



# CASE STUDY

## Aberdeenshire Council

Aberdeenshire Council switched from face-to-face training to e-learning to engage almost 20,000 users.

Aberdeenshire Council aims to deliver first-class public services over a large rural area of 6,313 square KM. The council's vision is: 'Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best in Scotland'. Aberdeenshire Council employs 14,500 staff across four services, covering a large variety of job roles.

# Challenge

In 2012, Aberdeenshire Council was using an entry-level learning management system to manage a small number of e-learning modules.

The move to this blended learning approach (from 100% face-to-face delivery) meant a change to the learning culture within the workforce.

It gave employees more control and responsibility for managing their own learning and development and enabled them to access learning at a time and place suitable to them.

To support this new learning and development model, a new LMS was required. The key criteria for this included:

- Quality – a solution that met learner needs and administrators' high standards
- Flexibility – of both functionality and appearance, i.e. a look and feel which would appeal to the learner
- Price – it had to be cost-effective
- Technical support – reliable hosting and support service

# Solution

Aberdeenshire Council had previously worked with Learning Pool, who provided hosting and support services for the entry-level learning management system the Council already had in place.

However, the Council has outgrown this platform and with a new set of needs identified by the Council the flexibility and scalability of Learning Pool's Totara Learn offering became much more appealing.

To move the project forward, the Learning and Development team at Aberdeenshire Council partnered closely with Learning Pool to set clear goals during the scoping stage, keeping in mind the challenges of driving culture change and creating a new blended and resource-driven approach to learning.

The team named their LMS ALDO, which stands for Aberdeenshire Learning and Development Online.



It was designed in close collaboration with administrators and course creators. It was vital that course creators found it easy to build blended programmes from the beginning and that the LMS was an enabler of great learning design, not a barrier to it.

To this end, the programme management features of Totara's LMS were key – because they allowed the Employee Development Officers within the team to easily develop online courses, pursue new approaches and promote learning, with the minimum time needed to acquire the technical skills required to produce the material itself.

In terms of the content, the Council took a 'sushi' approach to content development, presenting a variety of small, bite-sized chunks of e-learning in the form of quizzes, videos, and other resources.

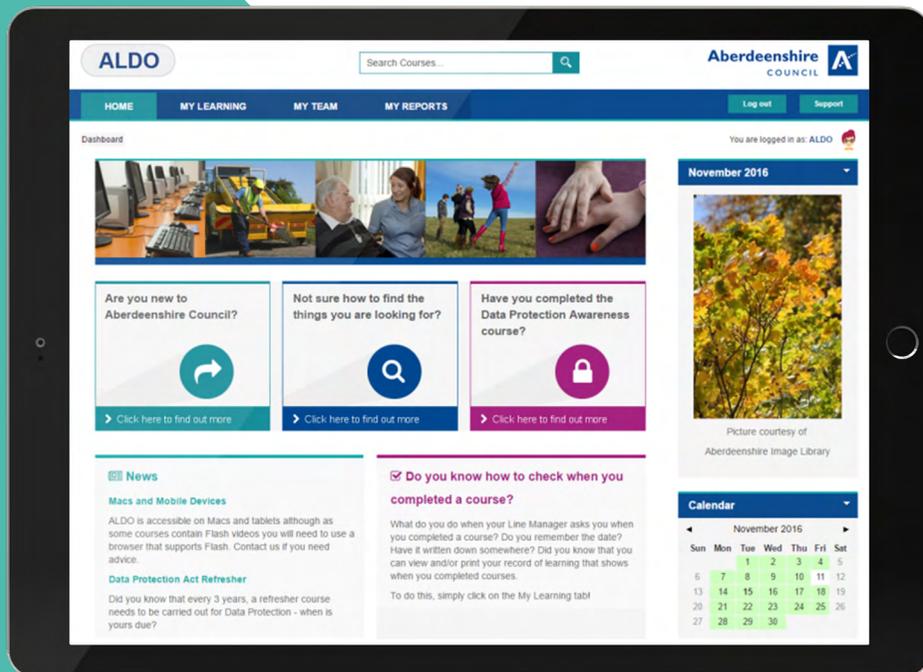
They then coupled these with face-to-face sessions for a truly blended learning experience, helping the Council move away from the inflexibility of standard, monolithic 'Click Next' e-learning.

Creating the learning themselves has also helped the Council keep costs down by removing the need to buy expensive third-party content, and Totara's LMS makes it easy for the Council to upload content themselves.

The system was quietly launched on 4th June 2012. ALDO, through Totara Learn LMS and Learning Pool\*, supports Aberdeenshire Council's new coherent and consistent approach to learning and development.

The ALDO system was designed with ease of use in mind for administrators and learners alike, and some courses have been developed by the subject matter experts with advice from the technical experts within the L&D team.

