



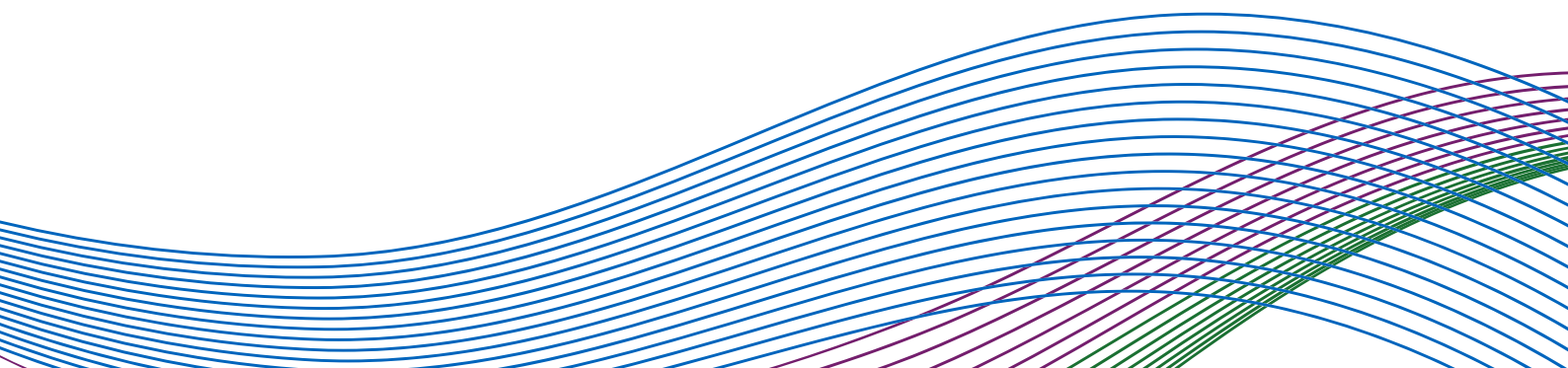
# **Sustainable Digital Public Services**

## Delivery Plan 2025-2028

November 2025

# Contents

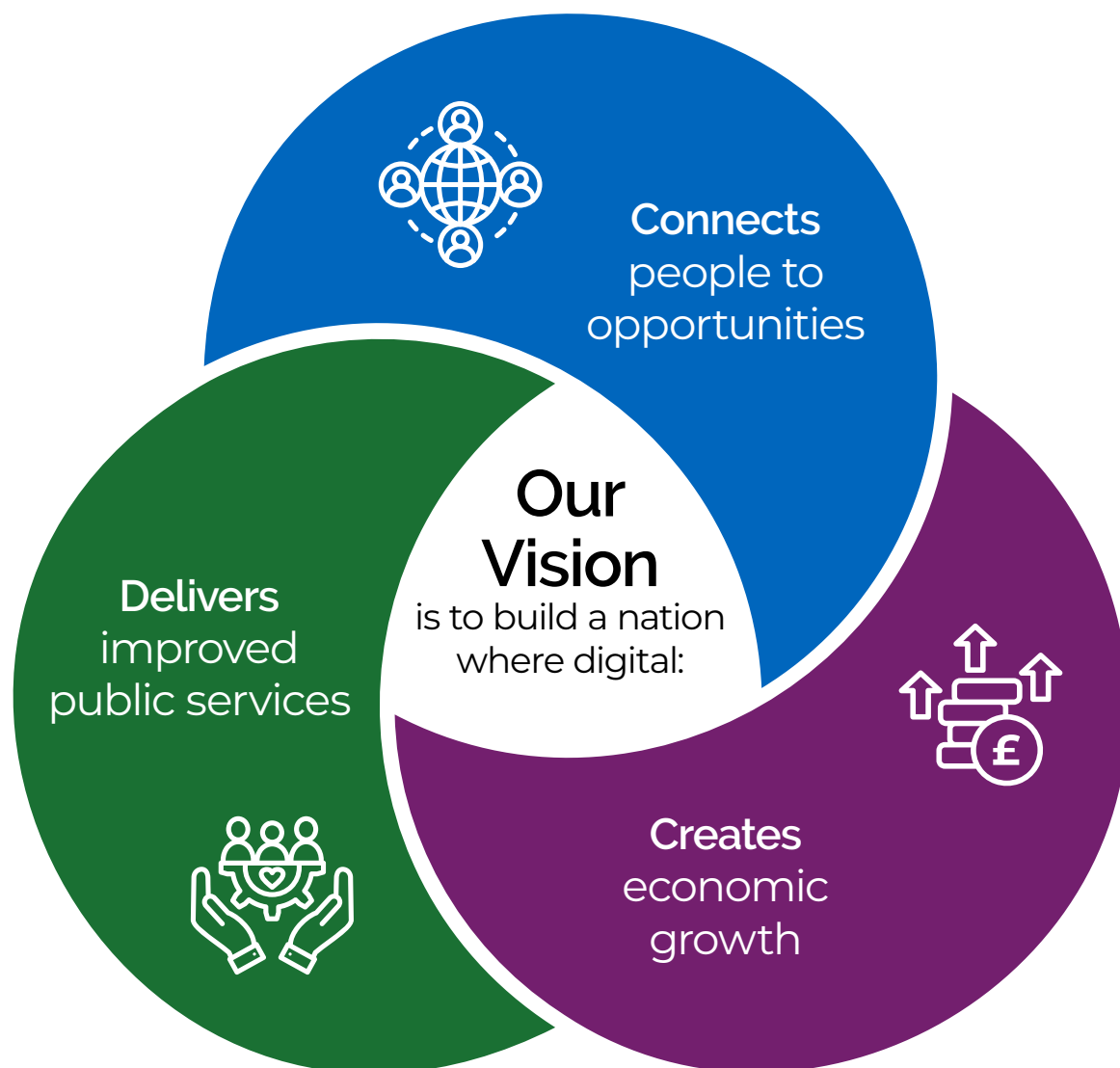
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# Introduction

## Digital Strategy for Scotland

The Digital Strategy for Scotland 2025 sets out the Scottish Government's and Local Government's joint vision.



The vision is supported by subject-specific delivery plans which explain how we will deliver the vision. The vision can be read here [Digital Strategy for Scotland – Our Vision](#)

## **Delivery plan**

This delivery plan sets out actions that will be taken by 2028 to deliver sustainable digital public services. The delivery plan explains why these actions are needed, when they will be delivered, and how progress will be measured. It will be overseen as appropriate by joint governance processes that bring together the Scottish Government and Local Authorities.

The plan will be regularly updated, so that it remains current. Case studies and successes will also be shared. We will publish an annual report to summarise our progress.

Reflecting the long-term nature of our vision, this delivery plan points to forthcoming actions beyond 2028. These will be given sharper definition in future updates.

## **Sustainable digital public services**

Public service reform in Scotland aims to create services that are efficient, person-centred, preventative, and delivered locally. This means that services are designed for people and communities, and not according to the way organisations are structured.

Digital solutions that are informed by quality data, are central to this, making services more efficient, improving the experience of people, empowering communities and supporting early intervention to improve lives.

## **Ambition for digital public services**

We want to see a Scotland where:

Digital innovation transforms Scotland's public services, making them smarter, faster, and fairer. By placing efficiency, high-quality customer service, and prevention at the core, where people have the confidence that public money is spent wisely and with clarity on how well services are performing, we can transform how our nation delivers public services and achieve better outcomes for everyone. At the same time, robust cyber security ensures everyone can trust and embrace digital services, confident their information is protected.

