



**Cavan**

Comhairle Contae an Chabháin  
Cavan County Council

A **Digital** Strategy  
For County Cavan  
2021 -2024



**CONNECTED  
CAVAN**

**July 2021**

Public Version 1.0



# A Digital Strategy For County Cavan 2021 - 2024

Building a Digital capacity in Cavan  
“digital capacity refers to the skills, competencies, attitudes,  
infrastructure and resources that enable people to work, live  
and learn in a digital world”

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**CONNECTED CAVAN**

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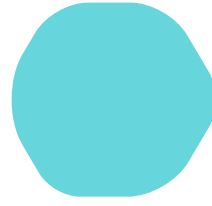
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# CAVAN DIGITAL STRATEGY



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## FOREWORD

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As Cathaoirleach and Chief Executive of Cavan County Council we are delighted to present the Connected Cavan Digital Strategy for 2021-2024. This strategy, which was prepared and adopted by Cavan County Council, sets out our Vision and Key Areas of Focus for the county for the next three years.

We commissioned PMG Consult to manage the development and coordination of the local Digital Strategy. This assignment followed the successful completion of a key project that would underpin the Digital Strategy – Cavan Digital Hub. The strategy has origins going back to 2016 when the then Broadband Officer together with Cavan LEO and the Community & Enterprise section of Cavan County Council initiated a Digital Economy networking group with local (and diaspora) tech and creative entrepreneurs known as Get Connected. The initial meetings of this group set the scene and direction for a local digital strategy for Cavan.

Connected Cavan will build a digital capacity to pave the way for future prosperity, cohesion, & sustainability across the economy and communities of the county. As we have seen with the Covid 19 Crisis, digital tools have been an essential element in our immediate response and this will be fundamental to our recovery. We commit to develop and activate communities through exposure to digital content and technology and support people to discover the value of using digital in their daily lives.

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**Clifford Kelly**

Cathaoirleach



**Tommy Ryan**

Chief Executive

# INTRODUCTION



Connected Cavan is the title given to the Cavan Digital Strategy. Connected Cavan will initiate, and support, the development of actions that lead to a connected and collaborative digital society and economy over the coming three years from 2021 to 2024.

The strategy will build on existing digital strengths and networks of knowledge to create a cohesive and inclusive Cavan. The scope of the strategy will range from Smart Community Initiatives to Digital Ecosystems of tech & creative entrepreneurs to Digital Transformation in the public service through online e-services and integrated IT and data systems.

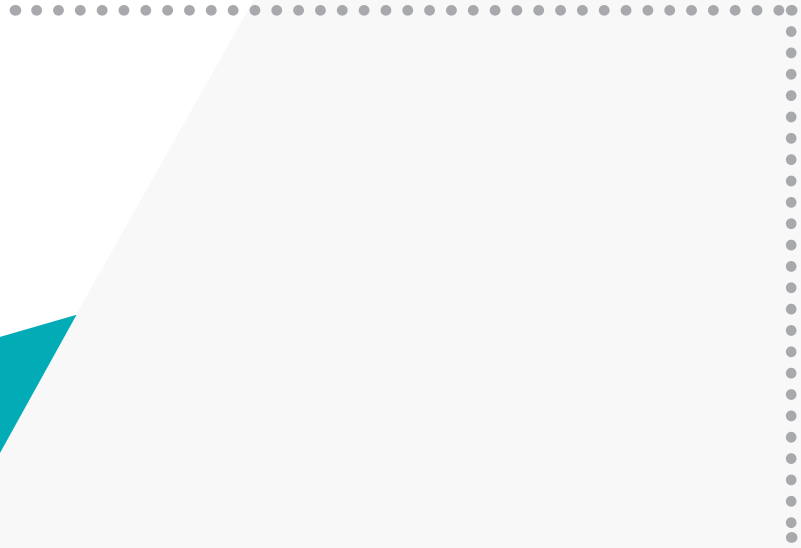
All of this will be underpinned by an investment in digital skills and highspeed broadband. Digital Champions from a cross section of society will help promote Connected Cavan and the benefits of Digital.



**Smart Communities is a new approach to community development and activation through exposure to digital content and technology and supporting people to discover the value of using digital in their daily lives.**



**All of this will be underpinned by an investment in digital skills and high-speed broadband**



From the early stages of the work the local digital strategy for Cavan developed the working title of Connected Cavan.

Subsequent to this the Department for Rural & Community Development (DRCD) under the direction of Minister for State for Natural Resources, Community Affairs & Digital Development developed guidance for local authorities on what a local digital strategy should contain and how it should be developed.

## Need for a Digital Strategy

Data is now the lifeblood of our economy and society. Whether going for a run, watching TV or sitting in traffic, virtually every activity creates a digital trace. Algorithms trained by digital traces create a big data society with powerful analytic capacity that is globally transformational.



Making the most of this digital society and economy will require skills and cultural transformation in our citizens, enterprises and institutions and access to high speed broadband will be a prerequisite for participation. The devastating effects of the COVID 19 shutdown on society and the economy has demonstrated the power of digital tools and skills to help us cope when we must isolate and disconnect, in a traditional sense.

Tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams have made remote working perfectly viable. WhatsApp and Snapchat allow us to stay connected and share and exchange information across our networks instantaneously. Digital entertainment services like Netflix provide us with endless content to help ease the burden of isolation. Online shopping has seen a spectacular rise and in many instances from local providers of essential goods and services.



## Strategic Aims

- AIM ONE** | Enhance the economic and enterprise base through digital adoption and innovation
- AIM TWO** | To develop digital skills and participation to enhance the social and community connections
- AIM THREE** | Use technology and digital to help decarbonise and support the climate action agenda
- AIM FOUR** | Drive public and private investment in digital connectivity and digital transformation (DX)

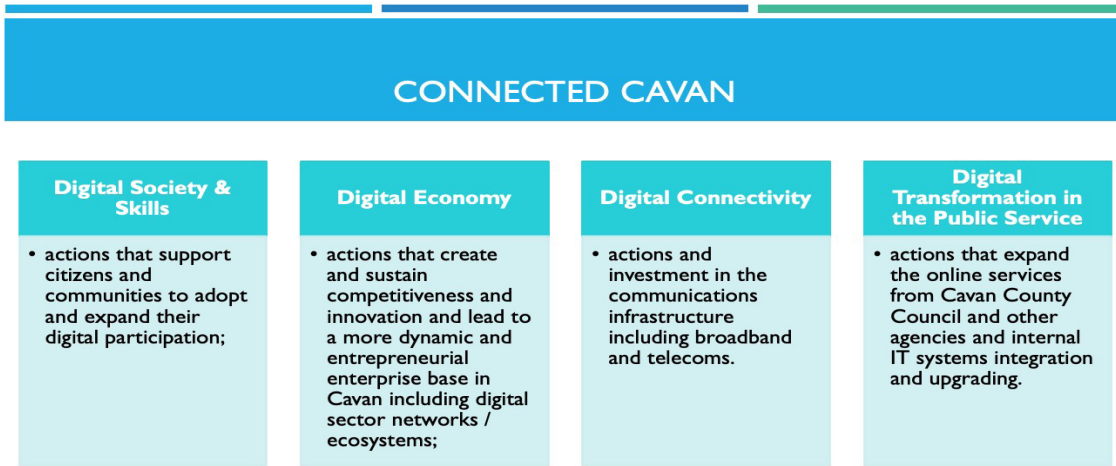
Online shopping has seen a spectacular rise and in many instances from local providers of essential goods and services. This is digital in action and it is set to continue to transform every aspect of our lives into the future. Each county must harness the benefits of the digital revolution for their citizens, enterprises and workforce, this is the space where the Digital Strategy sits.



## Key Pillars & Areas of Focus

Connected Cavan will build a digital capacity to pave the way for future prosperity, cohesion, & sustainability across the economy and communities of the county. The digital capacity refers to the skills, competencies, attitudes, infrastructure and resources that

enable people to work, live and learn in a world that is increasingly digital. Connected Cavan contains four Pillars of activity that will frame the actions over the coming three years.



The four Strategy Pillars illustrated in the graphic above will act as a framework for the organisation and delivery of actions and projects under Connected Cavan. Each Pillar will contain relevant initiatives that are directed at, and focused on, a particular audience or user group.

Section 4 of this document details out the full strategy framework, guiding principles, strategic objectives and the action themes and projects that make up Connected Cavan.

**Connected:** The strategy will seek to be as relevant as possible to citizens, community groups, businesses and institutions including public services, schools, colleges, public health providers and other statutory agencies. It will reflect the society and economy that it is serving and work with the existing structures, groups and networks throughout the county. A network of Digital Champions will help to build these connections between the user groups and the strategy.

The Digital Champions will also bring a familiar face to the strategy and act as a knowledge point for all the supports under Connected Cavan.

**Smart Collaborations:** Engendering SMART Communities and SMART Networks using existing structures and resources including Local Authority Officer Networks E.g. Heritage; Environment & Renewable Energy; Tourism; Recreation & Sports; Creative & Cultural;

Food Networks etc. Local partners will be critical to these Networks such as Libraries, Post Offices, GAA, HSE, Chambers and other sponsors or community / business leaders. These Collaborative Networks can play a significant role in connecting communities, specialist providers, funding and support systems at a local, regional, national and EU level. They will also allow projects to emerge and develop that would otherwise not happen.

**Partnership:** Connected Cavan will rely on a strong network of partners to ensure success in achieving its goals. There is a wide range of expertise and knowledge that can drive the digital agenda through a spirit of collaboration and shared resources and assets. The partnership will be critical from the outset and will be manifest in the Digital Assembly and the network of Digital Champions. The graphic highlights some of the key delivery

partners but there will be many more.

**Entrepreneurial:** The strategy will nurture enterprise and innovation and assist businesses to invest in their resilience, competitiveness and productivity. It will proactively support new business start-up's and new ventures that create value and employment in Cavan, especially digital enterprises or those investing in their digital

functions. It will stimulate and facilitate networks and connections with local and diaspora entrepreneurs to invest in Cavan. It will host and support Remote Working Networks to make Cavan a hub for this activity and promote facilities like Cavan Digital Hub and other Co-working facilities. Cavan LEO will lead on much of this activity, but it will always be in collaboration with local enterprise rather than in isolation.

