Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Report by Councillor Susan Aitken, Leader of the Council and City Convener for Inclusive Economic Growth

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RECOMMENDATION TO JOIN TO THE "CITIES FOR DIGITAL RIGHTS"

Purpose of Report:

To recommend that Glasgow joins the "Cities for Digital Rights", a coalition of cities which has the support of the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) to share best practices, learn from each other's challenges and successes, and coordinate common digital rights initiatives and actions.

Recommendations:

The City Administration Committee is asked to:

- note the recommendation from the Digital Glasgow Board to join the "Cities for Digital Rights"; and

- approve Glasgow's membership to the "Cities for Digital Rights".

Ward No(s):   Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐   consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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1 Background

1.1 Human rights is a central theme of the Glasgow City Council Strategic Plan which sets out an aspiration to deliver a step change in how we;

- *"Promote human rights and reduce inequalities across Glasgow.*
- *Improve the life chances and choices for all our citizens.*
- *Embed social justice in our policy making.*
- *Empower our citizens, giving them a stake, and a say, in what happens in their local communities and communities of interest."*

1.2 The Digital Glasgow Strategy, approved by the City Administration Committee in October 2019 is a bold and comprehensive strategy that includes a broad range of actions that relate to both the digital economy and digital public services in order to elevate Glasgow's reputation as a global digital economy and pioneer of digital public services.

1.3 The importance of human rights when considering the use and application of digital technology has steadily been increasing in importance and significance over recent years. As described within the Digital Glasgow Strategy, digital technologies undoubtedly provide opportunities to improve human rights, however they can also present a number challenges and threats to human rights such as access, privacy, ethics, equality, and inclusion. On this matter, the World Economic Forum (for example) states[1] that

"Digital rights are basically human rights in the internet era. The rights to online privacy and freedom of expression, for example, are really extensions of the equal and inalienable rights laid out in the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

1.4 The need to consider digital rights is already recognised in the Digital Glasgow Strategy and there are a number of actions contained within the strategy that put the needs, concerns, and rights of citizens needed to be at the centre of the strategy (such as access to digital connectivity, digital inclusion and participation, skills, privacy and security, and ethics).

1.5 The Digital Glasgow Board has reviewed proposals for joining a coalition of cities that are promoting digital rights, known as the "Cities for Digital Rights".

2 Overview of the Cities for Digital Rights

2.1 The Cities for Digital Rights was launched in October 2018 by the cities of Amsterdam, Barcelona, and New York, and it now has a membership of over 50 cities globally.

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[1] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/11/what-are-your-digital-rights-explainer/

2.2   At its core is a "**Digital Rights Declaration**"[2] that member cities are required to sign and use as the basis for collaboration. The Digital Rights Declaration sets out the following overarching principles for digital rights;

Principles of the Cities for Digital Rights Declaration:

1. ***"Universal and equal access to the internet, and digital literacy***
    Everyone should have access to affordable and accessible internet and digital services on equal terms, as well as the digital skills to make use of this access and overcome the digital divide.

2. ***Privacy, data protection and security***
    Everyone should have privacy and control over their personal information through data protection in both physical and virtual places, to ensure digital confidentiality, security, dignity and anonymity, and sovereignty over their data, including the right to know what happens to their data, who uses it and for what purposes.

3. ***Transparency, accountability, and non-discrimination of data, content and algorithms***
    Everyone should have access to understandable and accurate information about the technological, algorithmic and artificial intelligence systems that impact their lives, and the ability to question and change unfair, biased or discriminatory systems.

    4. Participatory Democracy, diversity and inclusion
    Everyone should have full representation on the internet, and the ability collectively to engage with the city through open, participatory and transparent digital processes. Everyone should have the opportunities to participate in shaping local digital infrastructures and services and, more generally, city policy-making for the common good.

