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Richard Leonard MSP
Convener
Public Audit Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

05 September 2024

Dear Mr Leonard

MAJOR IT PROJECTS – PROGRESS REPORT

I am writing to provide an update on major IT projects that are subject to the Technology Assurance Framework (TAF).

There are currently 515 projects recorded with the Digital Assurance Office, many of which are potential projects therefore may not be taken forward, and others are in early scoping phases without committed budgets. Annex A provides a breakdown of these projects, a subset of which are major IT projects.

Annex B provides an overview of current major IT projects which have digital assurance activity associated with them, including the Shared Services Programme. Original estimates for this Programme were calculated in 2021, and our understanding of this programme has continued to mature. Implementations of HR and Finance systems are notoriously complex to estimate. We are unpicking years of cumulative process design and building capabilities that will be fit for the organisation and our public body customers today, whilst providing the tools we need to grow and mature over time.

The total estimated cost of Shared Services Programme delivery in October 2024 is now £58.4m across FYs 22/23, 23/24 and 24/25. This is slightly ahead of the upper range reported in the Audit Scotland s22 report on the 2022/23 SG Consolidated Accounts (£46m-£52m) published in November 2023, figures that do not take account of the timeline changes. The main drivers behind cost and timeline changes are the scale and complexity of the implementation, combined with the challenge of running a programme of this nature in parallel with business-as-usual activity.

As previously discussed with Committee clerks, the Major IT Projects report will continue to undergo continuous improvements including strengthening the focus on

active digital projects in future. We are happy to discuss the report in more detail if the Committee wishes.

An update from the Digital Assurance Office is also attached (Annex C) which provides an overview of assurance outcomes since 2017-18, continuous improvement work and assurance insights from 2023-24 reviews. We would welcome your feedback on the usefulness of this report and any improvements that you may wish to see in future reports.

Yours sincerely,

Jennifer Inglis-Jones
Director for Internal Audit and Assurance

Geoff Huggins
Chief Digital Officer

Annex A Digital Assurance Office: breakdown of projects on 12 July 2024

Table 1. Total number of projects recorded in DAO Project Register

Total number of projects recorded	Total number of projects with estimated whole life costs	Total estimated whole life costs
515*	423*	**£1,740,141,124**

Notes

* These figures exclude closed and cancelled projects and include potential projects, projects at early scoping stage and projects which are on hold.

The DAO does not monitor the financial expenditure of projects and only captures estimated whole-life costs to help consider the level of assurance which may apply to a project. Whole-life costs reflect the total cost of creating and maintaining an asset through to its disposal.

The nature of the project register means that some estimates will include projected costs that are not related directly to the IT delivery element of the project. It should also be noted that the project register is updated regularly through a process of engagement between the DAO and organisations and therefore the nature of the information held will change over time.

Table 2. Breakdown of projects with an estimated whole-life cost recorded

	Number of projects	Percentage of active projects with estimated whole-life costs
Major Projects	28	50.40%
Potential Major Projects	13	23.74%
>=£5m (excluding major and potential major projects)	13	14.85%
£1m - <£5m	61	7.30%
£500k - <£1m	42	1.67%
£100k - <£500k	131	1.80%
<£100k	135	0.24%

Not all potential projects have estimated whole life costs recorded.

Annex B Major IT Projects

This annex provides an overview of major digital initiatives using information provided by the projects, approved by the respective Accountable Officers. The projects have been grouped in the following sections dependent on the phase and type of the project:

1. Major projects in delivery or live with further releases planned
2. Major projects at initiation and planning phases
3. Procurements for contracted services and facility contracts
4. Major projects that are under closure, have closed, cancelled or are no longer classified as a major project

1. Major projects in delivery or live with further releases planned

Major projects that are currently in delivery or have delivered therefore are live with further releases planned within the scope of the project are:

- Digital Infrastructure Programme, Disclosure Scotland
- Digital Service Assets Programme, Disclosure Scotland
- Aspen (Management Information Platform), Forestry and Land Scotland
- 2022 Census, National Records of Scotland
- Body Worn Video – National Rollout, Police Scotland
- National Integrated Command and Control System, Police Scotland
- Digital Case Management System – Office of the Public Guardian, Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
- Middleware and Java Upgrade Project, Scottish Government
- Shared Services Programme – Shared Services Transformation Phase 1, Scottish Government
- Digital Identity Programme – Digital Identity Service, Scottish Government
- Scottish Government Payments – Payments Transformation Project, Scottish Government
- Digital Evidence Sharing Capability, Scottish Government and Police Scotland
- Social Security Programme (IT Elements), Scottish Government
- McCloud Remedy, Scottish Public Pensions Agency
- Pension Platform Programme, Scottish Public Pensions Agency
- Digital Travel Data Information Services - Stage 2 Technical Travel Services, Transport Scotland

The following pages contain information relating to each project listed above.

Digital Infrastructure Programme, Disclosure Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Digital Director
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive

Programme description: Digital work needed to replace or enhance certain existing digital systems and supporting infrastructure in order to provide a framework upon which the requirements of existing and future legislation can be delivered.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£18.26 million	June 2021	October 2025	Delivery	No	Yes	A Delivery Gate was held in February 2024 to consider the Platform re-engineering project with an Assurance of Action Plan expected in due course.
Programme note: Changes to the scope and groupings of Disclosure Scotland projects has expanded the number of projects in this Digital Infrastructure grouping (this previously included 2 projects, it now includes 7 projects), primarily through the inclusion of the Digital Enhancements work previously reported. As a result of these reallocations, the infrastructure grouping has increased costs and the schedule has extended.						

Digital Service Assets Programme, Disclosure Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Digital Director
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive

Project description: The elements that improve our working service. Projects that are focused on the enhancement of Disclosure Scotland services. The scope includes the build of new service assets that facilitate the direct ingestion of Police Scotland data and also the build of a new online account.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£5.84 million	June 2022	October 2024	Delivery	No	Yes	There has been no assurance since the last update.
Project note: Changes to the scope and groupings of previously reported Disclosure Scotland projects has transferred elements of work to create this new grouping. It now consists of two projects: the Online Account and the Ongoing Monitoring of Other Relevant Information (OM ORI). The change was introduced through the Disclosure Scotland Portfolio Board to more clearly define scope and outcomes of the projects and programmes underway across Disclosure Scotland.						

