Policy briefing

Our key policy themes 2021

February 2021

Socitm

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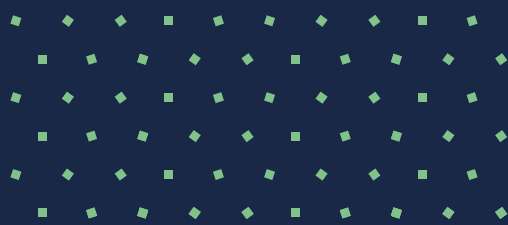
Introduction

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, and with our strategic and international partners. We develop evidence-based 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, COSLA, WLGA, SOLACE, CIPFA, ADASS, techUK, MHCLG, the Government Digital Service, the Scottish Local Government Digital Office, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government, 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 Director of Policy and Research, our policy work is supported by the President's Team and our Director of Leadership Development and Research.

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

Healthy and well communities

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

How do we enable the 'left shift' of intervention in people's health and wellbeing? This process needs to apply at every level of the system from the expensive acute end of the system to an earlier point at the community as well as at the locality end and with citizens themselves. What pathway do we best follow to facilitate the 'left shift' holistically?

Leadership, diversity and skills

Policy lead: **Sandra Taylor** (Immediate past president)

The information age will enable the public sector to operate more efficiently, lower costs, improve services, and achieve better outcomes. In order to realise this, leaders will need to acquire digital acumen, redesign processes, digitally upskill the workforce, develop diversity, and attract and retain talent. How do we achieve this when resources are scarce, and the labour market is unstable?

Service design and transformation

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

How do we support public sector leaders in successfully transforming organisations and services using digital technologies and data in a dynamic and continuously evolving environment? This requires digitally aware leadership within our organisations and across public sector services, partners, businesses and communities, embracing new and totally different ways of collaborating and working for the benefit of our citizens. How do we cultivate and develop this?

Ethical use of emerging technologies and data

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

How do we understand and promote the ethical use of emerging technologies? This includes the data they generate and store and the public service designs, processes and interactions they enable. It also applies to the outcomes that they generate. All this while ensuring public benefit and minimising unintended consequences. 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 and making sure that we meet the changing expectations of service users. How do we make this happen seamlessly and effectively?

Healthy and well communities

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

Theme proudly sponsored by: TBC

What is the challenge?

How do we enable the 'left shift' of intervention in people's health and wellbeing? This process needs to apply at every level of the system from the expensive acute end of the system to an earlier point at the community as well as at the locality end and with citizens themselves. What pathway do we best follow to facilitate the 'left shift' holistically?

What we are aiming to do?

› Explore how taking a fresh look at the determinants of people's wellbeing can enable the public sector in the widest sense to refocus its efforts on addressing the often entrenched and endemic problems in our communities.

› Identify and capture good use cases, where digital and information are enabling citizens to live independently and self-care. Thereby avoiding entry into the care systems and enabling faster discharge and out of hospital care.

› Consider methods such as 'Asset Based Community Development' (ABCD) that can be better enabled by digital and information that people and communities together to become more resilient and caring for each other.

› Champion 'frugal innovation' in this area i.e. how emerging technologies, data analytics, digital literacy and so forth can be a significant enabler to better health and wellbeing.

› Capture use cases where services are provided through new integrated teams, across organisations and enabled through common, open governance frameworks and integrated technologies.

› Capture use cases where data is combined, across different sources and organisations, for secondary uses such as 'population health management' to inform more targeted interventions and commissions.

› Consider a strong push for 'Open Platform' approaches to Digital Health (Note: The Open Platform approach is as relevant to arrange of other verticals of government).

› Set out our policy position on this and work with NHS Digital, England and the Devolved Nations on progressing it, as well as utilise the 'Learning from Local Programme and Platform'.

Leadership, diversity and skills

Policy lead: **Sandra Taylor**
(Immediate past president)

Theme proudly sponsored by: TBC

What is the challenge?

The Information Age will enable the Public Sector to operate more efficiently, lower costs, improve services, and achieve better outcomes. In order to realise this, leaders will need to acquire digital acumen, redesign processes, digitally upskill the workforce, develop diversity, and attract and retain talent. How do we achieve this when resources are scarce, and the labour market is unstable?

What are we aiming to do?

