

A Digital Strategy for County Monaghan

2021 - 2025

Powered by
Monaghan
County Council





Strategy Overview



Introduction

Monaghan County Council have developed this Digital Strategy to encourage and empower communities and businesses to harness the benefits of a digitally enabled county. Monaghan's Digital Strategy will run from 2021 – 2025 and sets out ambitious strategic goals and actions to drive digital transformation across the County and position it as a digital leader in Ireland and beyond.

This Digital Strategy is designed as an agile document, that will change and adapt to emerging needs and trends within our County, as recognised by its citizens, businesses and broader stakeholders. The strategy sets out an overall vision for the County, and the core principles, strategic priorities and actions for implementation.

The document has been informed by interviews and surveys with businesses, citizens and voluntary organisations. It is clear that people across Monaghan have embraced the digital revolution with enthusiasm. The strategy aims to build on this momentum and position the county to seize digital opportunities, ensure people can easily and effectively access information and services. In addition, it will serve as a statement of intent to drive innovation and transformation across the County and fuel economic and community development.

Digital Vision

Adopt Digital technologies as a gateway to connect and empower people, communities and enterprises to thrive in Monaghan and beyond



Engagement & Research

The development of the Digital Strategy for Monaghan County and associated actions, plans and initiatives is the result of extensive research and consultation

Indecon Digital Readiness Assessment

In July 2018 Indecon undertook an extensive Digital Readiness Assessment (DRA), on County Monaghan based on an internationally recognised model. The assessment included 7 key pillars to benchmark the County against Local Authority peers and the National averages. It covers both activities of households and businesses in the region, as well as the activities of each Council itself. Monaghan performs well under Pillars IV (Digital Services) and Pillar VII (Community and Culture). Further progress is possible in Monaghan under Pillars I, II, III, V and VI.

The impact of Covid 19

The impact of Covid 19 has been internationally recognised as having accelerated the adoption and proliferation of a broad range of digital technologies, tools, business models and opportunities across all sectors of society. With that comes a demand for skills, security and innovation. There is an urgency for Local Authorities, Educators, Community groups, business and citizens to embrace these technologies and ensure that there is equitable access and support to all stakeholders.

Stakeholder surveys

Stakeholders' surveys were undertaken with the following groups on a broad range of issues relating to digital readiness, access and innovations; Citizens, Businesses, Voluntary Groups and key stakeholders e.g. MIDL. All results, comments and interviews were collated and incorporated in the development of key initiatives for the Digital Strategy.

Key findings:

- Access – both mobile and broadband poor coverage
- Skills – low uptake of courses and ICT qualifications in the County
- Limited applications – know-how of tools to drive commerce and usage
- Low adoption

Digital Innovation Steering Committee

The Digital Steering Committee will monitor and drive the delivery of the Digital Strategy

Aidan McKenna (Chair)

Regional Director, North East & North West Region and Manager, Climate Enterprise Action Fund, Enterprise Ireland

Claire Cunningham (Vice Chair)

Director, Aura Internet

Cllr. Raymond Aughey

Chair of Transport & Community Strategic Policy Group

Cllr. Sean Gilliland

Chair of Economic Development & Enterprise Support Strategic Policy Group

Cathal Flynn

Director of Services, Monaghan County Council

Colin Gray

Regional Sales Manager, Combilift

Alan Johnston

Director, Johnston & Co Accountants Ltd.

John Kearney

Chief Executive, Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board

Cillian Leonowicz

Head of Markets & Alliances, EY Microsoft Services Group
Ernst & Young

John Mc Ardle

Broadband Officer, Monaghan County Council

John Mc Entegart

Head of Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office, Monaghan County Council

Annmarie Mc Hugh

Lecturer in Business, School of Business and Humanities
Dundalk Institute of Technology

Raymond Mulligan

Azure and Data & AI Specialist Lead, Microsoft Ireland

Carmel O'Hare

Head of Information Systems & Innovation, Monaghan County Council

John Patrick Shaw

Chief Executive Officer, Data Value Hub Ireland North East

Edel Treanor

Director, Mullan Lighting Design & Manufacturing Ltd.

Our Digital Principles

The development of the Digital Strategy for Monaghan County and associated actions, plans and initiatives will be underpinned by the following principles

Focus on the user

Before building or designing anything, we must start by researching and understanding the users' needs. We won't only do this at the beginning of the process – we must keep ensuring that our services meet those user needs and that we are responding to what they tell us

Build and adopt scalable solutions

To grow digital capability, solutions need to be scalable and future focused. Scalability will support the accelerated growth and adoption of digital services and ensure the ongoing success needed for long term advantage and differentiation. Where capability is available, we will adopt it, we won't reinvent the wheel where not necessary

Take a collaborative approach

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration is essential to driving and delivering connected digital solutions across the county

Do the hard work to make it simple

It's usually harder to make things simple, but for service users, it's the right thing to do. Making services simple and joined up is difficult but that's what we must strive to do. We won't take "it's always been that way" for an answer

Develop. Learn. Improve.