Aspen (Management Information Platform), Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS)

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Corporate Services
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Project description: The purpose of the project is to help FLS become financially sustainable and more business minded by putting in place new systems and updated processes that will modernise the way FLS manage finance, procurement and business planning. It will replace legacy finance systems with a modern, fit-for-purpose Enterprise Resource Planning system. It will adopt best-practice processes and it will also revise and redesign the Chart of Accounts.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£4.8 million	March 2020	June 2025	Delivery	Yes	Yes	A Delivery Gate was held in March 2024 with a follow up Assurance of Action Plan in May. A Digital Standard checkpoint has also been carried out which focussed on user centred design.
Project note: The reduction in estimated costs is due to more accurate costs following the completion of the procurement exercise.						

2022 Census, National Records of Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Interim Chief Executive
Accountable Officer: Director of Corporate Services

Project description: The programme of work, including IT to support Scotland's Census 2022, which will be primarily online.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£140 million	October 2015	December 2025	Delivery	Yes	Yes	The DAO has discharged the Programme from further digital assurance.
Project note: Following completion of the live collection exercise and the processing of the census returns, the programme is now focused on the phased release of census results. Lessons learned over the course of the programme are being used to inform development of our 2022 Census General Report which will be laid before parliament by end of 2024, and also to inform considerations on the future of population statistics in Scotland. A reduction in whole-life costs is due to savings realised through robust budget management of the overall lifecycle spend.						

Body Worn Video – National Rollout, Police Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Chief Digital Information Officer
Accountable Officer: Deputy Chief Constable Local Policing

Project description: Delivery of a Body Worn Video solution is included within scope of the Digitally Enabled Policing Programme.

Drivers for change include supporting the objectives of the Serving a Changing Scotland Strategy and the Scottish Government Digital Strategy for Justice in Scotland (2014). These aim to maximise officer visibility, increase the detection and prevention of crime, strengthen operational and partner decision making, improve access and communities and build public confidence through transparency and legitimacy.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£32.9 million	March 2022	December 2026	Planning	Yes	Yes	There has been no further digital assurance since the last update. Planning is underway for the next assurance activity.
Project note: Schedule dates will be confirmed as the current Design and planning work with the contracted supplier matures						

National Integrated Command and Control System (NICCS), Police Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: ACC Local Policing North & C3
Accountable Officer: Deputy Chief Constable Local Policing

Project description: The National ICCS system will facilitate the control of Police Scotland's operational communications via Airwave radio terminals and C3 telephony systems, utilising voice and data protocols. In addition, it shall enable the mandatory introduction of the Emergency Services Network (ESN) being implemented by the Home Office as a full replacement for Airwave TETRA radio communications. A single ICCS platform for Police Scotland, compatible with ESN framework and devices, will enhance the cross-site working, improve business continuity (moving staff across ACR sites) and reduce training overheads (single training course).

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£7.9 million	November 2018	March 2025	Delivery	Yes	Yes	A Go-Live Gate was held in December 2023.
Project note: Project end date is expected to move out to March 2025 to allow for final resolution of production issues						

Digital Case Management System – Office of the Public Guardian, Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Senior Responsible Officer: Executive Director, Tribunals and Office of the Public Guardian
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive

Project description: Development of new case management systems for the Office of the Public Guardian, as funding allows, to support online submission, end-to-end digital case management, and new functions to provide better service to public. Scoping of project progressing. The Tribunals and OPG Lab has recently carried out a proof of concept focused on Power of Attorney workflow.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£6.6 million	February 2022	August 2025	Delivery	Yes	Yes	There has been no further assurance since the last update and a Go-Live gate is under planning for September.
Project note: Estimated whole-life costs have increased due to initial estimates from the planning phase being tested with the market which were higher than anticipated. Scheduling changes due to rescoping and rephasing the project to focus on replacing the existing, obsolete case management system (there are severe risks associated with its continued use) with a modern, efficient and adaptable system and migrating the extensive historic data on to the new system. Once the project is complete – annual recurring savings are estimated to be in the region of £900k.						

Middleware and Java Upgrade Project, Scottish Government - Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Chief Technology Officer
Accountable Officer: Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy

Project description: The project is focussed on upgrading a critical component within our technology stack. This work is vital in ensuring our systems remain stable, reliable and secure whilst continuing to provide the common interface for technologies involved in making Agriculture payments. This Middleware Project is an upgrade project that is essential to mitigate the cyber security risks associated with running out of support software and is the first project in a multi-year Programme of Legacy remediation work.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£4.6 million	June 2022	October 2024	Live – further releases planned	Yes	Yes	Three reviews have been carried out during 2024. The latest review was a Go-Live review in May which concluded the digital assurance activity.
Project note: The Middleware and Java upgrade solution is now live for Rural Payments and Services application which is the largest application and project deliverable. Two further smaller applications will be upgraded and deployed onto the new platform which is on track for project completion by October 2024.						

Shared Services Programme – Shared Services Transformation Phase 1, Scottish Government - Corporate Transformation and Workplace Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Director of Corporate Transformation & Workplace
Accountable Officer: Director-General Corporate

Project description: The Shared Services Programme will deliver a new HR and Finance platform (Oracle Cloud), which replaces decades-old systems and will sit at the heart of our new corporate shared services offering to Scottish Government core and over 30 public bodies, helping to build a resilient corporate capability and drive efficiency and effectiveness of our HR and finance processes.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£58.48 million	June 2020	December 2024	Delivery	Yes*	Yes	A Health Check was held in May 2024 with a follow up Assurance of Action Plan in June 2024. A Go-Live Gate is scheduled for August.
Project note: Following preparation of a refreshed Business Case in 2023, a programme re-plan took place, culminating in the endorsement of the new plan and budget through formal governance routes in early 2024. Extensive progress has been made, with the core system now built and tested, the focus now is on supporting the successful transition to Oracle Cloud.						

