



IT Strategy (2016-2018)

The Vision

(document #1 of 2)





Introduction

The latest ICT Strategy lies within a very uncertain period for local government. Increased financial pressure will continue to be a large influence on the Council's plans for Service provision, and is likely to surpass the life of this strategy.

All Council services depend on ICT systems in some way. In some cases, this will be obvious and will be directly used to provide Services to the public, and in other cases it will be less visible and will play a supportive role behind the scenes. However, what's clear is, when it is used correctly, ICT is a critical tool and an enabler when it comes to improving services and reducing the costs of service provision. This strategy builds on the success of the previous strategy, but rather than placing the technology at the heart of the strategy, it uses principles and themes to ensure that the business leads the strategy and the technology provided to support this. A consultation has been held with the IT Governance Board and IT Service staff in preparation of the Strategy.

The ITC Strategy forms the Council's general ICT requirements, while supporting the work of delivering some of its strategic aims:

- **Putting the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do**
- **Improving engagement with communities on the care challenge**
- **Improving integrated working focusing on what matters for individuals**
- **Preparing the care workforce to meet the new way of working**
- **Promoting the use of the Welsh language in Gwynedd**
- **Ensuring a balanced sustainable budget for the future**

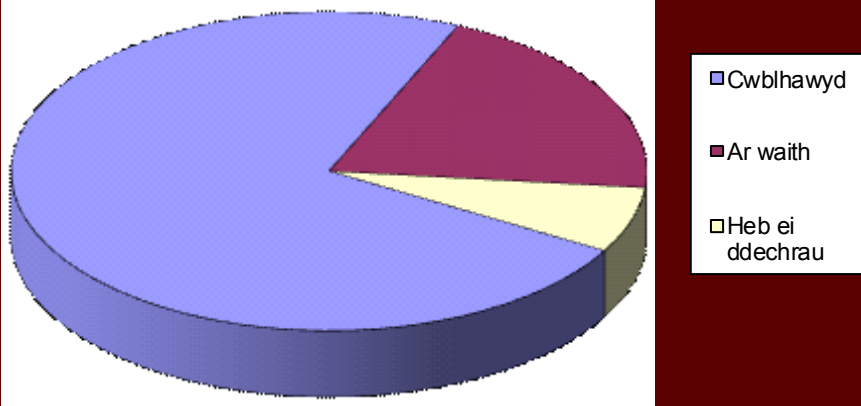


The success of the previous strategy

Amongst the 48 projects noted in the previous strategy, 40 have been completed, six are ongoing and two have not yet been commenced. The ongoing ones are expected to be completed by the end of 2014/15 and the two that have not yet been commenced need to be re-assessed. In addition, other strategic projects which were not originally identified in the previous strategy have been completed in the same period. This success not only provides a basis for service provision and strategic ICT projects for the future, it also instills much confidence in the Council's ability to provide its ICT programme as projected, while acknowledging the pressure this places on the ICT service itself. This confidence is further supported given the large number of specific service projects which have also been completed within this period.