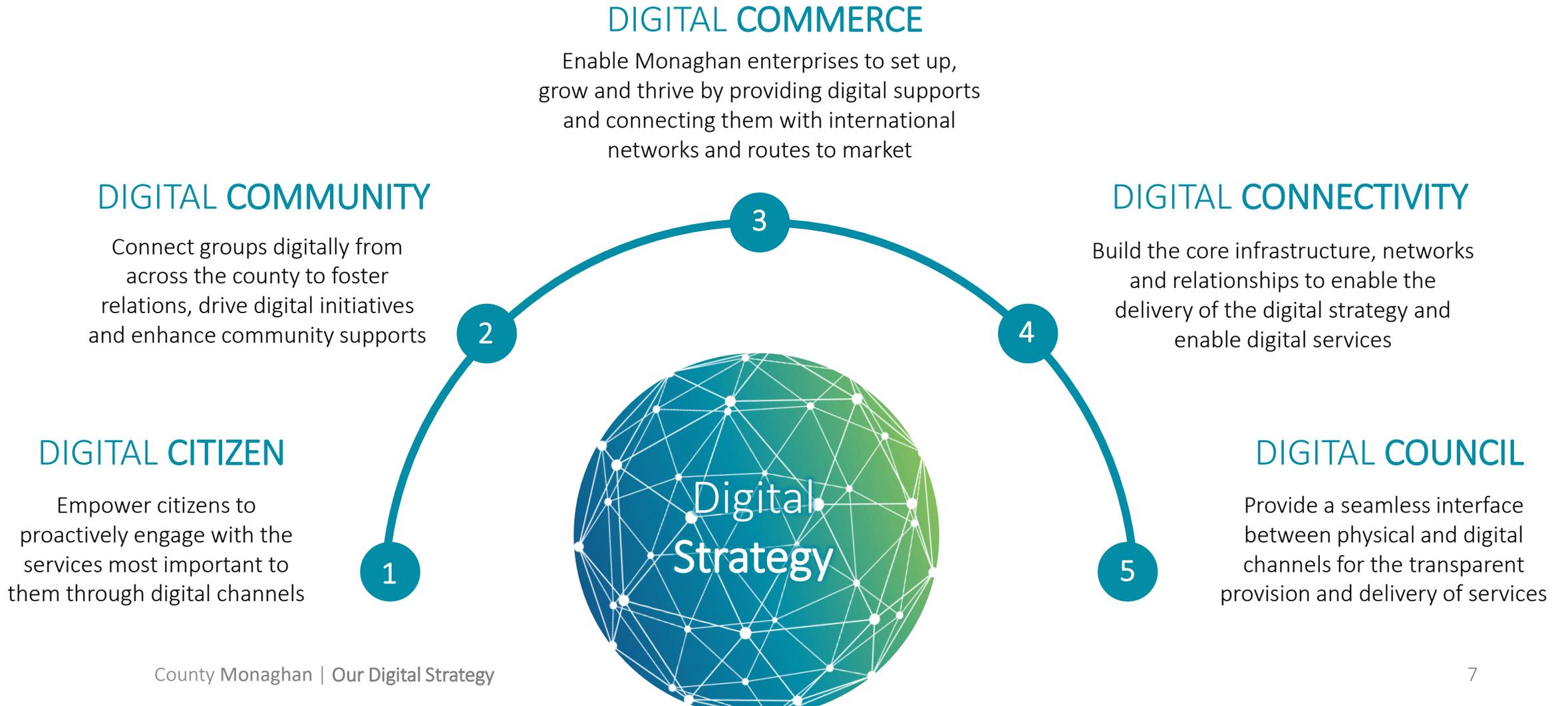
The best way to build good services is to start small and iterate. Iteration reduces risk. It makes big failures unlikely and turns small failures into lessons. If a prototype isn't working, don't be afraid to learn from it and start again.

Make things open and transparent

We should share what we're doing wherever and whenever we can. With colleagues, with users, with the community and wider stakeholders. Share knowledge, share designs, share ideas, share intentions, share failures, share successes. Win together

5 Strategic Digital Priorities

Key priorities have been identified as a framework for this strategy, these reflect best international practice and align with Monaghan County Council's Local Plans and Strategies



Our Digital Ambition

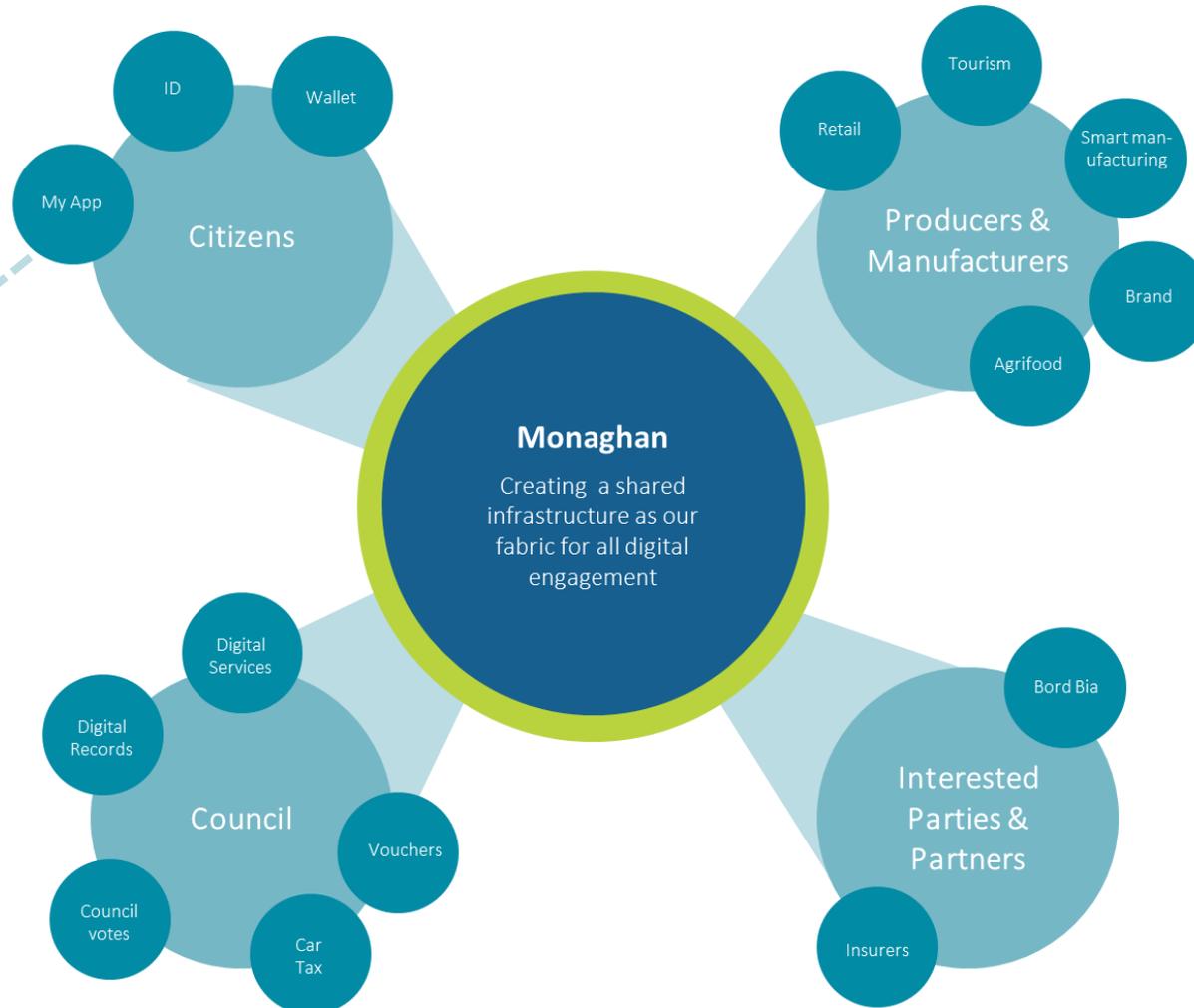
To create a shared digital platform for Monaghan and beyond which will provide the infrastructure for some of our flagship projects identified in this Strategy

To demonstrate our ambition, we will embark on developing two flagship projects which demonstrate Monaghan's digital commitment, and which form the nucleus for a digital platform and infrastructure. The flagship projects are aimed at improving the citizen experience as well as to bolster our production and manufacturing to truly differentiate us.