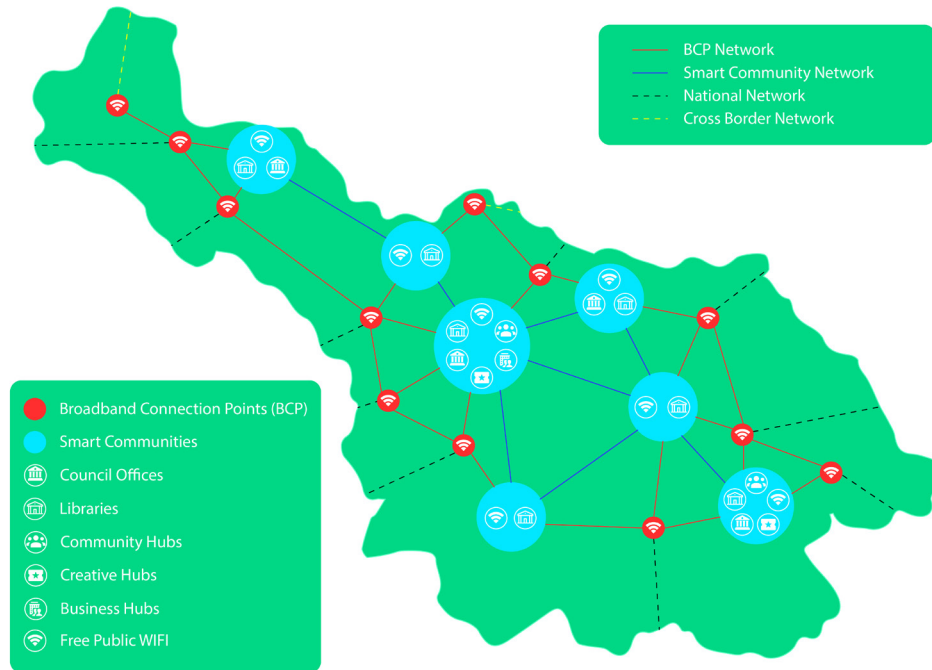
CONNECTED  
CAVAN

# CAVAN DIGITAL STRATEGY

## Key Delivery Partners and Stakeholders



# How will Connected Cavan Look in Practice?



Many of the objectives and actions will be around assisting citizens, business, farms, schools, community groups, etc to become more digitally enabled and skilled. However, there are some very immediate and practical elements to the strategy that will help address the issues of broadband connectivity and other infrastructure and services to allow people in Cavan to fully participate in digital. The map and graphic above illustrates each of these inputs and how they all connect together to form Connected Cavan.

## About this document

The remainder of this document sets out in summary form the critical information and findings on which the Connected Cavan strategy is built. This includes the following sections:

**Section 2** deals with the concepts and context that frames the Digital Agenda including digital terminology; the benefits of digital; the digital policy environment and programmes and supports that are there to promote digital adoption.

**Section 3** presents the summary findings from a number of areas of research and analysis on the digital economy and society as well as the trends in digital

and technology and also Cavan’s position relating to digital development including the National Broadband Plan (NBP). This section also provides a sample summary of the consultation messages and findings for Connected Cavan.

**Section 4** is the Connected Cavan Strategy in detail showing the strategy framework from vision to strategy pillars and action themes and projects.

**Section 5** provides information on the implementation of Connected Cavan over the coming three years and the partners and resources that will be required to deliver the strategy.

# Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the following who willingly gave their time to make a valuable contribution during the development of this strategy.

NAME	ROLE	BODY
Tommy Ryan	Chief Executive	Cavan County Council
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Stjohn O'Connor	Head of Rural Strategy	DRCD
Dr. Ronnie O'Toole	Divisional Director	Indecon

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



## The Digital Context.

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In order to understand the application of the digital agenda to Cavan and the local Digital Strategy – Connected Cavan, we must first provide some broader context for the digital environment and agenda.



## The Digital Society

Promoting responsible digital practices and participation will limit the potential for misuse of personal data and the risk of undermining public trust.

We are increasingly bound in the digital society, in which every aspect of our lives is profoundly affected by digital applications; the digitalisation and proliferation of data; how we communicate, socialise; work, learn, stay healthy and participate in politics and the economy. Digital technologies are rapidly

evolving and emerging to advance each of these factors. A healthy digital society will promote opportunity and access, protect citizens, drive efficiencies and knowledge and support better and more democratic policy making.

“Digitalisation promises tremendous benefits for society in areas like health, mobility, efficient energy use, and flourishing companies and economies. Yet it also raises complex challenges: new divides around access to and control of data;.. identifying knowledge and truth amongst the deluge of information. These challenges raise major issues of power, culture, governance and society”.

The Challenges of a Digital Society, VSNU 2018

Digital Citizenship is a term used to define the appropriate and responsible use of ICT in society. It is an important area of policy and regulation to ensure that democratic structures, systems and norms are upheld and citizens’ rights and opportunities are protected. Three principles underpin the digital citizen; respect, educate, & protect.

## The Digital Economy

The digital economy has rapidly become the real economy with digital products, services and resources defining enterprise and commerce rather than just an element of the economy.

All industries are undergoing digital transformation and the largest corporate organisations in the world have built their fortunes on it, over the past decade. Digital ecosystems are redefining the enterprise landscape. Tech giants have become the drivers of economic growth and value creation. Digital technol-

ogies disrupt markets for products, services, labour and other resources. In manufacturing for example, intensive use of data and 3D printing could transform value and production and supply chains and bring us closer to a more circular economy.

“The Fourth Industrial Revolution is rapidly driving transformational disruption across every economic sector. An estimated 70% of new value created in the economy over the next decade will be based on digitally enabled platforms. However, the G20’s Global Infrastructure Hub estimates a global funding shortfall of nearly \$1 trillion for information and communications technology infrastructure by 2040”.

World Economic Forum (WEF) 2019

## Digital Transformation

### Digital Transformation (DX)

refers to the integration of digital technology into all areas of an organisation resulting in fundamental changes to processes and operations and delivering value to customers, clients, citizens and internally to the organisation and its workforce. DX is a cultural change that requires the organisation to continually challenge the status quo, experiment, and future proof its functions.

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**Processes:** Digitalisation aims to increase automation in production and integrate simulation and data analytics in processes and supply chains, thus bringing about substantial and continuous productivity gains.

**Products:** digitalisation aims to increase the integration of digital in all types of products. This includes the development of markets such as the connected and self-driving car, wearables and smart home appliances.

**Business models:** Digitalisation aims to re-shuffle value chains and blurs the boundaries between products and services. Smart and connected products drive and adapt to changes in customers' behaviour, often establishing co-created, highly personalised services. Digitalisation of SME's in Ireland DBEI 2019

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USEFE Aim "to strengthen economic development in the area and create jobs. We recognise that taking a collaborative approach on our projects can lead to an overall greater outcome for the region. We do this in a number of sectors including tourism, renewable energy and Diaspora engagement"

## USEFE Network & Collaboration

Cavan is involved in a number of regional collaborations including education & training with Monaghan, youth services with Monaghan and Cross border peace, cultural and economic development with partners north and south of the border. However, one of the more recent and innovative collaborations is The Upper Shannon Erne Future Economy (USEFE) Project which is a joint initiative between the Local Authorities of Cavan, Leitrim, Longford and Roscommon together with Bord Na Mona and the ESB.

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The USEFE Local Authority Partners have collaborated extensively around the development of their Digital Strategies. This has involved process design, research, conferencing and events and network development with national support bodies and personnel. Not only has there been cost savings and value added in this collaboration but most importantly there will be strategic projects cutting across county

borders that will create lasting regional impact. Probably the most powerful direct outcome from these collaborations is the instant flow of information and knowledge sharing between partners. This often provides immediate solutions for partners and almost always avoids duplication of effort, and resources and produces significant cost savings.



The digital policy domain is deep rooted and pervasive across many departmental areas of governance and sectoral plans and strategies.



There is also a specific set of policies towards the support, development and guidance towards the Digital Agenda in society and enterprise from the International level to the local, and it is a growing policy field.

In particular the EU's Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) has been in existence and evolution for almost a decade and is one of

seven flagship initiatives under the Europe 2020 strategy. It focuses on technologies and online services that will allow Europe to create jobs and promote economic prosperity. It aims to improve the daily lives of EU citizens and businesses through the realisation of the Digital Single Market.



The National Broadband Plan (NBP) was signed on 19th November 2019 with National Broadband Ireland (NBI) to build, operate and maintain the network.





## The headline areas of digital progress under the DSM goals are:

1. Connectivity (Broadband & Telecoms Infrastructure);
2. Human Capital (Digital Skills & Literacy);
3. Use of Internet Services (Digital Participation);
4. Integration of Digital Technology (Enterprise adoption of ICT & Innovation);
5. Digital Public Services (Accessible and Efficient e-Services). Progress towards the Digital Agenda and the Digital Single Market are also measured and monitored annually by the National Digital Scoreboard.



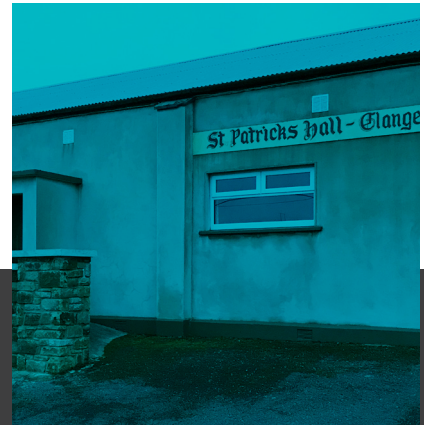
### Online Trading Vouchers

The scheme offers financial assistance of up to €2,500 along with training and advice to support businesses trade online.



### WiFi4EU Initiative

releasing €60,000 in European funds per Local Authority for free public Wi-Fi access.



