

2024-25

DELIVERY PLAN

People and Technology



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1. Introduction

People and Technology comprise a wide range of services covering Strategic HR, Organisational Development & Change and Digital, ICT, Transactional Services (HR advice, pensions and pay), Health, Safety and Risk and Organisational Resilience. It is one of seven strategic areas responsible for delivering the Council's Strategic Plan. Key actions to help achieve that are set out in this Delivery Plan, together with actions to address any performance issues and service priorities identified in the planning process.

The progress of this Plan will be monitored and managed by the management team and reported to Corporate Services Committee twice yearly, at mid-year and year-end.

2. Performance Review

The management team completed a detailed review of 2023/24 performance, focusing on the following:

- 2023/24 Delivery Plan year-end progress;
- Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) comparative data;
- Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) comparative data;
- National Digital Office programmes;
- Cabinet Office and Scottish Government Security compliance and guidance; and
- Continuous Improvement

This review highlighted our key achievements and challenges in 2023/24. These are summarised below.

Key Achievements 2023/24

Transactional Support

- Furthered digital improvements in the Workforce Management System (WMS) specifically the implementation of Caseviewer which significantly improves the management of online form approval and visibility
- Completed annual payroll audit and processed multiple complex pay awards.
- Successfully developed automations within key process areas delivering crucial efficiencies.

ICT

- Published streamlined 5-year ICT Strategy 2023-28
- Implemented new walk-up Tech Bar to provide immediate ICT support.
- Achieved over 76% KPI of ICT incidents resolved in half day or less.
- Microsoft 365 project – Council employees mailboxes migrated to 365 cloud platform and council email now available on any device from anywhere for migrated users. Cross organisation project completed that enables direct collaboration between council and NHSGGC employees.
- Implemented a new ICT Cyber Security Team
- Implemented new Cyber Security email protection technology to strengthen our Cyber defence.
- Delivered ICT Security training course materials and Cyber Security Awareness sessions for Senior Management Team and Upskilled ICT employees with industry-standard training in infrastructure, 365, device, and cyber security fields.
- Replaced 350 laptops in education and corporate sites, replaced 2000 Chromebooks in schools and now host over 12,000 Chromebooks on our Education network. Introduced Apple devices to enhance Music teaching and learning in high schools, upgraded 1400 PC's & laptops across Corporate and Education estate to ensure they are fully patched and secure with latest operating systems.
- Migrated 2700 corporate devices (laptops/phones) to 365 cloud services to ensure they can be managed remotely regardless of location.
- Delivered Network infrastructure Improvements:
 - Implemented a new secure Remote Access solution for council employees.
 - Began the replacement of virtual application solution and redesign of desktop application access.
 - Improved bandwidth capacity at council data centre.
 - Completed Council Wi-Fi replacement project to upgrade Wi-Fi access at 63 council locations.

People and Change

- Strategic Human Resources developed a revised Workforce Planning Strategy in addition to publishing key policy changes.
- Employee Engagement initiatives such as a relaunch of Trickle, supported with a Chief Officer pack, and a review of the Employee Awards have been completed.
- A new employee benefit has been launched with Vivup and AVC Wise allowing employees access to order white goods and access financial planning.
- Modern apprenticeship pay review undertaken and resultant revision to remuneration levels agreed by Corporate Services Committee.

- Organisational Development: reviewed key development programs. Reviewed the achieve values and delivered an enhanced programme for the Senior Management Network.
- Change and Digital team, reviewed the Fit for Future (F4F) approach which was nominated at the UK Business Awards 2023 for most disruptive programme. Provided significant support for 365 rollout and SharePoint, including development of good practice and testing for the roll out. Progressed updates to enhance data on the work force planning manager's console, reviewed the digital approach and transformation board, completed a digital skills survey and continues to maintain a network of champions.
- Health and Safety implemented a range of Health & Safety improvements particularly in terms of new fire safety legislation with new and increased requirements and responsibilities placed on all services.