Citizen App

Empower citizens to proactively engage with the services most important to them through digital channels.

Create a 'one stop shop' for all services in County Monaghan through a Citizen App.



“Made in Monaghan”

To differentiate our products, we will create a “Made in Monaghan” brand, underpinned by a provenance platform. This will enable Monaghan products to connect to international networks for procurement and to enable frictionless exporting. We will set a new standard for other counties and regions to follow

Digital Leaders

Many successful enterprises & organisations from across the County are already embracing digital technology



"With international trade exhibitions virtually non-existent, Combilift needed to find a way to reach global customers - going digital was not just an option, it became a necessity"

Combilift



"Digital technology advances within Monaghan have enabled us to scale our business internationally while keeping employment local. Leveraging these digital technology advances have enabled us to introduce our business and Monaghan to clients across the world, resulting in inward business tourism and cross promotion of other businesses within the region."
Mullan Lighting





Strategic Priorities





Priority 1
Digital Citizen



OUR OBJECTIVE

Empower citizens to proactively engage with the services most important to them through digital channels

OUR GOALS

- ▶ Create a 'one stop shop' for all services in County Monaghan through a Citizen App
- ▶ Extend and add new services and capabilities reflective of new and emerging trends and user needs
- ▶ Develop a public consultation and engagement platform to capture the voice of the citizen in the design of new services

01

DIGITAL CITIZEN

Empower citizens to proactively engage with the services most important to them through digital channels

Goals	Actions
Create a <i>'one stop shop'</i> for all services in County Monaghan through a Citizen App	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Ideate and define the purpose and capability of an app, digital identity and wallet infrastructure for County Monaghan▶ Conduct a review of the app including service requirements, user expectations, service delivery, cost and benefits and feasibility study▶ Develop a progression plan aligned with key use cases, e.g. Digitising the County Monaghan voucher scheme leveraging tokens and a digital wallet▶ Encourage promotion and engagement of the app e.g. annual call for ideas
Extend and add new services and capabilities reflective of new and emerging trends and user needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Initiate a review of the Council service catalogue to identify areas for immediate extension and enhancement through current digital channels e.g. online application forms▶ Work with stakeholders to connect capabilities and to provide <i>'joined up'</i> services for customers▶ Have a call for ideas for enhancing and improving online services
Develop a public consultation and engagement platform to capture the voice of the citizen in the design of new services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Establish a <i>'user forum'</i> to critique and identify improvements of existing digital services within County Monaghan▶ Capture the voice of customer as part of all "one-off" projects

DIGITAL CITIZEN

Empower citizens to proactively engage with the services most important to them through digital channels

MyCoCo.ie Local Authority Services

Local authorities offer more than 1,000 diverse services to the public. Many of the services are accessed using paper-based forms, payments are made by cash or cheque and the applicant has very poor visibility into the progress of their application. Monaghan County Council, in collaboration with Cavan, Louth, Sligo, Longford, Leitrim, Laois and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Councils, the OGCI and Irish Hauliers Association, was awarded funding under Our Public Service Innovation Fund 2021 to develop MyCoCo.ie - an online platform to provide these diverse services digitally.

MyCoCo is like the 'Amazon' for Local authority services. Citizens, businesses and organisations can register with MyCoCo, browse the service catalogue, choose a service, 'add to basket' and make payment. They can then track the progress of their service request. They can access services of multiple participating local authorities from a single login. MyCoCo is citizen-centric and solicitors in County Monaghan are among the pilot user group who are participating in the design and development of the solution.



MyCoCo:

Your one-stop shop for local authority services.

DIGITAL CITIZEN

Empower citizens to proactively engage with the services most important to them through digital channels

Monaghan County Council Customer App

Housing tenants, loanees and ratepayers can now access their customer accounts online, 24/7, via smart phone, tablet, laptop and PC. Customers can check their balance, view transactions, make payments, and download bills, receipts and statements. Housing Loan customers can also view their home loan capital balance.

This online service has proven to be very popular particularly since the COVID-19 emergency closure of public offices. As well as offering a new and accessible channel for customers the App has resulted in significantly fewer phone calls and visits to the offices. By May 2021 almost 900 customers had registered for the service. Hundreds of payments are been processed through the app each month in respect of rents, loans and rates. Customers report ease of use and satisfaction with access to their account and service it provides.



The customer app developed by
Monaghan County Council

Priority 2
Digital Community



OUR OBJECTIVE

Connect groups digitally from across the county to foster relations, drive digital initiatives, enhance community supports and digital skills

OUR GOALS

- ▶ Develop and roll out a Digital Skills programme for the county
- ▶ Encourage and enable communities to increase their use of digital technologies

02

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Connect groups from across the county to foster relations, drive initiatives and enhance community supports

Goals	Actions
Develop and roll out a Digital Skills programme for the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Promote and deliver classroom, virtual and workshop-based digital training to enterprises and start-ups▶ Publicise and promote digital training for citizens by all available means to enhance awareness and participation and particularly among groups in most need of training on digital technologies, e.g. older people and disadvantaged groups▶ Continue to deliver Digital Leadership training courses for teachers both in CMETB-run and other schools. Promote and deliver 'Road to Coding' courses for primary, post-primary teachers and pupils. Publicise and deliver social media training via the PPN to voluntary organisations where demand is identified▶ Promote formal education for the achievement of digital skills within the County
Encourage and enable communities to increase their use of digital technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Support community, voluntary and cultural organisations to develop and enhance their websites and social media strategies▶ Deploy digital information boards in key locations to share public information, facilitate local event advertising and promote community activities and Council notices▶ Conduct a feasibility study to assess the establishment of a 'virtual community' on a selected social media platform to enable community, voluntary and cultural organisations to interact with each other directly▶ Promote the development of digital services from the library e.g provision of digital technologies and hardware and digital training

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

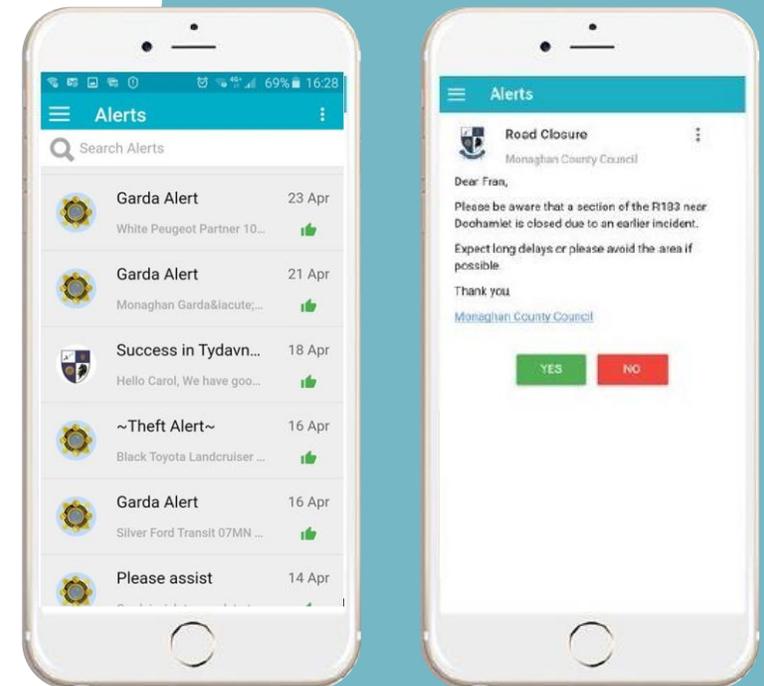
Connect groups from across the county to foster relations, drive initiatives and enhance community supports

