

Pendle Borough Council ICT Strategy

2025 – 2028

CONTENTS

	Page
Executive Summary	2
How our ICT Strategy is shaped	2
ICT focus areas	2
Introduction	3
Context and Background	3
Current ICT Landscape	3
Vision for ICT Strategy	3
Strategic Goals	4
Goal 1: Digital-First, Efficient Council Services	4
Goal 2: Connected Communities and Inclusive Digital Access	4
Goal 3: Sustainable, Growth-Oriented Technology	4
Goal 4: Secure, Resilient, and Future-Proofed ICT	5
Key Initiatives	5
Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity	5
Cloud Adoption and Systems Modernisation	5
Cyber security and Data Protection	5
Digital Services for Citizens	5
Remote and Agile Working	5
Smart Technology for Sustainability and Growth	5
Community Engagement and Digital Inclusion	6
Governance and Vendor Management	6
Implementation Plan	6
Implementation Timeline	6
Resource Allocation	6
Governance Framework	7
Risk Management and Contingency Planning	7
Monitoring and Evaluation	7
Performance Metrics (Key Performance Indicators - KPIs)	7
Review and Reporting Structure	7
Continuous Improvement and Future Planning	8
Conclusion	8

Executive Summary

The ICT Strategy for Pendle Borough Council sets out a forward-thinking digital roadmap to enhance public services, improve efficiency, and support the council’s ambitions. By embracing digital transformation, we aim to deliver high-quality, accessible, and sustainable services that empower residents and businesses across the borough.

How our ICT Strategy is shaped

There are 4 key priorities that have shaped how the ICT Strategy has been designed.

- **Providing High Quality Services and Facilities** – Ensuring the council operates effectively and efficiently, adopting a ‘digital by default’ approach to modernise services while delivering value for money.
- **Proud and Connected Communities and Places** – Strengthening digital connectivity, fostering community pride, and promoting a safer, cleaner, and greener borough.
- **Good Growth** – Leveraging technology to support economic prosperity, sustainable development, and improved education and infrastructure.
- **Healthy Communities** – Enhancing digital health and wellbeing initiatives, improving housing stock, and creating a more inclusive and connected leisure offering.



ICT focus areas

To achieve the ambitions, we have identified several strategic ICT focus areas:

- **Cloud First:** Enabling scalability, flexibility, and cost efficiency through cloud adoption.
- **Remote Working:** Providing secure and robust IT infrastructure to support flexible working.
- **Cyber security:** Strengthening data protection to safeguard residents’ information.
- **Scalability:** Ensuring digital services can evolve with the borough’s growing needs.
- **Data Management:** Enhancing accuracy, security, and accessibility of council data.
- **User Experience:** Developing intuitive, citizen friendly digital services.
- **Innovation and Emerging Technologies:** Embracing new technologies to drive efficiency and service improvements.
- **Vendor Management:** Partnering strategically with suppliers to maximise service value.
- **Cost Management:** Ensuring cost-effective investments in digital solutions.
- **Governance and Compliance:** Maintaining regulatory compliance and ethical IT practices.
- **Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity:** Strengthening resilience in digital service delivery.
- **Employee Training & Development:** Empowering staff with digital skills to support transformation.

Through collaboration with stakeholders and a commitment to innovation, this strategy will ensure Pendle Borough Council remains at the forefront of digital excellence. By investing in technology and modernising service delivery, we will build a more connected, efficient, and inclusive local authority for the benefit of all.

Introduction

Context and Background

The role of ICT in modern local government is increasingly critical, serving as the backbone for service delivery, operational efficiency, and resident engagement. Pendle Borough Council recognises the power of digital transformation to drive improvements across all aspects of council operations, ensuring we remain responsive to the evolving needs of our community.

As a council serving an area in the Northwest of England, we operate within a dynamic landscape that includes urban and rural communities, each with distinct needs. While digital connectivity is strong in some areas, disparities remain, particularly in access to high-speed broadband and digital services. Addressing these challenges is vital to ensuring all residents can fully engage with council services and benefit from emerging technologies.

Current ICT Landscape

Our existing ICT infrastructure is undergoing modernisation, with a focus on efficiency, security, and accessibility. We have made progress in digital adoption, but challenges remain, such as:

- Legacy systems that require upgrading to cloud-based, scalable solutions.
- Cyber security threats that demand robust protective measures.
- Increasing expectations for online and self-service options from residents.
- The need to develop digital skills internally and within our communities.

