft E5 license, this provides access to the entire package of Microsoft 365 productivity apps from anywhere and on any device. We look to maximise the benefits of this package before looking to purchase new software with similar capabilities.
- 29 IDS are working with HR and 100% Digital via the Be Your Best programme to ensure all staff have access to training to enable them to make full use of these new, and existing tools.
- 30 The Council have recently procured and delivered Genesys Cloud as a new platform for Customer Contact telephony, this is already being used across other service lines to provide an improved service to the citizen and is a further example of reuse of new technology. We are continuing to adopt this platform across 18 other business units moving them away from their existing telephony solutions as we rationalise. Genesys has a number of additional features included within the platform that we will adopt in Phase 2 including the ability for customers to use live chat with a customer service operative if they need advice completing a digital transaction form – which will avoid the need to make a phone call to the contact centre, the ability to engage via social media platforms – which will allow us to retire other software products currently used to manage our social media engagement.
- 31 IDS have developed a strategy of simplifying technology, reduced operational and software costs, and innovated by:
- Having a combined view of all enterprise applications (linked to Local Government Inform service definitions) – total operational costs are calculated, and a roadmap and feature timeline is completed for mission critical applications.
 - Creating a streamlined and modern strategy for applications with 'cloud first' principles at its core.
 - Establishing an innovation funnel that transforms the business by using existing platforms and capabilities – only purchasing when we have a genuine gap or need.
 - Reducing the number of technologies, helping us to invest in our people and deliver change faster.
- 32 Investing in digital skills for staff and the people of Leeds so everyone can engage on their own terms.
- Creating clear roles and responsibilities across IDS to help teams focus on skills development.

- Agile, collaborative working to learn and improve quickly.
- 33 Investing in a Security Operations Centre and centralised security team so we can continuously monitor risks and threats to our infrastructure.
- Working in line with the National Cyber Security Strategy (NCSS) to gather and analyse data threats.
 - Using our cyber security tools and technologies.
 - Providing better incident response.
- 34 New purchases follow 'cloud first' principles where the preference is public cloud over private cloud.
- Continuing to move enterprise applications to the cloud.
 - Business applications (Office, Dynamics, and Power Platform) will run in Azure. Legacy infrastructure and modern consumer web applications in AWS.
 - 2028 target to be fully cloud-based.
- 35 Ensuring accurate, equitable and inclusive decision making. We aim to publish decisions, including rationale and data that led to the decisions. Protecting the privacy and data of the people of Leeds.
- We are working to move data from enterprise applications to our centralised cloud platform (Azure).
- 36 Since 2021 IDS have deployed a long-range radio network (LoraWAN) across the city utilising tower blocks which enables the deployment of advanced smart sensors and offers a transformative approach to enhancing the lives of residents.
- 37 The LoraWAN network capability allows for the integration of Ambient Assisted Living platforms, connecting various people, systems, and sensors to assess data and respond to needs promptly. This network supports various applications like smart road temperature sensing, smart street lighting, environmental monitoring, and more, aiming to improve quality of life and city operations.

Digital Change

- 38 Since 2021 changes have been made to improve how IDS run our Line of Business Applications, engage with our services, and partners, provide Digital Learning for our staff, promote inclusion across the city, and develop Digital Transformation to enhance our digital capabilities across our services.
- 39 Operational Engineering teams have moved from Operational Services (internally within IDS) to Digital Change. This will improve collaboration between Product Management who lead the Product Life Cycle for over 400 line of business applications across the council, and our Operational Engineering teams to ensure better development of our products, better management of our Product Life Cycles, improved suppliers management, remove duplication of effort, develop agility in terms of working practice by being more multi-disciplined, leading to improved service offer.

100% Digital Leeds – Digital Learning and Digital Inclusion

- 40 To fully realise the benefits of digital for everyone in Leeds, IDS has expanded the remit of the 100% Digital Leeds service. The expanded service now has a dual focus: to develop digitally skilled and confident colleagues as well as digitally included and motivated communities.

