Public Service ICT Strategy

January 2015

"Delivering better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT."

An Roinn Caiteachais Phoiblí
agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public
Expenditure and Reform

Contents

Foreword

We live in a rapidly changing world. Shifts in technology together with shifts in people's expectations for Government services require new approaches to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in the Public Service.

I welcome this Public Service ICT Strategy, which sets out how the Public Service can meet these expectations. Building on the successful delivery of many existing services, the Strategy sets out how we can operate in a more efficient, shared and integrated manner across all of Government while delivering new and innovative digital services to citizens and businesses.

The Strategy identifies 5 key objectives aimed at providing a framework for technology innovation and excellence in the Public Service. The focus is on better sharing and integration of technology infrastructure; continued and improved digitisation of government services to citizens; facilitating lawful sharing of data; improving governance; and improving the ICT resource levels and skillsets across the Public Service.

The potential for improvements through the innovative use of technology is significant. Implementation will require a transformational programme of change, not just technological but administrative and cultural also. When implemented, the Strategy will deliver an enhanced quality of service as well as social and economic benefits.

This Public Service ICT Strategy was prepared by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (CIO) in my Department in conjunction with the Public Service CIO Council. I wish to express my appreciation for their efforts and I look forward to seeing the positive outcomes as the Strategy is implemented.

Brendan Howlin TD
Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New developments in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are fundamentally changing the way we live, work and interact with each other. Shifts to digital technology such as the rapid rise in the use of mobile devices and widespread information sharing as well as experiences with other industries such as banking, travel, retail and entertainment mean that citizens' expectations for technology enabled government services have risen significantly in recent years. This shift in expectations coupled with the financial pressure on Government to transform and "do more and better with less", presents new opportunities to deliver better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants. With technology at the heart of Ireland's economic agenda, this Strategy embraces the new technological era and will set an example for the successful use of ICT for delivering public services.

"Delivering better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT"

- The Public Service will be more agile and deliver more user centric and innovative services for citizens and businesses.
- Innovative use of ICT in the Public Service will deliver better value for taxpayers by creating efficiencies through integration, consolidation and sharing of common infrastructure, systems and resources.
- Adoption and facilitation of digital technologies will increase productivity, improve the relationship between citizens, businesses and government and will deliver social and economic benefits for Ireland.
- Integrated services and increased data sharing will drive significant efficiencies; will facilitate insight driven decision making; will increase openness and transparency between Government and the public; and will provide a much higher user experience and quality of service for citizens, businesses and public servants.
- Improved ICT governance will ensure alignment, reduce risk and support unification as envisaged under the Public Service Reform Plan and Civil Service Renewal Plan.
- The future needs for ICT skills will be met through professionalisation of ICT streams, targeted recruitment and improved mobility and succession planning across all Public Bodies.

The Public Service comprises of a diverse range of Government Departments, Offices and Agencies (hereinafter referred to as 'Public Bodies') delivering a wide range of services across all areas of society and business. Each Public Body has a breadth of business needs and varying ICT requirements and capabilities. ICT has been recognised as a critical component for the successful delivery of many existing services and this Strategy will enable the Public Service to build on these successes and use ICT to operate in a more efficient, shared and integrated manner across all of Government. Given the broad range of services provided by all Public Bodies, this Public Service ICT Strategy defines approaches and principles that will deliver real change and efficiency, while creating a structure through which individual Public Bodies can deliver their own strategies to support their individual business needs.

When delivered, this Strategy will create a new model for ICT delivery across the Public Service; delivering more efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery through a more integrated, shared and digital environment.

1.1 Strategic Direction

This Strategy has identified 5 key strategic objectives that will set the future direction for innovation and excellence in ICT within the Public Service.

1. Build to Share

Creating ICT shared services to support integration across the wider Public Service to drive efficiency, standardisation, consolidation, reduction in duplication and control cost.

2. Digital First

Digitisation of key transactional services and the increased use of ICT to deliver improved efficiency within Public Bodies and provide new digital services to citizens, businesses and public servants.

3. Data as an Enabler

In line with statutory obligations and Data Protection guidelines, facilitate increased data sharing and innovative use of data across all Public Bodies to enable the delivery of integrated services, improve decision making and improve openness and transparency between Government and the public.