Digital Identity Programme – Digital Identity Service, Scottish Government – Digital Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director Cloud & Digital Services
Accountable Officer: Director Digital

Project description: The Scottish Government's Digital Strategy contains the commitment to work with stakeholders, privacy interest groups and members of the public to develop a robust, secure and trustworthy mechanism by which an individual member of the public can prove their identity and/or entitlement to a public sector service or a benefit online. The aim of this programme is to deliver the commitment to develop a common public sector approach to online identity assurance, as part of digital public services.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£45 million	January 2018	December 2028	Delivery	Yes	Yes	Delivery Gates were held in August 2023 and June 2024.
Project note: Estimated whole-life costs are indicative to end of 2028 as a full cost model is to be developed as part of the full business case following a decision to offer the service at no cost to the Service Customers. Digital Identity service, renamed ScotAccount is now in private Beta with two customers, Disclosure Scotland and Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.						

Scottish Government Payments – Payments Transformation Project, Scottish Government – Digital Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director Cloud & Digital Services
Accountable Officer: Director Digital

Project description: Development of a common platform and service that standardises the way the Scottish Government and the wider public sector in Scotland makes and (in the future) takes payments to and from citizens and businesses.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£11.1 million	September 2018	April 2025	Delivery	Yes	Yes	A Delivery Gate was carried out in April 2024.
Project note: Plans have been revised to onboard public bodies identified in the full business case.						

Digital Evidence Sharing Capability, Scottish Government - Justice Directorate/Police Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Chief Digital Officer Police Scotland and Deputy Director, Civil Law and Legal Systems
Accountable Officer: Director General Education and Justice

Project description: This project will aim to deliver a service to collect and share digital evidence at every stage of a criminal case and prosecution across the justice sector. It is a collaborative project, being developed by and for Criminal Justice Sector (CJS) partners, supported by the Scottish Government.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£27.47 million	January 2016	November 2025	Delivery	No	No	A Delivery Gate was carried out in December 2023 to support extension of the pilot to national roll out.
Project note: The pilot was successful; all success criteria were met and feedback from users was overwhelmingly positive. The project has worked closely with criminal justice partners to ensure that all required data security controls and governance were in place ahead of national rollout which commenced in Tayside from May 2024. Engagement with the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner and the Information Commissioner's Office continues as required.						

Social Security Programme (IT Elements), Scottish Government – Social Security Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Social Security Programme Director
Accountable Officer: Director-General Communities

Programme description: To enable Scottish Government control and administration of devolved welfare benefits.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£277.4 million	January 2017	December 2025	Delivery	Yes	Yes	The DAO and Social Security Programme continue to work closely together to identify assurance requirements. Assurance activities have reduced significantly as the Programme has been afforded increased earned autonomy in recognition of the positive assurance outcomes achieved over recent years.
Programme note: The refreshed Programme Business Case for the Social Security Programme was published in February 2023.						

McCloud Remedy, Scottish Public Pensions Agency

Senior Responsible Officer: Chief Operating Officer
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Project description: Project to remedy discrimination arising from 2015 pension reform. Project scope includes NHS Scotland Pension Scheme, Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme, Police Service of Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service pension schemes. Includes system and process changes required and rectification of any pensions adjustments needed.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£10.65 million	October 2020	March 2025	Delivery	No	No	Two health checks and an Assurance of Action Plan review have been carried out since the last update. No further digital assurance is anticipated for the project.
Project note: Finalised estimated spend to March 2025 is still to be authorised.						

Pension Platform Programme, Scottish Public Pensions Agency

Senior Responsible Officer: Chief Operating Officer
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Project description: The provision of, and migration to a cloud hosted and managed Pension and Payroll administration platform, together with associated support and maintenance beyond March 2026 (when the current contract ends).

Phase 2 scope of the project includes Member Record Structure, Engage, Data Transformation, P&F Arrears, Data Quality Dashboard & Pensions Dashboard

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£15.3 million	January 2020	March 2026	Delivery	Yes	Yes	A combined Delivery and Go-Live Gate was carried out in August 2023 for the migration of the Police and Fire pension schemes to the new platform. A Go-Live Gate for the health and education schemes was carried out in November 2023. No further assurance is anticipated for Phase 1 of the Programme. The assurance plans for Phase 2 will be developed once the delivery plans are available.
Project note: Phase 1 is under closure having delivered the migration of the four pension schemes to the new cloud platform. Phase 2 is currently being scoped focusing on delivering business improvements.						

Digital Travel Data Information Services - Stage 2 Technical Travel Services, Transport Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Head of Concessionary Travel and Integrated Ticketing
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Project description: Appointment of a Technical Supplier(s) to oversee delivery of the Programme for Government initiative to implement the following:

• Data Management (collation, processing, output and associated services);
• Travel data technical system(s), including Fares Aggregator
• Disruption data services; and if required
• Associated services including Digital Information Provision (Website/App)

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£6 million	January 2021	April 2029	Delivery	Yes	Yes	A Technology Assurance Framework health check was carried out in May 2023, Delivery Gate in February 2024 and Go-Live Gate in July 2024. Alpha and Beta Digital Scotland Service Standard assessments have also been conducted.
Project note: The project will deliver a Minimum Viable Product approach that will introduce improvements to existing services currently delivered by Traveline Scotland.						

2. Major projects at initiation and planning phases

Projects in the early lifecycle phases of initiation and planning do not yet have budget committed therefore the project estimated costs provided in this section are indicative of anticipated expenditure, and therefore will be subject to refinement as business cases are developed and budgets are committed.

Major projects that are currently these early phases therefore not yet in delivery are:

- Full Business Case Digital Transformation - Stage 2, Care Inspectorate
- Digital Act Enablement Programme, Disclosure Scotland
- Unified Communications and Contact Platform (UCCP), Police Scotland
- Moveable Transactions, Registers of Scotland
- New Mobilising System, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)
- People, Payroll, Finance and Training, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Legacy Services Programme - Legacy Services Phase 1, Scottish Government
- Web Estate Transformation Project, Scottish Government
- Future eProcurement Systems Programme, Scottish Government

The following pages contain information relating to each project listed above.