Business Resilience

- Successful induction and integration of new Civil Contingencies Officer (CCO).
- Made significant progress in power outage planning across both Council and HSCP services.

Key Challenges in 23/24

Resilience/ Capacity Challenges

- Across People and Technology, there are a range of challenges linked to a continuing and increased demand for support, which is anticipated to be an ongoing pressure in future years. The workforce levels are now outstripped by service demands. Over the last few years, we have encouraged services to become more self-reliant by introducing self-serve and developing automation of key processes to promote efficiency in time-consuming tasks, however, buy-in from wider service areas has been slow. Similarly, the take up of service champions to assist with key priorities, such as digital transformation, has been a challenge with significant improvement required to support change. In 2024/25 we will continue to promote automation and self-reliance.
- The Digital team is a small corporate resource, as we move forward more individual/team ownership around digital capability will be key. This will be supported by Digital Champions but this role needs to be visible, valued, have the right people in it and be given the time needed to ensure a consistent cascade allowing tools and skills to be mainstreamed across services. The recent digital skills survey had a very low response rate, demonstrating a lack of engagement, a worrying lack of understanding in how important it is to understand the skills gaps across teams in order to address these, especially given the speed of technology developments and that this is the route forward to improving efficiency.
- The ongoing rationalisation of resources and development of service efficiencies has resulted in many restructures and an increased reliance on SHR which has significantly impacted on the team and the ability to do the more proactive

improvement activities. This has resulted in a number of initiatives taking much longer than anticipated such as the Stress Risk review and the People First employee cycle improvement plan. Focus and resources are often directed to more reactive activities such as VS/VER, legislative changes and the application and implementation of the HR people policies which results in resources being stretched.

- Workforce Planning requires to be further embedded to ensure knowledge across the organisation is enhanced.
- Continuing recruitment challenges in attracting and maintaining resource and skills due to uncertainty and budget implications.
- Increased demands include policy development and new employee initiatives that necessitates data from WMS and operational HR skillsets, both of which increase day to day workloads for Transactional teams. This will ultimately require the strict prioritisation of operational HR and Payroll tasks.
- The biggest challenge for the People and Change team was, and will continue to be, the exponential rate of change leading to increase demand for the service to support employees' skills, wellbeing and engagement whilst supporting council-wide projects such as the roll-out of Microsoft 365, structure changes, changing roles and skillsets with limited resources and increasing workload. This is leading to a much more demanding role as competing priorities such as wellbeing, workforce capability building, maximising tools and project delivery are balanced with ensuring that ongoing financial savings and service delivery expectations are met. As a result, turnover in the team is higher than previously experienced.

Technological Challenges

- Continued technical challenges with Frontier (WMS), particularly the speed issues for system users. Any issues continue to be managed through discussions with the supplier at national level.
- Hybrid Working Challenges
 - Managing and mitigating the increased risk of Cyber Security threats including phishing emails, ransomware attacks and updating and managing devices to ensure they are secure. Raising user awareness and investment in new technologies have helped to manage this challenge.
 - Teleconference meetings support challenging.
 - Deploying new technologies and upgrading existing technologies when dependency is heightened e.g., replacement of remote access solution and use of local desktop applications.
 - Increased demand and reliance on ICT support & technology - supporting hybrid working in addition to providing an appointment service and new walk-up Tech Bar service to deliver support in corporate environments.
- Managing storage growth and backups and encouraging service areas to carry out data housekeeping tasks in line with their retention policies.
- Increased revenue costs as organisations /suppliers move from a capital-based license model to revenue funded.

- Deploying and supporting new technology whilst training employees in the new technology.

3. Strategic Assessment

The People and Technology management team completed a strategic assessment to determine the major influences on service delivery and priorities in 2024/25. These are summarised below.

Key Factors

Financial Challenges

The entire public sector is continuing to face significant financial challenges due to a range of factors including inflationary cost increases, pay awards not being fully funded by the Scottish Government and insufficient overall funding to support the delivery of front line and back office services. The Council are currently faced with an estimated cumulative funding gap in 2025/26 of £9.8m rising to £40.4m by 2028/29. We will continue to monitor the overall financial position of the Council and updates on estimated future budget gaps will be reported to Elected Members throughout 2024/25.