Monaghan Community Alerts

Monaghan Community Alerts is an all-county Garda Alert service which replaces the 26 local Text Alert services around the county with one countywide service. The alerts enable the Gardai to reach the entire county with one message, including parts of the county which don't have an active Community Alert group.

A requirement from the outset was that the local groups must not in any way be diminished by the service. The importance of their work on the ground, and of the Community Alert movement, is paramount, and must continue to be so. Within the Monaghan Community Alerts service, each local group has its own Group account, and members of the public can subscribe to the group's account to receive news from the community alert group. The Garda alerts are sent out through a group called 'Monaghan Community Alerts', which carries the Garda logo. Monaghan County Council also has an account, bearing the Council logo, which it uses to send out alerts such as road closures, weather alerts, and recently Covid-19 alerts.

The project grew organically from an initiative which started life as an action in the Joint Policing Committee's (JPC) Strategic Plan. Considerable effort went into the Plan, to ensure that the identified actions were SMART, and involved all three pillars of the JPC in their delivery, i.e the Local Authority, An Garda Síochána and the community and voluntary sector.



Alert messages displayed on a phone

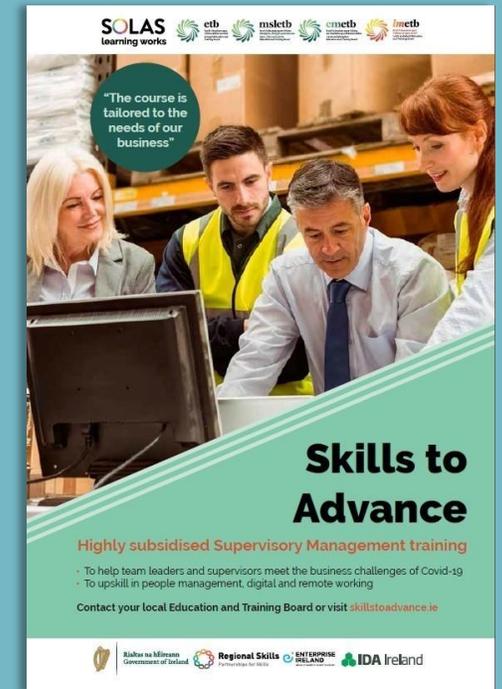
DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Connect groups from across the county to foster relations, drive initiatives and enhance community supports

Developing Digital Education and Qualifications

Efforts to improve the digital skills of the workforce have been ramped up in Monaghan in recent years. Training courses for teachers in 'Digital Leadership' are helping to ensure greater use of digital technologies in classrooms across the county and coding courses are helping students prepare for the future. Many of these students, more digitally-skilled than before, are availing of further education courses in digital disciplines provided by Monaghan Institute. Those who wish to further their digital education to diploma or degree level can progress to DKIT in Dundalk or one of the many colleges and Universities in Dublin or Belfast.

While younger people are mostly entering the workforce with the digital skills they need, a major effort is underway to upskill older workers. One key initiative is the 'Skills to Advance' programme run by the CMETB in partnership with Solas which targets people already employed who wish to improve their skills. Courses are run as early evening classes where participants are granted time off work to attend. Since Spring 2019, when the programme started, around 200 people from Monaghan have participated in these courses. Much of the training is focused on digital skills, most notably Microsoft Office Specialist courses. Courses in Computer aided design (CAD) began in January 2020 in response to an identified need for such skills in the local engineering sector. The CMETB's expectation is to train 400-450 people in Monaghan in 2020, around half of these on digital training courses.



The flyer for the 'Skills to Advance' programme features logos for SOLAS learning works, etb, mslctb, cmctb, and imctb at the top. The main image shows four people (three men and one woman) in a professional setting looking at a computer monitor. A quote bubble says: "The course is tailored to the needs of our business". The title 'Skills to Advance' is prominently displayed in bold black text. Below the title, it states 'Highly subsidised Supervisory Management training' and lists two bullet points: 'To help team leaders and supervisors meet the business challenges of Covid-19' and 'To upskill in people management, digital and remote working'. At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'Contact your local Education and Training Board or visit skillstoadvance.ie'. Logos for the Government of Ireland, Regional Skills Councils, Enterprise Ireland, and IDA Ireland are at the very bottom.

'Skills to Advance' programme run by the CMETB in partnership with Solas

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Connect groups from across the county to foster relations, drive initiatives and enhance community supports

Integrating IT into our Public Libraries

Monaghan County Council library service is continually developing and enhancing the range of digital and innovative services available to members of the public. This includes developing digital literacy programmes, such as Age Friendly IT training courses, running TechSpace programmes for children, and hosting an Annual Science Festival and Childrens Book Festival, delivered completely online in 2020.

When Covid 19 restrictions led to the closure of all library branches in March 2020, IT innovation was key in helping the library service keep in contact with customers and in finding new ways to deliver services. IT and Library staff worked to develop a GIS Desktop Application to assist in the launch of a new Home Delivery Service. The system records delivery requests, colour codes them to indicate their status and maps them across the County to assist the library driver in route formulation. The system uses the Eircode information and links to Google Maps to assist in this process. The system also has a dashboard for statistical reports.

The service has been highly successful, making 2,069 deliveries to date. As a result, this delivery model is to be permanently integrated into the service.

Carrickmacross Library launched the 1st My Open Library in Monaghan in April 2019, with Clones library due to become a My Open Library service before the end of 2021. This allows users to enter the library buildings and use all library facilities out of hours, using technology to facilitate access to buildings and services. There are currently approx. 300 registered Open Library users in Carrickmacross. With the inclusion of My Open Library services in two new libraries currently under construction, by 2022 Monaghan County Council will be providing the service in four of its five branches.