Vision for ICT Strategy

This strategy is designed to support the council's four key priorities:

- **Providing High-Quality Services and Facilities** – Using technology to streamline processes, improve service delivery, and offer value for money.
- **Proud and Connected Communities and Places** – Strengthening digital engagement and community connectivity.
- **Good Growth** – Supporting economic and sustainable development through digital innovation.
- **Healthy Communities** – Enhancing health, wellbeing, and housing through smart technology solutions.

By implementing a **cloud-first approach**, strengthening **Cyber security**, and improving **digital inclusivity**, we will future-proof our ICT capabilities and enhance the quality of services we deliver.

Our commitment to data security, user experience, and innovation will ensure that our digital transformation benefits all stakeholders, from council employees to residents, businesses, and partner organisations.

This strategy sets out clear objectives, initiatives, and ultimately a roadmap for achieving our vision over the coming years. By embracing a progressive and collaborative approach, Pendle Borough Council will create a modern, efficient, and connected council that serves the needs of our growing and evolving community.

Strategic Goals

The ICT Strategy for Pendle Borough Council is driven by four key priorities that align with the council’s overarching ambitions. To support these priorities, we have set out strategic goals that will ensure digital transformation enhances service delivery, community engagement, and operational efficiency.

Goal 1: Digital-First, Efficient Council Services

- Adopt a ‘digital by default’ approach to modernise council services, streamlining processes and improving accessibility.
- Invest in scalable, cloud-based infrastructure to enhance agility and resilience.
- Reduce operational costs through automation and efficiency improvements.
- Strengthen data management practices to ensure security, compliance, and accessibility.

Goal 2: Connected Communities and Inclusive Digital Access

- Improve digital connectivity across the borough, ensuring reliable broadband access for all residents and businesses.
- Develop user-friendly online services that empower citizens to engage with the council efficiently.
- Support digital inclusion initiatives to bridge the digital divide, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- Foster community partnerships to improve engagement in digital initiatives.

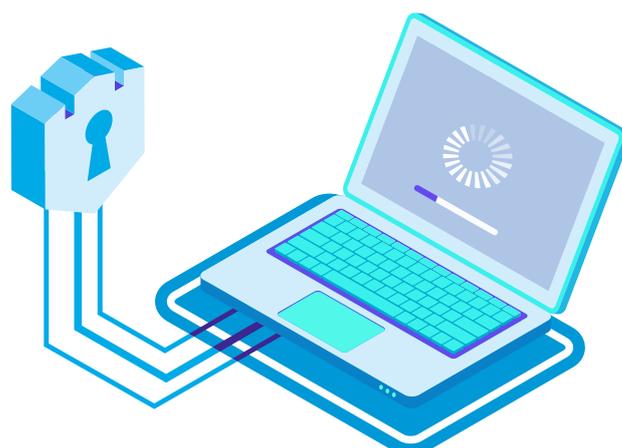
Goal 3: Sustainable, Growth-Oriented Technology

- Leverage ICT to support economic development, infrastructure improvements, and environmental sustainability.
- Promote smart technology in housing, planning, and transport to create more efficient public services.
- Drive green ICT initiatives, reducing carbon footprints and improving energy efficiency.
- Encourage innovation and emerging technologies that enhance service delivery.

Goal 4: Secure, Resilient, and Future-Proofed ICT

- Strengthen cyber security measures to protect sensitive data and digital assets.
- Ensure compliance with UK data protection regulations, including GDPR.
- Develop robust disaster recovery and business continuity strategies.
- Provide ongoing digital skills training for staff to support modern service delivery.

These strategic goals will guide our ICT initiatives, ensuring that technology is leveraged effectively to serve the needs of our residents while positioning Pendle Borough Council as a forward-thinking, digitally enabled authority.



Key Initiatives

To achieve the strategic goals outlined in this ICT Strategy, Pendle Borough Council will implement a series of targeted initiatives designed to modernise digital services, enhance operational efficiency, and improve connectivity for residents and businesses.

Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity

- Invest in next-generation network infrastructure, ensuring resilience and scalability.
- Expand free public Wi-Fi in key locations, improving accessibility for residents.

Cloud Adoption and Systems Modernisation

- Transition legacy systems to cloud-based platforms, enhancing flexibility and cost efficiency.
- Implement secure, scalable cloud storage solutions to improve data accessibility.
- Strengthen integration between council systems to ensure seamless digital service delivery.

