

# HILLINGDON DIGITAL STRATEGY - ANNUAL REPORT

<b>Cabinet Member &amp; Portfolio</b>	Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Finance & Transformation
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Matthew Wallbridge, Chief Operating Officer
<b>Report Author &amp; Directorate</b>	Darren Persaud – Head of Digital
<b>Papers with report</b>	None

## HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	In approving the Council's Digital Strategy 2024-2027 in October 2024, Cabinet also agreed to receive an annual report setting out progress delivering the Strategy, the delivery of associated savings targets and to make any further decisions on programmes and projects or further delegated authority required to implement such activity. This report also sets out the Council's approach to Technology Enabled Care to seamlessly integrate technology into care services to help residents live happier, more independent lives at home and in their communities.
<b>Putting our Residents First</b>  <b>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</b>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Digital-Enabled, Modern, Well-Run Council</p>
<b>Financial Cost</b>	Approval of the Digital Strategy 2024-27 update, as outlined in this report, does not in itself result in any immediate or direct financial commitment or expenditure. Any future financial implications arising from the implementation of specific programmes or projects under the strategy will be subject to separate approval processes and will be reported accordingly.
<b>Select Committee</b>	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee
<b>Ward(s)</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### That Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the annual update, as set out in the report;
- 2) Agrees to continue delivery of the Digital Strategy 2024-27, and endorses the next steps set out in paragraphs 59 - 62;
- 3) Agrees to extend the existing delegated authority from Cabinet on 10 October 2024 into 2026/2027, which provides for the Chief Operating Officer to implement the Digital Strategy, agree project variations, incur capital expenditure within approved budget and make all necessary procurement decisions, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance & Transformation;
- 4) Agrees to a further annual report in a year's time, setting out progress on the Strategy and delivery of savings targets, seeking agreement to the programmes and projects for the upcoming financial year and seeking further delegated authority if required.

### Reasons for recommendation

Cabinet is requested to acknowledge the progress of Hillingdon's Digital Strategy over the past year, which set out a clear vision for the Borough and the Council. The report seeks Cabinet acknowledgement and update of the programmes and projects delivered in 2025/26.

### Alternative options considered / risk management

No alternative options had been considered, as the delivery of the Digital Strategy was previously agreed at Cabinet in October 2024.

### Risk management

Risk management within the Digital Strategy has been closely monitored to ensure alignment with the Strategy's objectives. Programme and project governance boards for each of the five programmes are meeting monthly to monitor progress, spend and flag any risks to the Senior Responsible Officer. Any 'red' rated risks were reported back into the Corporate Operating Officer and the Corporate Management Team to own and mitigate. This process has worked well over the past year but has shown us the depth of the current digital work, as well as the pressure on resources for additional support.

Any variations to specific projects will be subject to three key conditions:

- i) They must be within the Strategy's objectives;
- ii) They must be within the approved budget for the financial year and associated aggregate savings for the financial year and;
- iii) They must have the agreement of the Chief Operating Officer and Corporate Director of Finance (s151), in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

## Democratic compliance / previous authority

Cabinet approved the initial digital strategy and may extend its special delegated authority to the relevant Chief Officer to efficiently make further procurement and spend decisions within the overall strategy and budget approved, subject to consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member. These are recorded as Chief Officer Decisions.