4. Improve Governance

Ensure that the ICT strategy is aligned, directed and monitored across Public Bodies to support the specific goals and objectives at a whole-of-government level and with an emphasis on shared commitment.

5. Increase Capability

Ensure the necessary ICT skills and resources are available to meet the current and future ICT needs of the Public Service.

The Strategy will ensure future investment in ICT is aligned across Public Bodies and continues to deliver the required services and efficiencies for the Public Service, for citizens and for businesses.

Accordingly, this ICT Strategy is aligned with the objectives of the Public Service Reform Plan[1] of increasing efficiencies and the overarching objective of providing better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants though embracing the latest technological advances.

Delivery of this strategy is a major transformational programme which will require diligent planning, excellence in implementation, cultural change and an increase in capability across all Public Bodies. Successful implementation requires a detailed implementation plan with associated change and programme management.

Public Service Reform Plan Alignment

This will also require leadership and support at Ministerial and senior official levels across the Public Service, as well as the engagement of other key stakeholders, including the Private Sector, in creating a new and modern ICT-enabled Public Service.
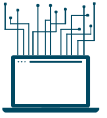
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[1] http://reformplan.per.gov.ie/index.html
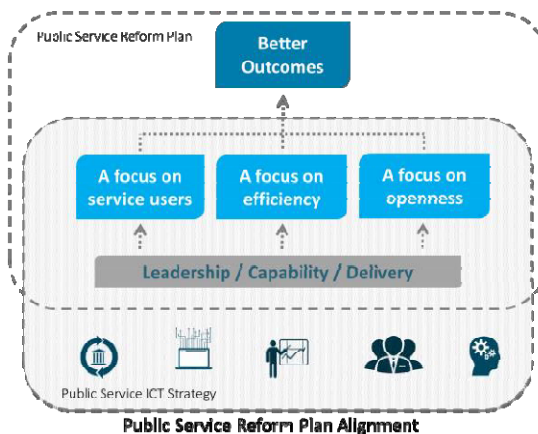
1.2 Strategic Objectives Overview

This table provides an overview of the guiding principles of the Public Service ICT Strategy Objectives and highlights where this Strategy aligns with the Public Service Reform Plan.

A detailed description of each objective is provided in Section 3 of this Strategy.

Strategic Objectives	Guiding Principles	Public Service Reform Plan Alignment			
		Focus on Service Users	Focus on Efficiency	Focus on Openness	Leadership & Capability
1. Build to Share	• Focus on the sharing of services across Public Bodies delivered through a Government Cloud to drive efficiency, reduce cost and support integration across the Public Service. This will include services, infrastructure and technology platforms that are common across Public Bodies but will not include core business applications required by an individual Public Body. • An integrated infrastructure will allow Public Bodies to collaborate and share information and facilitate the easier integration of systems in order to provide new digital services for citizens and businesses.	✓	✓	✓	
2. Digital First	• Build on previous successes by continuing to digitise high volume citizen and business interactions with Public Bodies. • Recognise that the digitisation of services, interactions and processes provides new opportunities to deliver increased efficiency through end to end digital processes and provide more effective delivery channels for citizens and businesses.	✓	✓	✓	
3. Data as an Enabler	• Facilitate better sharing of data on a whole-of–government basis to support better decision making, drive efficiency and deliver a range of new digital Government services to citizens and businesses, subject to relevant legislation. • Recognise that the governance and management of data is critical to ensuring data quality, as is the implementation of the necessary infrastructure to allow sharing of data between Public Bodies while recognising citizens data privacy rights.		✓	✓	✓
4. Improve Governance	• Focus on improving ICT governance to ensure alignment, reduce risk and support unification, as envisaged under the Public Service Reform Plan and Civil Service Renewal Plan. • Ensure that ICT projects are aligned, directed and monitored to support the specific goals and objectives of a Public Body at a whole-of-government level.		✓	✓	✓
5. Increase Capability	• Ensure that the necessary resource levels and skillsets are available through targeted recruitment and succession planning to meet the future ICT needs of the Public Service. • Professionalise the ICT career streams to allow progression within ICT as per the Civil Service Renewal Plan. • Increased use of external managed services providers (MSP's) to support delivery of non-core ICT services to free up critical ICT resources for more value added services.		✓		✓

2. ICT CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND NEW DIRECTIONS

This ICT strategy will ensure future investment in ICT is aligned on a whole-of-government basis while continuing to deliver the required services fundamental to the functioning of our economy and society. Accordingly, this ICT Strategy is aligned with the objectives of the Public Service Reform Plan of increasing efficiencies and the overarching objective of providing better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants.

