

Policy briefing

# Our key policy themes 2022

May 2022



# Introduction

Socitm is trusted for its integrity and influence. Together with our members, we have the strength and depth to shape and drive change in public service policy concerning digital technology, data and information.

Our policy work is broken down into five key themes. These are critical to delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses in the places they live and work.

For each theme, Socitm works collaboratively with members, our Local CIO Council,<sup>1</sup> and with our strategic and international partners. We develop evidence-focused policy thinking based on best practice. We also create practical guidance for successful local policy implementation.

Our policy work builds on and further develops our enduring relationship with bodies such as the LGA,<sup>2</sup> COSLA,<sup>3</sup> WLGA,<sup>4</sup> Solace,<sup>5</sup> CIPFA,<sup>6</sup> ADASS,<sup>7</sup> techUK,<sup>8</sup> DLUHC,<sup>9</sup> GDS,<sup>10</sup> the Scottish Local Government Digital Office,<sup>11</sup> the Scottish Government,<sup>12</sup> the Welsh Government,<sup>13</sup> the third, private, health and university sectors. It also strengthens our relationship with the media.

Policy is central to Socitm's work in representing and promoting the work of digital leaders and ICT professionals in the public sector and helps inform our research, events and services.

Led by our policy and research director, our policy work is supported by the president's team and our CEO.

**Socitm policy is going places** – focused on shaping places that make a positive difference to people's lives.

**Policy gives members a voice** – the right policies and the right implementations make for better outcomes and a better society.

**Policy drives everything** – our research, guidance, events and services to members.

**Policy changes people's lives** – healthy, active, caring, vibrant, connected, inclusive, sustainable, growing, curious, creative, learning, safe and secure.

## Purpose and audience for this policy briefing



Socitm produces policy briefings to represent the interests of those working in digital and IT roles in local public services. This policy briefing will be of interest to senior policy makers, decision makers and managers involved in the creation, design, commissioning and delivery of such services.

## Socitm's key policy themes



### Regeneration, sustainability and connectivity

Policy lead: **Sam Smith** (President)

This is a new theme for Socitm, reflecting the extraordinary impacts of Covid-19 on our members. Organisations and local, national and regional economies, and local authorities have been forced to change the way they work to address the needs of their communities.



### Leadership, diversity and skills

Policy lead: **Matt Lewis** (Vice-president)

Our Modern Leadership guides articulate the pace at which technological advancement is happening. It describes the fact we are all experiencing the impact of digital technology on our lives. If we are to consider this phenomenon and respond to it positively and proactively from our sector's perspective, there are several issues and challenges to address.



### Service design and transformation

Policy lead: **Huw McKee** (Vice-president)

To support leaders in co-design, co-creation and co-delivery of public services that achieve better outcomes in the communities they serve. This includes maximising the potential of digital opportunities within a dynamic environment, and using service design principles to consider the complete service requirements. The approach needs to be a holistic one, focusing on all the core components, stakeholders, organisations and users that combine to facilitate the establishment and delivery of service outcomes in any given ecosystem.



### Ethical, responsible and secure use of technologies and data

Policy lead: **Mark Lumley** (Vice-president)

How do we understand and promote the ethical, responsible and secure use of technologies? This includes the data generated and stored, and the public service designs, processes and interactions they enable. It also extends to the outcomes they generate. All this while ensuring public benefit and minimising unintended consequences. In practical terms, what do we mean by ethics and how do we apply them?



### Modernising ICT service delivery

Policy lead: **Alison Hughes** (Vice-president)

ICT service delivery is no longer business as usual. We need to modernise and to make decisions about how we manage and resource our operations in different ways. To do this, we need to make sense of emerging technologies to underpin new service patterns while recognising ongoing funding challenges to meet the increasing expectations of service users. How do we make this happen seamlessly and effectively?





## Regeneration, sustainability and connectivity



Policy lead: **Sam Smith**  
(President)

**In partnership with:** AvePoint and Tanium



### Strategic partners:

Institute of Government and Public Policy (IGPP); Linked Organisation of Local Authority ICT Societies (LOLA); Local Government Association (LGA); Major Cities of Europe (MCE); St George's House; University of Western England