## Select Committee comments

This annual report will be presented to the Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Select Committee in early 2026.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. In October 2024, Cabinet approved Hillingdon's new Digital Strategy, setting out a clear vision for the Borough and the Council over the next three years. This strategy represents a significant step toward modernising and transforming the way the Council operates, ensuring services remain efficient, accessible, and sustainable.
2. The agreed programme includes a series of ambitious projects designed to re-engineer outdated processes, deliver substantial savings, and protect vital frontline services. A key focus is on harnessing the wealth of data held by the authority, making it more accessible and actionable for staff to support informed decision-making. The strategy also commits to improving the Council's digital presence by revamping its website for a better user experience and investing in staff training to maximise the benefits of new technologies.
3. This forward-thinking approach is underpinned by a multi-million pound investment, reflecting the Council's commitment to achieving a high return and delivering a robust digital foundation for a modern local authority. The delegated authority granted by Cabinet ensures the effective delivery of this programme, driving innovation and efficiency across all areas of service.
4. This annual update report provides an overview of the progress made since the strategy's adoption, highlights key achievements, and sets out the next steps to ensure we remain on track to deliver the vision agreed by Cabinet.
5. Hillingdon's digital, technology, and data transformation continues to be guided by four core principles:
  - a) Prioritising customer needs: Placing residents and service users at the heart of every digital initiative, ensuring that solutions are designed to meet real needs and deliver tangible benefits.
  - b) Agile delivery: Embracing flexible, iterative approaches that allow us to adapt quickly, learn from feedback, and continuously improve our services.
  - c) Data-driven business models: Leveraging the Council's rich data assets to inform decision-making, drive innovation, and deliver more effective, efficient services.
  - d) One Council approach: Fostering collaboration across departments and teams, breaking down silos to deliver seamless, joined-up digital experiences for residents and staff.
6. To deliver on our vision, five strategic priorities were agreed by Cabinet in October 2024 and over the past year that have been used to prioritise and deliver change:

- a) Building services online by default: Ensuring residents can access services anytime, anywhere, on any device, with seamless digital journeys and improved customer experiences.
  - b) Better data, better decisions: Unlocking the value of our data to make smarter, more responsive decisions for residents and the organisation.
  - c) Modernising infrastructure and systems: Investing in reliable, integrated, and future-proof technology platforms that support innovation and resilience.
  - d) Building digital capability and inclusion: Upskilling staff and supporting residents to access and benefit from digital services, with a strong focus on digital inclusion.
  - e) Delivering a digital place: Using digital technology to enhance the borough's infrastructure, address challenges such as population growth and climate change, and improve quality of life for all.
7. These priorities are being delivered through five key programmes:
- a) Automations and Integrations: Streamlining processes and integrating systems, including the introduction of AI and a single front door for high-demand services.
  - b) Business Intelligence: Driving evidence-based decision-making with a single view of the customer and advanced analytics.
  - c) Customer Experience: Transforming the resident journey through a new website, digital inclusion initiatives, and proactive service updates.
  - d) Consolidating and Improving Systems: Replacing and upgrading legacy systems to enhance efficiency and reliability.
  - e) Enabling: Equipping staff and Members with modern devices and comprehensive learning and development to maximise the benefits of digital transformation.
8. Together, these principles, priorities, and programmes provide the foundation for Hillingdon's ongoing digital transformation, ensuring we continue to deliver modern, efficient, and inclusive services for all residents. This report provides Cabinet and senior stakeholders with a comprehensive update on the progress made against the Digital Strategy 2024–27 since its approval in October 2024, an update of our key achievements is provided below.

## **Building services online by default**

9. The council's digital transformation has been anchored by the successful implementation of our single platform that underpins the new council website. The My Account portal has over 200 online forms and includes case management back-office workflows. This project has been one of the most complex and wide-reaching digital initiatives undertaken by the authority, involving extensive collaboration across service areas, technical teams, external and internal stakeholders and partners and residents.
10. The new website was launched in November 2025 and was designed with a resident-first approach, focusing on accessibility, mobile responsiveness, and seamless navigation. The My Account feature now provides a single, secure hub for residents to access a wide range of council services, including council tax, housing, libraries, etc. with more to be added over the next year. This integration has enabled residents to manage their interactions with the council in one place, track the status of requests, and will soon be able to receive proactive updates—such as alerts for missed bins or service disruptions—directly through their account and or email, with work ongoing to implement this and SMS updates.