These challenges require further action to balance our budget and protect services for residents. Within People & Technology, this means that available funding will be reduced over time and we will need to reconfigure how we work, what we do, where we work, and potentially reduce the number of people employed. In this context, we will aim to continue to provide a sustainable, quality service to internal clients and the public.

Budget Sensitivity Analysis

Budget Sensitivity Analysis In reviewing the service budget projections, consideration has been given to sensitivity of these budgets, in particular for higher risk/ higher value budgets which may have a significant impact on budgetary control and future budget projections. The analysis has considered sensitivity around demand, costs and charges, and income levels.

Within People and Technology there were no budgets identified as being more susceptible to fluctuations.

Transactional Support

Automation of Processes and Information Provision

Many employees across the Council are employed in manual processes and information provision, such as processing invoices and updating transactional spreadsheets. In 2024/25, we will complete deceased records automation which has been delayed due to system challenges and continue to pursue opportunities across the council to improve efficiency. Many such processes can be automated, providing benefits such as faster service delivery, improved quality and greater flexibility, as well as enabling employees to refocus on more complex and meaningful tasks rather than those that are repetitive and mundane. Progress will be reported within Resources Delivery plan.

Payroll

It is critical to ensure that employees are paid contractual and non-contractual payments accurately, in accordance with Terms and Conditions of service, and in a timely manner. We continue to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements and timelines.

CAS Team Reductions

The savings options agreed to deliver the 2024/25 budget have resulted in a resource reduction in the Council's Corporate Administration Support (CAS) team. The CAS team carries out administrative functions across all Council services to ensure consistency. The reduction in resources will require reconfiguration of the service provided and may include the migration of some tasks and activity back to service areas although technologies will be explored to mitigate this impact.

ICT

Infrastructure and Technology

There continues to be rapid and significant changes across the public sector. We live in a digital age where demand for council services and expectations of service levels continue to increase at a time the council is facing significant financial challenges. The council needs to ensure we are fit for the future by leveraging the use of technology, to deliver affordable, efficient, sustainable, and digitally enabled services that meet residents and employee's needs and expectations. To prepare for this, there has been sustained investment in ICT in recent years, building a strong foundation for the future and enabling delivery of services in new and innovative ways. During 2024/25 we will progress the following initiatives:

Cyber Security

The council will continue to invest in Cyber Security technology and resources ensuring our ICT infrastructure, systems and data and employees remain secure against the risk of cyber threat whilst achieving Cabinet Office compliance for our infrastructure.

Improve Bandwidth

We will begin a 2-year improvement project to transform our external network and ensure council locations have fit for purpose bandwidth available to enhance workplace experiences and assist in enhancing teaching and learning across our education establishments.

Improve user Experience.

We will continue the rollout of a new remote access solution and remove legacy application technology to ensure council employees have access to a robust, consistent, secure and improved digital workplace experience regardless of working in the office or at home.

Microsoft 365 - next phase

The council has invested in Microsoft 365 cloud services and has made significant progress on associated projects throughout 2023/24. The main deliverable in 2024/25 is to implement MS SharePoint to replace our long-standing use of on-premises file storage used for managing council files and folder. This technology will integrate with existing 365 services and increase mobility and flexibility by enabling council employees to share files on the go.

ICT Device Replacement

We will undertake the annual device replacement project for all PCs, laptops, Chromebooks, and mobile phones that are reaching end of life and or 5-year refresh point as per the ICT Strategy 2023-28.

People and Change

Fit for Future Reviews (FfF)

In 2020, to support continuous improvement, the Council embarked on a programme of Fit for Future service reviews. Using a range of tools that encapsulates service design and employee engagement, information is gathered and reviewed to identify improvements and to ensure our services are efficient and that we make the best use of our resources. During 2024/25 we will further review the FfF programme to ensure it continues to meet the service needs.