    5. Open and ethical digital service standards
    Everyone should be able to use the technologies of their choice, and expect the same level of interoperability, inclusion and opportunity in their digital services. Cities should define their own technological infrastructures, services and agenda, through open and ethical digital service standards and data to ensure that they live up to this promise."

2.3   The expectation on members of the Cities for Digital rights is to share best practices, learn from each other's challenges and successes, and work together to coordinate common digital rights initiatives and actions where applicable. There is, however, no obligation to attend meetings overseas.

3   Benefits of Membership

3.1   The benefits of membership to the Cities for Digital Rights would be;

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[2] https://citiesfordigitalrights.org/assets/Declaration_Cities_for_Digital_Rights.pdf

3.1.1 To promote and enhance Glasgow's commitment to human rights, and indeed digital rights.

3.1.2 To concentrate relevant actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy into an overarching theme of digital rights.

3.1.3 To ensure that actions that provide a positive contribution to digital rights are aligned to an internationally recognised set of principles, which are themselves supported by the United Nations.

3.1.4 To provide the opportunity to validate Glasgow's ambition and strategic actions, and providing the potentially to identify gaps, or enhancements that could be made.

3.1.5 To allow Glasgow to accelerate and/or improve the impact of the actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy by being able to harness pooled experience and learning across a large number of international cities.

4   **Alignment to the Digital Glasgow Strategy**

4.1   The table in Appendix A provides an indication of how the actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy support the principles of the Cities for Digital Rights Declaration.

5   **Next Steps**

5.1   If approved by City Administration Committee the next steps will be to;

5.1.1 Provide formal confirmation (and publically declare) the decision to join the Cities for Digital Rights.

5.1.2 Provide information to the Cities for Digital Rights on Glasgow's digital rights achievements, plans and initiatives in line with the Cities for Digital Rights Declaration (as is summarised in Appendix A)

5.1.3 Provide the Cities for Digital Rights with branding and text for the Cities for Digital Rights website

6.   **Policy and Resource Implications**

     Resource Implications:

         Financial: None

         Legal: None

         Personnel: None

         Procurement: None

Council Strategic Plan:	"*Promote human rights and reduce inequalities across Glasgow*"

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22	Membership to the Cities for Digital Rights provides the potential to enhance existing actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy.
What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	An EQIA Screening Form has been provided to CAC for the existing actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy. As per the EQIA conducted for the overarching strategy, it is anticipated that a Human Rights approach will have a positive impact on protected groups.
	The development of the actions plans will include engagement with equality groups and ensure that each strand promotes equality of opportunity throughout.
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.	

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:	Membership to the Cities for Digital Rights provides the potential to enhance existing actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy.
Social, including Article opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:	
Economic:	

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:	Membership to the Cities for Digital Rights provides the potential to enhance existing actions contained within the Digital Glasgow Strategy.

7 **Recommendations**

7.1 The City Administration Committee is asked to:

- note the recommendation from the Digital Glasgow Board to join the "Cities for Digital Rights"; and

- approve Glasgow's membership to the "Cities for Digital Rights".

APPENDIX A

Cities for Digital Rights Declaration Principles	DIGITAL GLASGOW STRATEGY: Relevant Goals, Actions, and Achievements
PRINCIPLE 1 **Universal and equal access to the internet, and digital literacy**	**GOALS** • *"We want to improve connectivity where there has been insufficient and/or unaffordable broadband or mobile coverage"* • *"We want to tackle digital exclusion and improve digital participation as a matter of social inclusion"* **STRATEGIC ACTIONS** • Provide access to over 50,000 Apple iPads to *every child from P6 and above* (the largest deployment of Apple iPads to schools in Europe). • Work in partnership across all sectors in the city to promote and collaborate to deliver the pledges made as signatory of Scotland Digital Participation Charter: Ensuring staff and volunteers have opportunity to develop essential digital skills, supporting them to help others learn essential digital skills and embrace digital tools. • Develop training programmes to develop digital agility for community workers supporting adult literacy and numeracy services, English for speakers of Other Languages programmes, adult learning and Youth services. • Deliver a targeted Digital Inclusion programme that ensures everybody has access to Universal Credit. • Provide opportunities for people to further develop their essential digital skills by signposting opportunities to develop advanced digital skills for the work place. • Encourage companies to promote digital inclusion and participation programmes to their staff. • Provide opportunities for companies to actively support digital inclusion and participation initiatives through corporate social responsibility and/or volunteering. **ACHIEVEMENTS** • Glasgow is a signatory of Scotland's Digital Participation Charter[3] which sets out principles for improving essential digital skills[4].