11. The implementation of this new platform replaced multiple legacy systems, consolidating online forms, case management, complaints, and member enquiries into a unified digital platform. This has streamlined internal processes, reduced manual workarounds, and improved the council's ability to respond to resident needs efficiently, fully putting residents at the heart of what we do. The project included extensive user acceptance testing, design workshops, and integration with back-office systems, ensuring that the platform is robust, scalable, and future-proof.
12. A key aspect of the rollout was the migration of forms from our legacy platforms into the new platform, with a focus on automating form processing, clarifying ownership, validation, and routing. This has been particularly impactful in areas, where new digital forms are replacing paper-based processes, improving both efficiency and data quality. The transition required close engagement with heads of service to ensure alignment on ownership, validation, and routing of forms, as well as comprehensive testing and feedback loops.
13. The implementation also addressed the needs of specific service areas, such as Resident Services (housing, waste and recycling, green spaces, etc.), where priority forms for digitisation were identified and built in the new platform, replacing legacy paper forms and streamlining processes.
14. Training and support were central to the success of the rollout. The project team provided walkthroughs, recordings, and support materials to end users, with a particular focus on supporting Members and teams less confident with digital tools. The scale and pace of delivery—rolling out to over 150 users—required careful change management, with risks around adoption and support mitigated through targeted training and ongoing engagement.
15. The new platform's flexibility has also enabled the council to respond to emerging needs, such as the integration of new mobile app based (which also works on desktop, laptop, table and mobile) for environmental reporting (such as missed collections, missed bins, etc.) and process flows for specific services.
16. A major milestone in the early part of the next calendar year will be the implementation of a new 'report it' platform, which allows residents and visitors to report issues such as graffiti, potholes, and litter directly through a dedicated, branded mobile app, as well as the website. The system uses data to automatically allocate reports to the appropriate council service or external body. The project has involved complex integrations with key back-office systems, enabling seamless case management and real-time updates for residents and members. The phased rollout has included onboarding, training, and the development of "Report it" and "Request it" functions, with additional integrations and enhancements scheduled through early 2026.
17. The project has also focused on ensuring that residents and members can access and track their reports. The platform is now positioned as a core component of the council's digital offer, supporting both operational efficiency and resident satisfaction.
18. The platform's open architecture supports further innovation, including the integration of AI-powered search and case triage in future phases. For example, through image recognition and then the automation of work to route to the correct team (using the data we hold on public and non-public land), with all of the detail required to ensure the job / tasks are completed in an efficient manner, which the operative will then be able to update in the field, ultimately sending an immediate update to the resident / interested stakeholders. This is set to go live in the new calendar year and will represent a significant change for Hillingdon and a vast improvement for residents.

## Better data, better decisions

19. Business intelligence (BI) has become a cornerstone of the council's approach to evidence-based decision making. The BI team has developed over 140 dashboards across all service areas, with an additional 40 expected by year-end. These dashboards provide real-time insights into service performance, demand, cost and outcomes, enabling managers and leaders to make informed decisions and allocate resources effectively.
20. The BI function supports a wide range of use cases, from operational reporting to strategic planning. The team has also developed ward-level demand maps, overlaying performance data with geographic insights to support transformation projects and asset management.
21. Collaboration between BI, service leads, digital and technology teams has been critical to the success of these initiatives. The BI team works closely with service areas to define requirements, validate data, and ensure that dashboards meet operational needs. This collaborative approach has enabled the council to respond quickly to emerging challenges, such as the need for enhanced reporting in Adult Social Care, HR, and asset management.
22. The council has also invested in data modelling and warehousing, leveraging Power BI and other platforms to build robust data models and support advanced analytics. This has enabled the development of custom dashboards, star/snowflake schema modelling, and integration with other key systems, to provide a holistic view of service performance.
23. A significant strand of work this year has focused on strengthening data quality across the organisation, now a core workstream within the Consolidating & Improving transformation programme. The council has consolidated legacy systems, introduced improved validation and mandatory fields, and procured platforms that reduce duplication and improve data linkage. Data quality indicators are now embedded into everyday reporting, supported by new dashboards that highlight gaps, errors, and duplicates, enabling earlier conversations about ownership and corrective action. Alongside this, data enablement sessions are supporting cultural change by helping services understand how inaccuracies in their records impact statutory returns, operational reporting, and decision-making. A formal Data Quality Assessment (DQA) approach—aligned to the Government Data Quality Framework—has been introduced to assess datasets against the six national data quality dimensions and review controls across the full data lifecycle. This structured approach establishes clear accountability, supports long-term culture change, and forms a risk-based delivery plan prioritising statutory, high-risk, and cross-cutting datasets. Progress is reported quarterly through corporate governance mechanisms, underpinning a more accurate, timely, and reliable data environment for the Council.
24. The Council's commitment to evidence-based decision-making was reaffirmed in September 2025, when the Cabinet received the Annual Performance Report for 2024/25. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation highlighted that the Council is now beginning to realise the tangible benefits of its sustained investment in digital technology and business intelligence.
25. This investment has enabled the development of a powerful suite of data tools, allowing the Council to measure, monitor, and analyse performance and cost across a wide range of services. Cabinet Members now have access to up-to-date information through user-friendly dashboards, supporting more responsive and informed decision-making at every level.
26. The Annual Performance Report provided a clear and comprehensive overview of the Council's achievements over the past year, demonstrating a continued commitment to putting residents first, even in the face of rising demand and evolving community needs. These advances have been underpinned by a robust performance management ensuring