Improve step1 in the employee life cycle – ‘Recruitment’

The recruitment life cycle begins when a need for a post is identified until the point where the preferred candidate is identified. An eight-week review of this step was completed in 2023/24 and improvements in this area will be implemented. The recruitment step will be streamlined, improved and modernised for recruiting managers and for those applying for jobs in WDC (internal or external). Following some capacity challenges we will further progress this in 2024/25.

Workforce Planning

The Workforce Planning Framework and Strategy for 2022 – 2027 has been reviewed and implemented ensuring processes are aligned to the Strategic Planning Process and reflects the key priorities of the People First Strategy. During 2024/25 focus will be on further embedding the framework by developing managers' knowledge and skills to enable effective workforce planning within the context of the challenges faced to support Service delivery plans and sustainable people resources to deliver.

Sustainable Employment and Organisational Design

Continuing to ensure employees skillset/development continues to grow and can be supported. If this is not prioritised, recruitment and retention difficulties may be exacerbated with attendance, well-being and workforce motivation impacted. Skills may not keep pace with new technology/tools/developments with WDC becoming poorly placed to capitalise/deliver on improvements. During 2024/25 focus will be on ensuring adequate access to skills training,

Health & Safety

Continue to manage council risk and ensure sound Health & Safety practices are embedded. Poor H&S practice creates significant risk for the council both in terms of financial and reputational damage. Sound H&S practice supports employee engagement and collaboration with good workforce practices, without this commitment employee engagement, will suffer. During 2024/25 we will further embed key H&S practices.

Transformation and Continuous Improvement

Digital Transformation

The People First Strategy is ensuring that we put people at the heart of our approach to digital transformation, this is supported by a more cohesive and holistic plan involving learning, engagement, wellbeing and workforce planning. This ambitious plan will ensure all aspects of the individual is considered as we progress with digital transformation from 2022-27.

To facilitate this, the service needs a joined-up approach to supporting digital transformation, growing employee skills and working with citizens to adapt and change how services are delivered. To do this, structures require to be reviewed and resources (financial and workforce) need to be identified to ensure plans and processes are in place alongside the ability to

constantly monitor progress on keeping pace with digital transformation and technology. To support this the Digital Transformation Board has been reviewed to allow a more focussed, one-council approach to be adopted.

The speed of technological advancement has been rapidly increasing and will continue to do so. This will impact employees, citizens and services as the Council seeks to both capitalise and adapt to these. Additional support and upskilling have been evident with the rapid deployment of MS Teams and this will continue as the team support the rollout and maximisation of M365/SharePoint.

In 2024/25 we will continue to build good data practices/structures council-wide. Managing and maximising data usage and improving skills is key to ensuring employees and users understand benefits and threats. If this is not continued it increases the potential for both reputational and financial risks. It will also impact decision making and understanding on progressing improvement activity and planning for the same.

We will also continue to support development of the WMS to aid wider process and digital transformation and continue to develop automations within transactional processes through collaborative practice, service design and maximising digital practice, through the reviewed Fit for Future programme. Technology is developing quickly and WDC needs to ensure that they keep pace in order to capitalise on the benefits this brings to service improvement, costs and delivery. This must be looked at collaboratively with users and employees to ensure understanding, best practice and skills required.

Business Resilience

Service Resilience

The Civil Contingencies Officer has continued to support West Dunbartonshire's resilience planning, and response arrangements to ensure adequate officers are trained at all levels throughout the Council and HSCP to support the Councils response to any incident within West Dunbartonshire. Various Plans have been developed and are reviewed annually, these assist with the Councils readiness to respond to emergencies and other unplanned events.

This includes managing the Council and HSCPs Business Continuity Plans (BCPs), this process is typically reviewed on an annual basis or following an incident or an event to ensure they remain fit for purpose. All BCPs essentially feed into the Strategic Business Continuity plan to provide reassurances to Chief Executive and Chief Officers that essential services have been considered and adequate risk measures are put in place to minimise disruption. In 2024/25 we will continue to review the BCP's.