Full Business Case Digital Transformation - Stage 2, Care Inspectorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Executive Director of IT & Digital Transformation
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive

Programme description: The project will deliver a fully integrated digital platform for scrutiny of regulated care services. It will replace inflexible legacy systems at high risk of failure, by supporting risk-led dynamic scheduling and conduct of scrutiny, reducing manual effort so staff can concentrate on higher value work, and improving data quality and better information capture and sharing.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£8.63 million	June 2023	September 2026	Planning	Yes	A health check was held in June 2024.
Programme note: Since the last PAC report, the project has launched and has progressed through mobilisation stage. The project is now moving through service design in the planning phase and is on track with forecast budget which has now been reported as it is no longer commercially sensitive.					

Digital Act Enablement Programme, Disclosure Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Digital Director
Accountable Officer: Chief Executive

Programme description: Deliver the functionality required to support the implementation of the Disclosure Act.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£3.48 million	December 2023	March 2025	Planning	Yes	There has been no assurance since the last update.
Programme note: A change in scope has seen additional elements from other existing programmes of work transferred to the project. The change has been brought about as the planning and delivery rationale has developed, making it more cost effective to transfer work into this programme to ensure that user stakeholder and policy needs were met. Whole-life costs continue to be estimates due to the early stages of work which are being brought together under a single strategic business case therefore costs are expected to be refined as work progresses.					

Unified Communications and Contact Platform (UCCP), Police Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: ACC Local Policing North & C4
Accountable Officer: Deputy Chief Constable Local Policing

Project description: In support of the 2026 vision and Digital Strategy, the business needs across Police Scotland have developed to require additional functionality from our contact platforms, including integrated digital communication channels, presence and availability information. There is a need to replace the contact platforms throughout Police Scotland with modern, unified communications and contact solutions that better meet the changing needs of the business whilst rationalising the range of technologies to standardise technical and supplier support and maintenance requirements and finances - UCCP aims to carry this out.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£10.2 million	December 2019	March 2025	Planning	Yes	There has been no further assurance since the last update. The next assurance point is expected to be a Go-Live Gate later this year.
Project note: A reprioritisation of the rollout to enable delivery of key system requirements has been undertaken. Enterprise aspects are in delivery.					

Moveable Transactions, Registers of Scotland

Senior Responsible Officer: Head of Policy and Legal
Accountable Officer: Accountable Officer

Project description: The key project deliverable is the development of two new public Registers required in support of the Moveable Transactions (Scotland) Bill where details of assignations and corporeal (and some incorporeal) moveable property which had been used as security to raise finance are registered and publicly searchable.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£8.4 million	July 2021	June 2025	Planning	No	There continues to be close working between the DAO and project team with a health check held in April.
Project note: Work continues with SG on the operational regulations and progressing to an updated timeline for early 2025 for all the necessary secondary legislation					

New Mobilising System, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)

Senior Responsible Officer: Assistant Chief Officer
Accountable Officer: Deputy Chief Officer

Project description: Rationalisation of control rooms and implementation of single system. Control Room rationalisation was completed under Phase 1 of the Command and Control Futures Programme. The re-named New Mobilising System Project will implement a single Command and Control solution across SFRS.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£38.98 million	January 2023	December 2025	Planning	No	A Pre-Procurement Gate was held in August 2023.
Project note: The project is in the procurement phase which will enable the refinement of estimated costs which are currently based upon supplier high level estimates.					

People, Payroll, Finance and Training, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Senior Responsible Officer: Head of People Directorate
Accountable Officer: Chief Officer

Project description: Review of current People, Payroll, Finance and Training Systems provision.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£15 million	April 2021	October 2026	Initiation		There has been no further assurance since the last update.
Project note: Since the previous update the project has been engaged in workshops with Sopra Steria to explore the viability of adopting the SG Oracle Cloud (part of Shared Services Programme). This exploration is not fully concluded yet but presents a potential opportunity for savings.					

Legacy Services Programme - Legacy Services Phase 1, Scottish Government - Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director of Digital and Information Services Division
Accountable Officer: Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy

Project description: Important business systems that are essential to the smooth operation of ARE rely on technologies that are more than 25 years old therefore the primary objectives for the project are to mitigate the associated risks to business continuity and cyber security. The Legacy Project has also been established to address a number of external requirements resulting from the wider Scottish Government and ITECs technology roadmaps.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
tbc	April 2024	Tbc	Planning	Yes	A Business Justification was held in April 2024 and a follow up Assurance of Action Plan is scheduled for August.
Project note: New project – not on previous report.					

Web Estate Transformation Project, Scottish Government – Digital Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director Digital Transformation
Accountable Officer: Director Digital

Project description: The aim of the project is to deliver a consolidated Scottish Government web estate which meets the needs of the people of Scotland, is easy for civil servants to publish to, and which provides good value for money for the whole public sector.

The Scottish Government has, through its Digital Strategy, confirmed its ambitious programme to accelerate the pace of digital transformation in the Scottish public sector, in part based on common platforms and systems that cut across organisational boundaries, to deliver joined-up public services based upon the needs of users rather than historical organisation boundaries. The Web Estate Transformation Project aims to take a similar, platform-centred approach to meet the needs of organisations across the public sector in Scotland who are required to publish their corporate, service, campaign and legislative information.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£5 million	June 2023	March 2027	Planning	Yes	Yes	A Business Justification Gate was carried out in June 2024.
Project note: New project – not on previous report.						

Future eProcurement Systems Programme, Scottish Government – Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director eProcurement Scotland
Accountable Officer: Director-General Corporate

Programme description: The re procurement of the eProcurement offer in alignment to the end of contract dates and forward look to inclusion of new technologies, efficiencies and improved data collection. The programme is also looking at opportunities for Grants to align into the eProcurement systems.

Estimated whole-life cost	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
tbc	April 2022	March 2027	Initiation	Yes	A Business Justification Gate was carried out in February 2024.
Programme note: New project – not on previous report.					

3. Procurements for contracted services and facility contracts

This section contains service and facility contracts which are distinct from the previous digital programmes and projects. Information relating to the contracts listed below are contained in the following pages.

