

Digital Strategy 2024-2027



HILLINGDON
LONDON

www.hillingdon.gov.uk/digital

Hillingdon Council continues to put residents first in everything it does.

The Council Strategy 2022-2026 builds on the successes of the council to date and sets a clear vision, the ambition for residents and the council, and commitments to residents over the next four years to continue to respond positively to changing demands and requirements. The strategy provides a broad, overarching framework for effective business planning and strong performance management within the council to drive the transformation of services to continue to meet the changing needs and expectations of residents.

One of our ambitions is to be a digital-enabled, modern, well-run sustainable council with sound financial management, achieving positive outcomes for residents. Our Digital Strategy sets out our vision to embrace technology to be efficient and make it easier for residents to use council services, including supporting those who are unable to use technology.

Councillor Douglas Mills

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services



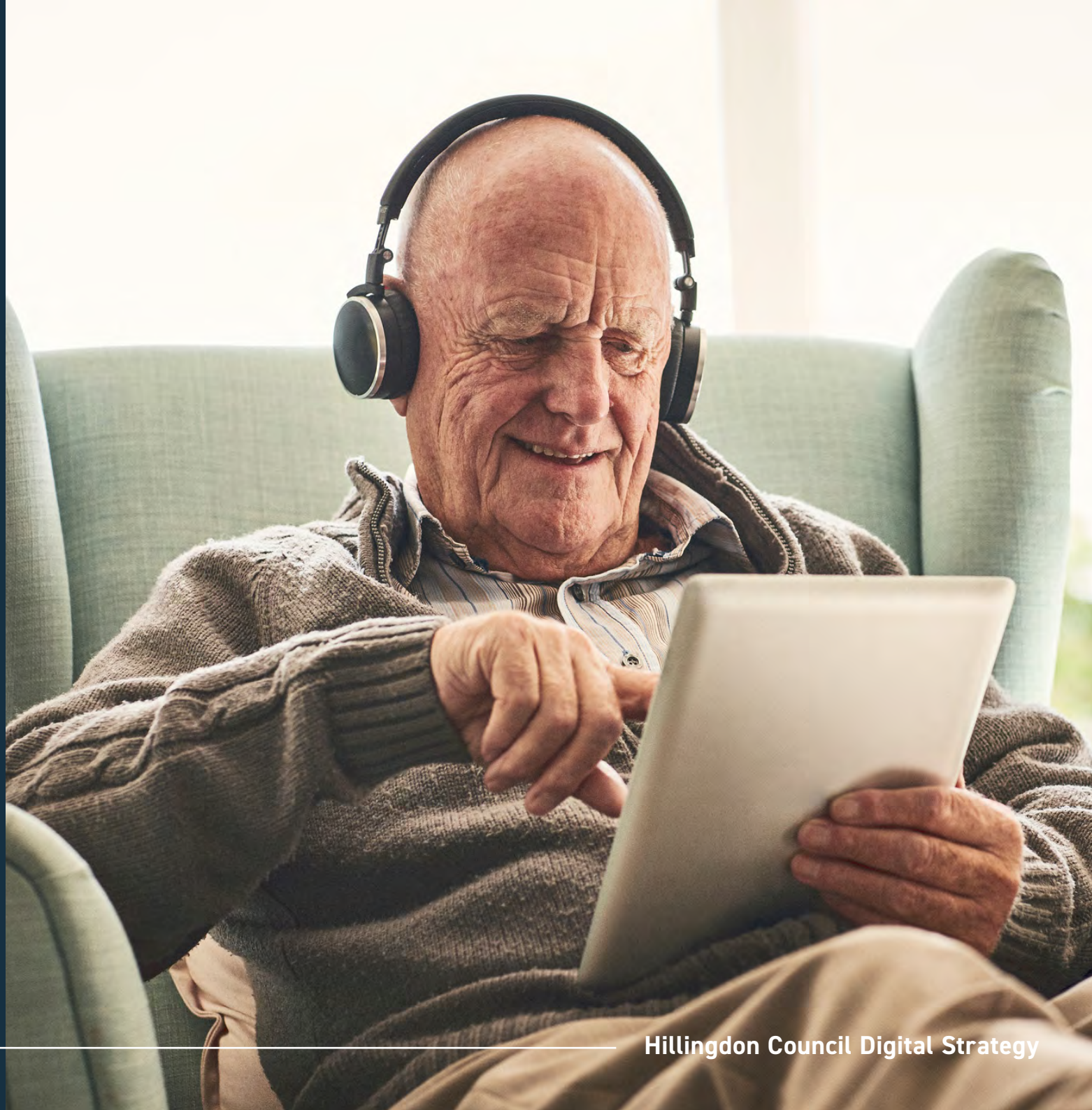
“Our Digital Strategy sets out our vision to embrace technology to be efficient and make it easier for residents to use council services, including supporting those who are unable to use technology.”



What is Digital?

'Digital'

is a mindset of being service-oriented and adaptive, and having an absolute focus on improving the lives of our residents.