Power Resilience

Power Resilience differs from Business Continuity Planning due to the complexities surrounding this risk. The aim of this work is to provide a robust and tested framework for the Council's Power Resilience arrangements. The purpose of this work is to provide confidence to the Chief Executive and Chief Officers that service managers have considered this risk, applied mitigation measures and raised awareness across their service, especially with employees. In 2024/25 we will progress plans to determine what our essential services are and how we can continue to deliver them, and at the same time prioritising those most at risk / vulnerable within our community.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is central to all that we do. The actions set out in this section as well as those at an operational level not included in this Delivery Plan, demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement and take account of the wider Best Value focus on vision and leadership; governance and accountability; effective use of resources; partnerships and collaborative working; working with communities; sustainability; and fairness and equality.

Action Plan

The challenges identified in Section 2 and the key factors identified in Section 3 have informed P&T priorities for 2024/25. Appendix 1 sets out the action plan to address them. It also includes:

- performance indicators and targets that will enable progress to be monitored and reported to stakeholders
- strategic workforce actions to address workforce issues identified in the planning process; and
- strategic and/or service risks.

In relation to the latter, strategic risks represent the potential for the Council to take advantage of opportunities or fail to meet stated strategic objectives and those that require strategic leadership. Service risks relate to service delivery and represent the potential for impact on individual services, or the experience of those who work within the services, i.e. employees, partners, contractors and volunteers or service users and clients in receipt of the services provided. In identifying the relevant risks for 2024/25 and actions to mitigate them, the aim is to improve or maintain the current position (i.e. the current risk score) set out in the appendix.

4. Resources

Finance

People and Technology has a net revenue budget of £10.727m and a capital budget of £1.341m in 2023/24. A breakdown by section is set out below. We will make the best use of the resources available to deliver on key priority areas and secure external/match funding where this is possible.

Service Area	Gross Expenditure 2024/25 (£m)	Gross Income 2024/25 (£m)	Net Expenditure 2024/25 (£m)	Capital Budget 2024/25 (£m)
Transactional	2.920m	-0.023m	2.897m	0.000m
Strategic People & Change	0.943m	-0.064m	0.879m	0.046m
ICT	2.114m	-0.144m	1.970m	1.295m
Central Admin Support	5.462m	-0.480m	4.981m	0.000m
Total	11.438m	-0.711m	10.727m	1.341m

Employees

Employee Numbers

The headcount and full-time equivalent employees in each section (as of 31st March 2024) are as follows:

Service Area	Headcount	FTE
Transactional (part of Business Support)	25	21.49
People & Change (Strategic HR, H&S, Risk, Change, OD & Digital)	33	32.39
ICT	51	45.91
TOTAL	109	99.79

Absence in 2023/24

The quarterly absence statistics for People and Technology are shown below together with the Council average for the same periods for comparison. The figures for People and Technology have been lower than the Council average throughout 2023/24.

Absence in 2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Annual FTE days lost per FTE employee
P&T Service	0.27	0.98	1.75	1.56	2.93
COUNCIL WIDE TOTAL	3.41	3.02	4.64	4.81	12.91

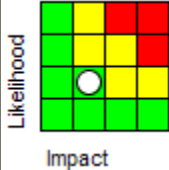
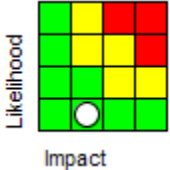
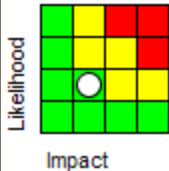
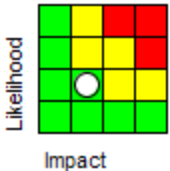
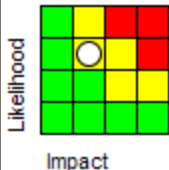
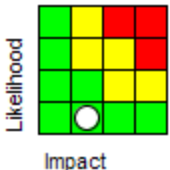
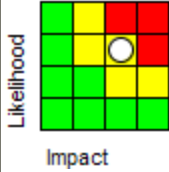
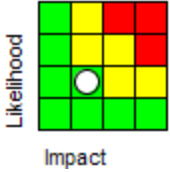
Appendix 1: Action Plan