## **How we will deliver this**

We will achieve this by:

- developing public sector leadership, skills and capability for digital, data, cyber and innovation
- using data and technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), ethically to protect privacy, build trust, and reduce cyber risk
- delivering collaborative digital programmes and common digital solutions that improve public service efficiency, transform the user experience, and deliver better outcomes through the delivery of person-centred and preventative services
- implementing a formal governance programme to enable better joint decision-making, strategic alignment and transparency

## What we will do

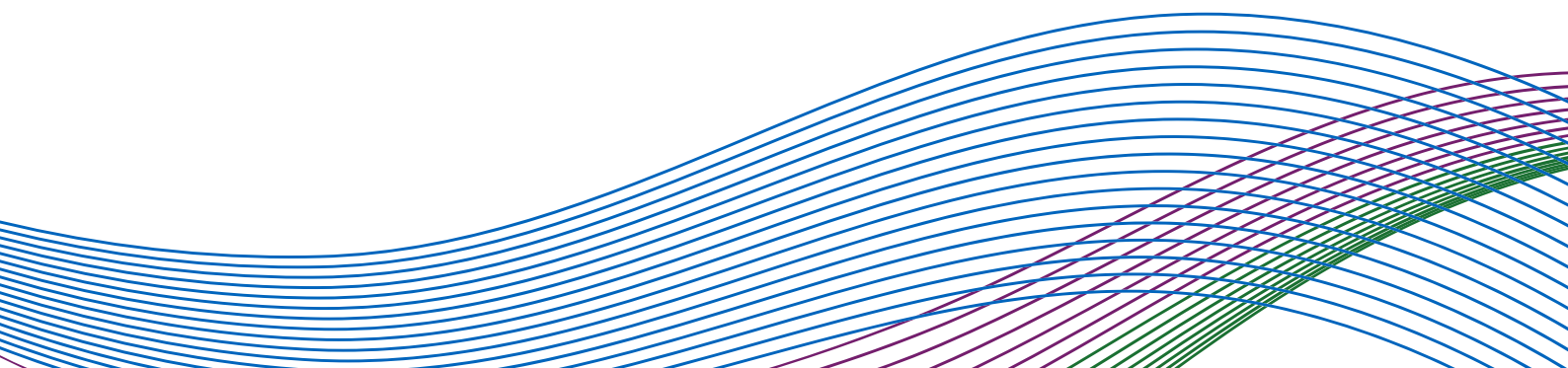
The following pages set out actions that Local Government and the Scottish Government will take between now and 2028. Actions that align to the 'Public Service Reform Strategy' are highlighted.

Actions are organised around the following themes:

- system leadership
- common approaches
- data
- public sector workforce and capability
- advanced technology and innovation
- cyber resilient services

## Public Service Reform Strategy

This ambition, and the actions to realise this, go hand-in-hand with the agenda set out in the Scottish Government's [Public Service Reform Strategy](#) to deliver effective public services that have a transformational impact on people's lives. The contribution and relevance of this action plan to the Public Service Reform Strategy, and vice versa, cannot be understated. We have highlighted the actions in this action plan that align to the Public Service Reform Strategy.



# 1. System Leadership

By improving how Government does business, the public sector can be better co-ordinated, joining up its efforts to avoid costly duplication. This coherence is vital to delivering digital services that are responsive to people's needs and make sense to service users.

Achieving greater transparency around digital spending will enable decision-making that delivers responsive, fairer, and impactful public services. This will assist us to make the best use of public money and target digital interventions where they are most beneficial.

## **Summary of deliverables 2025-2028**

### **To be delivered by the Scottish Government**

1.1 Digital spend control and prioritisation

### **To be delivered by Local Government**

1.2 Digital maturity in Local Government

## 1. System Leadership: deliverables

### Scottish Government Deliverables

The following are part of 'Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy – Delivering for Scotland (June 2025)':

#### 1.1 Digital spend control and prioritisation

By 2028, the Scottish Government will manage and control digital spending at a Government level to give visibility on total digital spend, and to help direct and leverage that spend in the most efficient way, reducing duplication or crossover, and ensuring efficient use and re-use of digital assets.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- the adoption of a common digital portfolio framework
- increased transparency of digital spend
- a shift from fragmented approaches to a coordinated, system-wide model

This approach will reduce duplication and embed reuse as standard practice. Investment in digital projects will be prioritised according to the potential to deliver the greatest improvements in the efficiency and quality of our public services and projects that deliver meaningful and measurable outcomes for the people of Scotland.

Sponsor: Yor Turner (Chief Operating Officer for Digital, Scottish Government)

## Local Government Deliverables

### 1.2 Digital maturity in Local Government

By 2028, the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government will ensure that all 32 Scottish councils are fully engaged with the enhanced digital maturity process, using an updated assessment tool. This will allow councils to benchmark their progress, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and prioritise targeted actions through clear improvement plans. These improvements will empower councils to assess their current capacity and capability to drive digital transformation and, where necessary, prioritise improvements, as well as identifying common challenges that might require a sector-wide approaches.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- the annual publication of digital maturity reports for each council, collaborative workshops to share best practice, and the integration of maturity findings into council digital strategies and improvement plans
- enhanced improvement planning to inform investment in skills, technology, and organisational change, ultimately boosting councils' ability to deliver high-quality secure digital services and respond to citizen needs more effectively
- regular engagement with the Scottish Cyber Coordination Centre (SC3) on vulnerability, threat intelligence and cyber maturity reporting, ensuring that Local Government realises the benefits from enhanced security collaboration

Sponsor: Sponsor: Thomas Glen (Chief Executive, Perth and Kinross Council)

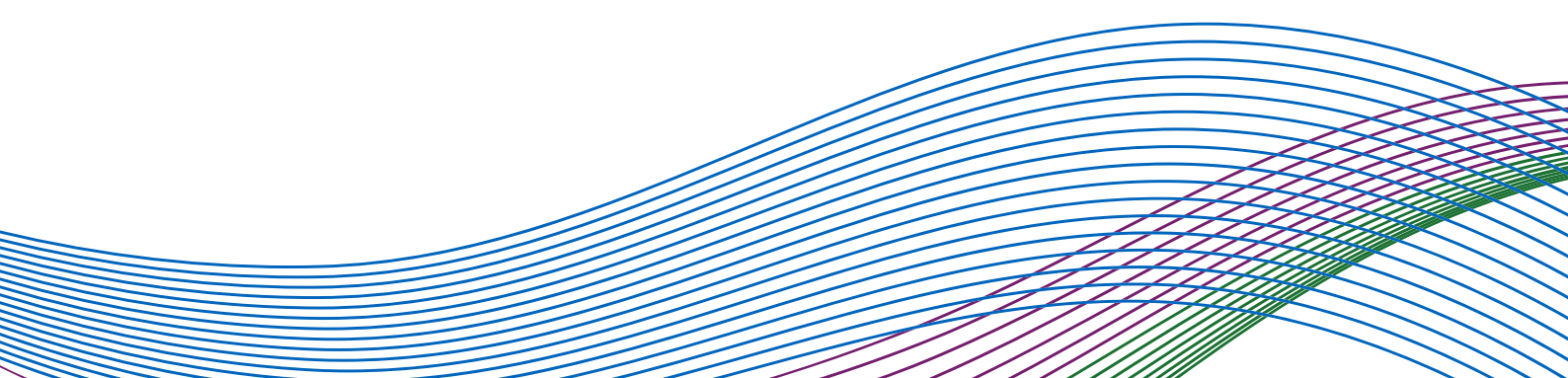
Senior Responsible Officer: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### What does delivery mean for people in Scotland?

Delivery of these system leadership actions will likely result in our public sector embarking on fewer digital projects overall – but we will be better able to prioritise this work to ensure best use of public money, delivering high quality and secure digital transformation and, as a result, meaningful improved outcomes for service users.

### System leadership: beyond 2028

The Scottish Government is exploring whether a single centralised budget for digital projects would be beneficial.





## 2. Common Approaches

By rolling out common digital infrastructure for re-use across the public sector, services can become better integrated, creating a better experience for users and saving significant public money.

Enabling public sector organisations to use what we know works, allows service providers to be confident that the services they offer are secure and trustworthy.

This does not mean that services are standardised to meet one set of needs. Through these initiatives we are developing the means for services to be more targeted, responsive to people's needs and easier to access.