### Broadband Connection Points

Broadband Connection Points (BCP) are key NBP priority locations in communities across Ireland.

## National Digital Strategy

Future Jobs Ireland 2019 includes a commitment to the completion of a framework for the development of a new National Digital Strategy (NDS) to provide a coherent view across sectoral policies to position Ireland to maximise economic and societal benefits from digitalisation in an inclusive manner.

The new national digital strategy will replace the first NDS launched in 2013 Doing More with Digital which set the framework for the development of a digital economy & society under four strategic strands:

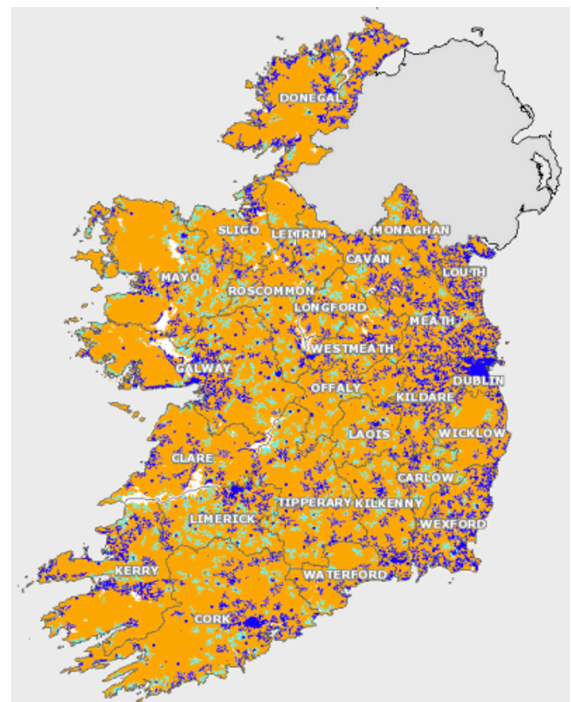
STRAND 1	Trading Online & Entrepreneurship for indigenous businesses
STRAND 2	More Citizen engagement
STRAND 3	Education & eLearning
STRAND 4	Cross-Government measures & eGovernment Strategy

The National Digital Strategy (NDS) 2013, which is still the active policy framework for digital development, seeks to shape our engagement with ICT and digital content through progressive skills development both for citizens and businesses and to extend our participation with, and access to digital technology, through the internet.

The scope of the revised NDS will be high-level providing an overarching long-term vision of the impacts of digitalisation on Ireland. It will take into account the many policy initiatives already in place or under development, to provide a structure and set of principles to give shape to Ireland’s digital transformation. The NDS will address themes including [Connectivity & ICT Infrastructure including NBP](#); [Digital/Data Security](#); [Citizen Trust and Well-being](#); [Digital Skills](#); [Digital Participation](#); [Smart Communities](#); [the Digital Economy and eGovernment](#).

## National Broadband Plan (NBP)

The National Broadband Plan (NBP) was signed on 19th November 2019 with National Broadband Ireland (NBI) to build, operate and maintain the network. The rollout will commence in early 2020 with a 3 to 5 year implementation period for the bulk of connections (90% or the 537,595 fibre connections will be complete within this period). This is the final piece of the enormous investment in the ICT infrastructure of Ireland and will see fibre brought to the last remaining areas, business premises, households, schools and community facilities in the difficult to reach and commercially unviable locations of the state.



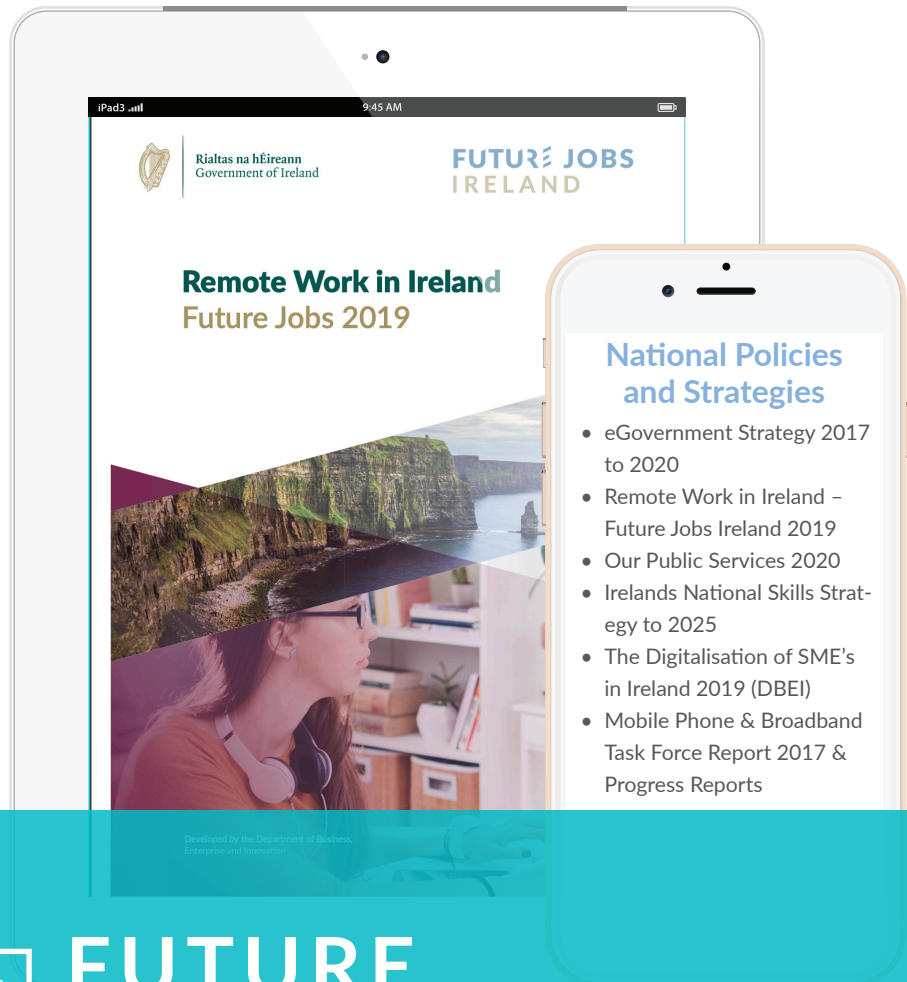
In the first stage fast fibre infrastructure will be delivered to over 300 community centres, schools, library, hubs and local sports facilities in the intervention areas, known as Broadband Connection Points (BCP) with 12 in each county. The BCP's will enable communities to quickly get free public access to high

speed broadband while the NBP itself is being rolled out to individual homes, businesses and other facilities. It is worth noting that almost 1.9m homes and premises across the country are already connected, or to be connected, with fibre broadband by commercial telco and utility providers.

The NBP will set up a wholesale open access company dedicated to the rollout of a predominantly fibre to the premises (FTTP) network in the Intervention Areas which will be capable of delivering a high-speed broadband network. Mobile 5G services are recognised by industry as being complementary to the high-speed broadband service that will be provided via the NBP.

## Local Digital Strategies Subgroup DRCD

KEY TASKS & GOALS	PROGRESS	NOTE
Develop common guidelines for the development of local digital strategies that will maximise digitally-enabled economic and social progress.	Complete	Indecon Guidance on LDS July 2018
Facilitate communication and learning amongst local authorities.	Ongoing	BBO Network
Discover and communicate case studies of best practice.	Ongoing	Common feature through the LDS
Foster and support local digital application champions.	Ongoing	Corem consecusae cus.
To support the development of the next iteration of the National Digital Strategy.	Ongoing	Due mid 2021



REMOTE WORKING  
REPORT

# FUTURE JOBS IRELAND

**Future Jobs Ireland is a strategy and framework of focused medium-term ambitions which form a key part of Ireland’s future economic agenda.**

It is the most prominent piece of national policy for employment creation and enterprise stimulation over the coming decade. It follows from the multi-annual Action Plan for Jobs strategy which commenced in 2012.

Future Jobs Ireland, along with Project Ireland 2040, Global Ireland 2025 and the Climate Action Plan represents an integrated approach to prepare for the opportunities and challenges of the future economy.

## REMOTE WORKING

Remote working is a part of the broader umbrella of flexible work, which encompasses many arrangements such as flexitime, parental leave, job-sharing and compressed hours. While many organisations in Ireland engage with some of these modes of flexible working, remote work is still not well understood. The many phrases used in reference to remote work include e-Work, telecommuting, telework, hub-work, homework, co-working,

hotdesking, smart working, intelligent working, mobile work, home office, virtual office, locationless work, and platform work. The trend towards remote working is potentially a significant contributor to a wide range of current policy agendas from regional and rural regeneration to low carbon economy and health and well-being as well as more dynamic local skills pools and more mobile entrepreneurship and investment.

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### Five Key Pillars

1. Embracing Innovation and Technological Change
  2. Improving SME Productivity
  3. Enhancing Skills and Developing and Attracting Talent
  4. Increasing Participation in the Labour Force
  5. Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy
- 

Building resilience and achieving and sustaining world-class levels of performance and innovation requires an integrated approach to investment in new technologies, skills and empowering workplace practices. Workplace innovation is about the systematic adoption of workplace practices, grounded in evidence, that unleash employee-led knowledge, skill and innovation at every level of the organisation, and is recognised as one further method to help retain and ultimately increase employment.