Big Changes at Monaghan Libraries

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Connect groups from across the county to foster relations, drive initiatives and enhance community supports

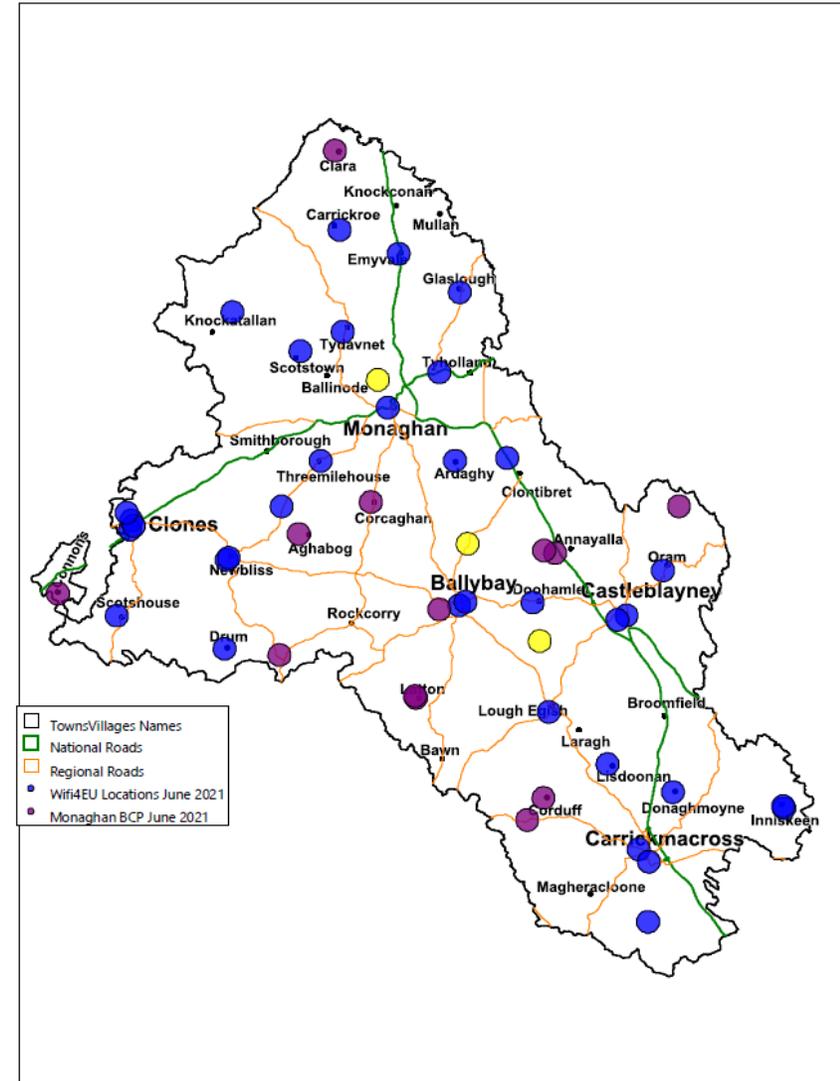
Connecting Communities – Leave No-one Behind

A myriad of Stakeholders across the county are already actively engaged in developing additional digital capacity within community groups and the communities in which they operate.

These stakeholders include CMETB, Co. Monaghan PPN, Monaghan Integrated Development (M.I.D.), Monaghan Co. Co.

These agencies are focused on some critical developmental areas:

- Enabling communities by installing broadband in community buildings across the county
- Identify and address barriers to getting online and benefiting from digital technology
- Developing Digital skills through training and education
- Offering online courses and training to users
- Targeting citizen groups suffering from social exclusion & digital poverty
- Developing Digital Leadership and digital problem solving within communities
- Ensuring that our online services are compatible and easy to use for people with disabilities
- Use digital technology to facilitate better community engagement and participation





Priority 3
Digital Commerce

OUR OBJECTIVE

Enable Monaghan enterprises to set up, grow and thrive by providing digital supports and connecting them with international networks and routes to market

OUR GOALS

- ▶ Develop and market a dedicated digitally enabled brand and provenance platform for produce and products from Monaghan
- ▶ Establish a Digital Innovation Steering Committee for County Monaghan
- ▶ Develop a partnership programme to work with organisations to support, develop and grow the commercial platform and create new value propositions
- ▶ Provide and promote digital supports and assistance for business development and greater connection to the ecosystems within the county

03

DIGITAL COMMERCE

Enable enterprises to set up, grow and thrive from Monaghan by providing digital supports and connect them with international networks and routes to market

Goals	Actions
Develop and market a dedicated digitally enabled brand and provenance platform for produce and products from Monaghan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Set a new quality standard for Monaghan products based on benchmarking current capabilities and initiatives e.g. Origin Green against emerging market enhancements and global best practice ▶ Identify a product, assurance partner and technology partner to test the new standard through proof of concept and feasibility study ▶ Hold an open national competition for the design and development of a bespoke “Made in Monaghan” brand
Establish a Digital Innovation Steering Committee for County Monaghan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Hold an open call for members to support the establishment of a new “Digital and Innovation Steering Committee” for County Monaghan ▶ Establish the committee's terms of reference and charter for the progression and achievement of this strategy vision and goals ▶ Confirm the steering committee members, the chair and develop the working groups to support the overall steering committee
Develop a partnership programme to work with organisations to support, develop and grow the commercial platform and create new value propositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a “Partnership Strategy” for County Monaghan. Present the strategy to identified target partners, as identified by the Steering Committee, and seek their partnership to foster the County’s growth and development ▶ Co-create new capabilities and deploy new services with Partners e.g. the Monaghan App with a Technology Partner, and, a “Digitally Attractive” campaign to IDA clients for inward FDI
Provide and promote digital supports and assistance for business development and greater connection to the ecosystems within the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Work with the Local Enterprise Office to develop a “market connectivity” review, mapping Monaghan to key markets and segments both domestically and internationally. Identifying supports required by business and where to invest for most market impact ▶ Support local businesses “go to market” through “ambassador” programme consisting of local influencers, national alumni and international diaspora which proactively attract new investment and customers to the county

DIGITAL COMMERCE

Enable enterprises to set up, grow and thrive from Monaghan by providing digital supports and connect them with international networks and routes to market

Data Value Hub

A Digital Innovation Hub is being established in Monaghan town to support local companies in embracing and utilising new technologies and drive digital transformation throughout the region.

The Data Value Hub is working on exciting Projects for Enterprises in our region, including Entekra, Exitex, Errigal and Eighty6 Software, to advance their AI Capability. The Data Value Hub is also working with Net1, Nomad, Healthcare Analytics and Energy Team to identify how new technology can help make better decisions faster. At its core, the Hub creates a diverse and expert collaboration that helps to future proof the North East region's economy through Productivity and Product Differentiation across all sectors.