that decisions are grounded in reliable data and focused on delivering the best outcomes for residents.

27. The Leader of the Council welcomed the report as a valuable reminder of the breadth and quality of services provided, and the achievements of Council staff. The Leader supported the recommendation for the report to be presented to full Council, reinforcing the Council's commitment to transparency and high service standards. Additionally, the Leader requested that future reports include more information on value for money, with comparative cost data from other authorities, and expressed confidence that this would be addressed as the performance reporting framework continues to evolve. This is covered in the half yearly performance report on this agenda.

## **Modernising infrastructure and systems**

28. Modernising the council's technology infrastructure has been a central pillar of the Digital Strategy. The migration to a new Teams telephony system has been completed, resulting in the decommissioning of the legacy Cisco environment and delivering a more integrated and flexible communications platform for staff. The rollout of new devices is nearly complete, equipping staff with the tools needed to work efficiently in a modern, hybrid environment. Additionally, the migration of remote users from Citrix to Azure Virtual Desktop is progressing well, further enhancing the council's digital resilience and flexibility. All of these projects are critical in creating a more modern and efficient workforce, with the ultimate aim freeing up staff to deliver better outcomes for residents.
29. Cyber security remains a top priority, with the implementation of new firewall devices significantly strengthening the council's defences against emerging threats. These investments ensure that the council's digital infrastructure is resilient, robust, secure, and capable of supporting ongoing transformation.
30. The Local Government Association conducted a Cyber 360 review of the council earlier this year and found strong leadership backing and a solid foundation of policies and processes in place. The commitment to improving security was evident through investments in digital strategy, proactive risk management, and the establishment of clear governance structures. Progress is continuing to foster a positive security culture, supported by robust communication channels, and increasing staff awareness via new phishing and cyber awareness training, improved reporting of cyber performance data via governance channels, and engagement with directorate service leadership teams to raise awareness.
31. The council's digital strategy places technology (e.g. artificial intelligence (AI), robotic process automation (RPA), etc.) at the centre of its efforts to modernise public services, streamline operations, and deliver improved outcomes for both residents and staff. These technologies are being embedded into the council's infrastructure and operating models, driving a fundamental shift towards automation, intelligent decision-making, and data-driven service delivery.
32. The automation and integration programme is focused on developing a variety of solutions internally using secure and scalable platforms. By automating repetitive, rule-based tasks, RPA is freeing up staff to concentrate on higher-value work such as resident engagement, complex casework, and service innovation. This approach has enabled significant reductions in manual intervention across finance, HR, and frontline services. Automated workflows have improved accuracy, reduced processing times, and minimised errors. The financial benefits of automation are measurable, supporting Medium Term Financial Forecast objectives and enabling the council to reinvest savings into priority areas. At the

same time, the resident experience has been enhanced, as staff are able to respond more quickly to enquiries, leading to higher satisfaction and the aim to reduce complaints. RPA also underpins new self-service channels, empowering residents to access information and complete transactions independently at any time. Solutions are co-designed with stakeholders across the organisation, ensuring alignment with strategic goals and long-term sustainability.