- Digital Support Services Procurement, Scottish Government
- National Standardised Assessments for Scotland, Scottish Government

Digital Support Services Procurement, Scottish Government - Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director Supporting Delivery of ARE Digital and Information Services
Accountable Officer: Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy

Project description: The primary requirement is to put in place a contract to work in partnership and supplement in-house resource and other specialist services in blended teams to ensure efficient and effective system maintenance, support, modernisation and enhancement.

Estimated whole-life cost	Start date	End date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£1 million	April 2023	April 2026	Delivery	Yes	Yes	A Pre-Procurement Gate was held in November 2023 prior to issue of the Single Procurement Document. A further Pre-Procurement Gate was held in May 2024 to support completion of work to enable issue of the Invitation to Tender. A follow up Assurance of Action Plan is scheduled in August.
Project note: The revision of the estimated whole-life cost is presentational and not a material change to the project's objective or organisation. It reflects a separation between the £1m (Revenue) estimated project cost to put in place a replacement contract and the £90-£95m (Revenue and Capital) maximum potential spend on services that may be called-off under the contract over the maximum seven-year term of the contract. The project itself will end in April 2026 when the new contract is fully in place (in October 2025) and services and knowledge transfer from incumbents to the new Service Provider have been successfully managed and evaluated. As is the case with the current service contracts, management of the new contract over its term will be subject to standard SG systems of internal control and budgetary disciplines and approvals.						

National Standardised Assessments for Scotland, Scottish Government – Learning Directorate

Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director, Improvement Attainment and Wellbeing
Accountable Officer: Director-General Education and Justice

Project description: A replacement provider has been procured for the delivery of National Standardised Assessment (online literacy and numeracy assessments made available to children in receipt of publicly funded education in Scotland since August 2017 in English and December 2018 in Gaelic medium), to provide phase two of the assessment service from 2022. Rather than separate contracts for the English and Gaelic assessments, a single replacement service provider has been appointed to run both assessment systems through a single assessment platform.

Estimated whole-life cost	Start date	End date	Current stage	Tracking to budget	Tracking to schedule	Digital Assurance
£17 million	January 2020	July 2026	Solution live – further releases planned	No	Yes	There has been no further digital assurance since the previous update and no further assurance is anticipated for the project.
Project note: Phase 2 continues with a focus on continuous improvement until the contract ends in August 2025. The Scottish Government has an option to extend the contract for a further year. Phases are reflective of the period of contract for procured services therefore preparatory work for phase 3 will take place to ensure arrangements are in place for the end of the current contract.						

4. Major projects that are under closure, have closed, cancelled or are no longer classified as a major project

Projects contained in this section are listed below for ease of reference.

- Enhancements to Glow, Education Scotland
- Core Operational Solutions, Police Scotland
- Scottish Government Cloud First Programme, Scottish Government
- Digital Planning Transformation Programme, Scottish Government
- Ar Turas, Transport Scotland

Key project information	Estimated whole-life costs	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Digital Assurance	Project notes
Enhancements to Glow, Education Scotland Senior Responsible Officers: Strategic Director Education Scotland and Deputy Director Workforce, Infrastructure and Digital (Scottish Government) Accountable Officers: Chief Executive and Director General Education and Justice	£11 million	September 2022	March 2026	Cancelled	There has been no further digital assurance since the previous update.	Project was cancelled prior to any significant expenditure, only staff costs incurred. Project considered closed from Autumn 2023.

Key project information	Estimated whole-life costs	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Digital Assurance	Project notes
Core Operational Solutions, Police Scotland	£36.8 million	July 2017	June 2024	Under closure	A Delivery Gate was held in March 2024 to coincide with completion of the roll out of Phase 2. No further digital assurance activity is anticipated for the project.	Phase 2 is now in closure phase following rollout across the divisions of national Crime, Case, and Warrants together with legacy data migration. Work is now underway to develop business cases in support of Phase 3.
Scottish Government Cloud First Programme, Scottish Government – Digital Directorate Senior Responsible Officer: Deputy Director Cloud & Digital Services Accountable Officer: Director Digital	£12.9 million	January 2020	March 2024	Closed	A health check and Go-Live Gate have been carried out since the last update.	Cloud Platform Service is now live, available to Scottish public sector. The Project Close Down Report has been agreed by SRO and shared with the Digital Assurance Office. The Cloud Platform currently has 16 customers onboarded (80% of the target for 24/25) with more than 60 in the customer pipeline requesting a service. Both cloud environments have maintained high levels of performance since going live. During Q4 of 23/24 customers realised £95k cashable savings through the service's provision of discounted hosting costs.

Key project information	Estimated whole-life costs	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Digital Assurance	Project notes
Digital Planning Transformation Programme, Scottish Government - Local Government and Housing Directorate Senior Responsible Officer: Chief Planner Accountable Officer: Director Local Government and Housing	£15 million	March 2021	March 2024	Closed	There has been no further digital assurance since the previous update.	The programme closed ahead of the originally scheduled delivery date due to a re-prioritisation of organisational funding. The closure report has been completed, with the formal end date in April 2024. Total expenditure of £13.1m yielded significant benefits and progress towards outcomes. In 3 years the programme delivered: a Data Strategy and delivery blue print which defined the data landscape, governance and a roadmap of activities towards delivering the data infrastructure for the programme; prototypes of two new services were developed; a Digital Skills portal was developed in partnership with RTPI; a Place Builder digital engagement tool was developed and rolled out including a new mapping tool; and a Placetech Innovation Lab was piloted with 3 Local Authorities. Following the programme's closure, elements of the work have been absorbed by the Digital Directorate where business cases are in development.
Ar Turas (formerly Booking and	£19.8 million	August 2016	June 2024	Closed	There has been no	The project has been signed off as complete by the Assurance Board with

Key project information	Estimated whole-life costs	Project start date	Project end date	Current stage	Digital Assurance	Project notes
Reservations Ticketing Solution, BaRTS), Transport Scotland Senior Responsible Officer: Head of Ferries Accountable Officer: Chief Executive Officer					further assurance of the project since the last update.	Calmac taking ownership of ongoing operations and system updates under business as usual – they have also put in place enhanced training and support for staff on the system to further drive performance and customer experience. Calmac are already undertaking a lessons learned exercise and submission of the finalised business case reflecting the outcome of the project.