### Team members:

William Barker, Martin Ferguson, Andrew Rogers

## What we are aiming to do?

- Explore the emerging picture from local authority regeneration, sustainability and connectivity strategies to update the common post-Covid “pillars” and establish a clear framework for the next steps of place-based recovery.
- Development of a “Planting the Flag #3” – Resilient People, Resilient Communities, and Resilient Places Framework, drawing key lessons learnt from UK and international partners.
- Develop with Socitm Advisory next steps “No reverse gear – revolutionising public services”<sup>14</sup> offerings that inform continuous improvement across local public sector regeneration, sustainability and connectivity plans and initiatives.
- Extend Socitm’s place-based Ethical Change model to encompass Integrated social care, wider community health, wellbeing and cohesion.
- Work with key stakeholders to develop a common place-based digital taxonomy for leaders, policy makers, practitioners and influencers to help inform forward policy and delivery of local public services.
- Champion the local digital capital agenda in partnership with anchor institutions to support community wealth building, skills development and levelling-up.
- Build linkages around inclusion, civility and ethical change with the work underway in Socitm’s other policy themes.
- Share supporting use cases for place-based regeneration, sustainability and connectivity that support the wider drive to build sustainable places in which people and communities can thrive.
- Develop leading edge research on the “new machinery of government” agenda covering the role and impact of machine technologies, AI and algorithmic decision-making in supporting place-based regeneration, sustainability and connectivity.



## Leadership, diversity and skills



Policy lead: **Matt Lewis**  
(Vice-president)

*Matt Lewis*

In partnership with: **Amazon Web Services**



### Strategic partners:

British Computer Society; Federation for Informatics Professions; Health Education England; LGA; NHS Digital; NHS Transformation Directorate; Solace

### Team members:

Matt Gascoigne, Nadira Hussain, Aidan Matthews, Andrew Rogers

## What are we aiming to do?

- > Improve digital proficiency among managers and employees at all levels of the organisation and the sector.
- > Champion the importance of diverse leadership and teams for the design of services and products that work for everyone.
- > Examine how to attract, recruit and retain skills within the workforce including apprenticeships and returners.
- > Champion our 'continuous development' methodology for talent and expertise amongst our members, partners and wider organisations as part of our 'Lead' initiative.
- > Continue to build our alumni community of interest which will provide support to member colleagues, create the public sector talent pool and facilitate succession planning. This will also help to champion the work that Socitm does and attract others to it.
- > Reference the work being done across the sector, in particular the NHS, voluntary/ third sectors to ensure that the Socitm leadership and skills development programmes are aligned and demonstrate and complement other initiatives.
- > Provide collaboration across the sector and with other agencies so that we can facilitate information exchange, knowledge sharing, and learn from the best practice that we have individually adopted and promoted.
- > Drive the development of digital leadership in the public sector, championing the need for all leaders and managers to have a strategic vision of the possibilities and potentials of the effective use and deployment of ethical technologies and data.



## Service design and transformation



Policy lead: **Huw McKee**  
(Vice-president)

**In partnership with:** Microsoft



### Strategic partners:

CIPFA; COSLA; GDS; Jisc; Local Digital Collaboration Unit (DLUHC); LGA; Local Government Digital Committee; MCE; Scottish Government; Scottish Improvement Service; Scottish Local Government Digital Office and Digital Transformation Board; Solace; Welsh Government; WLG

### Team members:

Nadira Hussain, Andrew Rogers

## What are we aiming to do?

- Put citizens' needs at the heart of service design, recognising that digital brings new opportunities to respond to people's raised expectations.
- Demonstrate essential collaborative and co-creation approaches to service design.
- Facilitate design thinking with key stakeholders that frame whole problems and generate transformed outcomes, focusing on end-to-end service needs – technology is one of the 'means to the end' not the 'end in itself'.
- Ensure accessibility to digital services is inclusive and addresses digital literacy and confidence in the local community, supported by availability and reliability of local infrastructure.
- Maximise digital awareness, leadership and innovative behaviours across all senior stakeholders within the public sector. Ensure leaders obtain and develop a modern digital leadership skillset, outlook and toolkit, and can present their cases to achieve improved effectiveness and efficiencies in digitally enabled service delivery.
- Highlight and enhance the importance of cultural change and adoption within an organisation and across the wider public sector to ensure the widespread acceptance and implementation of digital service delivery.
- Devise holistic approaches to the creation of digital applications, platforms and infrastructure by adopting updated data and business processes.
- Understand what works and does not, in ways that are ethical, to transform how public services are designed and delivered for the benefit of the communities that we serve.