	4. Our Council
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	Objective 10. Our workforce is resilient and skilled where digital technology supports service delivery for our residents
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Performance Indicator	2024/25 Target	Owner
Percentage of ICT helpdesk incidents fixed with half day of being logged.	65%	James Gallacher
% of our workforce who have declared a disability	2.2%	Alison McBride
% of our workforce who have stated they are LGBT	2.5%	Alison McBride
% of our workforce who are from a black minority ethnic group	1%	Alison McBride
Disability pay gap	10%	Alison McBride
The percentage of the highest paid 5% employees who are women	50%	Alison McBride
Gender pay gap	3%	Alison McBride
Percentage of Council employees who agree or strongly agree that in general, they feel valued in their role at WDC	75%	Alison McBride
% employee attendance improvement rate (teachers & local govt.)	1%	Alison McBride

Action	Due Date	Owner
Further secure the Council's technology infrastructure	31 Mar 2025	James Gallacher
Deliver fit for purpose bandwidth capacity to all Council locations	31 Mar 2025	James Gallacher
Enable an improved digital workplace experience for council employees	31 Mar 2025	James Gallacher
Coordinate ICT device replacement programme	31 Mar 2025	James Gallacher
Review and implement MS SharePoint and One Drive	31 Mar 2025	James Gallacher
Progress assurance and test plans for Service Plans	31 Mar 2025	Scot McFarlane
Progress and manage the Council's & HSPC's Business Continuity Process	31 Mar 2025	Scot McFarlane
Develop a framework for the Council's Power Resilience arrangements	31 Mar 2025	Scot McFarlane
Enhance/ expand digital skills champion roles	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride
Develop a plan to further mainstream digital transformation across the Council	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride
Develop and implement wellbeing, employee engagement, equality and learning and development plans to enable capabilities, improve resilience and promotion of a diverse workforce	31 Mar 2025	All Managers
Develop and implement employee life cycle plans in line with the People First Strategy to attract and retain the workforce	31 Mar 2025	All Managers
Develop and implement learning and development opportunities to improve capabilities and resilience within the workforce.	31 Mar 2025	All Managers
Implement service review process including role design, use of new technology and new ways of working to add resilience, address gaps, and establish opportunities for efficiencies	31 Mar 2025	All Managers

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Workforce Management System not fit for purpose	There is a risk that the WMS system is not fit-for-purpose thereby requiring manual workarounds restricting the level of automation impacting on efficiencies			Arun Menon
Challenges in protecting the Health and Safety of Employees and Others	Failure to meet the Council's duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and other people who might be affected by its business			Alison McBride
Complexities in ensuring an appropriately resourced and resilient workforce	Failure to ensure that there is an appropriately resourced and resilient workforce in place to meet future organisational needs, in effectively executing the Council's 2022-27 Strategic Plan.			Alison McBride
Threat of Cyber-attack	Data, systems and/or infrastructure are impacted as result of security attacks which are increasing in number at a time when this threat is already placing demands on resources to deliver increased levels of security controls.			James Gallacher

Ob Objective 11. Our Council is adaptable and focused on delivering best value for our residents

Action	Due Date	Owner
Implement statutory payroll changes	31 Mar 2025	Arun Menon
Undertake annual payroll audit	31 Mar 2025	Arun Menon
Implement revised team structure and service provision	31 Sept 2024	Arun Menon
Review and update FfF approach	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride
Maintain and monitor employee wellbeing, engagement and workforce planning.- next phase	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride
Review and enhance employee skills and learning programme	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride
Continue to embed sound H&S practice	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride
Implement improvements in recruitment life cycle processes	31 Mar 2025	Alison McBride

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Keeping abreast of developments in the innovative use of Information Technologies	Failure to keep pace with changing technology environment			James Gallacher