2.1 Strategic Goal

This Strategy sets out to build on the many successes of the past by continuing to drive delivery of services via digital channels, while maximising the potential benefits of the wide range of data contained across the system. This will support better decision making through data analytics and will provide a better user experience through a joined-up view of citizens and businesses. It is envisaged that further progress can be achieved through a central ICT Strategy; aligning ICT direction and prioritising investment based on whole-of-government objectives. In parallel, the Strategy seeks to leverage current investments in ICT combined with advances in technology, such as cloud computing, to deliver better value for taxpayers by creating efficiencies through integration, consolidation and sharing of common infrastructure, systems and resources.

2.2 Progress to Date

All Public Bodies require ICT to deliver on their mandate in one form or another and all Public Bodies have successfully utilised technology to drive efficiency and deliver services to their customers across a wide variety of areas from tax collection to education and justice.

This has also been supported centrally though various initiatives such as the Cloud Computing and eGovernment Strategies.

Currently there are over 400 services that can be accessed online which include informational services, application services and payment services.[2]

> **Case Study: Revenue Commissioners**
>
> 2014: Ireland is the easiest country in Europe and the sixth easiest country in the world to pay business taxes according to a report issued by PwC, the World Bank and IFC.
>
> *PwC: "One of the reasons why Ireland is the easiest country in Europe in which to deal with taxes is due to the Revenue continuing to make substantial advances in the area of electronic filing and payments and taking a proactive approach to making it 'easier' for companies to deal with their obligations."*
>
> The use of electronic channels hit new levels of usage in 2013 when over 1.2 million Local Property Tax returns were processed through Revenue's online services.

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[2] www.gov.ie

2.3 Opportunities & Challenges

This ICT Strategy recognises that for many Public Bodies, ICT is a complex yet critical component for service delivery. It also recognises that ICT is being successfully used by Public Bodies to support decision-making and to deliver efficient business services.

While challenges lie ahead, this Strategy presents a real opportunity to improve citizen and business engagement, increase internal and external collaboration, further increase efficiencies and improve the overall service provided to citizens and businesses. This table presents the three core opportunities upon which this Strategy has been created, namely Sharing, Digital and Data.

	Opportunities	Challenges
Sharing	Significant scope exists to expand existing ICT shared services initiatives and create new opportunities for the elimination of duplication and to create greater efficiencies across the system. The provision of a more integrated infrastructure and common systems will make it easier for Public Bodies to collaborate and share information.	ICT has traditionally been delivered on a standalone basis with limited sharing of infrastructure and services between Public Bodies. A challenge exists to create a model where services can be delivered on a shared basis within the existing developed structures while meeting the required service levels.
Digital	Digital trends are revolutionising how governments, citizens and businesses interact with each other and the world. Shifts to digital technology such as the rapid rise in the use of smartphones, widespread information sharing and expectations of 'anytime, anywhere' access necessitates investment in whole-of-government strategic projects that target efficiencies or better outcomes for citizens and businesses.	A significant portion of existing ICT spend is on day-to-day delivery of business as usual (BAU) services with little investment in strategic digital projects that target efficiencies or improved services for citizens and businesses. For all organisations, changing culture, managing changing customer expectations and capitalising on the benefits of digital will require careful change management and planning over the longer term.
Data	This Strategy provides an enhanced approach in which data can be shared; duplication reduced; innovation and collaboration encouraged and facilitated; and recognising data as a critical enabler to support new services and better decision making. Furthermore, this will support Open Data initiatives leading to increased openness and transparency between Government and the public.	Increasing data sharing between Public Bodies will be facilitated by new legislation as well as a robust, secure and standardised method for data transfer, data management and governance. Coupled with this is the requirement for a mind-set change and willingness from Public Bodies to share data when a valid business need exists and within the confines of statutory obligations.