### **Summary of deliverables 2025-2028**

#### **To be delivered jointly**

- 2.1 Public sector register of common solutions and common components
- 2.2 Personalised public services and the development of a public services app

#### **To be delivered by the Scottish Government**

- 2.3 Digital mailbox
- 2.4 Personalised public services
- 2.5 Reuse of common platforms and components
- 2.6 Digital licences
- 2.7 Digital development consents

#### **To be delivered by Local Government**

- 2.8 Common digital components
- 2.9 Common back-office systems
- 2.10 Common end-to-end customer experiences

## 2. Common Approaches: deliverables

### Joint deliverables

#### 2.1 Public sector register of common solutions and common components

By 2028, working collaboratively, the Scottish Government and Local Government will create a central public sector register of common solutions and common components. This will provide a definitive source of information about re-usable digital solutions in the public sector, allowing public bodies to understand what is available, how these work, and how they might re-use them.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see published resources such as a catalogue of services, components, architecture, and terms of use. We will use joint platforms like Once for Scotland to promote these resources.

Sponsor: Nia Lewis (Acting Deputy Director, Digital Services, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government) and Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

#### 2.2 Personalised public services and the development of a public services app

By 2028, the Scottish Government will have developed an app that lets users access government services on their phone or computer, just like they do with banking or shopping apps (see 2.5 below). We will work collaboratively with COSLA and individual Local Authorities to consider how they might adopt and make best use of this app.

Sponsor: Nia Lewis (Acting Deputy Director, Digital Services, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government) and Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### Scottish Government deliverables

The following are part of 'Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy – Delivering for Scotland (June 2025)':

#### 2.3 Digital mailbox

By 2028, the Scottish Government will deliver a new secure mailbox service and will have moved more correspondence onto digital channels.

As we progress with this initiative, you can expect the launch of the Mycare.scot application (co-created by COSLA and the Digital Health and Care Directorate within the Scottish Government) to which will be piloted from December 2025. This pilot will utilise the Scottish Government's new secure mailbox service, making it easier for people to interact with health and social care services.

We are also working with Rent Services Scotland, Food Standards Scotland, and Local Government on adopting the tool with future deliveries planned.

Sponsor: Isaac Smith (Deputy Director Digital Components and Infrastructure, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

## 2.4 Personalised public services

The Scottish Government will establish a common approach to digital channels so that people in Scotland are able to transact with public services. By 2026, the Scottish Government will deliver a pilot of a new app that will be integrated with other digital components, providing a gateway for people to access personalised public services.

This will offer Scottish citizens flexible, accessible, responsive, and personalised services; and will enable them to receive services, notifications, securely store and recall important documents on their mobile device.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see at least one service available by the end of 2026, with a pipeline of Scottish Government and public sector services ready to deliver through this new channel.

Sponsor: Nia Lewis (Acting Deputy Director, Digital Services, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

## 2.5 Reuse of common platforms and components

By 2028, the Scottish Government will have embedded a suite of common platforms and components across the public sector to reduce both duplication and the cost of service delivery. Common platforms will also increase the pace at which we can implement change and scale up services.

A vital component, currently in development, is ScotAccount. This is a secure and trustworthy mechanism by which the public can prove their identity and/or entitlement to a public service or benefit online. NHS Education for Scotland and Social Security Scotland are currently testing this service.

Another component is our common payments platform, ScotPayments. ScotPayments will standardise the way the public sector makes (and in the near future takes) payments to, and from, citizens and businesses. A live public beta launch will occur in late 2025/early 2026 and following this, the service will be made available for the wider Scottish public sector.

By 2026, we will also continue to move public sector workloads onto the the Scottish Government Cloud Platform Service, and develop additional features such as FinOps and GitHub to increase the efficiency of the platform. By 2027, we will achieve Cyber Essentials Plus certification and adhere to HMG Cyber Assessment Framework to offer increased assurances about the security of the service.

These common components are foundational for the development of personalised digital public services through the public services app (mentioned above at 2.2).

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see ScotAccount, ScotPayments and SG Cloud used in more services across the public sector.

Sponsor: Isaac Smith (Deputy Director Digital Components and Infrastructure, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

In addition to the above deliverables outlined in Scotland's 2025 'Public Service Reform Strategy' the Scottish Government will also deliver the following by 2028:

## **2.6 Digital licenses**

By 2028, the Scottish Government will have delivered an end-to-end digital solution for issuing digital licenses, permits, authorisations and certificates.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- an initial proof of concept tested with Food Standards Scotland, which will evidence the potential for all license issuing across the public sector to be built on the same components and service journeys
- following the successful proof of concept and roll-out as a live service our pipeline includes SQA, SDS, Education Scotland, Local Government, SEPA, Marine Scotland, Police Scotland (firearms licensing). We are proactively building our pipeline

Sponsor: Salvador Llopis-Quinn (Chief Digital Architect, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

## **2.7 Digital development consents**

By 2028, the Scottish Government will deliver a transformed digital service to apply for planning and building consents. This shared service will operate across all local and planning authorities in Scotland. The Scottish Government will work closely with Local Government on a phased development and delivery, enabling value to be realised early. Phase 1 is expected to be rolled out in Autumn 2026, with Phase 2 in 2027, and Phase 3 in 2028.

As we work to deliver this you can expect to see:

- Improved functionality, streamlined processes, and a better user experience. Phase 1 will transform the user journey for making applications, and will include a new way of paying, better guidance, and other improvements such as bulk file uploads and file naming conventions.
- Functionality introduced in Phases 2 and 3 will support Local Government efficiency and productivity improvements by delivering assessment ready applications.

Sponsor: Nia Lewis (Acting Deputy Director, Digital Services, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

## Local Government deliverables

### 2.8 Common digital components

By 2028, we will expand the adoption of shared digital components already available within Local Government, the Scottish Government, and the wider UK public sector. By enabling Local Authorities to share and reuse these digital solutions, we will reduce duplication and avoid unnecessary costs. This collaborative approach will deliver more consistent customer experiences across councils, making it easier for citizens to access Local Government services that align with the look and feel of applications used throughout the Scottish public sector.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- more consistent customer experiences across councils, making it simpler for residents to interact with Local Government services.

Senior Responsible Officer: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### 2.9 Common back-office systems

By 2028, Local Government will increase the sharing of common back-office solutions, building on the success of the shared telecare Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) solution, which already delivers consistent and efficient telecare support for vulnerable citizens and reduces technology overhead and duplication among councils. Comprehensive feasibility studies and business cases will assess shared digital approaches for housing, fleet, social work case management, security operations and licensing. These initiatives aim to support wider adoption of digital solutions that benefit both councils and communities.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- successful transition of councils to the shared telecare ARC platform
- documented operational savings and service improvements
- publication of feasibility study findings, business cases and recommendations
- launch of pilot projects in partnership with councils
- active engagement and consultation with stakeholders on shared solutions

Senior Responsible Officer: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

## 2.10 Common end-to-end customer experiences

By 2028, Local Government will work collaboratively to deliver common, end-to-end digital customer experiences for key Local Government services, ensuring that residents, businesses, and visitors can easily navigate and access seamless service journeys across Scotland. This will be particularly beneficial where customers (such as businesses) have requirements that span council boundaries.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- the introduction of a national visitor levy, which will serve as a flagship example, demonstrating how a uniform digital process can be designed and implemented across all Local Authorities
- this approach will provide a standardised digital pathway for those Local Authority areas that introduce a transitional visitor levy for guests to pay, councils to administer, and businesses to manage compliance, reducing administrative burden and improving public understanding
- reduction in manual processing and administrative overheads for councils
- adaptation of the end-to-end approach for other Scotland-wide services