33. AI is being harnessed to deliver smarter, more responsive services. Generative AI tools are integrated into both resident-facing and staff-facing systems, enabling intelligent triage, workflow automation, and enhanced information retrieval. AI-powered assistants are being designed and developed to assist with managing resident enquiries across multiple channels, providing instant and accurate responses while reducing wait times. These systems use advanced language models to understand context and deliver personalised support. AI also automates the classification and routing of enquiries, proactively updating residents and reducing duplication. This supports both early intervention and reactive care, improving outcomes and efficiency. For staff, AI tools are embedded into workflows to support information retrieval, decision-making, and process automation, resulting in faster access to relevant data, improved productivity, and reduced cognitive load. The council continues to explore further use cases for agentic AI, including smart notes for Social Care and advanced analytics to support service planning and delivery.
34. The council's approach to AI and RPA is underpinned by robust governance and a commitment to responsible innovation. The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for AI sets out clear principles and controls to safeguard personal data and ensure compliance. All data accessed by AI and RPA tools is encrypted in transit and at rest, with permissions managed centrally and usage logged for audit purposes. Risks such as inappropriate data access, inaccurate AI outputs, and uncontrolled data flows are mitigated through technical controls, ongoing reviews of access permissions, and comprehensive staff training. While generative AI tools can access most data a user is permitted to view, governance frameworks and technical controls are in place to minimise exposure and guide responsible use. Staff are trained to verify AI outputs, and privacy notices are regularly updated to reflect new use cases. The DPIA is reviewed quarterly to ensure continued alignment with best practice and regulatory requirements. Supplier contracts require adherence to GDPR and ISO standards, and the council blocks unauthorised third-party AI tools to maintain control over data flows.
35. Success is measured not only in terms of cost savings and operational efficiency, but also through improvements in resident satisfaction, reduction in complaints, and increased adoption of digital self-service. The council's commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in regular reviews of technology, processes, and governance, ensuring that digital transformation delivers sustainable, long-term benefits. In summary, the council's investment in AI and RPA is modernising infrastructure and systems, enabling smarter, more efficient, and more secure public services. By combining technical innovation with strong governance and a focus on outcomes, the council is building a resilient digital foundation for the future.

## **Building digital capability and inclusion**

36. The Council has played a pivotal role in engaging residents through the facilitation of resident panels and the design of a new resident feedback survey. These panels have provided a forum for direct resident input on digital services, accessibility, and the user experience of the new website and My Account portal. The resident survey—available



online, with support, or as a paper option—has been used to gather feedback from a diverse cross-section of residents, including those with complex needs and vulnerabilities. The web team and customer engagement team have also attended carers and disability forums to gather face-to-face feedback, ensuring the needs of vulnerable and digitally excluded residents are prioritised in service design. This feedback is being used to shape the ongoing development of the Resident Hub and digital services, with a commitment to repeat the process every 6 to 12 months to measure improvement.