Annex C DIGITAL ASSURANCE OFFICE UPDATE – JULY 2024

1. Introduction

The Technology Assurance Framework, administered by the Digital Assurance Office, has been in operation since 2017. It aims to reduce the likelihood of projects failing for common reasons, improve delivery and ensure that the lessons learned from previous experience are reflected and embedded in future practice.

As previously set out to the Committee, most recently in Sharon Fairweather's letter of 1 December 2022, the initial years of operation focused on prioritising resource to ensure that projects and services received the right assurance with work on continuous improvement and lessons learned progressing at a slower pace. Following appointment of a Continuous Improvement Delivery Lead in October 2022 this work has advanced significantly and this update provides an overview of assurance outcomes since 2017-18, continuous improvement work more generally and the specific assurance insights from 2023-24.

2. Assurance review outcomes 2017-18

Reviews undertaken under the Technology Assurance Framework result in an overarching recommendation to the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) or Service Owner on whether the project can proceed (with or without conditions), should pause to take remedial action or stop where the project is irrecoverable. There are some exceptions e.g. health checks or mid phase Digital Standard checkpoints where a recommendation is not always relevant. Detailed recommendations will also be provided for areas requiring specific attention or opportunities to strengthen delivery practice and SROs/Service Owners are required to submit an action plan to the Digital Assurance Office (DAO) and report on their progress against recommendations.

Charts 1 and 2 show the total number of reviews and recommendations made, from 2017-18 to 2023-24.

In each year since 2019-20 less than half of the major digital project reviews conducted result in an outcome where the project may proceed without any conditions. It is a similar picture for Digital Standard assessments, although in 22-23 just over half of reviews resulted in an outcome where the project could proceed without conditions. In chart 2 the 2020-21 and 2021-22 outcomes are not comparable with other years as the DAO did not have access to assessors to carry out Digital Standard assessments particularly during the early part of the Covid pandemic. This required alternative assurance approaches, including desk based assessments, to be deployed.

There were 30 major digital project reviews in 2023-24 which is lower than the previous two years where there were 49 and 45 reviews undertaken respectively. Resource and budget constraints appear to be contributing factors with projects undertaking frequent replanning. This creates a risk that assurance points are being missed. The DAO seek to mitigate this through engagement with projects and

relevant Audit and Risk Committees. There were 28 Digital Standard assessments in 2023-24, which is in line with 2022-23.

In 2023-24 of the 30 major digital project reviews conducted, 33% resulted in a recommendation to proceed or continue in their current stage with no conditions. 63% of reviews resulted in a recommendation to proceed with conditions. This means that projects have conditions to satisfy before they proceed to the next phase and/or conditions to satisfy during the next phase. One review resulted in an outcome which required the project to take remedial action before proceeding. This project received recommendations focusing on programme planning and day to day leadership. It is a similar pattern for Digital Standard assessments. In 2023-24 of the 28 assessments conducted 32% resulted in a recommendation to proceed with no conditions.