Senior Responsible Officer: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

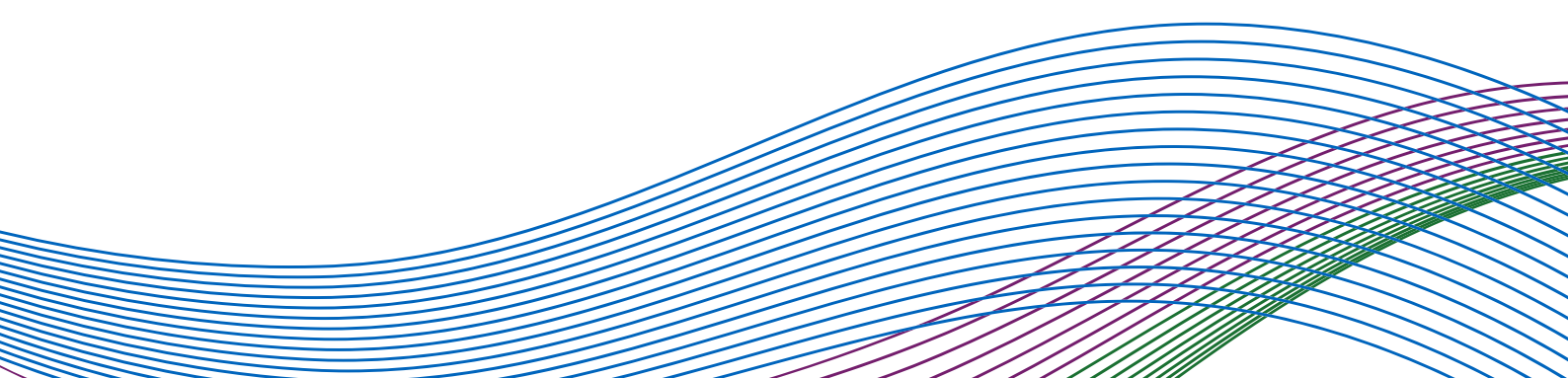
## What does delivery mean for people in Scotland?

Delivery of these common approaches commitments will result in a better, more consistent experience for people accessing public services online, regardless of where they live in Scotland. It will be easier to navigate across different services, and people will find these more responsive to their individual needs, while being assured that the public sector is working efficiently to make best use of public money.

## Common approaches: beyond 2028

Our components and services are already built with basic performance tracking and the ability to measure aspects of the user experience, such as time taken to perform a specific task, and failure rates.

However, collecting robust data about how users interact with digital government is easier once we are able to aggregate these individual components (or 'building blocks') into complete service journeys. This information will become available through the Public Services app. This will be a focus for the next iteration of the digital public services delivery plan, so that we can drive further improvements.



### 3. Data

Public sector data is a national asset and a key enabler of reform; every transaction in the public sector generates data and insights that can be used to develop services that are more targeted, personalised, and preventative. Central to this is the [vision for public sector data in Scotland](#), which sets a collective narrative and common direction for how data can drive innovation and meaningful change.

Making better use of public sector data is not merely a technical issue, but a strategic one, requiring cultural change and investment in skills. Efforts are already underway to enhance data sharing and management, as well as fostering data literacy in the public sector workforce to better drive innovation, especially in areas such as AI and emerging technologies.

Initiatives such as the development of a public sector data exchange and investments in geospatial datasets like Earth Observation (EO) and LiDAR are unlocking insights, supporting collaboration, and building a stronger data ecosystem which will support sustainable digital transformation across Scotland's public sector.

#### **Summary of deliverables 2025-2028**

##### **To be delivered jointly**

3.1 Collective leadership for data sharing

##### **To be delivered by the Scottish Government**

3.2 Building the maturity of data sharing

3.3 Sharing EO data

##### **To be delivered by Local Government**

3.4 Data interoperability in Local Government

3.5 Information governance in Local Government

3.6 Streamlining Local Government data return

## 3. Data: deliverables

### Joint deliverables

#### 3.1 Collective leadership for data sharing

By 2028, the Scottish Government and Local Government will deliver a more coordinated approach to data across the public sector. The key vehicle to support this will be a joint Local Government and the Scottish Government group that will align priorities, share tools and standards, and demonstrate how data can be used to improve public services.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- clear evidence of alignment with national digital priorities
- regular reporting of progress, impact, and lessons learned on individual deliverables
- adoption of shared tools, standards and approaches to data sharing, and on EO data
- identification and delivery of joint data projects that improve service outcomes
- increased data skills and capability across public sector teams

Sponsor: Tom Wilkinson (Chief Data Officer, Scottish Government) and Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### Scottish Government deliverables

The following are part of 'Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy – Delivering for Scotland (June 2025)':

#### 3.2 Building the maturity of data sharing

By 2028, the Scottish Government will make it easier to find data across the public sector via smart data cataloguing. We will do this by providing smart tools to map, find, and use trusted public sector data. We will ensure that ease of access to data does not compromise security, by developing simple and secure tools that allow pairs of organisations to safely share and reuse each other's data, supported by the adoption of data standards that enable seamless data exchange and integration. We will also build capability and confidence in data improvement by delivering two cohorts of public sector organisations through our Data Maturity Programme.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- public sector users consistently discovering and accessing trusted public sector datasets using smart catalogue tools, enabled by common approaches that support Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) data
- an improved understanding of data sharing needs with organisations successfully exchanging data through secure and simple tools
- delivery of two cohorts of the Data Maturity Programme with organisations demonstrating data improvements by 2028

Sponsor: Tom Wilkinson (Chief Data Officer, Scottish Government)



### 3.3 Sharing EO data

By 2028, the Scottish Government will ensure nationwide EO data can be accessed across the public sector. To enable this, complete nationwide LiDAR capture will occur by 2027, and we will launch a new dissemination platform to host and share EO data. We will release a suite of analysis-ready EO data products specifically tailored to Scottish public sector user needs - such as landcover mapping, flood risk maps, and urban planning layers. This data has the capability to be used to reduce the requirement to visually inspect the natural and built environment, reducing costs while supporting informed decision making. We will increase the awareness of the value EO data can bring, by encouraging organisations to strengthen their workforce's Geographic Information System (GIS) and data skills.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- nationwide EO data access through dissemination of the national LiDAR and satellite data to public sector users by 2028
- refined Geospatial Products with at least three user-driven EO products that are actively used in public sector decision-making
- skills and capacity building strengthened through the provision of GIS and EO data training and awareness initiatives to Scottish Public Sector staff

Sponsor: Tom Wilkinson (Chief Data Officer, Scottish Government)

## Local Government deliverables

### 3.4 Data interoperability in Local Government

By 2028, Local Government will further increase the sharing of common back-office solutions, building on the success of the shared telecare Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) platform. This solution already provides consistent and efficient telecare support for vulnerable citizens, while reducing technology overhead and duplication among councils. Comprehensive feasibility studies and business cases will be conducted to evaluate shared digital approaches for housing, fleet management, social work case management, security operations, and licensing. These initiatives are designed to encourage broader adoption of digital solutions that deliver tangible benefits to both councils and the communities they serve.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- councils successfully transitioning to the shared telecare ARC platform
- the development and use of common digital architecture across Local Government
- clear documentation of operational savings and service improvements
- publication of feasibility study findings, business cases, and recommendations
- launch of pilot projects in partnership with councils
- ongoing engagement and consultation with stakeholders on shared solutions

Senior Responsible Officer: Colin Birchenall (Chief Technology Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### 3.5 Information governance in Local Government

By 2028, Local Government will work collaboratively with partners to establish a consistent and coordinated approach to information governance across Local Government, with health and care serving as an initial catalyst for change. The primary focus is on supporting all areas of Local Government to develop robust frameworks and policies that ensure high standards of data integrity, security, and regulatory compliance. This unified approach will underpin more effective and efficient public services, laying the foundation for a resilient and innovative digital ecosystem across Scotland's Local Government sector. It enables easier data sharing and collaboration, reduces inconsistencies and duplication, and ensures all councils meet the same standards for security and compliance. This collective approach also streamlines processes, saves time and resources, and builds greater public trust through clear and consistent handling of information sector wide.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- standardised procedures, templates, and clear governance frameworks that will ensure consistent adoption and maintenance of data standards across Local Authorities, promoting transparency and accountability.