In September 2014, the administration of classroom training was moved to Totara Learn LMS – functionality which can be accessed by most employees to book face to face courses that are relevant to their work area and in agreement with their line manager.



## Results

Aberdeenshire Council celebrated the fourth birthday of the ALDO platform in June 2016, and they are delighted with their experience with both Totara Learn (LMS) and their Learning Consultants at Learning Pool.

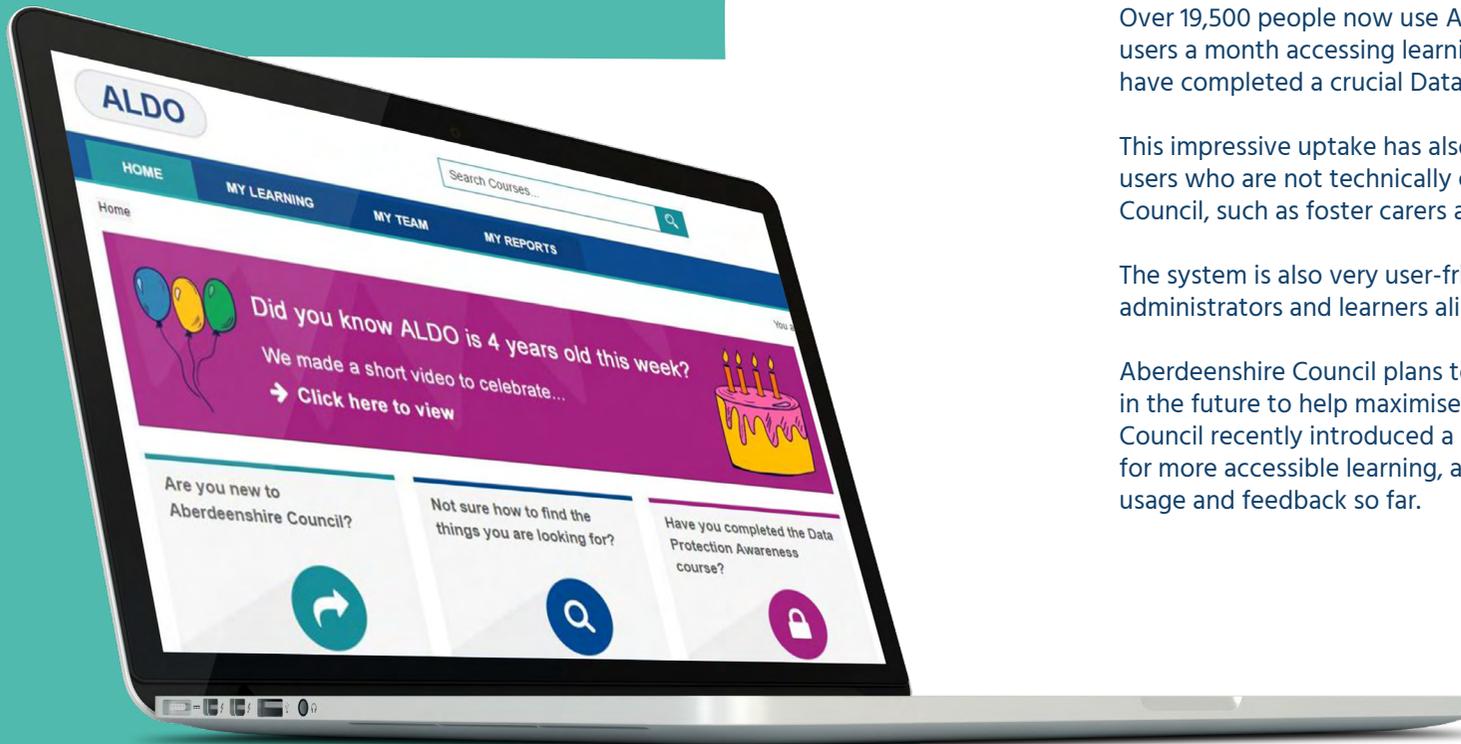
The success of ALDO has resulted in 78,964 enrolments to date, an average of 3,153 enrolments per month in 2015, and the creation of over 379 courses (including face to face), all of which are accessible to all employees.

Over 19,500 people now use ALDO, with an average of 2,184 users a month accessing learning content. 14,068 learners have completed a crucial Data Protection course to date.

This impressive uptake has also been driven by access from users who are not technically employees of Aberdeenshire Council, such as foster carers and personal assistants.

The system is also very user-friendly and flexible, ensuring administrators and learners alike can manage learning easily.

Aberdeenshire Council plans to enhance the platform further in the future to help maximise the benefit of ALDO. The Council recently introduced a new mobile-friendly theme for more accessible learning, and they are very proud of the usage and feedback so far.





# learningpool