Our Vision

We will improve the way the council delivers services to residents by utilising technology. We will put residents first by enabling them to access the services they need quickly and at their own convenience, whilst also delivering more efficient and effective processes for council staff.

Principles

We will do this by:

- Prioritising customer needs
- Carrying out an agile approach to delivery
- Delivering new business models driven by data
- Having a 'One Council' collaborative aim, facilitating cross-council project teams and sharing goals.



Progress so far

We have started to accelerate our digital journey by:



Automated voice and web chat

Becoming the first UK local authority to deploy an automated voice and web chat solution at scale.

Infrastructure

Delivering a modern and flexible infrastructure and a reduction in the number of applications.



Hybrid working

Quickly adapting to hybrid working post the COVID-19 pandemic, which enabled us to keep services running.

Connectivity

Delivering a programme of connectivity improvements, resulting in increased bandwidth across all our sites and the borough and giving residents better access to the internet.





Our approach to digital, technology and data transformation

Prioritising customer needs

Our service transformation will focus on meeting the needs of our residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable. We will use research and data to better understand this in our borough and will use this to build and develop products and services to meet those needs.

We will make our services accessible to all, working to improve digital inclusion. We will test the services to make sure they are simple and intuitive, and support those who are unable to go online.

Agile approach to delivery

We will embrace new ways of delivering improvements to our services, with small, iterative work packages backed up by research and data. We will invest in reducing manual-based tasks and paperwork, and enable quick, data-driven decision making.

Delivering new business models driven by data

The data we collect about resident needs will support every aspect of our digital strategy. We will engage our residents and staff, developing analytics and research which will guide what we do and when. We will invest in meeting common need, ensuring we use our time and money wisely and making sure we can measure success and continuously improve every aspect of our services.

One council

We will become a digital council by facilitating cross-functional project teams, sharing budgets and goals, and by working in a more collaborative and innovative way. We will empower these teams to build and realise their own goals. We will give employees the space they need to deliver, share knowledge and work across the council rather than in a silo fashion to best support residents.



Success in the next three years, will mean:



Resident

An improved better resident experience when interacting with the council in accessing services and information. They will be able to carry out simple transactions quickly and easily, with a more joined up approach ensuring they only need to make contact once.



Staff

A modern, digitally skilled workforce equipped with the systems and technology they need to do their work and put residents first.



Data

A better understanding of our residents' needs, through the smarter use of joined-up data. We will be using modern technology to join data sets and get insights which allow us to continuously improve our services and make better decisions.



Service

A more sustainable financial model, where we are able to improve service delivery while maintaining or reducing costs.



Ambitions for the future

We will achieve this through five workstreams:

1
Build services online by default

2
Better data, better decisions

3
Modernise our infrastructure and systems

4
Build digital capability and inclusion

5
Deliver a digital place



1 Build services online by default

Our aim

Residents expect services to be online and available on any device. People should be able to pay online, and experience seamless services from us. In turn, this will improve resident experience from our customer experience team and business areas, and improve our resident, visitor and business experience of us. The intended outcomes of this workstream are that:

- Most of our residents choose and prefer to interact with us online
- Residents can access their information about council services via our My Account function
- Residents will be able to carry out simple transactions quickly and easily, with a more joined up approach ensuring they only need to make contact once, whether for information or transactional services, without needing help
- Users understand our website and associated information, meaning they do not have to contact us if we have put the information online
- Our website will be user friendly and accessible with single sign-on and a maximum of two or three clicks to get what you need.

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1 Build services online by default

To do this we will:

- Build a roadmap of digital services in a data-driven priority order, focusing on high-volume services, and highly manual processes
- Transform the work of our customer experience team and across the council by continuing to use different channels and technology, with one telephone number for those that must speak to an agent
- Carry out research with residents to understand what they need from us and create a prioritised schedule of work
- Put payments online for all payable services, making the council cashless for all but the most vulnerable
- Consolidate and redesign our website, making it clearer and more accessible. We will introduce consistent, mobile-first design patterns, iterating based on user needs.

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Our aim

All local authorities have a lot of data, but often lack the insight to make good decisions both internally and for our residents. Better data, and the ability to use it wisely, brings a huge amount of opportunities from better decisions by understanding resident needs across multiple systems. We want to have the right data, to make the right decisions. The intended outcomes of this workstream are that:

- We have a clear understanding of the needs to our residents, local businesses, partners and visitors, both qualitatively and quantitatively, so that we can improve outcomes for and with them
- We get insights from our data to improve services, and personalise them for their users, as well as being more efficient and effective
- We have the right infrastructure to share data and insights across our organisation, and with partner organisations in the local area and nationally
- We have better data about our employees to create a happier and more efficient workforce.

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To do this we will:

- Our business intelligence team is a key part of service transformation and has the remit of bringing insights directly to business areas
- They will build better reporting and insight on a service-by-service basis so people can truly understand their customer base
- Engineer our systems data to make it easy to combine and analyse, and work with suppliers to get better access to our own data
- Improve our data warehouse to deliver insights from the data we can collect, and a single view of the customer
- Utilise machine learning and artificial intelligence to improve customer experiences and make us more efficient
- Carry out a data cleansing and reduction programme to eliminate duplicate records and make our data extractable and accurate
- Work with partners and other stakeholders to better understand our area.