Senior Responsible Officer: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### 3.6 Streamlining Local Government data returns

By 2028, Local Government will have worked in partnership with statutory bodies and the Scottish Government to enhance the management and coordination of data returns for statistical analysis. This collaboration will focus on establishing streamlined, standardised processes for submitting data, ensuring greater accuracy, timeliness, and compliance with regulatory requirements. By working together, Local Government and statutory bodies will reduce duplication, minimise administrative burden, and improve the quality and accessibility of data for informed decision-making. This coordinated approach will support more effective public service delivery and foster a data driven culture across Scotland's Local Government sector.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

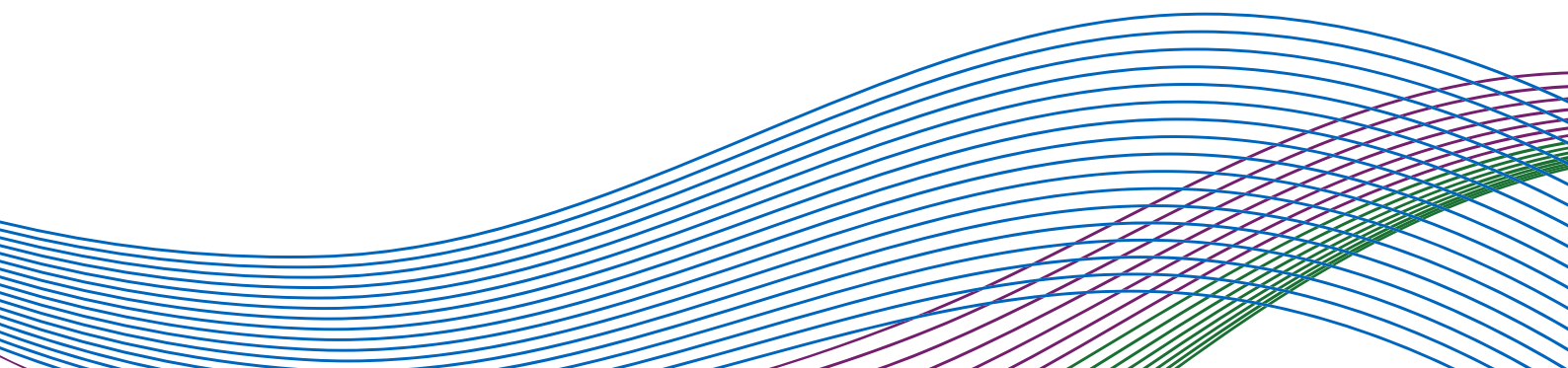
- leveraging of prior research to employ digital and data tools that enhance the efficiency and accuracy of compiling the Local Government Benchmarking Framework. This will enable Scottish councils to effectively measure and compare service performance
- unified data return protocols, with regular reporting against agreed standards, fewer instances of data errors or delays, and clear evidence of improved data-driven insights to support policy and service improvements

Sponsor: Jane O'Donnell (Chief Executive, COSLA, Kenneth Lowrie, Chief Executive, Falkirk Council)

Senior Responsible Officers: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### **What does delivery mean for people in Scotland?**

By strengthening data sharing across the public sector, people can expect to provide their details once, making it quicker and easier to access digital public services. With stronger frameworks governing how data is used and shared, citizens can be assured that the public sector is working both ethically and efficiently, to design and deliver the services they need.



## 4. Public Sector Workforce and Capability

To deliver targeted, personalised and preventative public services that are designed around the needs of those who use them, our workforce must be confident in embracing new ways of working, using emerging technology, and applying data-informed insights.

The Digital Capability Advisory Group (co-chaired by the Scottish Government and the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government) aims to realise this by sharing knowledge across organisations and strengthening collaboration to improve digital and data capability across the public sector.

The Scottish Digital Academy, acting as the public sector centre of excellence for digital capability, will further efforts through the development of an integrated service offer designed to develop the skills to deliver modern, secure, user-centred services, adopt common digital solutions, and strengthen leadership capability.

### **Summary of deliverables 2025-2028**

#### **To be delivered jointly**

4.1 Developing digital skills across the public sector

#### **To be delivered by the Scottish Government**

4.2 Strengthening digital skills and supporting common solutions

#### **To be delivered by Local Government**

4.3 Digital skills through the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government

## 4. Public Sector Workforce and Capability: deliverables

### Joint deliverables

#### 4.1 Developing digital skills across the public sector

By 2028, the public sector will adopt a shared approach to using Open Educational Resources (OER) to support digital skills and Agile ways of working. These freely available learning materials will help organisations avoid duplicating effort and reduce training costs. By sharing resources, teams across different organisations can work together more effectively, build skills faster, and ensure a consistent approach to learning. OER also promotes fairness and transparency, making knowledge and best practice available to everyone. This helps create a more skilled and flexible workforce, while ensuring public money is spent wisely. To support this, learning materials will use clear, neutral language that works across different organisations.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- easier access to training in the public sector, with high-quality learning available to everyone, regardless of role or organisation. Shared materials will help set common standards and reduce duplication, making learning more efficient and cost-effective
- targeted support for data skills in the public sector, including better understanding of data use and management, and practical ways to respond to new technologies like AI

Sponsor: Yor Turner (Chief Operating Officer for Digital, Scottish Government) and Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Local Government).

### Scottish Government deliverables

The following are part of 'Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy – Delivering for Scotland (June 2025)':

#### 4.2 Strengthening digital skills and supporting common solutions

The Scottish Government will accelerate efforts to build a digitally confident public sector workforce through the Scottish Digital Academy. A key focus will be on leadership and transformation, helping leaders gain the skills they need to guide change, build strong digital teams, and deliver better services using shared digital solutions. Support will also be provided for organisations to grow their digital, data, and technology capabilities. This includes working with key stakeholders to deliver greater standardisation of job profiles that can be aligned across organisations, to help attract and develop talent.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- a capability toolkit to help public sector organisations assess their readiness for digital transformation
- an updated professional learning offer designed to help public sector leaders lead change effectively
- new leadership and transformation prospectuses, outlining key learning pathways and development opportunities
- a national model for professional learning, setting a clear standard for digital skills development and procurement across the public sector
- a set of standardised job profiles for roles in digital and data, helping to build clarity and consistency in recruitment and career development

Sponsor: Yor Turner (Chief Operating Officer for Digital, Scottish Government)

## **Local Government deliverables**

### **4.3 Digital skills through the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government**

By 2028, COSLA, in partnership with the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government, will streamline the delivery and accessibility of professional learning across all Local Authorities. The goal is to unify and centralise digital skills development by leveraging modern learning platforms, conducting digital maturity assessments, and developing a robust leadership ecosystem through coaching and mentoring.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- Stronger links to digital health and care training platforms
- increased resource sharing between Local Authorities and NHS Scotland
- expanded opportunities for leadership development and engagement