LEO Discover Business Supports 2019

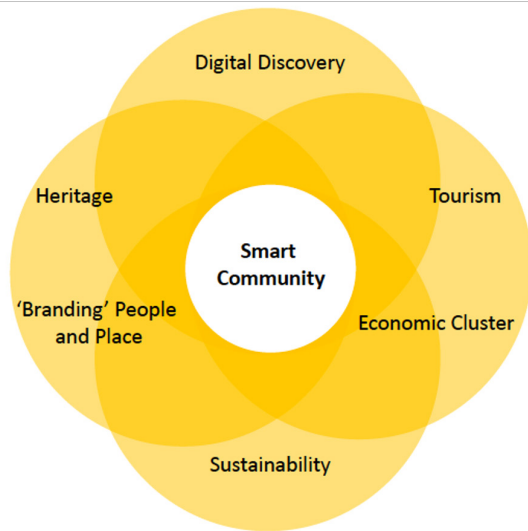
## Workplace Innovation

Evidence shows that workplace innovation leads to significant and sustainable improvements in organisational performance in areas of productivity, financial profitability, improved customer service, and employee engagement and well-being. The Workplace Innovation Toolkit is a diagnostic support designed to facilitate self-evaluation of the organisation's capacity

to be an innovative workplace. The toolkit is based on four pillars and signposts resources and supports to enhance performance in the areas of employee engagement, training, innovation, and productivity. Workplace Innovation Toolkit URL: <https://witooldbei.gov.ie/>

# Smart Communities Initiative

The Department is supporting the piloting of a Smart Communities Initiatives in conjunction with local authorities and their Broadband Officer and local community stakeholders.



It will be community driven, industry supported and enabled by government at all levels. Smart Communities is a new approach to community development and activation through exposure to digital content and technology and supporting people to discover the value of using digital in their daily lives. Collaboration and the utilisation of existing assets and resources under a shared vision the community will maximise its reach, impact and engagement of current schemes and programmes.

The Smart Community Initiative has the potential, in combination with local authority Digital Strategies, to deliver enhanced demand stimulation for uptake of High Speed Broadband services in urban and rural communities.



Tackle social exclusion and isolation



Create opportunities for young people



Improve service efficiency and reduce service costs



Development of skills for living and the labour force



Improve health and well-being in communities

# Broadband Officer Network

The DRCD continues to support the role of the Broadband Officers across the Local Authorities through co-funding of to employ a dedicated Broadband Officer with responsibility for improving telecommunication services in their areas, engaging with industry and facilitating the rollout of essential infrastructure as well as overseeing the development or revision of their Local Digital Strategy. It is anticipated that this role will evolve into a wider ranging 'Digital function' or 'Digital office' in the local authority structure, following the commencement of the roll-out of the NBP and as the focus and priorities change toward other digital development activities.

The appointment of Broadband Officers has been highlighted by telecommunications operators and other stakeholders as an extremely important development. Broadband Officers have successfully submitted applications Digital Innovation Programme under the DRCD. Applications ranged from infrastructure projects, to life saving uses of digital technology, cultural promotion and tourism initiatives, to scientific research and smart street furniture. Broadband Officers are also involved in a number of other initiatives in their functional areas, including the Smart Communities Initiative, and local facilitation of NBP and public WiFi and support for remote working and coworking spaces.

Leading the Digital Transformation in the local authority and managing the Local Digital Strategy evolution.



**Daniel Peeters**  
Cavan Broadband Officer

DIGITAL SERVICES



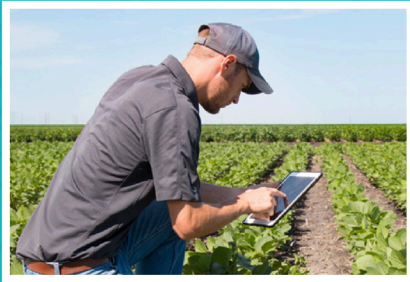
### Broadband Connection Points

Broadband Connection Points (BCP) are key NBP priority locations in communities across Ireland. The BCP's have been selected for prioritising as high speed broadband points in the community in the first year of the roll out of the NBP.



### WiFi4EU Initiative

Broadband Officers are also responsible for overseeing the rollout of the WiFi4EU initiative, potentially releasing €60,000 in European funds per Local Authority for free public Wi-Fi access.



### Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme

Addressing the foundations of the digital divide means reaching out to citizens and helping them participate in a digital society. The Digital Skills for Citizens Scheme is providing basic digital skills classes to help citizens take their first step online.



### Online Trading Vouchers

The Local Enterprise Office supported Online Trading Voucher Scheme is an enterprise assisted support for micro firms and SME's to develop their capacity and competence in moving to e-commerce, and or, developing a stronger online profile.



# STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) is a composite index published every year since 2014 by the European Commission's Europa statistical service. It measures the progress of EU countries towards a

digital economy and society based on a set of relevant indicators on Europe's current digital policy mix. The DESI is composed of five principal policy areas, which regroup 34 indicators overall:

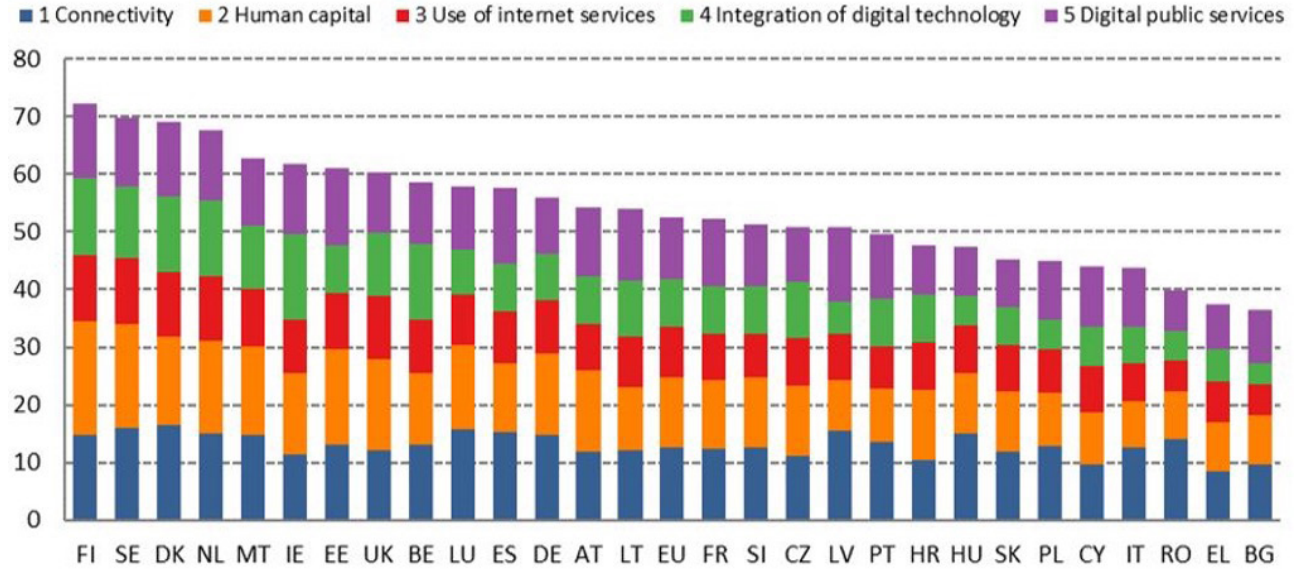
No	KEY POLICY AREA	DESCRIPTION / MEASURE
01	Connectivity	Fixed and mobile broadband, broadband speed and prices
02	Human capital	Internet user skills and advanced skills
03	Use of internet	Citizens' use of internet services and online transactions
04	Integration of digital technology	Business digitisation and e-commerce
05	Digital public services	e-Government and e-health

## SOME KEY EMERGING TRENDS IN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY & ECONOMY

- Increasing use of IoT technologies and the rise of the Big data society.
- Significant Innovation and investment in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies.
- A rise in cyber-attacks and trust issues surrounding digital services leading to enhanced security.
- Continued migration to the cloud across all enterprise sectors and institutions.
- Consolidation in the telecoms industry and more cross-industry mergers between networks, technology, television, media, transportation e.g. Tech Firms diversifying into automotive and other consumer goods.
- A shift away from owning to using: e.g. car sharing app's; entertainment streaming; cloud subscriptions.
- Virtual currency, mobile payments and crowdfunding will impact the future of banking and finance.

# How does Ireland fair among its EU peers in our digital performance?

Ireland ranks 6th across the EU 28 on the DESI multiple indicator index for digital progress and performance.



This shows steady growth on the index but Ireland fairs very well on certain factors and variables. For example, on the Digital Intensity measure Ireland is scoring high with over quarter of all enterprises deploying prescribed key digital technologies.

On Integration of digital technology, Ireland scored highest, followed by the Finland, Belgium and The Netherlands. Integration of digital technology covers ‘business digitisation’ and ‘e-commerce’. The EU Member States that have exploited e-commerce opportunities the most are Ireland, Sweden and Denmark.

Ireland comes top of the table for higher level digital skills among the population for the latest available data year (2016). In this measure, the index ranks countries by the number of Science & Technology graduates in the 20 to 30 age cohort.

## Ireland’s Digital Profile & Scale

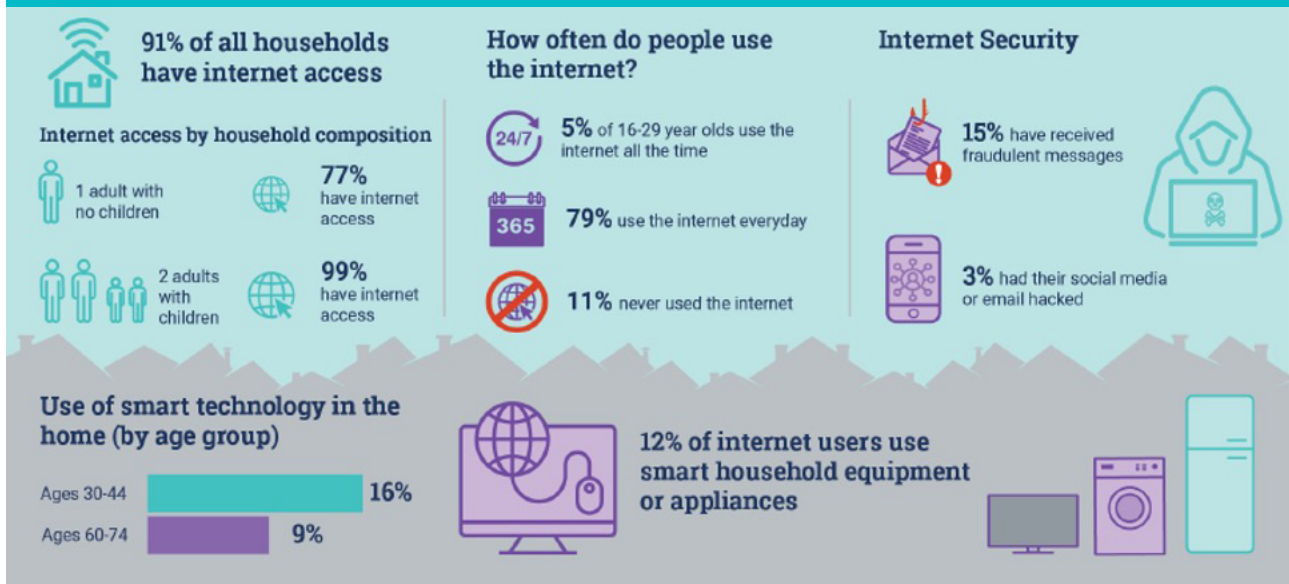
Ireland is in the leading group of digital economies and progressively so when compared with its peers. Much of this is reflected in the structure and nature of our economy with a strong representation of science and technology enterprises and a technically educated and skilled workforce.