> Promote steps to build a digitally capable workforce and to address gaps in leadership, diversity, and hard and soft skills

> Champion the importance of diverse leadership and teams, including the empowerment of women, for the design of services and products that work for everyone

> Examine how to gain, re-train and retain skills within the workforce including apprenticeships and returners and addressing the salary gap in the sector

> 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 use and deployment of technology in support of process review and service redesign – delivering user-focused services that are accessible and responsive

> Improve digital proficiency among managers and employees at all levels of the organisation and the sector

> 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-share, and learn from the best practice that we have individually adopted and promoted

> Start to articulate and define the evolving roles of 'tomorrow's digital leaders', including relevant skills and experience.

Service design and transformation

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

Theme proudly sponsored by: **Microsoft**

What is the challenge?

How do we support public sector leaders in successfully transforming organisations and services using digital technologies and data in a dynamic and continuously evolving environment? This requires digitally aware leadership within our organisations and across public sector services, partners, businesses and communities, embracing new and totally different ways of collaborating and working for the benefit of our citizens. How do we cultivate and develop this?

What are we aiming to do?

› Maximise digital awareness and leadership across all senior stakeholders within the public sector, ensuring they obtain and develop a modern digital leadership outlook, skill set and toolkit.

› Inspire and enable senior stakeholders to challenge the norm of budget cost-cutting by delivering robust redesign and transformation business cases to decision makers, who welcome such innovation to improve effectiveness and efficiencies in digital service delivery.

› Highlight the importance of cultural change and adoption within an organisation during transformation and the importance of taking citizens and service users with them on the journey.

› Maximise learning across the public sector though partnerships, collaboration and sharing proven best practice to enhance services and value to our citizens.

› Identify proven, standardised and simple successful models and solutions, and share them across the public sector to increase adoption.

› Use modern technology to develop holistic services across organisations through strategic partnership.

› Evaluate the best approach for taking control, ownership and hosting of our public sector data, seek to simplify and standardise on data exchange and interfacing, and partner with organisations to develop the business applications to support this approach.

› Promote awareness and sharing of proven methods, components and solutions according to the principles of simplify, standardise and share.

Ethical use of emerging technologies and data

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

M. Lumley

Theme proudly sponsored by: **splunk>**

What is the challenge?

How do we understand and promote the ethical use of emerging technologies? This includes the data they generate and store and the public service designs, processes and interactions they enable. It also applies to the outcomes that they generate. All this while ensuring public benefit and minimising unintended consequences. What do we mean by ethics and how do we apply them?

What are we aiming to do?

› Identify what is unique and different about an ethical, place-based approach to using emerging technologies and data. Explore how the approach helps us to design better services, leveraging benefits and better outcomes.

› Understand how to overcome challenges through self-reflection, discussion and scenario-based thinking.

› Generate a rationale for separating the ethical use of emerging technology and data from regulatory compliance based on how we demonstrate that innovation is for social good.

› Ethical practice is an intrinsic part of organisational strength. We explore how to ensure that ethics is part of 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 emerging technology.

› Consider the place of security, cybercrime, privacy, social interaction, governance and free will. As well as the relationship with ethical standards and accepted codes of practice in areas such as health, care and finance.

› 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 emerging technologies and data.

› Research what ethical use of technology and data should look like. What is the role of government and public debate around the use and limitations of these technologies? Where and how do we overcome gaps in current legislation and regulation?

Modernising ICT service delivery

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

Theme proudly sponsored by: **Capita**

What is the challenge?

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 and making sure that we meet the changing expectations of service users. How do we make this happen seamlessly and effectively?

What we are aiming to do?

> Explore existing proven and emerging service delivery models, reflecting changes in how our diverse users operate, as well as the growing demand for integrated public service delivery and shared data and intelligence.

> Identify innovative technology to help us to respond to the changing expectations of our internal and external service users.

> 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 though 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 re-sellers to ensure the sector is achieving best value for the provisioning of tech products, solutions and services.

> Identify future roles and skills sets for our ICT people, to 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.

About this briefing

Author
Martin Ferguson - Director of policy and research

Designers
Magdalena Werner - Senior creative designer
Benjamin Hughes - Graphic designer

Have your say

We always welcome feedback and discussion on the contents of our publications.

Martin Ferguson
Director of policy and research
martin.ferguson@socitm.net

Nadira Hussain
Director of leadership development and research
nadira.hussain@socitm.net

Get in touch

Website: www.socitm.net
Email: inform@socitm.net
Tel: 01604 709456

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