The Data Value Hub is here to help Enterprises win with Data. Enterprises in our region have probably seen more technology change in the past 12 months than in the past 5 years, with staff working from home, the wider adoption of Office 365 and a greater use of eCommerce. This trend will continue and Enterprises must adopt new technology to compete.

For Enterprises, the Data Value Hub enables Artificial Intelligence, (AI), Edge Computing and Autonomous Things. The Data Value Hub helps your Enterprise in 3 ways; Technology Upskilling, Incubator Projects and Capability Assessments. Later in 2021, the Data Value Hub will host open days, guest lectures, school visits, collaborative workshops and information days on valuable and emerging digital trends.



On Friday 04th June, Heather Humphreys, Minister for Justice, Social Protection, Rural and Community Development, visited the Data Value Hub with Aidan McKenna, Regional Director for North East & North West in Enterprise Ireland to meet with John Shaw, CEO of the Data Value Hub.

DIGITAL COMMERCE

Enable enterprises to set up, grow and thrive from Monaghan by providing digital supports and connect them with international networks and routes to market

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Daisy Clothing
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- Health
- Home & Interiors
- Men's Fashion
- Music
- Office & Stationary
- Women's Fashion

Welcome to Shop Carrickmacross

DIGITAL COMMERCE

Enable enterprises to set up, grow and thrive from Monaghan by providing digital supports and connect them with international networks and routes to market

Monaghan Station House

The Station House contains a hot desking area with capacity for 27 members, along with two sound proofed Phone Booths, a Zoom Booth, 6 Private Offices, 2 Meeting Rooms, and a new Corten Steel façade extension that houses the bright and airy breakout area.

The old Station Master's house in Monaghan has had a new lease of life thanks to local businesspeople Ann and Paul Bowe. Monaghan Train Station ceased to operate in December 1959, but the buildings were eventually used as warehousing and offices. Ann Bowe actually ran her physiotherapy practice from the Station Master's house from 1990 to 1998, so when it came up for sale in 2019 the decision to purchase was driven primarily by sentiment rather than commercial reasons.

However, having been made aware of the growth in coworking facilities in Ireland, the Bowes decided to renovate the station house and it is now a premium work hub for freelancers, entrepreneurs and remote employees that would rival any facility in our capital!

If you would like to work from the Station House, you can email us on hello@stationhousemonaghan.com - "Fuelling Monaghan's Entrepreneurial Spirit."



DIGITAL COMMERCE

Enable enterprises to set up, grow and thrive from Monaghan by providing digital supports and connect them with international networks and routes to market



The BioConnect Project

Founded to create a platform for regional transformation by supporting companies seeking to undertake strategic, commercial, and collaborative research and development using biotechnology.

BioConnect's mission is to engage with local and regional food businesses and agricultural producers, together with entrepreneurs and investors, to drive the sector forward creating world class opportunities and businesses.

The BioConnect Project is anchored by a unique 1,639 square metre research and development Innovation Centre located at Knockaconny in Monaghan – the beating heart of Ireland's agri-food industry.

"BioConnect wants to build a home where users can network, ask questions, seek out support - or just share their experiences - a breeding ground for new ideas, new projects and business development. An extension of the physical building will be a communications platform to engage with the widest possible constituency to mould the future of the food, health and agricultural sectors regionally, nationally and attract attention on the global stage. Yes, we are ambitious!" David Macaulley, Chief Executive.



DIGITAL COMMERCE

Enable enterprises to set up, grow and thrive from Monaghan by providing digital supports and connect them with international networks and routes to market

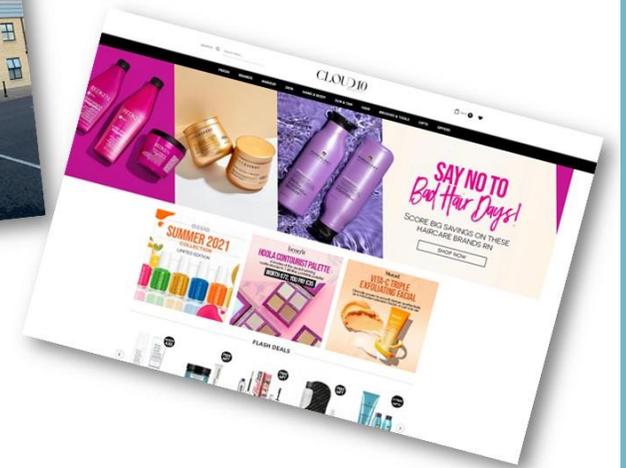
Cloud 10 Beauty

Co. Monaghan has been Cloud 10 Beauty's home for almost 10 years. As an ecommerce business we are digitally native, and our core digital strategy focuses on the use of technology to continuously improve business processes and overall performance.

Being based in Co. Monaghan has allowed us to grow and flourish in the digital space, away from the hustle and bustle of more densely populated regions in Ireland. There's a real entrepreneurial spirit here in County Monaghan with many local companies, from small businesses to global conglomerates who are highly adaptable and innovators in their field.

Continuous innovation and growth have allowed us to build a great team over the last 10 years, many of which live locally and enjoy a good work-life balance.

The business, based in Castleblayney, has rapidly grown to become Ireland's leading online beauty destination stocking top beauty brands from across the world. Our team trawl the globe to seek out the brands that we know our customers will lust over, while also delivering unparalleled customer service along with free samples, and free worldwide shipping options.



CLOUD 10
BEAUTY



Priority 4
Digital Connectivity



OUR OBJECTIVE

Build the core infrastructure, networks and relationships to enable the digital strategy and seamless service delivery

OUR GOALS

- ▶ Facilitate the development and roll out of high-speed broadband
- ▶ Provide the digital infrastructure for the deployment of new services and value propositions in the county
- ▶ Leverage all digital infrastructure to build Smart Monaghan

04

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Build the core infrastructure, networks and relationships to enable the digital strategy and seamless service delivery

Goals	Actions
Facilitate the development and roll out of high-speed broadband	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Engage and collaborate NBP provider to ensure efficient roll-out of broadband across County Monaghan▶ Work with remote rural communities and stakeholders to progress the provision of 13 Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) in the early part of the National Broadband Plan build▶ Continue the programme of engagement with telecommunications providers to facilitate commercial providers to increase and improve broadband coverage across the county (as recommended by the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Report 2016)
Provide the digital infrastructure for the deployment of new services and value propositions in the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Support the deployment of new infrastructure and connections for users to leverage it▶ Extend new infrastructure to include the provision of public Wi-Fi which enables the use and adoption of new digitally enabled services
Leverage all digital infrastructure to build Smart Monaghan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Define Smart Monaghan, identifying existing initiatives to support this and areas for enhancement and extension▶ Establish a roadmap for “Smart Monaghan” and seek the investment and funding required to support the development of capability as a “national flagship” for emerging and digital technologies▶ Create a “Digital Bridge” to connect the participants to the ecosystems e.g. IOT network, AI network in County Monaghan and beyond

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Build the core infrastructure, networks and relationships to enable the digital strategy and seamless service delivery

Our aim is to provide people with the tools to develop digital communities throughout the county. Digital initiatives are underway to improve connectivity across the county in advance of the full roll-out of the National Broadband Plan, allowing people in these communities to avail of benefits of the digital world that were previously denied to them.