48 tasks identified in the Strategy

- 40 completed
- 6 ongoing
- 2 not yet commenced





Challenges and Principles

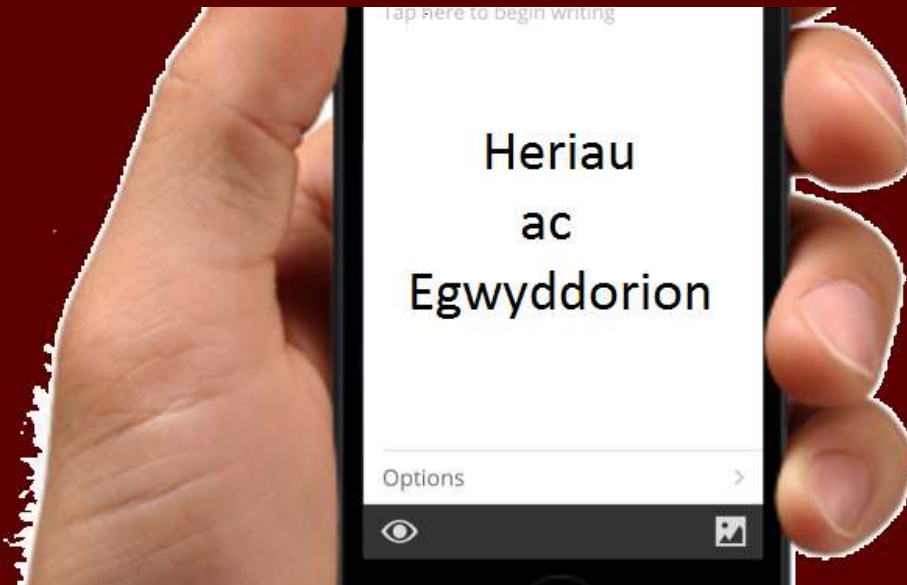
Many challenges are facing us as a Council, with prominent financial pressure affecting every aspect of the Council's activities. Due to this, efficiency, affordable investment and maximising the use of current assets are factors which will be considered when introducing initiatives associated with technology.

Principle 1 Technology and its supportive department should be flexible to meet Ffordd Gwynedd challenges.

Principle 2 Staff using technology should have the accurate technology to facilitate their work and appropriate skills to use the technology effectively.

Principle 3 Any change or review presented to a service needs to consider offering a digital channel as a method of introducing the public to the service. Any new system introduced will be expected to offer a digital channel to make the service more accesible to the public.





Principle 4 The current IT assets will be reviewed, rationalised and exploited as much as possible to make the best possible use and to avoid wasting.

Principle 5 IT patterns and aspirations which become apparent across a range of services should be treated as a corporate solution, or cross-authority/agency if appropriate.

Principle 6 Information technology should be flexible and secure, an enabler to delivering effective services, in an efficient manner. Technology, or a lack thereof, should not be a barrier.



Themes of the Strategy

The following themes evaluate how we will deal with the principles and touch on how the service will evolve to meet future challenges.

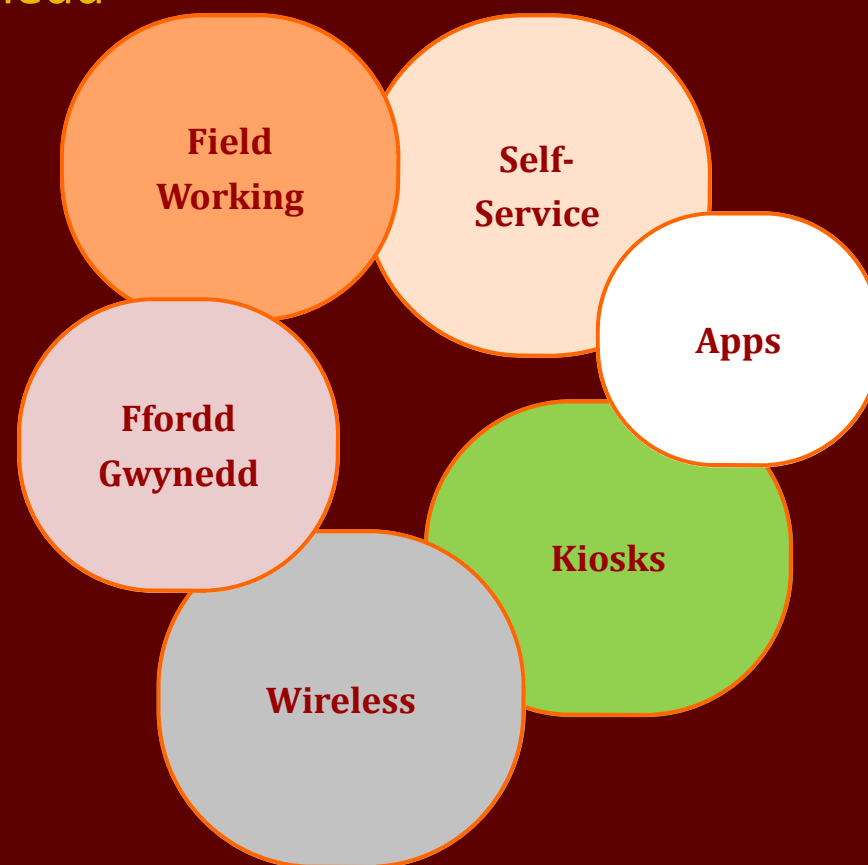
- 1. Bringing services closer to the people of Gwynedd**
- 2. Lead and support the Council's departments and internal services with their use of technology**
- 3. Free up IT staff members' time**
- 4. Make the IT service more effective and efficient**