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[3] https://digitalparticipation.scot/charter

	- The John Wheatley Network already provides access and training opportunities to over 8000 people across the city each year delivered across 40 learning hubs - Glasgow Life provide hands-on support for improving essential digital skills throughout Glasgow's libraries through the "Digi-Pals" programme.
PRINCIPLE 2 **Privacy, data protection and security**	**GOALS** - *"We want to be trusted for how we process and use data."* **STRATEGIC ACTIONS** - Where online services provide access to personal and/or sensitive information we will integrate our online services with relevant national online identity assurance platforms. - Develop online services that help put citizens in control of the data that is collected about them by allowing them to see how their data is used, and where possible, control consent. **ACHIEVEMENTS** - Glasgow has established the role of a Data Protection Officer as part of its implementation of the recent EU General Data Protection Regulation, putting privacy and compliance at the heart of its data management. - Glasgow has recently achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation in line with the UK's National Cyber Security (NCSC) Cyber Essentials programme and the Scottish Government's Cyber Resilience Public Sector Action Plan.
PRINCIPLE 3 **Transparency, accountability, and non-discrimination of data, content and algorithms**	**GOALS** - *"We want to be trusted for how we process and use data."* **STRATEGIC ACTIONS** - Build on the foundation of GDPR by developing a data ethics framework to ensure that our use of data to transform services is done so in a way that respects privacy, rights and ethics. - Develop online services that help put citizens in control of the data that is collected about them by allowing them

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to see how their data is used, and where possible, control consent.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Glasgow has established the role of a Data Protection Officer as part of its implementation of the recent EU General Data Protection Regulation, putting privacy and compliance at the heart of its data management.

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PRINCIPLE 4

Participatory Democracy, diversity and inclusion

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GOALS

- *"We want to empower communities through better access to information and using digital technology to increase civic participation."*

STRATEGIC ACTIONS
- Launch a new digital service which will provide communities with better access to real time information about their area including community assets, demographics, planning applications and statistics on reports made to the council.
- Expand our use of digital tools to engage and involve Glasgow's citizens in setting general priorities and in making decisions about how best to prioritise Council spending.
- Introduce digital apps that allow people to vote on local community matters (including Participatory Budgeting).

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Glasgow has launched a digital platform for deliberation and voting for Participatory Budgeting which is based upon an Open-source project and global community of cities called the Consul project (consulproject.org)

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PRINCIPLE 5

Open and ethical digital service standards

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GOALS

- *"We want to strengthen the digital foundations that enable us to deliver sustainable and secure digital public services"*

STRATEGIC ACTIONS
- We will increase the number of open data sets that we publish and expand the use of our City Data Platform in order to provide a scalable platform for publishing open

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	data, and providing meaningful visualisations of non-sensitive data through maps and dashboards. • We will work with partners across the city to make our technology platforms more interoperable and open and create a City Software Development Kit (SDK) that we will make available to staff and 3rd party developers. • We will build communities of interest for data, and will facilitate engagement with city data through open innovation challenges. **ACHIEVEMENTS** • Glasgow first gained experience open data through its Open Glasgow platform funded through the Future Cities Demonstrator. • The underlying "City Data Platform" which was built through the Future Cities Demonstrator already makes digital services publically available as well as just open data. For example, it already makes available real-time feeds traffic and car parking information available to third parties who can incorporate this information into their own applications.