Chart 1: major digital project review outcomes

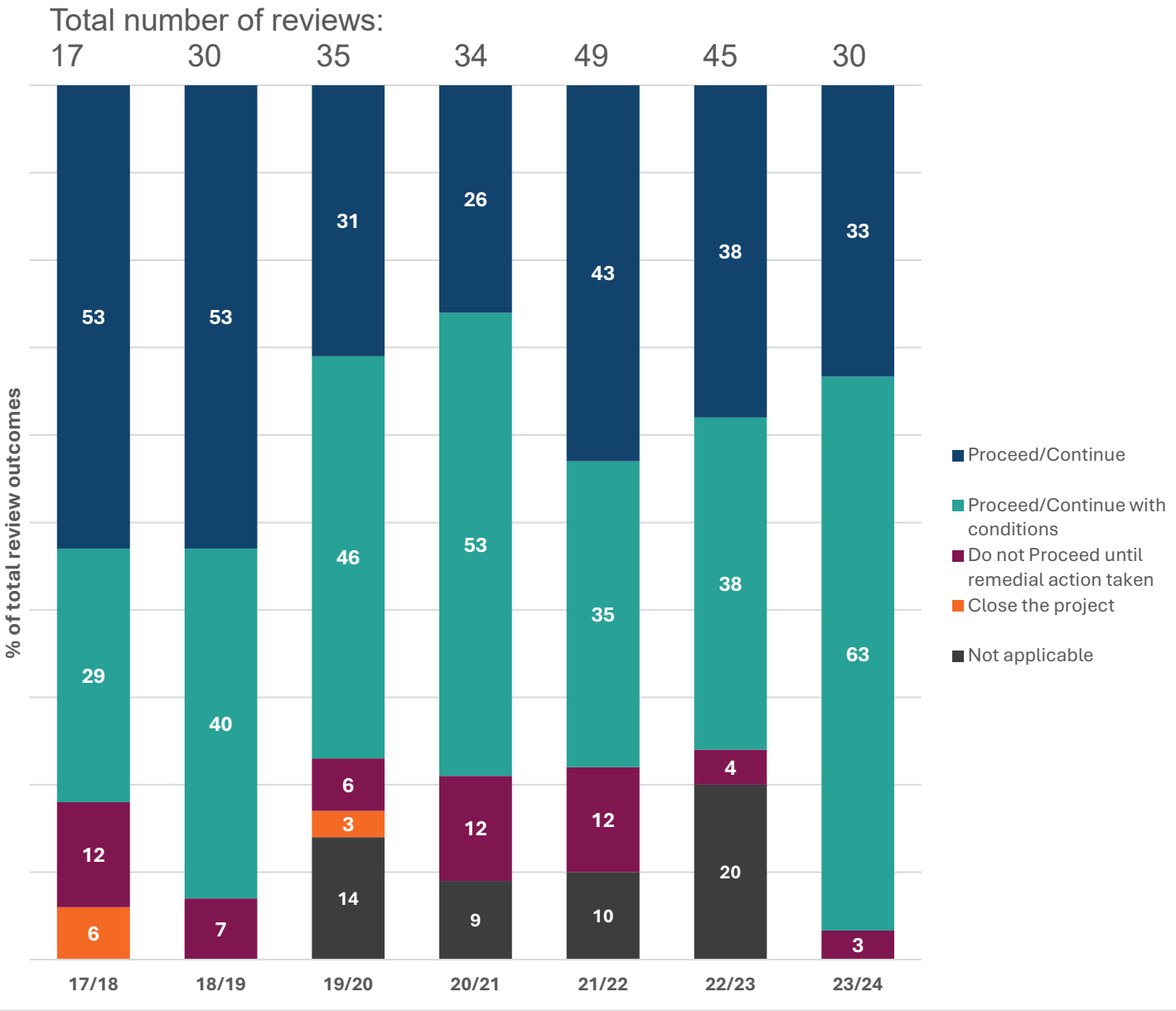
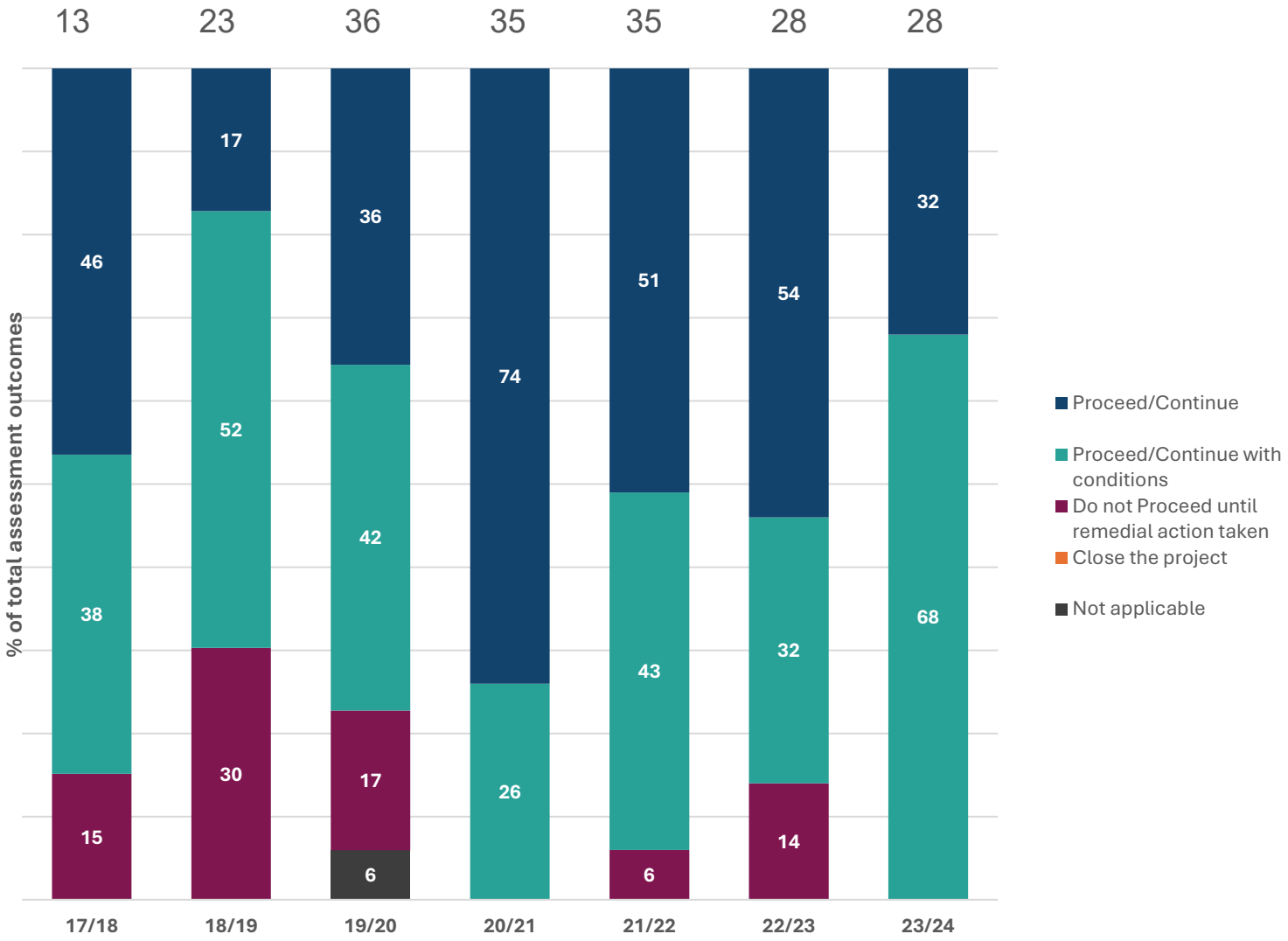


Chart 2: Digital Standard assessment outcomes



3. Continuous Improvement

A significant amount of work was done in 2023-24 to catalogue and code all of the recommendations made from major digital project reviews (2017-18 to 2023-24) and Digital Scotland Service Standard assessments (2021-22 to 2023-24)[1] to draw out insights around common challenges for project and service teams. The insights are being reported to Scottish Government senior leaders, acting as a prompt to ensure steps are being taken to mitigate against these common challenges.

The insights are also being shared with Scottish Government teams – Digital Directorate, Programme and Project Management Centre for Expertise, Digital Commercial Service, Scottish Procurement and Property Directorate – who provide guidance and training for those delivering digital projects and programmes to help inform the support they provide.