Cyber Security and Data Protection

- Deploy advanced Cyber security measures to safeguard sensitive council and resident data.
- Ensure compliance with UK data protection laws, including GDPR and Cyber Essentials standards.
- Provide regular Cyber security awareness training for council staff.

Digital Services for Citizens

- Develop a single, intuitive digital portal for residents to access council services online.
- Enhance self-service options, enabling citizens to complete transactions with minimal assistance.
- Improve accessibility features to support all users, including those with disabilities and digital literacy challenges.

Remote and Agile Working

- Expand secure remote working capabilities for council employees, ensuring flexible work arrangements.
- Provide staff with modern collaboration tools, enabling efficient communication and teamwork.
- Strengthen IT support services to assist remote workers with technical issues.

Smart Technology for Sustainability and Growth

- Implement smart technology solutions in housing, transport, and environmental services.
- Support green ICT initiatives, reducing energy consumption in council operations.
- Explore emerging technologies such as AI and automation to improve efficiency and innovation.

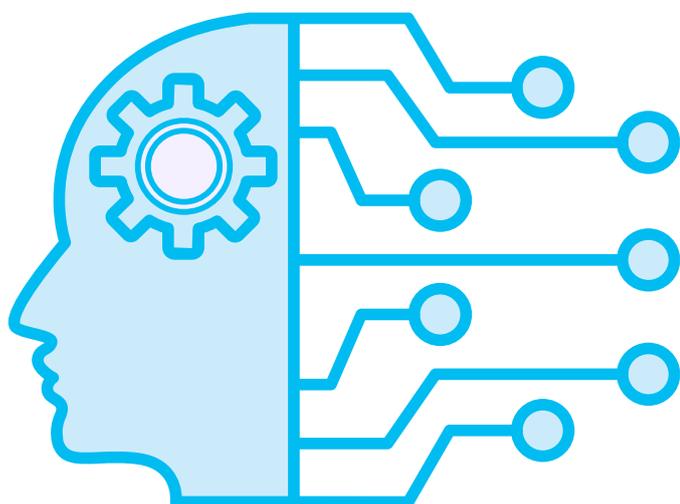
We will allocate funding for staff training, ensuring council employees are equipped with essential digital skills.

Community Engagement and Digital Inclusion

- Provide digital skills training for residents, ensuring equitable access to online services.
- Collaborate with local schools and organisations to promote digital literacy and education.
- Partner with businesses and community groups to expand digital inclusion efforts.

Governance and Vendor Management

- Establish strategic partnerships with technology providers to drive service improvements.
- Ensure IT procurement aligns with cost efficiency and long-term sustainability goals.
- Maintain strong governance structures to oversee ICT investments and service delivery. These initiatives form the foundation for delivering an ICT strategy that modernises public services, fosters innovation, and strengthens community engagement. By adopting an initiative-taking approach to technology adoption and digital transformation, Pendle Borough Council will provide a smarter, more accessible, and more efficient service to all stakeholders.



Implementation Plan

To successfully execute the ICT strategy, Pendle Borough Council will adopt a phased approach, ensuring that investments, projects, and policies align with long-term goals while delivering tangible benefits in the short term. This plan provides a structured timeline, resource allocation, governance framework, and risk management approach to support the implementation of our key initiatives.

Implementation Timeline

- **Short-Term (0–1 years)** – Focus on foundational improvements such as upgrading broadband infrastructure, transitioning core systems to cloud-based platforms, and continuing to strengthen Cyber security measures.
- **Medium-Term (1–3 years)** – Expand digital services for residents, deepen community engagement in ICT initiatives, and continue modernising operational systems.
- **Long-Term (3+ years)** – Implement innovative technologies, optimise ICT cost management, and ensure sustainability in digital operations.

Resource Allocation

- Invest in modern technology and infrastructure to support digital growth.
- Allocate funding for staff training, ensuring council employees are equipped with essential digital skills.
- Establish strategic partnerships with vendors and industry experts to maximise value and service quality.

Governance Framework

- Define clear roles and responsibilities for ICT leadership within the council.
- Implement robust decision-making processes to ensure technology investments align with council priorities.
- Maintain transparency through regular reporting and stakeholder engagement.

Risk Management and Contingency Planning

- Identify potential risks such as cyber security threats, infrastructure downtime, and budget constraints.
- Develop mitigation strategies to address risks proactively.
- Establish a business continuity plan to ensure resilience in digital service delivery.