Broadband Connection Points (BCPs)

One of the early initiatives under the National Broadband Plan is to provide high-speed broadband to key buildings within rural areas. The provision of this high-end connectivity allows communities to have access to internal and external Wi-Fi services within their community buildings. This will allow community groups to access online training and to expand the range of activities available within these hubs.

16 locations have been identified within the county as Broadband Connection Points (BCPs). These include a community of nearly 300 people at St Pats Direct Provision Centre, facilities at Tanagh Outdoor Education Centre, and 14 additional community buildings across the county. These sites are provided with a minimum broadband speed of 150 Mbps. The development of these BCPs will facilitate higher levels of digital engagement by everyone within the community offering scope for remote working, digital learning and for remote teaching in areas where this was not previously possible.

The BCP programme is supported by the Department of Rural & Community Development.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Wifi4EU

As a county, we want the people of Monaghan to have the opportunity to develop a range of skills in STEM and digital sciences.

The Wifi4U programme is an EU-funded program to provide free Wi-Fi connectivity for citizens and visitors alike. Within County Monaghan, this initiative has been adapted to deliver broadband into community centres throughout the county.

This offers community groups across the county the opportunity to develop higher levels of digital capacity and awareness and allow them to deliver more digital services and digital training.

Wifi4EU is jointly funded through the EU, the Department of Rural and Community Development and Monaghan County Council. This programme has been rolled out to more than 30 community centres, playparks and public buildings, with 60 wifi points being installed at indoor and outdoor locations.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Build the core infrastructure, networks and relationships to enable the digital strategy and seamless service delivery

County Monaghan's broadband infrastructure includes key assets which allow businesses to access High Speed dedicated fibre services through a series of ISPs. These include Metropolitan Area Networks run by Enet in Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Monaghan, as well as the Kelvin network which runs along the corridor from Armagh to Monaghan, and on to Castleblayney before continuing towards Dublin.

A series of existing and planned IT Remote Working and Knowledge Based Hubs:

- Bio-Connect, Monaghan – Knowledge Hub
- Castleblayney Enterprise Centre
- C-Tek, Carrickmacross
- C-Tek 2 (2023)
- Creighton Corner I.T. Hub, Clones
- M-Tek, Monaghan
- Newbliss IT Hub (2023)
- Scotstown Business Centre
- The Data Hub, Monaghan – A.I. Research Hub
- The Ridge, Castleblayney (2022)
- The Station House, Monaghan





Priority 5
Digital Council



OUR OBJECTIVE

Provide a seamless interface between physical and digital channels for the transparent provision and delivery of services

OUR GOALS

- ▶ Lead by example and become a flagship for the deployment of digital services both within the County and across Ireland by our peers
- ▶ Provide a dedicated digital innovation space and facilities

Provide a seamless interface between physical and digital channels for the transparent provision and delivery of services

Goals	Actions
<p>Lead by example and become a flagship for the deployment of digital services in the County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Promote Monaghan as a centre of excellence for digital innovation by acting as a champion through the deployment of services digitally ▶ Drive development of the Citizens App by making all council services accessible within the app. This will be underpinned by a new Council CRM system to support higher standards of customer service and data quality ▶ Champion the “Smart Monaghan” initiative ▶ Encourage the adoption of Peppol and eInvoicing to improve the security and efficiency of supplier payments ▶ Progress digital government within the county by making key documents available to citizens via the app e.g. council meetings minutes ▶ Support local initiatives and their digital enhancement and evolution through existing Council mechanisms e.g. Local Enterprise Office, Broadband Officer and Tourism
<p>Provide a dedicated digital innovation space and facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Support the establishment of a “Digital Innovation Hub” within County Monaghan ▶ Assess options to establish co-working and incubation spaces within the existing real estate portfolio ▶ Drive and encourage digital enterprises to operate and benefit from new innovation centres across the county

DIGITAL COUNCIL

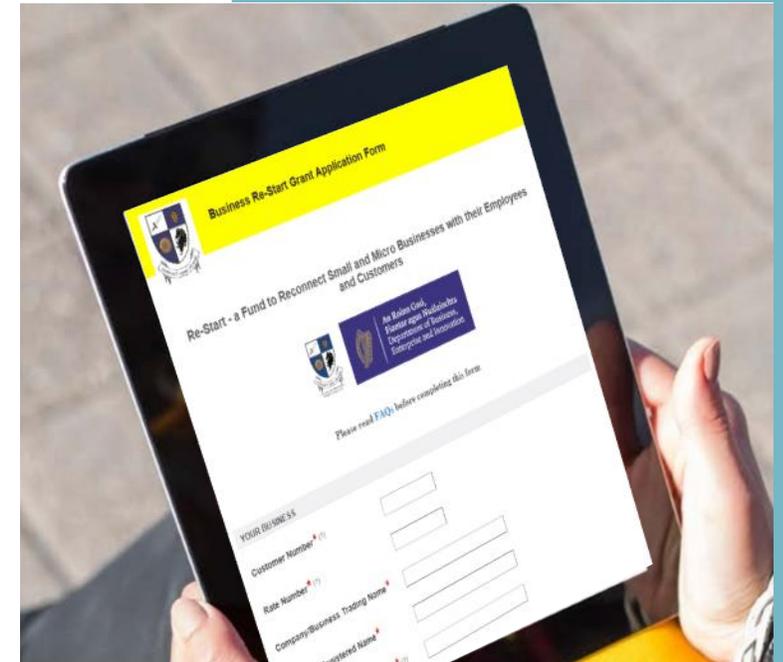
Provide a seamless interface between physical and digital channels for the transparent provision and delivery of services

Automation in response to COVID-19

Monaghan County Council has embarked on a digital transformation journey which is transforming how the organisation operates and how services are delivered. More and more services are being delivered online while internal processes are being redesigned and automated to improve efficiencies and eliminate paper from the system.

Business continuity during the current COVID-19 pandemic has been effortless for staff as they can access electronic documents securely and operate efficiently from home. Likewise, citizens have been able to access services online outside normal working hours and while offices were closed during lock-down. Using Laserfiche Enterprise Document Management System Monaghan County Council has been agile and able to respond quickly and develop effective solutions for new services required during the pandemic while meeting challenging deadlines.