3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES – DETAILED VIEW

3.1 Build to Share

All Public Bodies, while having widely diverse responsibilities, employ similar technologies and systems for delivery of day to day activities. These include networks, telephony, email, servers and storage. All major Government Departments employ systems to manage common business processes like parliamentary questions, submissions and records management as well as websites for internal and external facing communication. All of the above can be seen as infrastructure that is generally similar across Public Bodies. Currently this infrastructure is largely delivered on a standalone basis with each Public Body developing and managing its own infrastructure from separate locations. Moving to a more integrated and shared infrastructure model will deliver efficiencies across the Public Service.

> **Case Study: Shared Services (Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine)**
>
> The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine provide full ICT infrastructure support for the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR). Since the service commenced in June 2011 over 6,400 Help Desk calls have been successfully managed in that period with a monthly average of approx. 208 calls being dealt with by DAFM staff.
>
> DAFM also continue the provision of network support to the Department of the Taoiseach. The bulk of phone services in DoT are now provided via a DAFM-hosted Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone system, which is managed internally by DAFM ICT staff.

The implementation of this component of the Strategy will require a full detailed analysis of the associated ICT costs and headcount across the relevant Public Bodies. Any potential efficiency gains referred to as the Reform Dividend[3] could be used to part fund investment in new digital services, innovation and supporting data infrastructure. Moving to a shared services model of shared ICT infrastructure would support integration and sharing of resources across the wider Public Service while driving efficiency and controlling cost. It is also in many ways a prerequisite for implementation of wider collaboration, data sharing, cross-government digital services and ultimately a unified Civil Service as per the Civil Service Renewal Plan.

This objective is underpinned by several key focus areas including:

3.1.1 Delivery of Services via a Government Private Cloud

Creating shared centres of excellence for the delivery and management of common technology infrastructure as a set of services to the wider Public Service. These would be internally and/or externally hosted and delivered via a secure Government Cloud network. Services include hosting, email, web monitoring, servers and storage. These services would be delivered and operated from a number of centres and where applicable, will leverage existing infrastructure and the Government Cloud Services Catalogue to maximise existing investment and reduce delivery times.

3.1.2 Common Applications Delivery

While taking account of existing investments and different solutions that may already be in place, when applicable (e.g. upon scheduled replacement of existing applications),

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[3] http://reformplan.per.gov.ie/exec_summary/exec_summary.html

use a shared capability for the delivery of applications that are common across Public Bodies to address common business challenges and implement these on a government wide basis.

This will require the creation of a central applications delivery and development hub to deliver common applications across Public Bodies. These will be a mixture of packaged off-the-shelf applications and internally developed software. This strategy aims to deliver and centrally support such applications as a shared service rather than enforce a common technical solution in each Public Body.
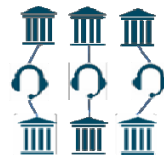
3.1.3 Networks and Telecommunications

Build on existing Government Networks to drive integration across data and telecommunications networks on a Public Service wide basis. Currently a central Government Networks exists to provide connectivity across a range of Public Bodies. Outside of this each Public Body manages its own local network and telecommunications needs. Centralisation of these services into a common Government Telecommunications group will be progressed. This will deliver further efficiencies, reduction in costs and improved standardisation and service levels on a whole-of-government basis.

3.1.4 ICT Support

Currently there are a number of insourced and outsourced ICT support models in place delivering a variety of first and second line desktop and general ICT support services. However, most first and second level support is delivered on standalone basis within Public Bodies. In some cases this is done using a mixture of internal Public Service and contract staff. Where applicable, consolidation of desktop and general ICT support services into more centralised groups supported by external managed services providers (MSPs) will release ICT resources for other services or more strategic ICT activities while providing a more flexible and standardised service.

	In Scope	Out of Scope
Build To Share	Infrastructure; Networks; Telecoms; Cloud Services; Servers; Storage; Desktop and General ICT Services; Public Body Common Business Applications (E.g. Email. Parliamentary Questions etc.)	Public Body Business Specific Applications (E.g. Tax Collection; Agriculture Payments etc.); Business Application Support Services

ICT Procurement

In parallel with the above focus areas, the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) will deliver the commercial implementation of the Public Service ICT Strategy through the development and delivery of sourcing strategies aimed to reduce the current fixed ICT cost base. These strategies will leverage the considerable buying power of the Public Service and will include, where possible, aggregation of spend, standardisation of specifications and on-going analysis/renegotiation of current ICT contracts. The Office of the Government CIO (OGCIO) and CIO Council will work closely with the OGP and the ICT Category Council to deliver on these strategies.