- 41 Many council colleagues live and work in communities across Leeds, and they deliver services for those communities. The wider role of the 100% Digital Leeds service will ensure colleagues are better equipped to use digital tools and technology to work more efficiently and effectively. This will improve service delivery for citizens, who will be more confident to use digital tools and technology to access council and other services through the work of the 100% Digital Leeds digital inclusion programme.
- 42 Since 2017, the 100% Digital Leeds Digital Inclusion team has reported annually to the Infrastructure, Investment, and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board. [Those reports are available online](#), and the team's most recent report in April 2024 noted the scale, scope, and impact of the digital inclusion programme.
- 43 The 100% Digital Leeds Digital Inclusion team has worked with partners to secure over £3million of funding over the last three years. Almost all that funding has gone to community organisations across Leeds. The Digital Inclusion team worked with 247 partner organisations last year, and those organisations supported tens of thousands of people. People from priority neighbourhoods and communities of interest, including older people, people with learning disabilities, and low-income families, have moved closer to digital inclusion.
- 44 One feature of the 100% Digital Leeds model is to support third sector organisations to use external funding to appoint digital inclusion officers to work with specific communities or to achieve specific outcomes. This extends the reach and capacity of the 100% Digital Leeds team, and increases their impact, at no cost to the council.
- 45 Digital inclusion is now accepted, understood, and invested in as a strategic priority by teams and organisations across all sectors. This map shows [the locations of the organisations across Leeds that are working with the 100% Digital Leeds team](#). The digital inclusion team are leading on [a wide range of Key Initiatives](#) that support the council's and the city's priorities and ambitions. Qualitative outcomes for individuals, communities, organisations, sectors, and the city are set out in the team's [most recent Scrutiny Board report](#) and on the [100% Digital Leeds website](#).
- 46 In addition to the work of the Digital Inclusion team, the 100% Digital Leeds Digital Learning team is prioritising programmes and projects that drive efficiencies, deliver savings, and support the council's Financial Challenge, Best City Ambition, and Corporate Transformation priorities.
- 47 As part of the Digital Change service in IDS, the 100% Digital Leeds service supports the effective adoption of digital tools, technology, products, and services. The 100% Digital Leeds Digital Learning offer will also support the IDS Technical Strategy and the council's organisational objectives.
- 48 The Digital Learning team has worked with council HR colleagues to develop a Digital Learning offer that will be rolled out over the next 18 months to over 2,000 managers across the council as part of the Be Your Best programme. This menu of training and support will focus on the corporate M365 tools that can help all managers work more efficiently and effectively. The council has already paid for these tools, so this training programme will support the council's ambition to spend money wisely and maximise the impact of investment.
- 49 Another priority focus for the Digital Learning team is to support the widespread adoption of Core Business Transformation (CBT) tools. The team has assigned a Digital Learning Officer to support the CBT programme. This Officer will attend meetings with Transformation colleagues and Subject Matter Experts, learn more about the product, assess and adapt learning resources from suppliers and external trainers, build learning resources on Bubo (the council's e-learning website), adapt content as modules and processes are confirmed, and discuss and agree any

additional learning needs as the project and products develop. This approach has already received positive feedback from CBT colleagues and demonstrates the IDS approach to agile ways of working and matrix-management across multi-disciplinary teams.

- 50 The team will continue to review and refresh the entire Digital Learning offer to ensure it meets the needs of the council's current and future workforce. The offer will be delivered through a blended approach to ensure colleagues can find the most suitable opportunities to improve their digital skills and confidence. These include face-to-face training sessions, virtual sessions led by the Digital Learning team, self-directed e-learning sessions, sessions and resources from partners and suppliers, plus options for peer-support, collaboration and innovation for teams and service areas.

Strategy & Innovation

- 51 As part of the 2021 IDS restructure, Strategy & Innovation was created to provide strategic direction in relation to the use of digital technology across the council and Leeds ICB. It also leads on digital innovation to explore how use of existing solutions can be maximised and how new and emerging technologies could be adopted by the council to drive efficiencies.
- 52 It led on the City Digital Strategy 2022-2025 which puts people at the centre of what we do, and how digital can support people to Start Well, Live Well, Work Well and Age Well. Following its publication, in 2022 and 2023, the team delivered two digital innovation workshops as part of Leeds Digital Festival that encouraged people from across the city to co-design solutions that support independent living in older age and increasing productivity and collaboration at work. Ideas from both these workshops continue to be investigated.
- 53 For the past 2 years it has delivered a Digital Health and Social Care event that has brought together over 200 delegates and world-renowned speakers together to share best practice on how new and emerging technology is shaping the sector and could be adopted by the council. All these events have been fully funded through sponsorship.
- 54 Strategy-wise, it is also currently supporting the Office of Data Analytics with the development of a data strategy.
- 55 The team is leading on the pilot of the Microsoft AI assistant, Microsoft 365 Copilot with 300 people from across the council trialling the solution. There has been excellent engagement from staff across the organisation through attending a variety of innovation sessions over a 3-week period that have outlined the benefits of the solution, and provided a forum for staff to identify and explore possible use cases where it can improve efficiency and support them in their work.
- 56 The team has also been working closely with Adults & Health and GP practices to trial two remote monitoring solutions that support people to manage their Long-Term Conditions at home and be supported by family members and carers. The results of these projects are feeding into the work led by Cath Roff on the Community Health and Wellbeing Service.
- 57 Working within IDS alongside technical teams and product managers to identify opportunities for savings and efficiencies through reviewing existing products and contracts, as well as market appraisal and horizon scanning. Finally, they are increasingly working with existing LCC partners including Microsoft, AWS, and BT to maximise the benefits of our working relationship with them, and how we deliver best value for money from existing solutions before procuring anything new.

