



Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy

To:

Councillor Mike Davey, Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Our Cambridge
Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, 1 July 2024

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All wards

Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy 2024-2029 for approval, which sets out the Council's vision and framework for effectively managing digital, data and technology over the next five years. For clarity, this is an internal (not public facing) technical strategy and does not relate to the 3C ICT Service Review.
- 1.2 Customers are placed at the heart of this Strategy. A key component of the Strategy is the digital customer journey which focusses on improving both user experience and accessibility for our customers, where those who *can* engage digitally, choose to do so because it is more convenient and preferable to other alternatives.
- 1.3 The Strategy aims to achieve the following outcomes: more agile response to community needs; improved digital accessibility; increased operational efficiency, better decision-making capabilities, an adaptable and resilient IT estate, and provide staff with improved digital and data skills.

- 1.4 The Strategy is structured into four strands: digital customer journey, data and information management, technology and innovation, and digital and data skills development. Each strand has specific missions and actions to deliver the desired target state of the Council.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve the 5-year Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council's previous Digital Transformation Strategy was produced in 2018, setting out priorities and key themes that aimed to build a digital Council, benefit residents, and take a digital by design approach. However, the action plan that supported this strategy has now lapsed.
- 3.2 An updated Strategy is now required that accurately reflects the rapid adoption of digital technology and post-pandemic changes in Council staff working practices, how residents and communities expect to engage with us and how service and staff needs have evolved and in what ways.
- 3.3 The need for a strategic approach to address these issues was identified in the council-wide Transformation consultation [outcomes](#) and [Work Style Report](#), which fed into the [Direction of the Future Council and Organisational Design](#) approved by Members at the Strategy and Resources Committee in October 2022.
- 3.4 Digital has also been identified as a corporate function in the Our Cambridge Corporate Design Programme, approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee in January 2024. The DDaT Strategy will support this, for example, through consistent processes and systems.
- 3.5 The aim of this Strategy is to:
 - Provide a strategic vision and internal framework for how the Council will use data, digital and technology (DDaT) over the next five years.
 - Define consistent application of core design and delivery principles across the organisation and standardise how we collect data, produce online content, and why and how digital solutions are selected.
 - Enable data to be better used to support decision making, understand need, target our efforts and resources, improve service and resident outcomes

3.6 The Strategy factors in the need to sequence activity carefully over the next five years. Enabling missions are scheduled to be completed first to ensure both improved working practices are in place, and have created the necessary savings to self-fund, some of the potentially more expensive missions such as data interoperability.

3.7 Each of the four strands within the Strategy is further broken down into missions to guide key activities over the next five years:

Strand	Mission	Description
Digital customer journey	3.1 Create a unified user experience across all digital services	To ensure residents can effectively use Council services by creating an accessible and unified user experience across our digital estate.
Data and information management	1.1 Enhance data interoperability	To refine the way the Council shares and utilises data across key systems, improving resolution time for customer issues and better flow-through of data.
	1.2 Improve the customer experience through better use of data	Ensure access to necessary data for both customers and staff and enhance our self-serve options.
	1.3 Information management and data ethics	Update and ensure compliance and dissemination of the information management policy which sets out the guidelines for how the Council organise, own, and protect our data.
Technology and innovation	2.1 Technical Design Authority (TDA)	Create a TDA to ensure that IT contracts contain optimal technology choices.
	2.2 Make technology buying and management smarter	To change how we buy and manage technology, with a focus on systems that are easy to use, work well with other systems and are adaptable to new needs.
	2.3 Transform how outsourced IT is managed	To review and ensure that any shared ICT services align with the Council's strategic goals.

Strand	Mission	Description
	2.4 Rationalise our IT estate	To verify the efficiency, security, and cost effectiveness of IT contracts, only paying for what we need.
Digital and data skills development	4.1 Improve DDaT skills across the organisation	To empower Council staff with the DDaT skills necessary to operate a modern organisation.

4. Implications

a) Financial Implications

The Strategy has an estimated total cost of £760,000 over five years, and an estimated total benefit of £1,414,000 over the same period, resulting in a net benefit of approximately £654,000.

It is intended that the activity in the Strategy will be self-funded by:

- Existing resource within the Council's mainstream services. This activity is funded through mainstream service budgets.
- Existing resource within the 3C ICT shared service. This activity is funded through mainstream shared service budgets.
- Reinvestment of early savings realised by the Strategy to self-fund the additional skills and resources needed to deliver key elements in the later stages of the Strategy.

However, because costs are indicative at this stage, if any additional funding is required to support the Strategy, this will be reported at a later Strategy and Resources Committee.

b) Staffing Implications

The DDaT Strategy will have implications for how we work with 3C ICT Shared Service staff and the wider organisation. The Strategy aims to build digital capability and capacity across the council, enabling staff to work more efficiently and effectively with modern technology. This will require investing in skills development, recruitment, retention, and succession planning of digital talent.

The Strategy also envisages a more flexible and agile workforce that can respond to changing needs and demands. The Strategy will be implemented in consultation

and collaboration with staff, trade unions and other stakeholders, ensuring that any changes are managed in a fair and transparent way.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been produced and is included with this report. The EqIA does not identify any negative impacts from the DDaT Strategy.

d) Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Adopting the approach set out in the DDaT Strategy is consistent with the Council's approach to net zero carbon, climate change and the environment set out in its Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategies.

e) Procurement implications

As part of the implementation of the DDaT Strategy, the Council will explore opportunities to refine its approach to the procurement of and spending on technological solutions.

f) Community Safety Implications

There are no community safety implications from the DDaT Strategy.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

5.1 The Strategy was co-developed with a digital transformation consultancy, PUBLIC, who engaged a broad representation of key stakeholders from across the organisation, through both individual stakeholder engagements and group workshops. In addition, we have consulted members of the Digital Board, 3C ICT Shared Service, CAT Board, Leadership Team, and the Transformation Board all of which have contributed to and subsequently signed off the strategy to ensure a well-considered and robust approach.

5.2 Once approved, the Council's DDaT Strategy will be communicated internally through:

- intranet articles;
- direct engagement with the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT); and
- engagement with the wider organisation through Townhalls.

5.3 Where elements of the Strategy need to be communicated externally to our customers or strategic partners these will be communicated through:

- social media posts;
- updates on the Council's website; and
- direct engagement with our strategic partners such as SCDC, HDC and 3C ICT.

6. Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

7. Appendices

- Appendix A - Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy
- Appendix B - DDaT Strategy Appendices
- Appendix C - EqIA

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Michelle Lord, Strategic Digital Lead, email: michelle.lord@cambridge.gov.uk.