Ireland has a vibrant MNC sector with some leading clusters of tech, science and engineering industries and global leaders in each.

This has led to a strong culture and profile of investment in leading systems and innovation and the development of the workforce skills.

In the last evaluation of the digital economy; Assessment of the economic impact of the internet and digital on the Irish economy (Indecon 2016), a number of headline figures and statistics are noteworthy:

- The digital economy represents 6% (€12.3bn) of Ireland's GDP and set to expand to €21.4bn by 2020
- We are experiencing rapid growth, at approximately 40% since 2012
- Almost 116,000 direct and indirect jobs are supported, of which 68,000 are directly linked to digital
- Irish consumers spend over €1m per hour online, 24 hours a day
- Irish consumers expect this to grow by 25% in the coming 3 – 5 years
- 88% of Irish consumers research products online before buying, compared to 79% across the EU
- 13.5% of the adult population make a supplementary income on the internet.



## Cavan Focus / Online Trading Voucher Scheme

The online trading & e-commerce support scheme has been running in Cavan through the Local Enterprise Office since 2016 and has approved 143 trading online vouchers in 2020. Typically vouchers are being used to help clients integrate an online solution for their sales function or digital tools for better engagement with their target market. The case study in the link below outlines some of the benefits experienced by one local Agritech business in Cavan.

## Analysis of Cavan’s Digital Context

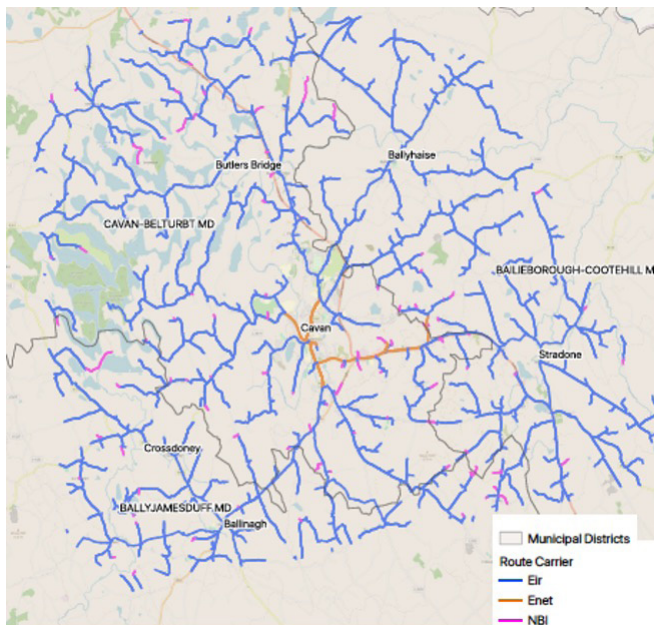
This section will examine a number of areas of digital development in County Cavan together with information gathered and assessed through consultation and other areas of research conducted in the development of this strategy.

The rollout of the NBP in County Cavan is the most significant infrastructure investment in the coming years. The total investment in the county will be in the order of €65m and will include FTTH and other fast broadband solutions to over 16,000 homes, business premises, farms, schools and community facilities. This represents 38% of the entire connection base (42,184 connections) in the county.

This equates fairly evenly with the provincial average coverage of 36% for Ulster but much higher than the average for the state at 22%. Leitrim (52%); Roscommon (49%); Monaghan (46%) and Mayo (43%) respectively, are the counties with the highest coverage of the NBP per total connections followed by Cavan, Longford and Kilkenny with 38% coverage and Sligo with 37%.

Despite Cavan having a relatively high percentage of connections needing to be delivered under the NBP (38%), the county still has a fairly extensive fibre infrastructure around the urban centres and some larger rural villages. In Cavan town there is a 1Gb fibre under the Siro service into a number of enterprises and commercial clusters. The Eir fibre service is also extensively available in Cavan town and other urban centres which delivers speed of up to 150mbps.

## High Speed Broadband – Cavan Profile



PINK areas are the target areas for the State intervention under the National Broadband Plan.

BLUE areas are where commercial operators have, or are, delivering high speed broadband services.

ORANGE areas are where Enet has undertaken a strategic fibre and or wireless infrastructure investment in metro fibre networks (Cavan Town).

## Cavan Digital Readiness Index

As part of the Local Digital Strategy process at the local authority level a Digital Assessment assignment was undertaken by Indecon Consultants in 2018 supported by the DRCD.

The assessment led to the full Digital Readiness Index being produced in July 2018 of each county or city council area which measured digital development on a series of criteria and indicators.

Helping counties and cities move towards Digital Maturity is the core objective of the DRI and allowing for managed and monitorable progression through the stages of development.

Central to this progression, and connected to the section above on NBP, is digital connectivity and infrastructure as this will ultimately allow for access and participation online.

At the time of the assessment in July 2018 Cavan received an average score overall relative to the regional performance and the national average.

Cavan scored best on the 7th Pillar (Community & Culture) relating to engagement with the community on digital matters; active research and data gathering around community welfare and resources; partnerships across communities with remit for culture, enterprise, education and social cohesion; and digital engagement with citizens. Cavan is considered among the best in the state for partnership and collaboration and deep connections into the community sector.

## Consultation & Engagement

A number of strands of consultation and engagement have taken place in the development of Connected Cavan.

Through-out the consultation period in late summer and early autumn 2019 a number of consultations were conducted with selected enterprises in Cavan. Get Connected Digital Network conducted a strategic feasibility study into the need for a large Digital Enterprise Hub in Cavan town and this should proceed ahead of the Digital Strategy. The network also highlighted a set of focus areas for the development of actions. These priority areas were grouped under the following headings: Connectivity & Infrastructure / Digital Hub(s) / Digital Skills / Networking & Digital Ecosystem / Creative Industries.

Four community workshop sessions were all evening-based events from 7pm to 9pm and were conducted in Swanlinbar, Virginia, Cootehill and Cavan Town.

The digital element of the workshops used a live interactive poll using smart phone for voting to rank the views of participants against a series of key topics and questions. This was followed by a wider discussion and analysis of the issues arising from the vote and the information relevant to the particular community in question.

# Workshops

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## Stakeholder Consultations & Workshops – Key Messages

- Cavan County Council will need to lead on a digital futures agenda in order to get the enterprise and community buy-in.
- Tourism promotion is a big opportunity for digital service and information e.g. tourist information points (Kiosks) and other outreach facilities.
- Promoting broadband in rural areas as NBP is rolled out will be crucial and demonstrating all of the enterprise and education benefits of greater connectivity and services – BCP's will be core in this effort.
- LEO's have a strong support system from DBEI and Enterprise Ireland around service information for entrepreneurs and micro enterprises. It is very digitally focused in its engagement with clients.
- E-Planning function will be a major digital project for Cavan and will be part of a bigger national digital records and application service.
- Roads division is becoming more digitally focused through better data capture and digital maps.
- Housing services has a big remit under the eGovernment Strategy.
- Bringing together all the information and digital services into a citizen facing portal is the long-term plan.
- Library services are most public facing part of the local authority and are well experienced in helping with public & IT information.
- The roll-out of a full Document Management System across the organisation using SharePoint as part of the cloud/digital transformation agenda internally is already in progression.

Healthy Ireland will also be useful is getting digital apps and tools into people's lives.

2016 & 2017	Get Connected Digital Economy events	July 2019	Enterprise consultations and workshops
2018	Digital Hub feasibility Steering Group consultation	October 2019	USEFE Business briefing with Minister Canney and analysis workshop
May 2019	Cavan County Council Department Heads and LEO workshop with Indecon	October 2019	Community based workshops x 4

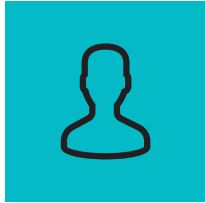
### Key qualitative findings from the Community Workshops

- Broadband connectivity (NBP) and telecoms network service will be critical to any future digital aspirations for citizens and rural businesses. Fibre connections to homes, businesses and farms as well as reliable 4G (and 5G in the future) will be vital for competitiveness and connected communities;
- LECP objectives and actions must be advanced by the Digital Strategy;
- Town & village renewal and revitalization plans need to be promoted and realised through better public information and engagement;
- Utilise existing public and community infrastructure and resources such as libraries, community hubs, schools and the Cavan PPN to provide information, services, training and events for the community. Also invest in new ICT equipment and resources in these facilities for community benefit;
- Build on the “This is Cavan” brand and develop deeper connections with the Cavan Diaspora for the betterment of the county through tourism development, enterprise & investment and vibrant communities;
- Develop Smart Initiatives in towns and villages to support regeneration. Adopt smart technologies and infrastructure like public WIFI hotspots, e-car charge points, smart signage & information points, remote working hubs, smart energy systems and other IoT technologies;
- Training in Digital Skills, especially among older age groups and isolated rural dwellers, to address social exclusion and promote participation and community cohesion is a big opportunity for the Digital Strategy;
- Use the Digital Strategy to support and promote safety, healthy lifestyles, wellness and positive mental health through better information and networks – at a community level.

