# Enabling digital government



**AUDITOR**GENERAL

## Why is this audit important?

Digital technology is becoming a core part of the way public services are delivered, offering huge potential for improving and transforming these services and how users interact with public bodies. Public services are being designed to be digital and citizens' expectations of these digital services are increasing.

The Scottish Government launched its overarching digital strategy, *Realising Scotland's full potential in a digital world: a digital strategy for Scotland*, in March 2017, and its digital health and care strategy

in April 2018. These set out its vision and core areas including: transforming services; digital infrastructure; collaboration; involving users and digital inclusion; data; and digital skills.

The Scottish Government has a key role through its digital strategy in enabling central government organisations to innovate and use digital technology to improve services. Significant amounts of public money are being invested in digital programmes and infrastructure. The public sector invests over £800 million each year with technology suppliers to help deliver digital programmes.

Our 2015 report, *Managing ICT contracts in central government: an update* ⊕, highlighted some of the issues the Scottish Government and central government bodies experienced when delivering digital and Information Communications Technology programmes. The Scottish Government introduced a new technology assurance framework and a digital transformation service to support central government bodies during 2015.

In May 2017, we published a briefing *Principles for a digital future: Lessons learned from public sector ICT projects* ⊕. This drew on lessons from our previous audits and the rest of the world, and identified key principles for public bodies to consider as they plan and manage digital projects and design services.

This audit will provide an update from our previous reports. It will assess what progress the Scottish Government is making in building a digital government since we last reported and set the scene for what more needs to be done to deliver on its ambition to be a digital government.

## What will the audit look at?

The overall aim of the audit is to answer the question: How effectively is the Scottish Government enabling a digital government?

The audit will seek to answer the following questions:

- What progress has the Scottish Government made in building a digital government?

- What progress is the Scottish Government making in enabling the transformation and re-design of Scotland's public services?

We will use case studies from across central government to look at different examples of how the Scottish Government is enabling digital transformation. We will also look at what other sectors and countries are doing in this area.

The audit will not look at all aspects of the Scottish Government's digital strategy, but we will continue to monitor progress throughout our five-year work programme.

## How will we carry out the audit?

We will answer the audit questions by:

- Reviewing and analysing key documents such as the Scottish Government's digital strategy, budget documents and related internal and published documents. This will include reviewing relevant international examples of digital government.

- Interviewing officials from the Scottish Government and a sample of central government bodies.

## What impact will it have?

The audit will review what approaches are working well and the reasons for success. The audit will also identify barriers or limitations to the effectiveness of the Scottish Government's approach, what can be done to address them, and make recommendations for improvement. By doing this, we will assess the effectiveness of the Scottish Government's arrangements for enabling government to improve services through digital technology.

## Timetable and contact

We plan to publish in summer 2019. We are carrying out the audit on behalf of the Auditor General for Scotland. For further information please contact Morag Campsie, Audit manager, on 0131 625 1748 or email: mcampsie@audit-scotland.gov.uk ✉.