37. Digital inclusion remains a core principle underpinning the council's digital strategy. Since October 2024, the council has taken concrete steps to ensure that all residents can access and benefit from digital services, regardless of their circumstances.
38. A key achievement has been the distribution of nearly 200 laptops and over 2,000 data SIMs to residents most at risk of digital exclusion. This initiative, delivered in partnership with Libraries, Adult Education and Tenants Engagement teams, has provided vital connectivity and devices to vulnerable individuals and families, enabling them to access online services, education, and support.
39. These efforts are complemented by targeted digital skills support, ongoing engagement with community groups, and the design of all new digital platforms (including the website and My Account) to meet accessibility standards. The council's borough-wide fibre and mobile connectivity programme further addresses digital exclusion by improving infrastructure in "not spot" areas and ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to get online.
40. Digital inclusion is also embedded in service transformation projects such as Love Clean Streets, Technology Enabled Care (TEC), and the Digital Excellence Academy, ensuring that both residents and staff are equipped to participate fully in a digital society.
41. To further support digital inclusion, the council has implemented a vulnerable resident's line. This ensures that those who struggle with digital channels or automated systems receive a personalised, accessible, and quicker experience. Calls from vulnerable residents are routed based on a maintained list of telephone numbers, and the Customer Experience Team captures data on those needing ongoing or permanent assistance. This approach is being rolled out in phases, with ongoing evaluation to ensure it meets the needs of the most vulnerable and supports the council's digital inclusion goals.
42. Upskilling staff and supporting residents to access and benefit from digital services, with a strong focus on digital inclusion.
43. The council has invested in apprenticeships for staff through partnerships with providers such as Multiverse and Henley Business School. Staff are enrolled in programmes including the Level 7 MSc Digital and Technology Solutions, Level 5 Transformative Leadership, Level 4 Data Fellowship and Level 3 Data & Insights for Business Decisions, supporting both digital leadership and data literacy. Multiverse apprenticeships are being used to upskill staff in digital, data, and technology roles, with regular progress reviews and support from dedicated coaches. Eighty active learners are participating in the Digital Excellence Academy, and a further 50 are due to start in January. The council is also exploring fully funded Masters-level apprenticeships to further develop digital leadership to future-proof the organisation.
44. The council's longer-term learning and development (L&D) strategy includes a mix of formal courses (e.g., Council Connects), digital skills training, and on-the-job learning. Staff are encouraged to attend webinars, drop-in sessions, and bespoke training aligned to their roles. There is a commitment to ongoing investment in digital apprenticeships, partnerships with providers, and the development of a permanent digital, data, and technology workforce.

## Delivering a digital place

45. The council's commitment to delivering a digital place is evidenced by ongoing improvements in connectivity and the embedding of digital innovation in planning and asset management. The borough-wide fibre and mobile connectivity program continues to deliver significant improvements in bandwidth for both council sites and residents, supporting economic growth and digital inclusion. Smart City initiatives are being advanced, with a focus on using data to drive energy management and sustainable operations, positioning Hillingdon as a leader in digital innovation within local government.
46. A key enabler of Hillingdon's ambition to deliver a truly digital place has been the successful management and strategic deployment of SIP (Strategic Investment Pot) funding, in collaboration with the West London Alliance. Over the past year, the council has worked to secure the transfer of remaining WLA SIP-1 funds—approximately £792,000—directly to Hillingdon, enabling the borough to pursue its own digital connectivity projects.
47. Over the past five years, access to full fibre broadband for residents has increased from 5% of the Hillingdon population to over 79%. This is one of the fastest growing rates in London and has been enabled through successful working with the private sector.
48. Over the past year improvements have been made to internal processes and legal documents to simplify and speed up operator Multi Site Visits and Wayleave agreements to ensure the borough remains investor ready for telecoms providers.
49. We have participated in a pan-London trial of damp and mould sensors in ten council house properties, gaining useful insight into the operation and effectiveness of the technology.
50. We have been an active participant in the feasibility study for a West London Borough owned Long Range Wireless Area Network (LoRaWAN) network to support a community based sensor network supplying environmental data for use in our data platform to better inform service and policy planning. We have been an active participant in the West London Alliance feasibility work.

## Partnership Working

51. The council's digital transformation has been strengthened through strategic partnerships. Collaboration with Microsoft (and a number of other key partners / suppliers) has supported the deployment of various new technology; Copilot and advanced AI solutions, with regular sync meetings to align technical and business objectives. Joint working opportunities with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), and the Local Government Association (LGA) have enabled the council to collaborate on best practice, secure support / or be part of early adopter groups and contribute to national innovation agendas.
52. In January 2025 the Government launched 'A blueprint for modern digital government' citing Hillingdon as a good practice example:

*Hillingdon Council became the first UK local authority to use voice automation and AI at scale, creating an AI-driven citizen contact system that reduces cost per call by 5% and immediately provided the capacity of 25-30 full time employees, successfully delivering a cost saving of £5 for every pound spent and allowing citizens to phone the council 24 hours a day.*

53. In addition, the Prime Minister referenced the work we are doing in test trails to automate the extraction of key data in Planning applications:

*Today we're announcing a new government-built AI tool called Extract that can process these documents in minutes, freeing up thousands of hours for planning officers to focus on decision-making to speed up housebuilding.*

*In test trials across Hillingdon, Nuneaton & Bedworth, and Exeter councils, Extract digitised planning records in just three minutes each — compared to the 1 to 2 hours it typically takes manually. That means processing a 100 planning records a day, significantly speeding up the process.*

## **Adult Social Care Technology Enabled Care (TEC) – Progress and Future Vision**

54. Following a positive outcome from the Adult Social Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection, which highlighted good practice in promoting independence, well-being, and proactive intervention, Hillingdon has identified further opportunities to strengthen its Technology Enabled Care (TEC) offer. This forms a key part of the ongoing improvement plan for Adult Social Care and reflects our ambition to embed technology seamlessly into care and support services, enabling residents to live happy, fulfilled lives in their homes and communities.
55. The vision for TEC is to build on the progress already made in transforming Adult Social Care services by using digital technologies as enablers to deliver high-quality, efficient, and integrated care. Our approach focuses on early intervention, promoting independent living, and supporting carers, ensuring that technology is considered at every stage of care planning and review.
56. Significant progress has already been achieved. Initiatives such as AskSARA, an online self-help tool launched in March 2025, and lifestyle monitoring apps like Intelligent Lilli have enhanced our understanding of care needs at home. These tools allow us to tailor ongoing support and prevent or delay admissions to long-term residential care, particularly for people living with dementia. Night-time sensors have reduced the need for one-to-one support, delivering staff efficiencies and cost savings without compromising care quality. TEC also supports medical monitoring by providing accurate data on seizures, potential falls, and other health indicators. Through Disabled Facilities Grant funding, we have introduced a range of devices including movement sensors, smart watches, wearables, falls prevention tools, smart home devices, and robotics. These innovations help residents stay at home longer, manage risks more effectively, and reduce reliance on traditional care services.
57. Looking ahead, our plans include embedding TEC as a first consideration in care planning, using tools such as Just Checking to support social work assessments, and ensuring all analogue TEC systems are fully transitioned to digital by January 2027. We will continue to expand the use of “plug and play” TEC kits for hospital discharge and community use, develop online platforms offering guidance and support, and provide training for professionals on data tools and insights. Future developments will also include smart home assistants, fall detection and seizure monitoring technologies, and virtual reality learning tools to support independent living and transitions for children with disabilities into adulthood. Carers will benefit from remote monitoring systems, training, peer support networks, and dedicated TEC Champions, while safety will be enhanced through sensors, GPS tracking, and real-time monitoring supported by staff training for emergency response.
58. Technology Enabled Care remains central to delivering high-quality, person-centred adult social care in Hillingdon. These initiatives align with the CQC assurance framework by

empowering residents to remain independent and resilient, enhancing care delivery through early intervention and smart devices, and ensuring safety through proactive risk management. Our commitment to digital transformation, staff training, and cross-system collaboration reflects strong leadership and a culture of continuous improvement. While we recognise that not everyone will want to use technology in their care or daily life, TEC will remain a cornerstone of our improvement journey, ensuring that residents, carers, and professionals have the tools and data they need to deliver outstanding care.

## **Next Steps**

59. **Accelerate Digital Transformation and Service Integration** - Continue to prioritise the migration of council services to online platforms, consolidating legacy systems into unified digital solutions. This will streamline resident interactions, improve efficiency, and enhance data quality across service areas.
60. **Strengthen Digital Inclusion Initiatives** (where resource allow) - Expand the distribution of devices and connectivity support (laptops, data SIMs and training) to vulnerable residents, ensuring equitable access to digital services.
61. **Embed technology into care and support services for adults, aiming to maximize independence and safety for residents.** Define clear objectives for the rollout of TEC solutions (e.g., sensors, wearables, remote monitoring) and regularly assess their impact on resident outcomes. Ensure digital solutions are considered as a first option in care planning.
62. **Strengthen collaboration with technology partners** (such as Microsoft) and government bodies (including MHCLG and DHSC) to share best practices, secure funding, and contribute to national digital agendas. Formalise partnership objectives and governance arrangements and report regularly on progress and outcomes.