By adopting this structured implementation plan, Pendle Borough Council will successfully transition towards a more digitally enabled, efficient, and responsive public service.

A phased rollout will ensure that investments are strategically aligned with council priorities while delivering meaningful improvements in service delivery and community engagement.

By focusing on digital transformation, cyber security, infrastructure improvements, and resident accessibility, we are committed to building a modern and resilient council that meets the evolving needs of our citizens.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the successful implementation of the ICT Strategy, Pendle Borough Council will establish a structured monitoring and evaluation framework. This approach will allow us to track progress, assess the effectiveness of key initiatives, and make data-driven decisions to refine and improve digital services over time.

Performance Metrics (Key Performance Indicators - KPIs)

- Measure the adoption rate of digital services by residents, assessing usability and accessibility.
- Track improvements in broadband connectivity, particularly in rural and underserved areas.
- Analyse cost savings and efficiency gains from cloud migration and automation.
- Evaluate cyber security resilience by monitoring incidents and response times.
- Assess staff digital competency through ongoing training and skills development initiatives.

Review and Reporting Structure

- Conduct quarterly performance reviews to evaluate the impact of ICT investments.
- Provide transparent reports to stakeholders, ensuring accountability and alignment with strategic goals.
- Engage with residents and businesses through digital feedback channels to refine service delivery.
- Adjust the ICT Strategy based on evolving technology trends and emerging best practices.

Continuous Improvement and Future Planning

- Maintain flexibility in ICT policies to accommodate advancements in technology.
- Explore pilot projects for emerging technologies, ensuring innovation remains a key driver.
- Foster collaboration with industry experts and local partners to enhance digital transformation efforts.

By embedding monitoring and evaluation into the ICT Strategy, Pendle Borough Council will ensure that digital investments deliver maximum impact, remain aligned with priorities, and continuously adapt to meet the needs of our residents and businesses.

Conclusion

The ICT Strategy for Pendle Borough Council sets out a bold and practical roadmap for leveraging technology to enhance service delivery, improve efficiency, and strengthen community engagement.

By focusing on digital transformation, cyber security, infrastructure improvements, and resident accessibility, we are committed to building a modern and resilient council that meets the evolving needs of our citizens.

Through strategic investment in cloud-first technology, cyber security, remote working capabilities, and sustainable ICT solutions, we will drive efficiency while ensuring equitable access to digital services.

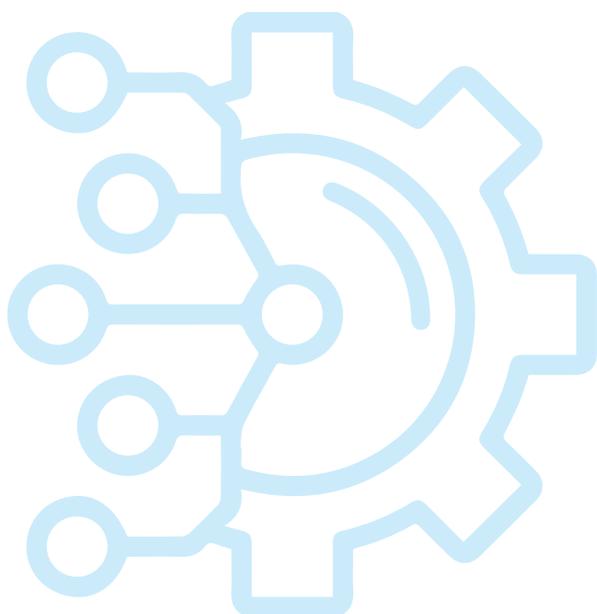
Our focus on data security, user experience, and innovation will underpin all initiatives, ensuring that our digital transformation is both meaningful and sustainable.

As we implement this strategy, ongoing collaboration with government partners, local businesses, and communities will be essential.

By fostering an environment of continuous improvement, adaptability, and forward-thinking solutions, we will position Pendle Borough Council as a digital leader in local government.

With a clear implementation plan, measurable performance indicators, and strong governance in place, we are confident that this ICT Strategy will deliver lasting benefits for residents, businesses, and council employees, and councillors alike.

By embracing the opportunities of the digital era, we will provide a smarter, more accessible, and more efficient council – one that is equipped for the challenges and possibilities of the future as we move towards Local Government Reorganisation.





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ijb-12702_06/2025