3.2 Digital First
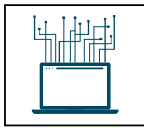
A Digital Government is not simply about putting front-end services online but rather it encompasses everything from the core digitisation of public services to the digital infrastructure, governance and processes, including both front-end and back-office transformation needed to deliver services for citizens, businesses and Government.

Government should use the appropriate mix of electronic channels of communication and engagement to improve citizen satisfaction in service delivery, reach new levels of engagement and trust, and increase efficiency within the Public Service. This Strategic Objective will build on previous successes by the continued digitisation of the top citizen interactions and the increased use of ICT to deliver improved efficiency within the Public Service and provide new digital services to citizens, businesses and public servants. This will also include initiatives to garner feedback from the public on their expectations and the design of digital services from Government[4].

This objective is underpinned by several key focus areas including:

3.2.1 Digitisation of Top Citizen and Business Interactions

Prioritise the transformation, modernisation and digitisation of the main existing citizen and business transactional service across Public Services. Significant progress has been made in digitisation of information and transactional services and further digitisation will be planned on the basis of a rolling programme with new projects being added as existing ones are completed. Prioritisation will be agreed and progress monitored centrally on an ongoing basis.

> **Case Study: Digital Interactions (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport)** The Online Motor Tax (OMT) service at www.motortax.ie enables vehicle owners to pay their motor tax by secure link over the internet thus avoiding attendance at local motor tax offices or making application by post which can involve delays and inconvenience. Some 98% of vehicles can have their motor tax renewed online.
>
> Take up of the overall OMT facility (renewal and first licensing) is excellent. Approximately 66% of vehicle owners nationally who are eligible to do so are taxing their vehicles online. The total number of online discs issued in 2013 was over 2.55 million generating tax revenues of over €605.8 million from that source which represents approx. 55% of overall motor tax income.

3.2.2 Strategic Digital Projects

A small number of key strategic Digital projects will be identified and prioritised within each Public Body. These should include both eGovernment and back-office improvement initiatives and will require full buy-in from the relevant management board. Projects should deliver demonstrable efficiency and good value within individual Public Bodies or on an interdepartmental basis. Priority should be given to projects that leverage innovative, cloud or mobile technologies to deliver new services and drive efficiencies.

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[4] Examples include the Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey and ongoing citizen and business consultative panels.

3.2.3 Design for Digital

All new services being delivered by Public Bodies should be designed for "Digital First" meaning they are compelling and intuitive to use and those who can use digital services will voluntarily choose to do so. This will require a shift in the culture of Public Bodies so that they think digital first and design digital services around the needs of the end-user. The introduction of new channels, digital services or digital work practices will present challenges requiring an increase in digital skills across the wider Public Service.

> **Case Study: Digital Interactions**
> **(Department of Education and Skills)**
> The Online Claims System (OLCS) is used by almost 4,000 primary and post-primary schools to submit details of school employee absences, along with claims for the payment of substitute and casual appointees. Approx. 2.4m transactions are processed annually through the OLCS, updating the school employee HR and payroll systems, and it is essential to the efficient processing of salary claims for substitute and casual appointees.

3.3 Data as an Enabler

Recognising data as a critical enabler and sharing this data on a whole-of–government basis is critical to supporting better decision making, increasing simplicity of engagement, driving efficiency and delivering a range of new digital government services to citizens and businesses. Good examples of data sharing exist between Public Bodies but this is primarily implemented on a case by case basis. This Strategy recognises the benefits of data sharing and will facilitate better sharing across all Public Bodies.

Implementing a data strategy is a complex and challenging task. The Data Sharing and Governance Bill currently being prepared by Government will provide a streamlined legislative basis for data-sharing, as well as setting standards for transparency and governance around the sharing of personal data and requirements for the use of identifiers by Public Bodies. In implementing any strategy, existing infrastructure and services such as the Single Customer View and Public Services Card should be utilised in creating an infrastructure to allow citizens to engage in a secure but integrated manner across the wider Public Service.