Sponsor: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

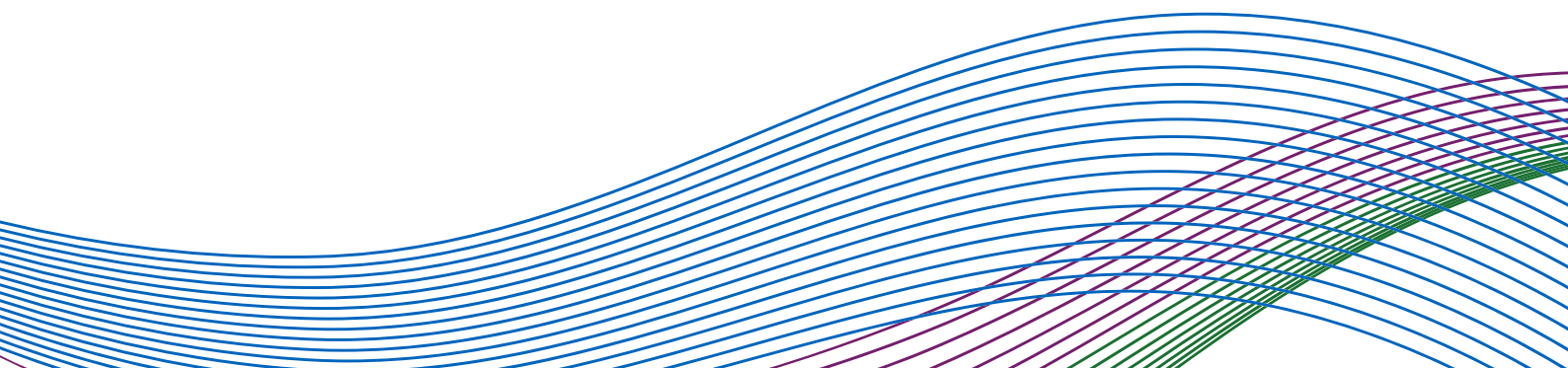
## **What does delivery mean for people in Scotland?**

A digitally skilled public sector work force is vital to ensure we design and deliver services which are beneficial to people across Scotland. Therefore, skills development will be more focused and targeted on where it is most needed. For those who work in the Scottish public sector, leaders and delivery teams will be able to acquire the skills they need to evaluate, design, build and maintain secure and resilient digital public services, to better serve our citizens.

## **Public sector workforce and capability: beyond 2028**

It is vital to understand what types of professional learning and training are being procured across the public sector, and at what value. By doing so, we can reduce duplication, pool effort, and strengthen collaborative procurement at scale. This will save money and, more importantly, create opportunities for greater impact.

Beyond 2028 we will develop and refine a common approach to procurement across the public sector. This will enable a clearer understanding of where industry and third-party expertise can best support the development of digital skills and capability.



## 5. Advanced Technology and Innovation

Digital innovation makes our public services better, faster and fairer. In a climate where public sector budgets are under pressure and complex societal problems have resulted in a rising demand for services, digital transformation and innovation are essential.

It is important that we coordinate our efforts to better understand how rapid developments in AI can fairly deliver efficiencies and support public sector transformation; dramatically speeding up repetitive tasks and freeing staff time for the novel problem solving that people do best. Supporting best practice in the development and use of AI and sharing information and data will be central to driving innovation.

CivTech, the Scottish Government's innovation programme, specialises in co-producing solutions to public sector problems. It remains instrumental in bringing the public sector, private sector, and third sector together to create digital solutions as quickly and effectively as possible. Regular launches of new CivTech challenges will accelerate ideas, taking these from inspiration to activation.

It is only through building a culture of innovation, that we can transform public service delivery and the lives of the people of Scotland.

### **Summary of deliverables 2025-2028**

#### **To be delivered jointly**

5.1 Collective leadership

#### **To be delivered by the Scottish Government**

5.2 Ethical adoption of AI

5.3 Piloting AI

5.4 CivTech innovation programme

#### **To be delivered by Local Government**

5.5 'Internet of Things' (IoT) innovation

5.6 AI innovation and collaboration



## 5. Advanced Technology and Innovation: deliverables

### Joint deliverables

#### 5.1 Collective leadership

By 2028, we will ensure the public sector is better aligned and able to navigate the opportunities of advanced technology. We will strategically collaborate to maximise the benefits and adoption of AI across the public sector in an ethical way and support the public's understanding of how AI is being used in government.

Joint initiatives could focus on enhancing public services through AI-driven solutions, such as predictive analytics for healthcare, smart infrastructure management, and personalised education programmes. Additionally, this may involve fostering a culture that supports innovation through training programmes and pilot projects, to accelerate AI adoption across various sectors.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see the establishment of a public sector working group that will facilitate collaboration on AI adoption and ethics in government.

Sponsor: Eilidh McLaughlin (Deputy Director, Digital Ethics, Inclusion and Assurance Digital Directorate, Scottish Government) and Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### Scottish Government deliverables

#### 5.2 Ethical adoption of AI

Since the publication of the 2021 digital strategy, the Scottish Government has undertaken a range of public and expert led engagements to develop an ethical approach to AI. As part of this, the work of the Scottish AI Alliance has helped to raise awareness of ethical AI practice. Key to future success will be the development of capacity and a stronger understanding of AI across Scottish public sector workforces, accompanied by clear guidance on ethical approaches. The AI Register and cross-public sector knowledge sharing will help underpin this approach.

By 2026, the Scottish Government will develop an ethical framework on AI. This will bring together a library of frameworks that can be used according to the needs of individual public sector organisations, and which will provide ethical assurance and build public trust.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- a clear policy statement on the ethical use of AI in the public sector and continued use of the AI Register
- a holistic digital ethics approach developed and promoted, together with the continuation of developing understanding of new and existing use of AI in the Scottish public sector

Sponsor: Eilidh McLaughlin (Deputy Director, Digital Ethics, Inclusion and Assurance Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

The following are part of 'Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy – Delivering for Scotland (June 2025)':

### **5.3 Piloting AI**

By 2028, we will identify and pilot opportunities to use AI in public service operations to deliver efficiencies, such as predicting demand, streamlining administrative tasks, monitoring outcomes for prevention and targeting interventions.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see ethical and innovative development of AI in specific public services.

Sponsor: Tom Wilkinson (Chief Data Officer, Scottish Government)

### **5.4 CivTech innovation programme**

By 2028, the Scottish Government expects to invest up to £16 million to support the development of solutions to around 24 CivTech challenges. CivTech's mission is to drive daring and innovation in the public sector by collaboratively solving challenges to make people's lives better, and in doing so creating generations of high growth potential, sustainable businesses.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- innovative new solutions to public sector challenges supporting public sector reform and other priorities
- embedding a culture of innovation and the entrepreneurial mindset in the Scottish Government and public sector
- evidence on the impact CivTech generated innovations are having on the public sector and wider economy, such as the number of new jobs created in Scotland as a result of CivTech solutions
- new companies continuing to be established in Scotland

Sponsor: Mark Elliott (Head, CivTech Division Head, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

## **Local Government deliverables**

### **5.5 'Internet of Things' innovation**

By 2028, Local Government will adopt a collaborative approach to developing and implementing 'Internet of Things' (IoT) solutions across health and social care, housing, property estates, and environmental sustainability. This will involve establishing effective processes, partnerships, and frameworks to enable the sharing and scaling of innovation. It will be supported by evidence-based investment and funding strategies. Local Government will use this approach to deliver a targeted innovation project for energy management across council property estates, developing a robust business case to enable the scaling of these solutions.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- deployment of smart energy management systems using IoT devices across council property estates, enabling real-time monitoring and data-driven optimisation of energy use
- expansion of IoT solutions in health and social care, housing, and environmental sustainability, leading to improved service delivery through enhanced connectivity, automation, and evidence-based decision-making

Sponsor: Colin Birchenall (Chief Technology Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government).