Office of Data Analytics

- 58 In June 2021, the previous report to Scrutiny Board described the planned creation of an Office of Data Analytics in Leeds, bringing together skills and expertise to provide new insights that

would help us to understand health inequalities and citizen needs, leading to improved services and outcomes.

- 59 The Office of Data Analytics was formed in 2022, bringing together data experts from across the Council and the ICB. The service applies a cloud-first approach and has taken steps to improve the curation of data from across the city, in addition to creating insights that are meaningful and can drive evidence-based decision making. A good example is the recently developed Social Progress Index that allows us to assess progress against the Best City Ambition. The Office of Data Analytics owns the Leeds Data Model – which is a nationally recognised NHS-linked data model.
- 60 A secure city data platform has been created which leverages our Microsoft product set – the Leeds Insight Hub – a platform where partners across the city can share reports and visualisations, giving a single version of the truth. Alongside analysis of historic and current activity, a data science function has emerged, allowing us to apply predictive modelling. The initial models focus on health and care but are starting to broaden.
- 61 Separate to this is Data Mill North – this is our open data platform and is maintained by the Office of Data Analytics. Over 700 datasets are published by approximately 50 (mainly) public sector organisations from across the region. Over the past two years more and more data is being shared openly and this drives innovation across the city. Leeds City Council alone publishes 320 separate datasets. Alongside reducing FOI requests this positively demonstrates the Council's transparency.
- 62 The Office of Data Analytics also holds a role in implementing cross-organisational data collaborations in the city, including coordination of information governance, and underpinning digital capability that allows this partnership work to happen. The system visibility components of the HomeFirst programme are a key example of this capability.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 63 This report provides an assurance on the performance of IDS and presents an update on changes to structure within the service and an update on the technology direction.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 64 The work IDS do support all five Directorates and therefore supports all three pillars of the Best City Ambition. IDS undertakes work with supports the Organisational Plan, Financial Strategy, People Strategy and Procurement Strategy/LGA Action Plan.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 65 Andrew Byrom, Chief Digital Information Officer (Interim) has regular meetings with Councillor Coupar and provides her with a regular progress update on ongoing work in IDS including the Digital Strategy.
- 66 IDS report annually to the Corporate Governance & Audit Committee, the reports presented to committee in February 2024 are available online [here](#) and the appendix [here](#).

What are the resource implications?

- 67 IDS continue to struggle to recruit and retain technical staff due to pay scale inequalities with the private sector. Leeds has many technologies companies and has become a technology hub over recent years. Due to this there is high demand in the city for technology roles.
- 68 To address this issue IDS have procured an augmentation framework which has strengthened the capacity of the IDS to a level which will enable a more rapid rate of delivery of priority project work alongside delivery of business-as-usual activities and will accelerate several key programmes of work. Delays in securing resources will cause delays to these major programmes that are reliant on releasing financial savings or keeping the council's estate secure and compliant. This includes major initiatives such as the Core Business Transformation Programme, Highways Enterprise Architecture Programme, Web Migration Programme, Cloud Migration, Modernisation and Compliance Programme and the Essential Services Programme.
- 69 The new framework does not impact on members of staff within IDS in terms of changes to structures or roles. However, it will be positive for IDS staff in removing workload pressures. It will also support IDS staff in their development and retention by enabling them to be involved in projects involving new technologies. This will allow them to gain the skills, experience and training required to move into developing and supporting new technologies. In terms of the wider impact on staff across the council, it will help by allowing IDS to implement projects that improve access to information and tools that will make delivery of services quicker and easier.
- 70 IDS recognise the need to grow our own staff and are developing plans for a trainee entry level scheme within the service to target key roles which are currently being filled via the augmentation framework. This plan will cover a 3-year period and will be measurable through the reduction in use of the framework and conversion to that work being undertaken by our own trainees / graduates, linked to a more proactive approach to workforce planning and development.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 71 There are two corporate risks managed by IDS.
- LCC15 Major ICT Failure
 - LCC31 Major Cyber Incident
- 72 Regarding LCC15 Major ICT Failure the council's ICT function plays a central role in supporting our Best City Ambition by providing day-to-day support to all council staff who use information, communications, and technology to carry out their job. This includes standard office software as well as running major business applications.
- 73 There are many factors which could trigger frequent or prolonged ICT failure, including loss of power coupled with failure of back-up generators, air conditioning units fail resulting in the data centre overheating and a power down of the ICT server equipment, a loss of internet connectivity and insufficient staffing resources to maintain the infrastructure.
- 74 Should the risk arise, and the digital infrastructure not be restored promptly, there would be a significant adverse impact on our ability to deliver services leading to mass complaints, loss of public confidence in the council and reputational damage.
- 75 There are many controls in place to manage this risk, as follows:
- Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans in place for primary systems, with periodic review and testing. A cross-council Major Incident Management process is in place and would be activated to deal with a major IT failure.