This element of the Strategy has five key focus areas which will require time, co-operation and investment to achieve a successful outcome. This will be driven through the OGCIO with the engagement of the CIO Council and Data Protection Commissioner.

3.3.1 Common Data Model

Identify and agree the common data set across the Public Service that uniquely defines citizens and businesses.

3.3.2 Data Management

Create functions for oversight and governance of critical common data to ensure standardisation of data and drive data quality.

3.3.3 Data Infrastructure

Implement the necessary infrastructure to allow aggregation and facilitate sharing of common data on a Public Service wide basis to support new digital services and secure authentication to existing services. This would leverage existing systems and services such as Public Services Card to provide a more integrated citizen experience.

Case Study: Using Shared Data to Reduce Fraud (Department of Social Protection)[*] The Department of Social Protection carries out data matching with external agencies to identify and target cases for review. These activities identify appropriate cases for referral to scheme areas and investigators.

In one such exchange, information was provided by Revenue on persons who had received interest on investments made and it was clear from the interest received that they had invested significant amounts of capital. This data was matched with Departmental records (i.e. means tested payments) and cases were referred for review where there was a possibility that means from financial savings had not been disclosed. In working age schemes (Jobseeker's Allowance, One Family Parent and Disability Allowance) these cases were investigated by the Department's Special Investigation Unit.

Outcome

A total of 941 case investigations have been concluded. These investigations have resulted in overpayments and the disallowance of social welfare payments to the value of €25.7 Million. Thus far, overpayments to the value of €9.54 Million have been recovered.

An Roinn Coimirce Sóisialaí
Department of Social Protection
www.welfare.ie

*Department of Social Protection *Compliance and Anti-Fraud Strategy 2014-2018*

3.3.4 Data Insight

Identify opportunities for better data analysis by Public Bodies to target service delivery, improve services and better inform decision making. This should include creation of a centre of excellence for data analytics to assist Public Bodies in addressing common business challenges in this area.

3.3.5 Data Protection

Create functions for oversight and governance of privacy and security for the safe and appropriate use of data as an enabler to support new services and better decision making.

In line with the expectations of the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner, the resulting Implementation Plan from this Strategy will provide a comprehensive approach to how the governance (e.g. control, access, identification of data controller) and security arrangements (e.g. IT-led, encryption, firewalls, data transfer protocols) of data sharing are to be dealt with and how guidance on when data may lawfully be shared using a principles-based approach is to be managed.

Furthermore, it is critical that these data sharing proposals are not just seen in terms of business need and efficiency, but that their perceived benefits are properly weighed up against the personal fundamental rights of the individual.

Open Data

This Strategic Objective also supports increased Open Data in electronic format by government to provide transparency of government operations as well as laying the foundations to encourage participation by the private industry and citizens, and spurring new ideas and innovations. The proliferation of Open Data has profound implications for companies, governments, and individuals.

3.4 Improve Governance

ICT Governance ensures that ICT projects are aligned, directed and monitored to support the specific goals and objectives of a Public Body at a whole-of-government level. Governance structures, aligned with overarching strategies are required for delivery of the intended outcomes of the ICT Strategy. As part of the new Civil Service Management Board, an opportunity exists to increase collaboration and establish a Public Service wide ICT-focussed governance to agree and prioritise government objectives.

A Public Service ICT governance model will be developed to ensure that ICT priorities reflect overarching Reform and Renewal objectives. Key initiatives to develop an enhanced governance approach are set out below.

3.4.1 ICT Governance

It is recommended that a body is created under the Civil Service Management Board to provide governance of ICT and ensure the Strategy has the necessary mandate at the highest level. This will allow the elements of the ICT Strategy, such as continued digitisation of services to citizens, to be reflected in Public Bodies' individual priorities, and provide the mandate for delivery of a more integrated ICT infrastructure. This requires an effective governance model at senior level.

While each Public Body will continue to have its own individual ICT priorities to support its business strategy, this mechanism will align ICT deliverables with Government priorities. This will include defining an agreed scope of the role of Office of the Government CIO (OGCIO) in the central governance of ICT across the Public Service.

3.4.2 CIO Council

The CIO Council provides an advisory role on ICT policy and strategy and is responsible for communication and legitimisation of these decisions across the wider Public Service.