Training for digital economy skills is a big part of LEO remit and a Skills Needs Assessment – relevant skills for business, will be an important baseline.

# SWOT ANALYSIS

Understanding Cavan’s relative position, in a micro and macro context, is important as a backdrop to the development of Connected Cavan. A SWOT analysis of Cavan’s digital credentials, and its potential for growth and development will identify assets to build upon, barriers to be removed, gaps to fill and opportunities to maximise. Each of the SWOT factors acts as a starting position for generating strategy options and actions.



## STRENGTHS

- Quality of life & cost of living in Cavan is a strong selling point for the county.
- Location and accessibility is good for second sites, mobile entrepreneurs and remote workers.
- Strong culture of partnership and collaboration in Cavan.
- Progressive Local Authority and Enterprise Supports.
- Cavan Digital Hub and CITC are leading regional enterprise facilities.
- A good standard of broadband already exists in many of Cavan’s towns.
- Strong Cavan business network and diaspora community.
- A good training & skills infrastructure in the county, from Cavan Institute to community based providers.



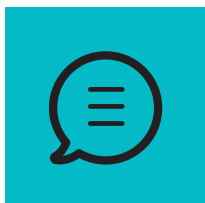
## WEAKNESSES

- Low in key Digital measures - innovation; skills; digital integration in business; etc
- Low or no clustering at present in tech sectors – but signs of emerging tech community.
- Underdeveloped ICT infrastructure in many parts of county inc Telecoms.
- Secondary location for FDI.
- Rural decline in some parts of Cavan.
- No IOT / Tech Uni present in county.



## OPPORTUNITIES

- Digital Strategy implementation will drive a number of key strategic developments in Digitalisation of Public Services.
- Global growth in the digital economy and Cavan’s positioning for investment capture.
- Network of Local Hubs as multi-purpose facilities, connected to the community.
- Facilitate the development of a Cavan Digital Economy Network from the Get Connected community.
- Smart Initiatives across the county through partnerships and community ownership.
- Collaborative regional projects with USEFE partners and Monaghan CC.
- External Digital Champions forum as ambassadors and references for Connected Cavan in their community.
- Digital Awareness campaigns - Connected Cavan events and social media activity



## THREATS

- Underperformance of Cavan in innovation investment by both enterprises and institutions could lead to further divergence on digital economy & society.
- Competition from other regions to capture investment in digital sectors and knowledge services.
- Macro economic climate and threat of recession – Brexit exposure is high in Cavan given geographic and sectoral position.
- Talent retention and development for Cavan’s benefit will be challenging.



# ISSUES FOR STRATEGY FORMULATION

## Big picture / global view

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1. The Digital Recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic will be critical in the short and medium term. Governments, Companies, Institutions and society will have to embrace digital and technologies to assist in distancing but also through innovation and productivity gain – Cavan must establish practices and policies that support this digital recovery and support its employees, clients and partners to return to work and productivity
2. Rapid development and advancement in digital technologies and their impacts and dynamics on the digital society & economy – Cavan must keep pace through the Connected Cavan strategy
3. The Digital Citizen, Digital Participation & Activation and Smart Communities are all movements that are happening despite government or intergovernmental prescription or incentive – Cavan must work hard on awareness & participation in digital engagement for personal and community benefit
4. Big data is here and will shape our future world in every way – Cavan must utilize local data and analytics tools for better planning, investment and resource efficiency
5. Growing inequality in terms of locations, investment opportunities and social exclusion are growing, this includes the Digital Divide – Cavan must harness all its assets, strengths and networks to support digital integration and opportunity for its citizens and enterprise base. Develop niches and exploit competitive advantages
6. Climate change and the drive towards a low carbon sustainable future is going to dominate policy and funding for the next decade and digital technology will play a massive role – Cavan must position its industry structure to be ready for change and capture the opportunities around renewable energy technologies and sustainable living patterns

## National scene

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1. The NBP will finish the installation of digital infrastructure across the country in the next 4 to 5 years providing access and opportunity for all citizens and areas to participate in the digital society and compete in the digital economy – Cavan must ensure that the NBP roll-out is delivering benefit and opportunity through awareness, activation and collaboration
2. Trends in future work and activity patterns such as remote working, home working, co-working, mobile entrepreneurship etc will mean that locations must be more responsive to future demands and needs – Cavan must proactively (and organically) plan and invest in services and facilities to support flexibility
3. Funding and investment is becoming more competitive and scheduled around key NPF themes like Enterprise & Innovation; Rural & Urban Regeneration; Climate Action & Carbon Reduction; Smart Community Initiatives. Meeting assessment criteria and eligibility will become more important like partnership & collaboration, regional impact, citizen engagement, low carbon outcomes and so on – Cavan must be consistent on these measures and have the long-term view and structures in place to be successful in competing for such funding and Connected Cavan can support this effort
4. Digital Transformation and digitalisation of service is a major priority of government in recent years and will remain so for the next 3 to 5 years. This means that local authorities and their contractors and delivery partners must implement digital integration and transformation in all their systems – Cavan must push on with this agenda and implement its internal digital strategy and rapidly move to digital services for its clients and citizens

## Regional & Local considerations

1. Regional collaboration & partnerships are evolving as an important layer in the future development agenda driven by NPF/RSES and regional rebalancing needs e.g. AEC, USEFE, Cross Border Partnerships and funding – Cavan must continue its strong tradition and leadership in such collaborative networks including USEFE; Cavan / Monaghan sub-regional partnerships & forums and cross border programmes and build elements of Connected Cavan into each
2. Regional growth centres will emerge as locations or hubs for investment, infrastructure, services and other resources in order to accommodate and manage population growth and economic expansion. Cavan Town is the largest urban centre in its regional catchment and setting – Cavan must ensure that the conditions are favourable and development framework (CDP / CLDP) is ambitious and capable of hosting regional investment in a competitive environment
3. Cavan has strong community structures and partnerships in place with vibrant people and networks including diaspora connections. Some of these structures and networks are formal and more are informal, and both bring progressive ideas and energy to the table – Cavan must now harness these assets, resources and strengths through digital activation and around digital focused projects to ensure a healthy and sustainable digital society and economy.
4. The Digital Divide between urban and rural areas is pronounced, growing and becoming a broader indicator of regional disparity and rural decline in a more general sense. It is not just the lack of broadband infrastructure and services but also the digital skills and participation levels among the community in many rural areas. Rural Hubs can become places of learning and community collaboration and participation for the betterment of citizens and their communities – Cavan must establish best practice and service models for its rural communities through a network of Rural Hubs (existing facilities, pipeline projects and in some instances, new hubs). See Case Study on Virginia Rural Hub and related projects and networks
5. As above in the global considerations and drivers The Digital Recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic will be critical in the short and medium term at the local level.

# CONNECTED CAVAN STRATEGY

## Strategy Rationale

Cavan needs to build a recognised digital ecosystem in niche areas of strength to attract external investment and sustain a dynamic enterprise base. The common features will include a vibrant start-up community, a critical mass of large firms, R&D and innovation, specialised 3rd level education programmes, a dynamic and skilled labour market, and proactive support network.

The lack of concentration of digital enterprise, together with a predominantly rural geographic profile, means that Cavan must be creative and efficient in delivering services. Cavan also needs to retain its own talent, and attract talent in, to

sustain a meaningful digital economy. This can only be done by offering entrepreneurs an outstanding suite of services and some compelling quality of life factors in order to compete with other locations.

Alongside this focus on attracting digital and technology talent from outside the county, this strategy will create awareness and support structures for local companies in the digital / technology space to identify commercial innovation and collaboration opportunities to Cavan. This virtuous circle of driving innovation and growth in our digital economy with locally based solution providers will reinforce the economic impact and create real 'homegrown' clusters.

At the community level and through the education system digital skills and participation must be promoted in exciting and engaging ways especially to the elderly and those at risk of digital isolation to help foster a dynamic digital society.

Government can play a strong role in promoting digital skills and literacy through delivering public services online and providing incentives for citizens to adopt technology to live more sustainably and contribute to the democratic process through social media and other dedicated platforms.

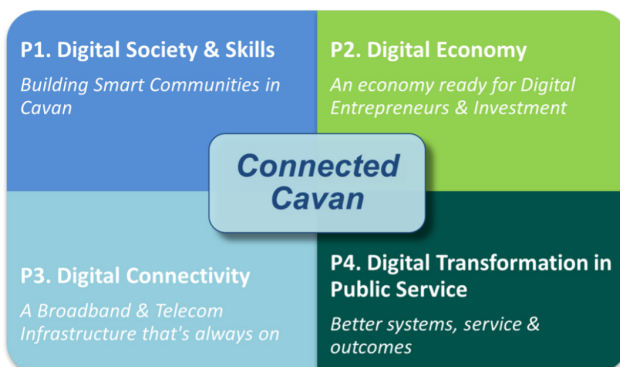
Finally, Cavan must keep pace with the development and roll out of digital infrastructure through the NBP, and other key enterprise infrastructure including strategic sites for enterprise and industry if it is to have a viable offer to FDI and digital entrepreneurs. In particular, 1Gb fibre, 5G mobile networks (in future), and the network infrastructure to accommodate these technologies.

### Key Areas of Focus – The Strategy Pillars

Each of the four strategy pillars are accompanied by a short statement or tagline to help communicate what the intended area of focus and action for that segment of the Digital Strategy – Connected Cavan.

## Vision Statement

Connected Cavan will set the foundations and roadmap for a citizen focused, entrepreneurial and dynamic digital economy & society over the coming decade. This will be delivered through intensive partnership & collaboration and the targeting of resources into assets and activities that have a real and lasting impact on local communities, carbon reduction and economic prosperity for the county and region”



The central message is that Cavan is a connected county in terms of its infrastructure, its people & organisations, its economy and its systems.

Connected Cavan is the initial three-year strategy for Digital Development in Cavan. It will create support structures, networks, knowledge and see out the vast majority of the NBP roll-out in Cavan.