## **Financial Implications**

Approval of the Digital Strategy 2024-27 update, as outlined in this report, does not in itself result in any immediate or direct financial commitment or expenditure. Any future financial implications arising from the implementation of specific programmes or projects under the strategy will be subject to separate approval processes and will be reported accordingly.

The approved Corporate Innovation and Technology investment for the period 2024/25 to 2025/26 is £9,779k. For 2025/26, the total capital budget is £6,446k of which £1,703k has been released to date. This released sum includes £1,012k that has been rephased and carried forward from the 2024/25 budget into 2025/26.

	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total Capital D&I Programme Budget	3,333	6,446	9,779
Expenditure to Date	2,728	510	3,238
Released to Date	4,943	1,703	6,646
Remaining Unreleased Budget	0	4,743	4,743

The Council's capital investment, allocated via the Corporate Innovation and Technology budget under the Digital Strategy, has played a key role in delivering Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings. This funding has supported with the delivery of specific savings proposals, including the Reshaping Customer Experience and Business Support savings, as well as the Digital and Technology Contracts savings. Additionally, the digital investment in projects has supported a range of other savings across different directorates, with these benefits being tracked and reported as part of individual projects within the MTFS. These investments are considered enabling costs essential for the successful delivery of the associated projects and subsequent savings.

The Adult's Finance Business Partnering team reports that digital investment has enabled delivery of £300k in savings for 2025/26, with £150k from Technology Enabled Care and £150k from AskSARA, the latter expected by year-end.

## RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

### **The benefit or impact upon residents, service users and communities**

The past year has seen Hillingdon's Digital Strategy move from vision to tangible delivery, with a clear focus on making digital services more accessible, responsive, and inclusive for all residents. Residents now benefit from a streamlined online experience, with the website offering a single, secure place to access over 200 council services. This "digital by default" approach means residents can complete transactions quickly and easily, track requests, and soon receive proactive updates thus reducing the need for repeat contact and ensuring a more joined-up, user-friendly journey. There is still ongoing work with the services to ensure we have a fully complete end-to-end resident journey, i.e. not only an easy way to report / track requests, but also ensure the job is completed.

Our commitment to understanding and meeting residents' needs has deepened through smarter use of data and ongoing engagement. The council's investment in business intelligence and data quality has enabled more informed decision-making, while resident panels and feedback surveys have shaped the design and continuous improvement of digital services. Special attention has been given to digital inclusion, with targeted support for vulnerable residents including the distribution of devices and connectivity, accessible service design, and a dedicated line for those who need extra help.

Looking ahead, the strategy remains rooted in co-design and consultation, ensuring that as technology evolves, so too does our understanding of what resident's value most. By embedding feedback loops, supporting digital skills, and maintaining a strong focus on accessibility, Hillingdon continues to deliver a modern, efficient, and resident-centred council, one that listens, adapts, and strives to improve outcomes for all.

## CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

### Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concur with the Financial Implications set out above, noting there are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

Furthermore, it is noted any future impacts arising from subsequent programmes within the strategy will be subject to separate approval processes. The associated costs and any savings delivered will be monitored through the regular monthly monitoring cycle and as part of the wider MTFS.

Additionally, it is noted that an annual report will be submitted to Cabinet that sets out the progress against this Strategy.

### Legal

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report and the approval of the recommendations will allow for improved processes, analytics and focus service requirements more effectively resulting in positive productivity and assist with modernising Council services and for services to be continued to be delivered using the latest technology reliably and consistently in line with the Council's Digital Strategy. Although any Contract entered into must comply with the Council's standing orders.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [08 - REPORT Digital Strategy Cabinet ReportFinal 1.pdf](#)
- [Digital Strategy 2024-2027.pdf](#)
- [London Borough of Hillingdon - Agenda for CABINET on Thursday, 10th October, 2024, 7.00 pm](#)