The CIO Council will be restructured to ensure better communications and the sharing of ideas and dissemination of best practice across the ICT community within all Public Bodies. Improvements can be achieved through regular forums and the creation of discussion groups around shared or common processes or services. The CIO Council should also be given a clear mandate for communication and alignment of ICT policy and strategy within Departments, Sectors and the wider Public Service.

3.4.3 ICT Policy

ICT systems support critical services and day-to-day operations in Public Bodies. Consequently, these systems need to be managed appropriately to minimise potential risk factors that would impact on the delivery of Public Services. To deliver best-in-class ICT services on a whole-of-government basis, guidance and policies are required to inform Public Bodies on individual ICT issues.

The OGCIO, in collaboration with the CIO Council, will define and implement whole-of-government policies and best practices for key ICT areas to reduce risk and support standardisation and integration. It is also recommended that the OGCIO and CIO Council will work with the various internal audit functions to ensure that agreed policies and controls are in place and monitored regularly.

3.5 Increase Capability

The rapid pace of change in ICT combined with accelerated retirement and headcount reduction initiatives have resulted in a skills shortage and skills gap across the wider Public Service. This Strategy identifies targeted recruitment of ICT professionals and professionalisation of ICT as critical to future delivery of ICT enabled public services.

Given the importance of ICT in service delivery, it is essential that the correct ICT resource levels and skillsets are in place; and, as with any key business function, that succession planning for critical roles be established.

This objective is underpinned by several key focus areas including:

3.5.1 Professionalisation

Delivery of ICT requires a wide range of skills from support services and infrastructure management to project management, systems architecture and software development. Professionalisation of ICT career streams to allow progression within ICT is critical; as is mobility of ICT staff across Public Bodies to develop expertise and provide succession planning.

> Professionalisation of ICT career streams is a key element of the Civil Service Renewal Plan and will be supported by the OGCIO and CIO Council to ensure these goals are achieved.

3.5.2 Centralised Resource Pool

The Public Service provides a wide range of services across society and ICT is critical to delivery of many key day-to-day services. One of the challenges this presents for smaller Public Bodies is how to ensure that the diversity of skills required for the range of ICT services is available or viable in these Public Bodies. Where this does not exist, a dependency on external bodies is created for initiation of ICT based projects. This can increase risk factors and costs of the associated delivery.

> It is recommended that a central core competency of ICT expertise is made available under the OGCIO which together with the significant ICT experience that exists in Public Bodies, will support small and medium sized Public Bodies in designing and delivering ICT solutions to address their business challenges.

3.5.3 External Managed Service Providers

Given the current ICT skill shortages, the variety of careers available to ICT professionals and the continued Public Service headcount pressure, a more flexible resourcing model will be required in some Public Bodies to meet the needs of the future. Analysis will be undertaken in collaboration with each Public Body to identify opportunities for business benefits by blending internal management with external services providers for ICT services and realising the potential to release resources for other business or more strategic ICT activities.

4. SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

4.1 Summary

This Strategy sets out to build the ICT foundations that will deliver the government services into the future. It is specifically aligned with the objectives of the Public Service Reform Plan and the goals of the Civil Service Renewal Plan. It aims to provide a framework for the delivery of greater efficiencies in Public Service ICT delivery and administration, with better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants.

The Strategy is based on a high level analysis of current ICT services across a range of Public Bodies, analysis of international best practices for the use of ICT within Governments and consultation with the Public Service CIO Council.

> Leveraging the Reform Dividend to fund technology improvements, invest in the Public Service workforce and realise internal process efficiencies will deliver efficiencies and better outcomes for citizens, businesses and Public Servants.

If implemented correctly, the Strategy will create a new model for ICT delivery within Public Bodies and across the Public Service; delivering more efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery with better outcomes for citizens, businesses and public servants through a more integrated, shared and digital environment.