## PILLAR 1 - DIGITAL SOCIETY & SKILLS

# Building Smart Communities in Cavan

Digital connectivity and participation can be used to reduce social exclusion and promote social cohesion but it is also leading to greater divergence and polarisation in democratic and political discourse. A healthy digital society will promote opportunity and access, protect citizens, drive efficiencies and knowledge and support better and more democratic policy making.

In Cavan this will mean providing opportunity for citizens to skill up in digital and to have access to reliable and fast broadband. It will also require collaboration, investment and innovation in the rural and community facilities to be more digital friendly and resourceful.

Actions and activity under Pillar 1 of Connected Cavan.

ACTION ITEM	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<p>P1:1 Digitally Enabled Communities</p>	<p>Ensuring speedy rollout of NBP and early delivery of infrastructure in community through BCP's / WiFi 4 EU Network and Public WiFi Hotspots. A full public and community information campaign should be implemented prior to the roll-out with information on the schemes, the benefits and how to engage. See action also under P3.1 below. As a general action relating to all community based projects and Digital Society (P1) activity, the Connected Cavan strategy and team will work closely with the Cavan PPN and individuals and groups with the expertise of the target community.</p>
<p>P1:2 Develop Digital literacy &amp; Skills</p>	<p>Promoting digital literacy through formal and informal learning at a community and workplace level, targeting vulnerable excluded groups. The Digital Skills for Citizen Scheme is funded by DCCAE and run in a number of locations across Cavan. At the informal learning level there are interesting projects in the community for Digital Skill that can be replicated e.g. 'Getting Started' Basic IT Skills for over 55's where the teaching is done by TY Students from the local Secondary School. The young age cohort is also a target for certain types of digital learning despite their general competence in digital literacy. This learning activity will focus on internet and date security, digital etiquette and responsible and safe online communications.</p>
<p>P1:3 Smart Communities Initiatives</p>	<p>Working with the local community and voluntary sector and statutory partners to identify, resource and implement Smart Initiatives in localized communities and across the county. Broadband Officer to actively engage with the Smart Communities Initiative forum under DRCD and identify best practice and fitting initiatives for Cavan Communities. Appendix 4A profiles a small number of Smart Communities Case Studies from across EU and Appendix 4B presents the DRCD Digital Innovation Programme Projects.</p>
<p>P1:4 Rural &amp; Community Hubs</p>	<p>Investment in ICT and other AV and media equipment in existing network of community hubs and facilities, including BCP's, to help stimulate demand and scope. (see Revitalising Rural areas through digitisation - ENRD)</p>
<p>P1:5 Remote Working Supports</p>	<p>Develop information, supports, networks and facilities to encourage and assist the Remote &amp; Flexible Working agenda. This will involve providing information on Remote Working &amp; Flexible Working and support with establishing local network and groups e.g. Grow Remote and other formats. See activity below under P4:5 CC Digital Digest for promotion of Remote Working chapters and networks.</p>
<p>P1:6 Digital Champions Assembly</p>	<p>Establish a Digital Champions Network and provide them with supports and resources to help communities utilise and exploit digital tools (6 to 8 member assembly) Seek information and best practice from the DRCD / BBO Network on experience from elsewhere with external Digital Champion's and how to get the right model to work for Cavan. Also see recommendations on Digital Champions role in Strategy Governance and promotion in Implementation Plan.</p>
<p>P1:7 Adopting Best Practice</p>	<p>Adopt and learn from best practice and guidance from the forthcoming National Digital Strategy (NDS) and Digital Agenda for Europe. Become active in networks and policy groups in ROI/Ni &amp; EU for Digital Society / Smart Communities / Rural Digital Development.</p>
<p>P1:8 Address deficiencies in DRA</p>	<p>Prioritise and tackle areas of weaknesses in relation to Digital Skills &amp; Digital Services from DRA 2018</p>

## PILLAR 2 - DIGITAL ECONOMY

# A Location ready for Digital Investment & Entrepreneurs

While Ireland is already in a strong position, being among the most digitalised countries in the world (6th in the EU digital index DESI), the digital economy appears to run at two different speeds, with a small number of foreign-owned multinationals with high digitalisation levels and productivity, and traditional indigenous SMEs, which are slower in leveraging digital solutions to reduce costs, drive innovation and expand market presence.

Cavan is not operating, for the most part, in the first tier or speed of the digital economy. Investment in skills, facilities and business networks must happen under Connected Cavan to bridge this gap.

Actions and activity under Pillar 2 of Connected Cavan.

ACTION ITEM	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<p>P2:1</p> <p><b>Digital Ecosystems &amp; Networks</b></p>	<p>Activate and support the 'Get Connected' Digital Cluster group to stimulate knowledge sharing and collaboration in the digital sector and extend best practice to wider enterprise community. In conjunction with Cavan LEO, Cavan Digital Hub, CITC, CCFE, Breffni Integrated CLG and other partners. Scope out the specific needs and supports required and help sub-groups like Digital Marketing / Software / Data Analytics / VR &amp; AI / to form and collaborate.</p>
<p>P2:2</p> <p><b>Digital Hub(s)</b></p>	<p>Continue to support Cavan Digital Hub to grow its client base and function in the enterprise community through events, information, marketing and other supports via Cavan LEO / CITC / CCEF. Support planning and resourcing of other enterprise facilities around the county to provide a digital service to clients.. This activity should be subject to some prior engagement and research and feasibility work if required. Future REDF, RRDF and the Border Enterprise Fund should form part of a short to medium-term investment plan. In conjunction with P1:1 &amp; P1:4 above support initiatives to accommodate remote workers and small-scale enterprise space / shared facilities &amp; services.</p>
<p>P2:3</p> <p><b>Digital Skills for Enterprise</b></p>	<p>Working with Cavan LEO, Cavan Institute and Cavan Monaghan ETB and private training providers perform a skills needs analysis of the enterprise base in Cavan. This should also involve detailed input from the Digital Enterprise Network (Get Connected) in P2:1 above.</p> <p>Resource and run training events with specific targeting of content to business type and personnel rather than a general IT skills roll-out approach. (see below for suggested content modules)</p> <p><a href="#">Digital Skills for tech enterprises</a> Coding, data science, digital business models, 3D modelling &amp; design, VR/AR creation, Digital Transformation, Cloud Strategy.</p> <p><a href="#">General Digital Skills for enterprise</a> Online selling and e-commerce website maintenance; Data analytics; Social Media management; Multi platform design for UX (user experience); ERP system specific training; Network &amp; Data Security</p>
<p>P2:4</p> <p><b>e-Commerce &amp; Digital Marketing</b></p>	<p>Drive awareness and information around the benefits and incentives towards online trading and digital marketing activity particularly in the B2C business base. Cavan LEO is already very active on this measure but there may be an opportunity to deliver an expanded version of support to include the national programme tailored to the needs of Cavan businesses.</p> <p>Help set up a user group / network to provide mutual help and support on an informal basis to businesses going online.</p> <p>This could include advice on platforms, costs, implementation timescales, back-up and servicing etc.</p>
<p>P2:5</p> <p><b>Investment in innovation &amp; ICT</b></p>	<p>Target supports from EI and competitive Innovation Funds to run collaborative Digital projects for clusters of Cavan based enterprises. The investment will address common critical needs and deficiencies among the participating businesses including group training and ICT. The investment should be made on a sectoral level so that many operators can benefit from the activity and equipment. Develop this project in conjunction with all enterprise and innovation partners in Cavan and possibly across the USEFE and Cavan Monaghan regional networks.</p> <p>Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund</p>
<p>P2:6</p> <p><b>Address deficiencies in DRA</b></p>	<p>Prioritise and tackle areas of weaknesses in relation to Digital Economy &amp; Employment and Innovation &amp; Entrepreneurship from DRA 2018</p>

## PILLAR 3 - DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

# A Broadband & Telecoms Infrastructure that is always on

Digital Infrastructure will underpin every aspect of the Connected Cavan Digital Strategy. Without fast reliable broadband and quality mobile network coverage citizens, businesses and schools will not be able to realise the benefits of digital and participate fully in the digital society and economy.

The rollout of the NBP in County Cavan is the most significant infrastructure investment in recent times. The total investment in the county will be in the order of €65m and will include FTTH and other fast broadband solutions to over 16,000 homes, business premises, farms, schools and community facilities.



Actions and activity under Pillar 3 of Connected Cavan.

ACTION ITEM	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<p>P3:1 BCP Network Plan</p>	<p>Section 3 above provides information on the BCP initiative in Cavan including selected locations. An important early action is to provide a project development plan to help manage and communicate what is involved in the BCP network and how it will benefit the communities they serve. Working with each local community and the PPN Connected Cavan will need to provide some demand stimulus through additional equipment and content.</p>
<p>P3:2 WiFi4EU &amp; Public WiFi Hotspots</p>	<p>See P1:1 above.</p>
<p>P3:3 NBP roll-out schedule</p>	<p>Cavan County Council in conjunction with DCCAE and NBI will publish a quarterly update on the rollout of the NBP across the county starting at end of Q3 in 2020. This will initially cover progress on getting all 12 BCP's fully installed with fast broadband and services to support access. Each Quarter will then see progress against the delivery of fibre to the 16,000 premises, households, farms and other connections in the intervention area.</p>
<p>P3:4 Telecoms Masts Strategy</p>	<p>Through consultation with the community and business there is evidence of a need for some technical assessment of the status and operational quality of the Telecoms Mast Infrastructure in some parts of Cavan. Comreg provide detailed mapping data on infrastructure location and signal strengths. However, there is a need to undertake a technical assessment of this information to establish the exact 'blackspots' and quantify the problems and weaknesses. Considerations should include MVNO's variance and 3G and 4G coverage as a minimum.</p>
<p>P3:5 Address deficiencies in DRA</p>	<p>Prioritise and tackle areas of weaknesses in relation to Transition to Digital &amp; Infrastructure from DRA 2018</p>



**WE MAKE  
REMOTE WORK  
LOCAL**

We're a bunch of people who believe remote work is a powerful tool for community development. We're mostly interested in rural areas and permanent (employed) remote work.