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3 Modernise our infrastructure and systems

Our aim

We need a modern infrastructure with systems that talk to each other, highly reliable hosting and platforms, the best of commodity technology and modern, cloud-based and application programming interface driven architecture. The intended outcomes of this workstream are that:

- We have a cost efficient and reliable technology estate, centrally managed and regularly reviewed to ensure value for money
- Great connectivity for both residents and staff
- We have full control of the data in all our back-office systems, and can extract and analyse that data to improve services
- We have a clear architectural vision and roadmap
- Our infrastructure and systems are resilient against a cyber attack.

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4 Build digital capability and inclusion

Our aim

We need highly skilled digital, data and technology resource which can be deployed to support our ongoing transformation needs. We also need to upskill our employees to be confident with technology and use this to implement the digital elements of service delivery to better meet the needs of residents and support those who do not have digital access. And in turn, ensure residents are supported to have access to and use digital devices, or supported if they can't. The intended outcomes of this workstream are that:

- Our employees feel confident in their knowledge and skills around the technology they need to do their jobs
- We can adapt quickly from project to project, using digital resources to help the council prioritise and meet its needs
- Improve our digital capability and engagement with our residents and businesses.

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4 Build digital capability and inclusion

To do this we will:

- Create a permanent rolling programme of digital apprenticeships, working with local higher educational institutions to build pathways for young workers and graduates who are interested in digital, technology and data
- Build digital, data, technology teams in the council consisting mainly of permanent staff with a small number of contractors or partners
- Partner with business areas across the council to co-create service transformation plans enabled by technology and then deliver on them
- Work with other boroughs, government bodies and suppliers to share learning, work together and improve
- Focus customer experience on supporting the digitally excluded and vulnerable
- Ensure residents have access to digital services to transact with the council and find council-related information.

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5 Deliver a digital place

Our aim

There is also an important role for the council in facilitating the use of digital technology to bring about further improvements within the borough, and the way it functions. This is increasingly important as Hillingdon, like many other areas, faces challenges from population growth, automation, congestion and the climate crisis. The intended outcomes of this workstream are that we will:

- Improve digital connectivity across the borough
- Improve sustainability across the borough
- Improve our digital capability and engagement with our residents and businesses.

There is also an important role for the council in facilitating the use of digital technology to bring about further improvements within the borough.



5 Deliver a digital place



To do this we will:

- Continue our programme of boroughwide fibre and mobile connectivity improvements, increasing bandwidth for the council, businesses and residents
- Help Hillingdon become a Smart City by having a planning service that instils digital innovation into current and new developments
- Create a clear digital offer to businesses that defines the way in which they should engage and interact with the council
- Use of cutting edge technology to capture data to gain new insights. For example, information on the performance of assets, such as boilers in council housing, energy use and sustainable energy management systems
- Leverage social value in the digital arena when procuring major contracts i.e. housing developments/commercial builds/any other high value contracts
- Develop the digital economy in Hillingdon.

Help Hillingdon become a Smart City by having a planning service that instils digital innovation into current and new developments.





Key Performance Indicators

Objective: 	Measure: 
User Adoption and Engagement:	Track the number of users adopting and actively engaging with new digital services. This includes the number of registered users, frequency of logins, duration of sessions and a reduction in spend on more costly channels.
Task Completion Rates:	Monitor the rate at which residents can complete tasks using the digital services. High task completion rates suggest that the services are user-friendly and efficient. The number of vulnerable residents / those with complex needs supported.
Customer Satisfaction:	Measure customer satisfaction through surveys, feedback forms, complaints, compliments and other user forums. High satisfaction scores indicate that the digital services are meeting user needs and expectations, whilst lower scores will provide insight into areas where improvements are required.
Digital Uptake:	Compare the number of transactions completed via digital means to those through other channels, reducing paper usage, helping meet the council's climate commitments - measured through a reduction in spend on printing and postage. This helps in understanding the shift towards digital services and the reduction in manual processes.
Support Requests:	Track the number and types of support requests related to the digital services. A decrease in support requests over time indicates that the services are becoming more intuitive and user-friendly.

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Key Performance Indicators

Objective: 	Measure: 
Conversion Rates:	Measure the effectiveness of digital services in driving specific actions, such as making payments or updating personal information. High conversion rates indicate that the services are achieving their intended goals.
Operational Efficiency:	Assess the impact of digital services on operational efficiency. This includes metrics such as the time saved through automation, reduction in manual processes, and cost savings.
Accessibility and Usability:	Evaluate the accessibility and usability of the digital services. This will be done through user testing, accessibility audits, and feedback from users with disabilities.
Website Performance:	Monitor the performance of the redesigned websites, including metrics such as page load times, bounce rates, and mobile responsiveness. High performance indicates that the websites are providing a good user experience.
Research Insights:	Use insights from resident research to prioritise and schedule work. This ensures that the digital services are aligned with user needs and expectations.