4.2 Next Steps

- A comprehensive analysis of ICT expenditure and headcount as well as a base-lining exercise is being undertaken in order to support the implementation of the Strategy.
- On completion of this detailed analysis, the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) will be further developed and business cases for investment in the various strategic initiatives will be prepared. This step is also necessary to identify the resources available to be reinvested in other elements of the Strategy as part of the Reform Dividend.
- The resources and funding required for the delivery of the SIP in the longer term (beyond 2015) will be built into the budget cycle for the relevant Public Bodies from 2016 onwards.
- Given the scale of the challenge and the diversity of the Public Service it is envisaged that the programme would be broken in to a number of defined phases targeting specific ICT areas within specific Public Bodies and on an interdepartmental basis.
- The Strategy provides a 5-year horizon for delivering better outcomes and efficiency through innovation and excellence in ICT but given the ever-changing nature of ICT, the Strategy will be reviewed for currency and updated accordingly on an annual basis.
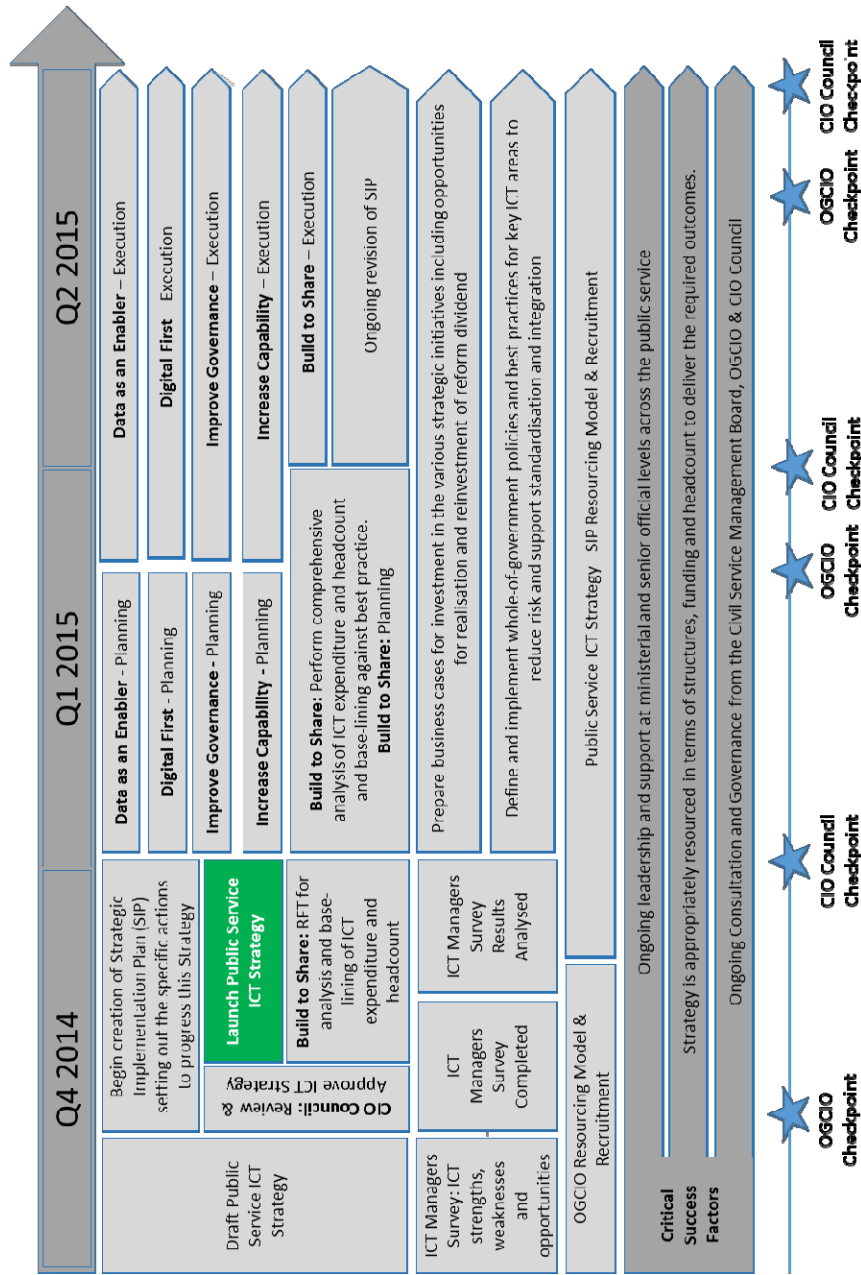
Fig 4.1: Public Service ICT Strategy – High-Level Roadmap