It is important to view Connected Cavan as the first phase of a longer term Digital agenda for Cavan with an emphasis on preparing the ground and getting ready and resourced for a dynamic digital future. Each of the four strategy Pillars are geared toward this development journey and will create focus and capacity around these priorities.

## PILLAR 4 - DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

# Better Systems, Service & Outcomes in Public Service

Connected Cavan is led by the local authority Cavan County Council. As the lead partner in the local digital strategy, Cavan County Council must lead and support in the transition to digital.

Therefore, a programme of Digital Transformation in public services and internal systems and processes will be coordinated and implemented under Pillar 4 to bring forward digital services and resources.

Actions and activity under Pillar 4 of Connected Cavan.

ACTION ITEM	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<p>P4:1 National Strategy and Projects</p>	<p>Cavan County Council will participate in the roll out of citizen facing digitisation projects. i.e. ePlanning.</p>
<p>P4:2 Cloud Based ICT</p>	<p>In line with Government policy Cavan County Council will approach the implementation of new systems with a 'cloud first' thinking.</p>
<p>P4:3 Digital Development Team</p>	<p>Broadband Officers are based in local authorities around the country. The role of the Broadband Officer is to provide a local point of contact for telecoms operators and the public regarding telecoms issues. They will also play the leading role in their local authorities as the National Broadband Plan is rolled out.</p>
<p>P4:4 Evolve Council website(s)</p>	<p>Develop a fresh new County Council website.</p>
<p>P4:5 Connected Cavan – Digital Digest</p>	<p>To keep the public informed on the updates to the actions in the digital strategy via social media and website.</p>
<p>P4:6 Responsive Digital Council</p>	<p>Develop an ICT Strategy specifically for Cavan County Council.</p>
<p>P4:7 Address deficiencies in DRA</p>	<p>Prioritise and tackle areas of weaknesses in relation to Transition to Digital &amp; Digital Services from DRA 2018</p>

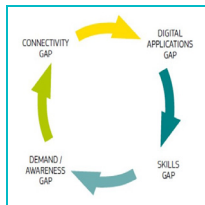
Connected Cavan embodies the building blocks and the framework for Cavan County Council and its key partners and stakeholders to drive improvements and investment in:

- our digital infrastructure
- digital participation by citizens
- digital enterprise creation and growth
- Digitalisation of local services and internal systems
- Cavan's natural tendency towards collaboration and innovation

# Current Projects & Activities

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A number of emerging activities, projects and funding opportunities are being explored and developed at a national, regional and local level. These include, but are not limited to the following:



## Smart Communities Funding

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There is a growing focus on Smart Communities from Europe and national government. The Department is supporting the piloting of a Smart Communities Initiatives in conjunction with local authorities and their Broadband Officer and local community stakeholders. It will be community driven, industry supported and enabled by government at all levels. Smart Communities is a new approach to community development and activation through exposure to digital content and technology and supporting people to discover the value of using digital in their daily lives. The DRCD have co-funded a large number of small localised projects under the Digital Innovation Programme which neatly fit the SMART Communities Initiative type of intervention. Collaboration and the utilisation of existing assets and resources under a shared vision the community will maximise its reach, impact and engagement of current schemes and programmes.



## Techspace Programme

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TechSpace provides opportunities for young people to be creative using technology. A leading creative technology network for educators to train and upskill in digital Creativity and STEAM. TechSpace design and deliver training, activities, resources and opportunities through English and Irish for youth workers, teachers and volunteers. The programme covers film-making, animation, robotics, electronics, mobile journalism, audio production, coding, graphic design, 3D printing and other digital applications. It helps to develop 21st-century skills such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. Young People are living in a digital age and the TechSpace Network exists to enable them to become creators of technology, not just consumers. TechSpace was established in 2012 to have a major impact on education for youth development in Ireland.



The Smart Community Initiative has the potential, in combination with local authority Digital Strategies, to deliver enhanced demand stimulation for uptake of High Speed Broadband services in urban and rural communities.



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## Town Hall Creative Hub

The refurbishment of the Cavan Town Hall into an exciting collaborative arts event space is at an advanced stage. This project will provide an arts space for the county that will serve artists and audience and compliments existing provision for culture in this region. The venue will also host digital for digital arts and media demonstration including VR technology. The vision is to establish a space for artists and audiences of all ages to participate in contemporary arts in Cavan, to make new work and to present that work locally and internationally. The venue and company will champion new, experimental and cutting-edge theatre, visual arts, film, music and dance in a regional setting with a programme of exhibitions, performance, workshops, talks, events, residencies, and research and touring projects.



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## Peace Plus Programme 2021 – 2027

- Objective 1 A SMARTER EU by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation.
  - Objective 2 A GREENER, LOWER CARBON EU, by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation, risk prevention and management.
  - Objective 3 A MORE CONNECTED EU by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity.
  - Objective 4 A MORE SOCIAL EU. This focuses on improving employment opportunities; increasing access to quality education; reducing marginalisation through improved housing and services; and increasing access to quality health care.
  - Objective 5 A EUROPE CLOSER TO ITS CITIZENS by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas, and local initiatives in the region.
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# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## Preparation & Capacity Building

Getting started on the Connected Cavan journey will require a dedicated driver. This means that there will need to be a clearly identifiable organisation and individual(s) that act as the focal point for the strategy and take direct responsibility for its coordination and implementation. Naturally, other stakeholders will play key roles in the planning and implementation also but there must be a leader that takes overall responsibility for the strategy. In this regard, the implementation ownership will rest with the Digital Transformation Project Leader in Cavan County Council.

As outlined in action P4:3 in the strategy, this function or division within Cavan County Council will need to be expanded and resourced in order to deliver against each of the strategy pillars and manage other activities and projects closely related to the local Digital Strategy – Connected Cavan.

Partnership development around the Connected Cavan strategy will be a critical element in laying the foundation for successful implementation. Each of the key stakeholders and delivery partners will need to be engaged to establish a platform and commitment to the principles, vision and objectives of the strategy. The key partners in Connected Cavan will include:

- Cavan County Council (cross departmental)
- Cavan LEO
- Cavan Economic Forum
- Cavan Monaghan ETB
- Cavan LCDC

At a project level, other partners, groups and organisations will be central to the implementation of Connected Cavan. These will include, but not limited to, the following organisations:

- Cavan Institute
- Cavan PPN members
- Cavan Innovation & Technology Centre
- Cavan County Enterprise Fund Ltd
- Breffni Integrated CLG
- The primary and secondary education sector.
- Cavan Diaspora Network rep
- National Broadband Ireland
- Telco's and Network Providers
- Utilities Infrastructure Providers (Ducting & Poles)



**Digital Champions** will need to be identified across all sectors of society and business to help promote the digital society and economy in their respective spheres of influence. This will include digital entrepreneurs, large enterprises & FDI Companies, teachers with strong IT skills, community leaders and social entrepreneurs.

# Creating Awareness of Connected Cavan

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A network or assembly of digital champions will need to be established to connect them into the strategy and to allow for a sharing of ideas and access to support for driving new projects or campaigns.

## Digital Champion Assembly

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This Digital Champion Assembly will exist in a virtual and real context where members will share ideas and information and promote best practice in digital applications to all sectors of society and the economy.

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This element of the Connected Cavan structure will be very important when it comes to promoting projects at a community level or among business networks but equally in demonstrating a strong and embedded sense of Connected Cavan when it comes to drawing in external investment, funding or new infrastructure.

The Digital Team will co-ordinate and facilitate this group and disseminate the advice and resources arising from the Digital Champions Assembly.

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## Press & PR

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Press & PR will be important from the outset to drive the awareness and information about Connected Cavan and what it means for citizens and businesses.

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This media focus will involve general press releases and features of a more specific nature depending on the target audience and the area of focus. Initially, and in conjunction with a full media launch, a Connected Cavan press statement and feature will need to be sent to all regional newspapers and other media outlets. A shorter and more focused version can be prepared for the national and weekend newspaper market. For example, the Sunday Business Post and other national broadsheets can highlight the initiative in their technology and business sections.

This PR campaign needs to be progressive and ongoing rather than a big launch with no follow through. An ongoing periodic feature on tech or digital businesses in Cavan could be run on a monthly basis across local and regional media outlets. This feature would be branded Connected Cavan and highlight the success of digital enterprises in the county along with general information and news about projects under the strategy.



## Strategy Timescales

Connected Cavan strategy is divided into three distinct timescales.

In addition to this project scheduling and planning there will be a set of activities that are 'ongoing' and will need to be progressed throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

### SHORT-TERM:

immediate to 18 months

### MEDIUM-TERM :

one to three years

### LONG-TERM:

beyond 2024

## A Connected Cavan roadshow

A Connected Cavan roadshow to showcase the strategy and its action plan will need to be delivered across the county in a series of workshop or information evenings.


These meetings will be open to the public and coordinated through Cavan PPN, Cavan LEO, Cavan Chambers of Commerce and other networks but must be promoted heavily in advance with invitations sent to all local stakeholders including business representatives, community organisations, education providers, development agencies and other interest groups. The presentation format and event management must be professional and engaging in order to inspire confidence and buy-in to the strategy and to help embed Connected Cavan and build familiarity with the partnership and delivery personnel. These localised events will also be an opportunity to identify and recruit suitable Digital Champions.

The online presence of Connected Cavan will need to be multidimensional and encompass website, social media, e-zine and other platforms. The quality of the content and its management will also be an important aspect to provide confidence and engage with its audience whether that is strategy stakeholders, partners or the general public.

The second key dimension, and the most important, will be the promotion of Connected Cavan and its specific activities, through a wide variety of social media platforms. In particular, LinkedIn and Twitter will deliver a focused message to entrepreneurs but also facebook and Youtube will have a role to play in promoting the digital society elements of the strategy to the community.

Online news services such silicon republic and other technology and enterprise related media channels will need to be utilised for raising the profile of Cavan in the digital sphere when there is a critical announcement or a success story worth sharing. Events & Expos will also be important in addition to the local information workshops highlighted above Connected Cavan will need to plan for its presence at key events at a local, regional and national level.

## Cavan County Council

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