25. The primary strategy for addressing the council's digital requirements is the Performance and Transformation Strategy but there is recognition that this needs to link to workforce priorities.

26. The People Strategy 2023-2028 sets out the ambition to have an empowered and effective workforce, which addresses the digital and analytical skills gaps which remain a critical area of focus for the council. This will involve fostering a digitally proficient workforce by identifying skills gaps and providing appropriate digital training. Performance on this will be measured through employee engagement surveys and digital maturity assessments.

The council has introduced several corporate and service-level IT systems and digital developments that have delivered workforce benefits and increased productivity

27. The council has rolled out 2,900 Microsoft 365 (MS365) licences across services and provides corporate staff access to the MS365 functionality, which provides staff the opportunity to drive improvements in the areas of productivity, and collaboration. The council's Fort Client Remote Access enables around 2,000 staff to have remote access from home via a secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) to all council network applications and systems.

28. The council uses Objective File Plan, which is its Electronic Content Management (ECM) system for the secure management and disposal of electronic information. The system allows the council to optimise data assets more effectively and can support smarter and more agile working in the council and increase the performance and efficiency of key business processes. A key feature of transformation activity is Objective workflow, which is delivering digital business processes in several services. Objective workflows have increased process performance by automating common or repeatable tasks and the implementation of workflows is an important part of the council's digital programme.

29. The council's Televic Video Conferencing (TVC) system enables the council to broadcast live meetings to members of the public via the council's YouTube channel, utilising both Microsoft Teams and the Televic software. The system also enables council officers to attend council meetings for specific items of business, removing the requirement to travel to and from the Civic Centre. The TVC system has delivered productivity gains through the removal of lost time due to travel to committee meetings, and at the same time allows officers to continue to work remotely whilst waiting to attend the committee meeting for the specific item of business they are attending.

The council has invested in Robotic Process Automation to improve and streamline internal processes

30. In June 2021, the council approved proposals to pursue a combination of approaches to maximise the benefits of automation through an upgrade to the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and investment in an Intelligent Automation solution across a range of service areas. The proposals highlighted there were a range of financial and non-financial benefits, which were associated with automation, robotics and artificial intelligence (AI):