Through the digital blog[2], these insights are being shared with project and service teams. They are also being actively promoted through various forums that support digital project and service delivery. By promoting these insights, those delivering digital projects and services are encouraged to consider if they are taking action to mitigate these common challenges. As well as reporting on common challenges surfaced through major digital project reviews and Digital Standard assessments over individual years, 'deep dives' into dominant themes which draw on reviews and assessments across the years are being prepared. Insights on effective procurement and contract management, governance and project control and resourcing and capability have been published

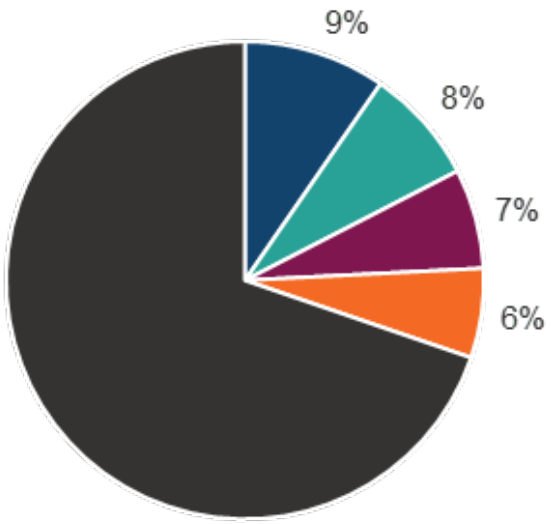
The DAO are also working with organisations who have received assurance to share their experiences from delivery, which might help others to deliver digital projects. In collaboration with National Records of Scotland and Transport Scotland, case studies on the Census 2022 Programme and National Entitlement Card Smart Ticketing have been published.

The Social Security Programme 'Our Story team', part of a wider Programme Legacy Portfolio, is actively identifying and sharing over eight years of acquired knowledge, capabilities, and lessons learned, through a variety of means, including case studies, blogs, workshops, and coaching, for the benefit of Social Security Scotland, the Social Security Programme, and the broader Scottish Government and public sector. The DAO and the Our Story team collaborate closely to maximise opportunities for promoting learning and supporting project delivery. This includes signposting and cross referencing our work, shaping case study content based on assurance insights, and shared workshops to enhance synergy.

[1] The Digital Scotland Service Standard (DSSS) was introduced in 2021-22, refreshing the Digital First Service Standard (D1). In this report total numbers of Digital Standard assessments includes DSSS and D1 assessments. The analysis of recommendations is for DSSS assessments only.
[2] The digital blog is available on the Scottish Government website and you can subscribe here for updates.

Insights from assurance – 2023-24

In 2023-24 there were **281** recommendations from major digital project reviews. Four themes stood out as dominant areas for improvement:



9% Strong governance and project control

- Formal **governance processes** which are **communicated, understood and followed**
- Appropriate **board membership, meetings and decision making**
- **Regular review** of governance arrangements to ensure they remain **fit for purpose as projects evolve**

8% Invitation to tender (ITT) and evaluation criteria

- **Specialist or peer review** of ITT documentation
- Clear ITT **issue criteria and formal governance/SRO oversight** of issue, incl. robust final review and clear go/no go decision making
- ITT to reflect **scope and scale of services required and all project requirements** (e.g. Digital Scotland Service Standard compliance)

7% Organisation and/or planning

- Clearly articulated **end to end vision of project success**
- **Long term, holistic view** of the project and the delivery context
- **Overarching and regularly reviewed plan** that covers all activities, reflects planning assumptions and supports understanding and decision-making (including with users/stakeholders)

6% Resource requirements and/or capability

- Proactive **resource planning** (incl. contingency options) that effectively interact with overall project plans/requirements
- Securing **specialist expertise and/or support**
- **Appropriate escalation of resourcing risk**, where required
- Effective **transition** at project end

Two of these themes - Governance and project control and resource requirements and/or capability - have featured in the top 5 recommendation themes every year since the introduction of major digital project reviews in 2017-18. These two themes also jointly make up 19% of all recommendations made in major digital project reviews over these seven years. Organisation and planning has a strong relationship with the governance and control theme and has been in the annual top 5 recommendations 3 times since 2017-18. Invitation to Tender (ITT) and evaluation criteria has been in the annual top 5 recommendations 5 times since 2017-18.

In 2023-24 there were **28** Digital Standard Assessments. Services are assessed against the 14 Digital Scotland Service Standard criteria. Of the 14 assessments carried out for medium to high risk/cost services, the criteria that were less likely to be met, and the focus of the recommendations made, were:

Criterion 5: Make sure everyone can use the service – test the accessibility and inclusivity of the service by undertaking accessibility testing and accessibility audits; prepare an accessibility statement which sets out compliance (and non-compliance) with accessibility requirements and provides details about plans to improve accessibility where relevant; have targets to measure the accessibility of the service; include diverse perspectives by engaging with a broad range of people; ensure the service is inclusive and supports those with assisted digital needs and use simple language.

Criterion 6: Have a multidisciplinary team - make sure the team has a resource plan identifying the right mix of skills to deliver the whole service. Recommendations have a particular focus on keeping the resource plan up to date and understanding and meeting requirements for the next stage and creating a sustainable team to manage the service.

Criterion 7: Iterate and improve more frequently – ensure that the live service is free of major technical debt/unfixed bugs; ensure that the service is designed in a way that can implement change frequently and that improvements are identified and prioritised based on good data.

Criterion 9: Define what success looks like and publish performance data – understand what success for the service looks like with clear metrics to show whether success has been achieved and define the approach to publishing data to help inform and improve future government services.

Criterion 13: Operate a reliable service – put in place effective end to end testing, plan for major events and have in place the processes and tools to operate the service.

Criterion 14: Ensure sponsor acceptance – have in place robust governance structures with routes for escalation and decision making and good risk management; ensure operational organisations are included in the development of the service; be open and transparent, with evidence of stakeholder mapping and communication plans.

Half of service teams did not meet **Criterion 1: Understand users and their needs** with recommendations focusing on doing research with a wide range of people; test and learn as early as possible and ensure research is done legally and **Criterion 8: Create a secure service** with recommendations focusing on protecting users' personal information; testing the system; ensuring appropriate security assurance is conducted during development and approach security risk in a proportionate way with evidence of risk identification, evaluation and management.

There have been 38 medium to higher risk/cost Digital Scotland Service Standard assessments from 2021-22 to 2023-24. The criteria more likely not to be met considering all of these assessments are the same as those set out above for 2023-24 but also include **Criterion 4: Help users succeed first time** with recommendations focusing on testing frequently with real and potential users to understand if the service that has been designed works in the way you would expect.