## 5.6 AI innovation and collaboration

By 2028, Local Government will establish comprehensive policy and strategy frameworks to guide the collaborative development of AI solutions within the public sector. This will be supported by ongoing capability building to ensure that staff possess the digital skills and confidence to fully engage with AI technologies. Through structured partnerships and co-design approaches, Local Government will deliver innovative AI programmes, piloting and scaling successful projects across multiple services. All initiatives will be underpinned by rigorous technical assurance processes, ensuring that AI solutions are secure, interoperable, and deliver measurable value in full alignment with data governance and regulatory standards.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- development of a national AI governance framework aligned to public sector values, to support councils in creating local policies, and promote sector-wide standards through the Generative AI Framework and collaborative roundtables
- establishment of a Technical Assurance Group, to share risk and governance templates, and maintain a national AI Registry to monitor responsible AI use
- coordination of shared pilots and proof-of-concepts, creation of a unified procurement framework, and promotion of the reuse of successful AI tools to help create common platforms to maximise efficiency whilst reducing costs
- building Local Government Sector AI capability through training, peer learning, and inclusive design practices, while addressing challenges like shadow AI and public trust through citizen engagement and awareness campaigns

Sponsor: Martyn Wallace (Chief Digital Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

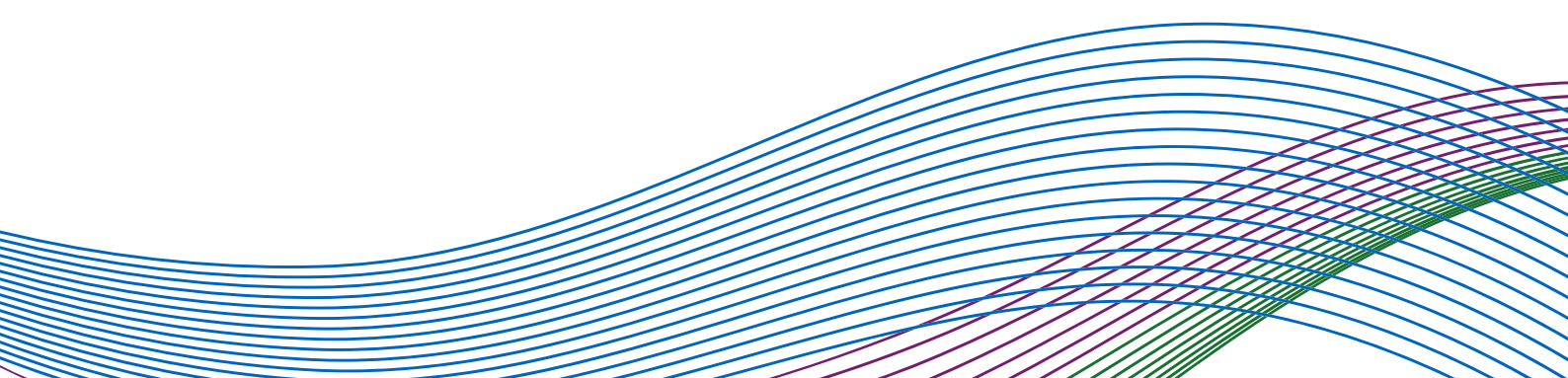
### **What will this mean for people in Scotland?**

Innovation, AI and advanced technologies will transform public service delivery in profound and measurable ways. Innovators, entrepreneurs, and businesses in Scotland will continue to be supported as CivTech provides them with unprecedented routes to developing products the public sector needs. The public sector will be able to collaborate and innovate in a cost-effective environment to co-produce solutions to organisational problems.

### **Innovation and AI: beyond 2028**

Beyond 2028, we will be considering jointly, how to maximise consistency across public sector procurement requirements in terms of AI and advanced technology, taking steps to re-use to minimise duplication.

CivTech will continue to explore how it can fully support the public sector and how innovation can be capitalised on to deliver good quality outcomes.



## 6. Cyber Resilient Services

Scotland's increasing reliance on digital technologies has brought significant benefits to public service delivery, but it has also expanded the cyber threat landscape.

Emerging technologies, geopolitical tensions and the rise of ransomware and cyber-crime-as-a-service have made attacks more frequent and complex. Public services, including Local Government, face growing risks to data, infrastructure and continuity, requiring a more coordinated and proactive approach to cyber resilience.

The refreshed [Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland](#) sets out a national approach to strengthening cyber resilience across public services. Local Government is a key focus, with the framework emphasising the need for secure-by-design systems, improved incident response coordination, and stronger leadership on cyber risk. Recent attacks on councils and public infrastructure highlight the urgency of embedding cyber resilience into service delivery and governance to protect communities and maintain trust.

### Summary of deliverables 2025-2028

#### To be delivered jointly

6.1 Regular cyber security exercising across the public sector technology landscape

6.2 Delivery of the 'Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland 2025-2030'

#### To be delivered by the Scottish Government

6.3 Enhanced cyber security coordination and service delivery

6.4 Development of a Cyber Observatory to provide a clearer picture of cyber maturity across the public sector

#### To be delivered by Local Government

6.5 Engage and progress the priorities from the 'Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland 2025-2030'

## 6. Cyber Resilient Services: deliverables

### Joint Deliverables

#### 6.1 Regular cyber security exercising across the public sector technology landscape

By 2028, the Scottish Government will have expanded existing exercising services, including tools and training programmes, to enable all Local Authorities to regularly undertake valuable and actionable incident response exercises. These exercises will test and validate organisational and operational response processes against a wide range of potential incidents.

Beyond the Scottish Government's existing cyber exercising cadre, as we work to deliver this you can expect to see an increase in the frequency and range of exercises being undertaken both by Local Authorities individually, and as facilitated events led by the Scottish Government and the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government.

#### 6.2 Delivery of the 'Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland'

By 2028, the Scottish Government in collaboration with Local Government will have developed and implemented sector-specific action plans that strengthen cyber resilience across public services in support of the Strategic Framework. These plans will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain responsive to emerging threats and aligned with national priorities.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- coordinated leadership and governance across national and local levels
- clear accountability for cyber risk embedded in public service planning
- shared access to threat intelligence, incident response protocols and best practice
- support for Local Authorities to assess and improve their cyber maturity
- investment in workforce development, including training and professional standards
- integration of cyber resilience into digital transformation programmes
- ongoing collaboration through the Public Sector Cyber Resilience Network

Sponsor: Alan Gray (Deputy Director, National Cyber Security and Resilience, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government) and David Ritchie (Chief Information Security Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

## Scottish Government Deliverables

### 6.3 Enhanced cyber security coordination and service delivery

By 2028, the Scottish Cyber Coordination Centre (SC3) will have completed delivery of the SC3 Strategic Plan, providing a range of services and support to Local Government and the wider public sector in support of the 'Scottish Government's Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland'.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- data-driven threat and vulnerability intelligence shared across the public sector on current and emerging cyber security issues
- increased preparedness and resilience against cyber incidents across the public sector, backed by robust and well-tested response plans
- increased adoption of appropriate cyber assurance standards and operational good practices across the public sector
- continued delivery of robust incident response support for organisations, with SC3 leading on multi-agency coordination and support efforts for major public sector cyber incidents, including victim support, specialist technical services, and ministerial engagement

### 6.4 The Cyber Observatory

The Scottish Government is committed to strengthening cyber resilience through improved data, insight and reporting. Central to this is the development of the Cyber Observatory, a national capability led by the SC3. The Observatory will provide a clearer picture of cyber maturity across the public sector, enabling more targeted support, better risk management and informed decision making.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- enhanced reporting on public sector cyber maturity and risk posture
- a central portal for public bodies to engage with SC3 services
- automated data collection and analysis to support strategic planning
- improved visibility of vulnerabilities and response readiness
- evidence-based evaluation of cyber resilience initiatives

Sponsor: Alan Gray (Deputy Director for National Cyber Security and Resilience, Digital Directorate, Scottish Government)

## Local Government Deliverables

### 6.5 Engage and progress the priorities from the ‘Strategic Framework for a Cyber Resilient Scotland 2025-2030’

By 2028, with the support of COSLA and the Digital Office, Local Government will have implemented the priority actions and adopted the detailed action plans where appropriate. The primary focus will be on fulfilling the vision of the Framework that Scotland thrives by being a digitally secure and resilient nation.