## Ethical, responsible and secure use of technologies and data



Policy lead: **Mark Lumley**  
(Vice-president)

*M. Lumley*

**In partnership with:** TBC

### **Strategic partners:**

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport; Global Peter Drucker Forum; LGA; MCE; National Cyber Security Centre; Open Data Institute; Oxford Internet Institute's Data Ethics Lab; Scottish Government Cyber Group

### **Team members:**

William Barker, Russ Charlesworth, Martin Ferguson

## What are we aiming to do?

- > Identify what is unique and different about an ethical, place-based approach to using technologies and data. Explore how the approach helps us to design better services, leveraging benefits and better outcomes in support of wider regeneration, sustainability and connectivity.
- > Understand how to overcome ethical challenges through self-reflection, discussion and scenario-based thinking.
- > Generate a rationale for separating the ethical use of technology and data from regulatory compliance based on how we demonstrate that innovation is for social good.
- > Explore ethical practice as an intrinsic part of organisational design and the value proposition to users and customers.
- > Consider the role of the CIO/Head of IT in taking responsibility, ownership, leadership and action on the ethical and safe use of technology and data.
- > Consider the place of security, cybercrime, privacy, social interaction, governance and free will, and their relationship with ethical standards and accepted codes of practice in areas such as health, care and finance.
- > Upgrade the Civic Cyber Resilience Model to encompass the Secure Connected Places guidance for local organisations responsible for the design, procurement, implementation and management of connected places technology and data to deliver local services.
- > Develop ethical guidance for the following areas: practical use of emerging technologies; harnessing internal and external data; design of services, processes and interactions; engagement of emerging technology and data analytics micro-industries; and development of workforce capabilities and competencies.
- > Promote the education of designers and users, particularly how empathy, responsibility, competence and trust underpin motivations to make positive or negative uses of technologies and data.



## Modernising ICT service delivery



Policy lead: **Alison Hughes**  
(Vice-president)

In partnership with: Okta

### Strategic partners:

Cyber Technical Advisory Group; DCMS; GDS; iNetwork; Local Digital Collaboration Unit (DLUHC); NCSC; LGA; Local Government Cyber Security Stakeholder Group; Warning, Advice and Reporting Points

### Team members:

Andrew Rogers, Dave Sanderson

## What we are aiming to do?

- Evaluate future models of user support and service desk best practice in our changing landscape of ICT service provision.
  - Highlight modern, engaging, pragmatic solutions to our ICT security and data management challenges, working with information governance colleagues and managing risks.
  - Maximise learning across the public sector through partnerships, collaboration and sharing proven best practice in building robust ICT services and supporting value to our citizens.
  - Develop a technology roadmap, including the role that cloud and hybrid technology models play in designing ICT service models for the future.
  - Work effectively with the Crown Commercial Service (CCS), partners and resellers to ensure the sector is achieving best value for the provisioning of products, solutions and services.
  - Identify future roles and skill sets within the public sector ICT profession. Reflect the demands of our organisations for the future, particularly focusing on developing the next generation of ICT professionals and making public sector services attractive to talented young people.
  - Create and embed a culture and ethos in our service delivery teams, whatever the model operated, to enable relationships to be formed with our users, suppliers and wider public service partners.
- Explore existing proven and emerging service delivery models, reflecting changes in how our diverse users operate.
  - Identify innovative technology to help us respond to the changing expectations of our internal and external service users.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Local CIO Council (Socitm): [socitm.net/about/local-cio-council](https://socitm.net/about/local-cio-council)
- <sup>2</sup> Local Government Association (LGA): [local.gov.uk](https://local.gov.uk)
- <sup>3</sup> Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA): [cosla.gov.uk](https://cosla.gov.uk)
- <sup>4</sup> Welsh Government Association (WGA): [wlga.wales](https://wlga.wales)
- <sup>5</sup> Solace: [solace.org.uk](https://solace.org.uk)
- <sup>6</sup> Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA): [cipfa.org](https://cipfa.org)
- <sup>7</sup> Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS): [adass.org.uk](https://adass.org.uk)
- <sup>8</sup> techUK: [techuk.org](https://techuk.org)
- <sup>9</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now called: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities): [bit.ly/33D6lfN](https://bit.ly/33D6lfN)
- <sup>10</sup> Government Digital Service (GDS): [bit.ly/3p2m2V2](https://bit.ly/3p2m2V2)
- <sup>11</sup> The Digital Office for Scottish Local Government: [digitaloffice.scot](https://digitaloffice.scot)
- <sup>12</sup> Scottish Government: [gov.scot](https://gov.scot)
- <sup>13</sup> Welsh Government: [gov.wales](https://gov.wales)
- <sup>14</sup> No reverse gear – Revolutionising public services (Socitm Advisory): [advisory.socitm.net/noreversegear](https://advisory.socitm.net/noreversegear)

## About this briefing

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## Have your say

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