Bringing services closer to the people of Gwynedd

There are several ways in which we can use technology to bring Council services closer to our users. At present, only a handful of services are available via self-service and Gwynedd residents are expected to have online access to use these services. The aim of the strategy is to present a broader range of services via the digital medium and facilitate access to the medium for Gwynedd residents.

Another element of using technology to bring services closer to our users is by empowering our employees in the field with purposeful technology to make it more efficient. This can become prominent in a range of ways and in a range of service fields. Portable technology has offered different ways of working with infrastructure such as wireless and mobile data links to support this.

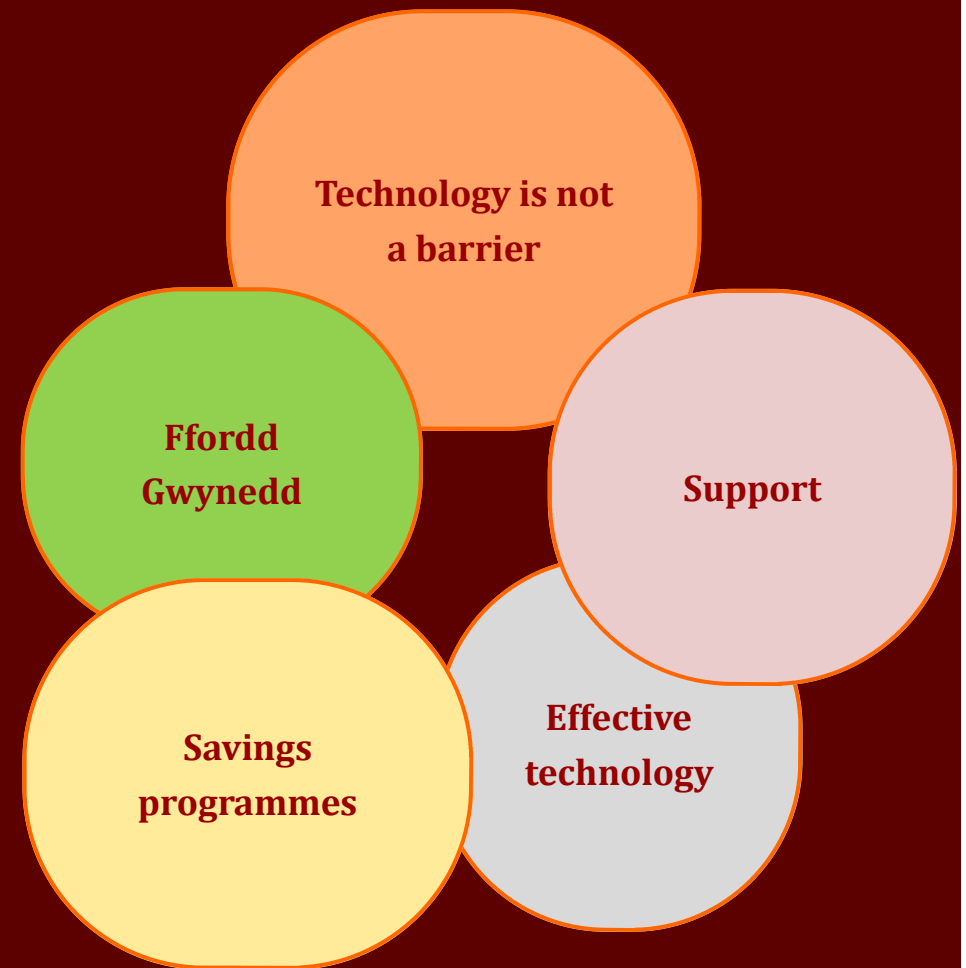




Lead and Support

Introducing technology for effective use is a duty which is shared throughout the organisation. It would be inappropriate to deliver technology if it did not enrich the services, either through making the service more effective or efficient. This means that it is necessary to continue to build bridges between the business and the service which delivers and supports the technology. It can work both ways, the service asking for technology to support their plans, and the technological side offering solutions which can support the department's plans on the other hand.

Technology has the ability to make far-reaching amendments, but the users need support to make the best use of what is delivered.



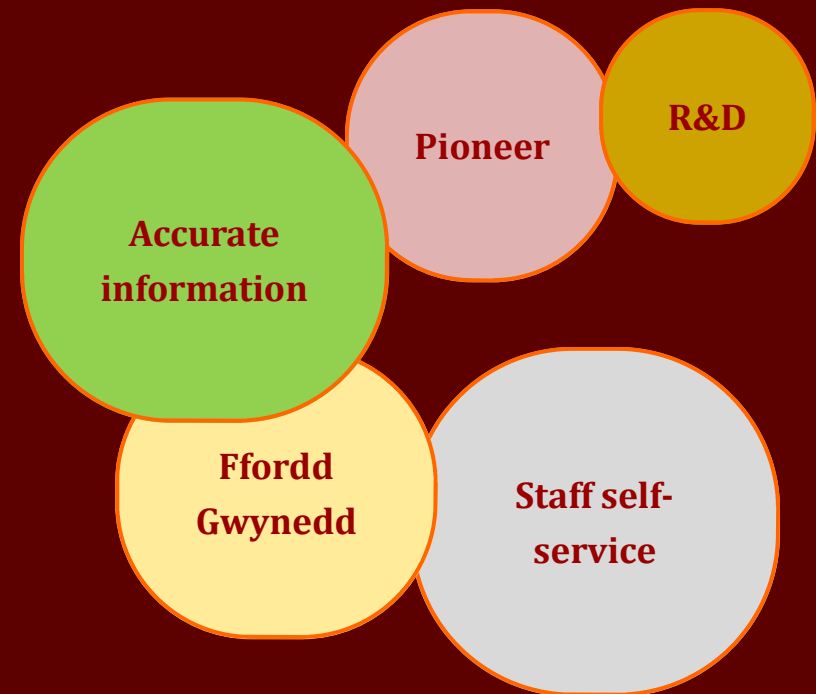


Free up IT staff members' time

By now, most of the IT service's officers' time focusses on supporting solutions which have already been delivered. This means that there are not enough resources to deliver further solutions without withdrawing support for some services or by adding to the resource.

Broad research is required on a discipline which is changing at a large scale, and unless there is available time to undertake the research it is inevitable that the solutions which are being delivered have significantly aged before they are active.

Not only for new solutions, but also to improve the systems and information that the Council already has. Council systems have evolved over a number of years, often without being challenged. Not only is there doubt about the accuracy of our information and its validity to support the business, but there are also opportunities to aggregate entire systems which lead to savings and an improvement in the quality of information.





Effective and Efficient IT Systems

The IT system is required to evolve to meet the expectations of our internal and external customers in terms of delivering a resilient and standardised service. The current nature of the service is responsive and most of the officers' time is spent responding to requirements and problems. In order to free up officers' time to concentrate on developments and new challenges, we need to improve by moving to a situation where we are addressing problems before they appear, but naturally, it is necessary to support the service in a period where the service is transforming, which brings about additional challenges.

The changes are far-reaching, and involve considerable change in the current culture by moving from a situation with elements of disorder to a coherent service which has the ability to change direction to address changes in the Council's business and challenging circumstances which we are facing when coping with a situation of having to do more with less.