As we work to deliver this, you can expect to see:

- workforce strengthened by improved workplace culture and awareness
- exercises being delivered at all levels of Local Government both internally and with support from the Digital Office
- increased cyber maturity as measured by the Scottish Government Cyber Security Assessment and Cyber Assessment Framework
- the implementation of fundamental cyber hygiene such as MFA across all platforms

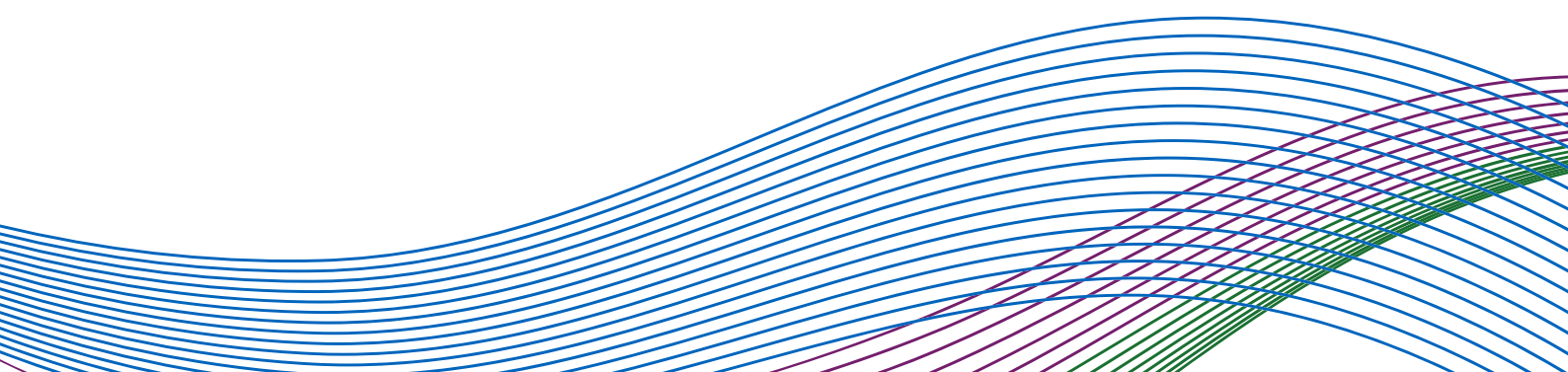
Sponsor: David Ritchie (Chief Information Security Officer, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government)

### What does delivery mean for people in Scotland?

In today’s landscape, it’s not a matter of if a cyber incident will occur, but when. Delivery of these actions will proactively address this threat to reduce the risk of disruptive attacks and ensure continuity. This will provide increased protection of citizens’ personal data, more reliable access to services, and greater confidence in the digital systems that underpin daily life, and a public sector that’s better equipped to serve communities in an increasingly digital world. Ultimately, it’s about safeguarding trust and enabling progress.

### Cyber resilient services: beyond 2028

From 2028 onwards, Scotland’s cyber resilience efforts will shift from scaling to sustaining maturity across sectors. The Cyber Observatory will provide deeper insights into public sector cyber posture, enabling more targeted interventions. Cross-sector collaboration will continue to strengthen incident response and innovation, while workforce development will focus on closing persistent skills gaps and embedding professional standards. Cyber resilience will be mainstreamed into business continuity planning, ensuring that public services remain secure, trusted and future-ready in an evolving threat landscape.

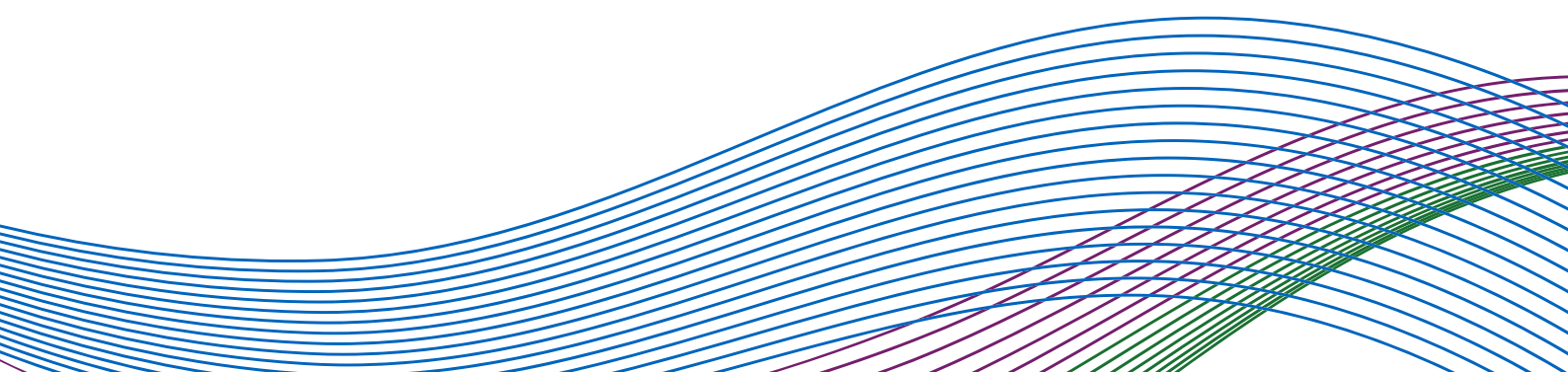




## Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>AI Register</b>	The <a href="#">Scottish AI Register</a> provides information on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems in use or in development within the Scottish public sector. Using the Register, you can get to know the basics of those AI systems, or examine them in more detail, based on your own interests.
<b>Cybercrime-as-a-Service (CaaS)</b>	A criminal business model where cybercriminals offer tools, infrastructure, and expertise for hire, enabling anyone—even with little technical skill—to launch cyberattacks.
<b>Cyber Essentials Plus</b>	<p><a href="#">Cyber Essentials</a> is a Government-backed certification scheme that helps keep an organisation's and customers' data safe from cyber-attacks.</p> <p><a href="#">Cyber Essentials Plus</a> is an expansion upon the "Cyber Essentials Verified Self-Assessment" which includes an audit of an organisations IT systems.</p>
<b>Cyber Resilience</b>	Strong protection against online threats and attacks.
<b>Development Consents</b>	Approvals needed for construction or land use projects.
<b>Digital Components</b>	Software or technical systems created once and reused many times that help build better services, more joined up services that are quicker
<b>Digital Licences</b>	Online permits for things like fishing, building, or pyrotechnics.
<b>Digital Mailbox</b>	A secure inbox for receiving messages from government and public services.
<b>Digital Maturity</b>	How ready and capable an organisation is to use digital technology effectively.
<b>Digital Spend Control</b>	Tracking and managing how money is spent on digital projects.
<b>Ethical AI Framework</b>	Guidelines to make sure AI is used fairly and responsibly.
<b>FinOps (Financial Operations)</b>	Tools and practices that help organisations manage Cloud and digital spending wisely.
<b>GitHub</b>	A web-based platform for collaborative software development that uses Git for version control, allowing developers to store, manage, and track changes to their code.
<b>HMG Cyber Assessment</b>	The UK Government's structured framework for evaluating and improving cyber security resilience across critical sectors.

Term	Definition
<b>Information Governance (IG)</b>	The strategic framework that organizations use to manage, protect, and maximize the value of their information while minimizing risks and costs.
<b>Internet of Things (IoT)</b>	A network of physical objects—such as devices, vehicles, appliances, and sensors—that are embedded with software and connectivity, enabling them to collect, exchange, and act on data without requiring direct human intervention.
<b>Interoperability</b>	The ability of different systems to work together and share information safely.
<b>LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging)</b>	A remote sensing technology that uses laser pulses to measure distances and create precise 3D maps of objects, surfaces, and environments.
<b>Low Earth Observation Satellite</b>	A satellite that orbits in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), typically between 160 km and 2,000 km above Earth's surface specifically designed to monitor and collect data about the planet.
<b>Public Services App</b>	An app that lets people access government services on their phone or computer.
<b>Ransomware</b>	A type of malicious software (malware) that blocks access to a victim's files or systems—usually by encrypting them—and demands payment (a ransom) to restore access.
<b>SC3 (Scottish Cyber Coordination Centre)</b>	A national centre that co-ordinates work to help public services stay safe online.
<b>ScotAccount</b>	A secure digital ID that lets people access multiple public services in Scotland with one login.
<b>ScotPayments</b>	A system that helps people make and receive payments for public services in Scotland.



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