End-to-end solutions from online application through to payment of grants were implemented in-house within a few days for the COVID-19 Business Re-Start Grant and Re-Start Grant Plus. Solutions were also developed for the COVID-19 Mortgage Payment Break and Emergency Fund for Community Groups. In addition, online forms were developed, and automatic workflows implemented for several community grants including Town & Village Renewals, CLÁR Measure 1 and Measure 2, and Community Enhancement Programme 2020. As well as public facing services, the Council continued to develop solutions to replace traditionally manual internal processes including Chief Executive Orders, Staff Increment Process, and Health & Safety inspections.



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DIGITAL COUNCIL

Provide a seamless interface between physical and digital channels for the transparent provision and delivery of services

PATRICK KAVANAGH CENTRE

The Patrick Kavanagh Centre

Inniskeen's Patrick Kavanagh Centre -operational in the 200 years old deconsecrated St Mary's Church since 1994- reopened in July 2020 after extensive refurbishment, with a brand-new state of the art exhibition and performance space.

The exhibition features a canny mix of artefact and digital technology with a series of touchscreens and digital projectors bringing the Patrick Kavanagh story to life. Touchscreen content and administration can be managed remotely thanks to recently installed Fibre Broadband connection.

The Kavanagh Centre recently purchased a digital screen and conferencing solution further enhancing its digital capacity.

The Patrick Kavanagh Centre is also participating in Failte Ireland 'Digital that Delivers' programme supporting the transformation of organisational digital capacity for visitor attractions throughout the country. The first phase of this will see the centre upgrade to a new ticketing and CRM solution that result in better customer experience, deliver powerful consumer insights and support greater connectivity with partners.





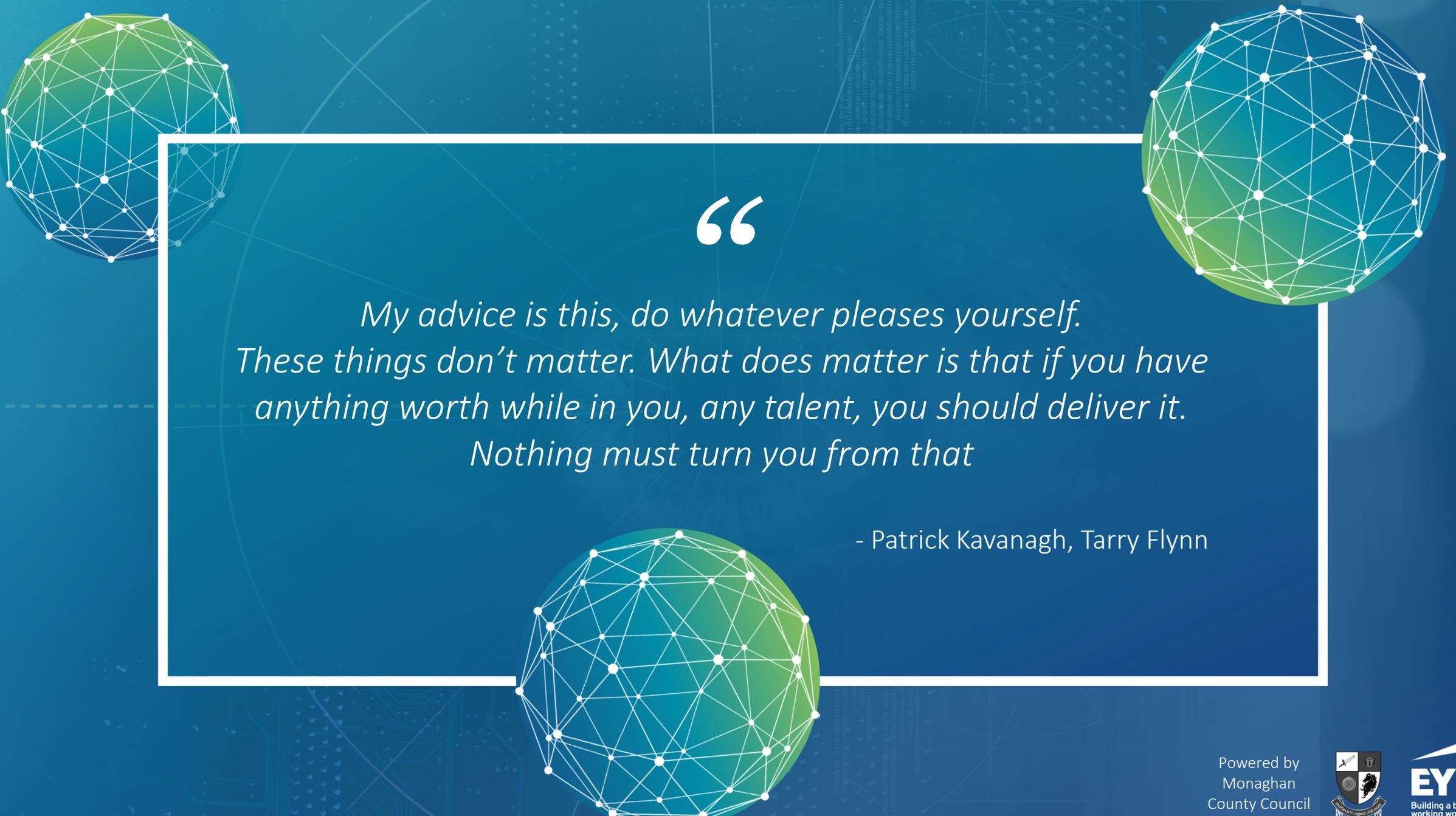
Transition to Digital

HOW WE WILL MOVE FORWARD WITH AMBITION

The Digital Strategy is an agile document which will undergo regular monitoring by the **Digital and Innovation Steering Group** .

The **ongoing assessment** by the steering group will focus on the following areas:

- ▶ A review of the 5 priorities in the digital strategy to determine the continued relevance of these priorities
- ▶ Discussion of the progress of aligned plans including but not restricted to the Monaghan Local Economic & Community Plan, the County Development Plan, the National Broadband Plan and the National Digital Strategy, to determine if any new priority areas have surfaced during the implementation of these or other key local and national plans and strategies
- ▶ Review of actions associated with each of the 5 priority areas to determine the status of each of these and whether new action items need to be added or existing items closed
- ▶ A report of this quarterly review will be compiled and presented to all stakeholders
- ▶ **An annual review** of the strategy will be developed to present an overview of the progress of the strategy over the year and to make recommendations on any considerations or modifications that need to be made for the year ahead



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*My advice is this, do whatever pleases yourself.
These things don't matter. What does matter is that if you have
anything worth while in you, any talent, you should deliver it.
Nothing must turn you from that*

- Patrick Kavanagh, Tarry Flynn