- In the event of a total or partial disruption to the power supply, IT systems are configured to shut down safely. Generators providing an alternative source of power supply are maintained and can be used to support key sites in the event of a mains power failure.
- The implementation of a resilient fibre service between key data centres has reduced the number of hardware failures that can affect service delivery. Improved fibre links enable a quicker offsite backup of data should a major incident occur, and data recovery be required.
- IT security measures such as firewalls, anti-virus software, and access controls for staff and contractors in place to mitigate against cyber-attacks.
- Senior managers within the council's Integrated Digital Service (IDS) meet weekly and act as the escalation point for any concerns raised around security and digital service delivery.
- IDS have the Essential Services capital programme for 2024-25 of £9.6M that will see investment made in maintaining the IT Service across the council – including spend on devices, security, networks, software refresh, infrastructure, storage and compliance.

76 Further actions planned:

- Regular work to review, update and test the digital aspects of Business Continuity Plans for the council's critical services.
- Leading up to 2025 there will be significant changes as the national telephony system switches over from analogue to digital. A programme is underway to convert the council's phone systems to digital and this includes the identification of any "legacy lines" that will no longer work after the switchover.
- As part of the Cloud and Compliance Migration Programme more applications will be moved off premises and into cloud-based solutions

77 Regarding LCC31 Major Cyber Incident to reduce the risk of cyber-attacks IDS has controls that are technical, management and personnel.

78 In June 2024 a letter was received from the DLUHC/NCSC which highlighted the following key considerations in preparedness for the General Election. IDS have used this information to further sanity check the Cyber assurance processes in place with the Council.

- Ransomware
- Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks. (A distributed denial-of-service attack is a malicious attempt to disrupt the normal traffic of a targeted server, service, or network by overwhelming the target or its surrounding infrastructure with a flood of Internet traffic.)
- Website defacement
- The ability to recover from backups.
- The NCSC Active Cyber Defence Programme

79 These key considerations can be addressed by the technical controls IDS has in place:

- IDS has in place Endpoint Protection, Anti-virus & Malware Protection, an Email Gateway Security System, and a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) System, all of which offer a defence against ransomware.
- IDS utilises a DDoS Protection System to provide a defence against DDoS attacks.
- IDS has Web Application Firewalls to help protect web applications by filtering and monitoring traffic between web applications and the Internet. This helps prevent website

defacement or alerts us to suspicious content that might indicate defacement to enable it to be swiftly rectified.

- IDS has a strong backup regime utilising both on premises and Cloud solutions should data and systems need to be restored.
- IDS has been utilising the NCSC Active Cyber Defence offer for several years. We are signed up to the Early Warning, Mailcheck, Protective DNS, and Webcheck Services that are referenced in the DLUHC/NCSC Joint Letter June 2024.
- We have incorporated the Early Warning Service into our Cyber Incident Response Process to immediately route any NCSC cyber incident alert to the appropriate technical experts and the IDS Service Centre to log a ticket and escalate accordingly.

What are the legal implications?

80 There are no legal implications arising from this report – it is for information.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

81 Not applicable.

How will success be measured?

82 Digital skills of leaders will be measured through the number of projects which successfully change ways of working with improved outcomes for citizens and more efficient service delivery.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

83 The delivery of the initiatives covered in this paper are ongoing and will be reviewed regularly with the Director of Strategy & Resources and Councillor Coupar, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Resources. .

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None