



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

# DIGITAL

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND ON THAMES

# STRATEGY

SEPTEMBER 2019

# INTRODUCTION

This Council is committed to becoming an engaging, open and innovative Council - one that has better local schools, is safer and greener, one that is fair and more affordable for all. In doing so we plan to learn from best practice elsewhere and bring fresh ideas and approaches to the borough.

We are clear that an increasingly digital approach will be one of the enablers to achieving our goals and that becoming more digital is key to better more efficient service delivery. This strategy sets out how we develop that approach, working towards providing efficient, customer focussed digital services – open and accessible to all, ensuring all our residents, businesses and service users can benefit.

For this Council, digital simply means the smart use of technology to improve the lives of residents and businesses. The key shift in our approach is about putting them at the heart of how we think about designing and delivering all our services. We're not interested in "digital for the sake of it" and will be driven by ensuring all digital developments meet the test of "how will it benefit the user's experience of council services, using modern technology when appropriate". We won't push people to digital – but will design services so they will move that way naturally.

# OUR LOCAL CONTEXT

The London Borough of Richmond is a suburban borough in South West London with a population of approximately 200,000 people. Over 40% of the borough is covered by green open spaces, and there are a number of internationally renowned and popular visitor draws.

Richmond is the least deprived Borough in London and one of the least deprived in England, although there are some concentrations of relatively deprived areas. From a digital perspective this means that our population is relatively well connected, with 97% using the internet, but with a resultant risk for those who don't being left behind and unable to benefit from new digital approaches.

Our residents are relatively affluent and demanding, with ever increasing expectations. We know that they value being able to access services in ways and at times that are convenient to them. Many areas of our borough already have access to relatively fast broadband and mobile networks – others do not and ensuring such access for all is a prerequisite for enabling the delivery of more and more digital services.

The Council delivers many services through innovative partnership working, notably through our **Shared Staffing Arrangement** with Wandsworth, and these arrangements have led to both efficiencies and service improvements. Nevertheless, our finances remain constrained following years of government grant cuts.

# THE NATIONAL AND LONDON CONTEXTS



The government expects the delivery of innovative increasingly digital approaches to be at the heart of future public sector services. A dedicated **local digital team** has been set up by government to provide support and guidance to all public sector bodies. A key strand of this is the **local digital declaration** to which this Council will be a signatory, and we wholly endorse the guiding principles contained therein:

- We will go even further to redesign our services around the needs of the people using them. This means continuing to prioritise citizen and user needs above professional, organisational and technological silos.
- We will 'fix our plumbing' to break our dependence on inflexible and expensive technology that doesn't join up effectively. This means insisting on modular building blocks for the IT we rely on, and open standards to give a common structure to the data we create.
- We will design safe, secure and useful ways of sharing information to build trust among our partners and citizens, to better support the most vulnerable members of our communities, and to target our resources more effectively.
- We will demonstrate digital leadership, creating the conditions for genuine organisational transformation to happen, and challenging all those we work with to embrace the Local Digital Declaration.
- We will embed an open culture that values, incentivises and expects digital ways of working from every member of our workforce. This means working in the open wherever we can, sharing our plans and experience, working collaboratively with other organisations, and reusing good practice.

At a London level the Mayor has launched Smarter London Together and created the post of Chief Digital Officer, both initiatives designed to foster collaborative partnership working across London towards Smart City objectives and we endorse this approach.

# OUR DIGITAL AMBITIONS

We recognise the challenges – and are determined to become a leading digital authority. We see our digital ambitions within a wider context of cultural and transformational ambitions with the potential to lead to:



## For the service user

- The right services delivered in the right way, providing consistently good outcomes and user experiences
- Greater transparency and openness from their Council
- A more joined up approach across different Council services
- Increased access for the excluded



## For the organisation

- Opportunities for efficiency savings, including through flexible working and technologies for staff
- Continuously improving and innovating services as we become a digital organisation will break down silos and deliver better outcomes at lower cost
- Reputational benefits from being an innovator – helping us to attract and retain the best staff



## For the community as a whole

- A more vibrant, digitally enabled and resilient local economy
- Environmental benefits, including improving air quality by reducing travel and congestion
- Improved community safety by the smarter use of our data and CCTV

There are five priority themes to our digital work, highlighted below, with the associated work programmes set out on the following pages:

# CONNECTIVITY

## CONNECTIVITY

- We want our borough to be amongst the best connected in the country, with high speed broadband available for all, and universal high quality mobile network coverage. Working with suppliers, we are committed to making the Council easy for infrastructure companies to do business with. We will work to identify residential and business 'not spots' and campaign on resident's behalf for these to be targeted with improved infrastructure.



# INCLUSION

# COLLABORATIVE WORKING

## INCLUSION

- As the world becomes increasingly connected and more services become digital we will ensure no one gets left behind – through a combination of raising skills and awareness and of continuing to provide some services in traditional ways where it is necessary to do so. We will always seek to help people who choose to use digital services - working with partners, and through our library service we will continue to provide free **IT taster sessions** in our libraries. We want our services to work for everyone, and will always ensure the needs of those with disabilities are fully taken into account as we develop new initiatives.

## COLLABORATIVE WORKING

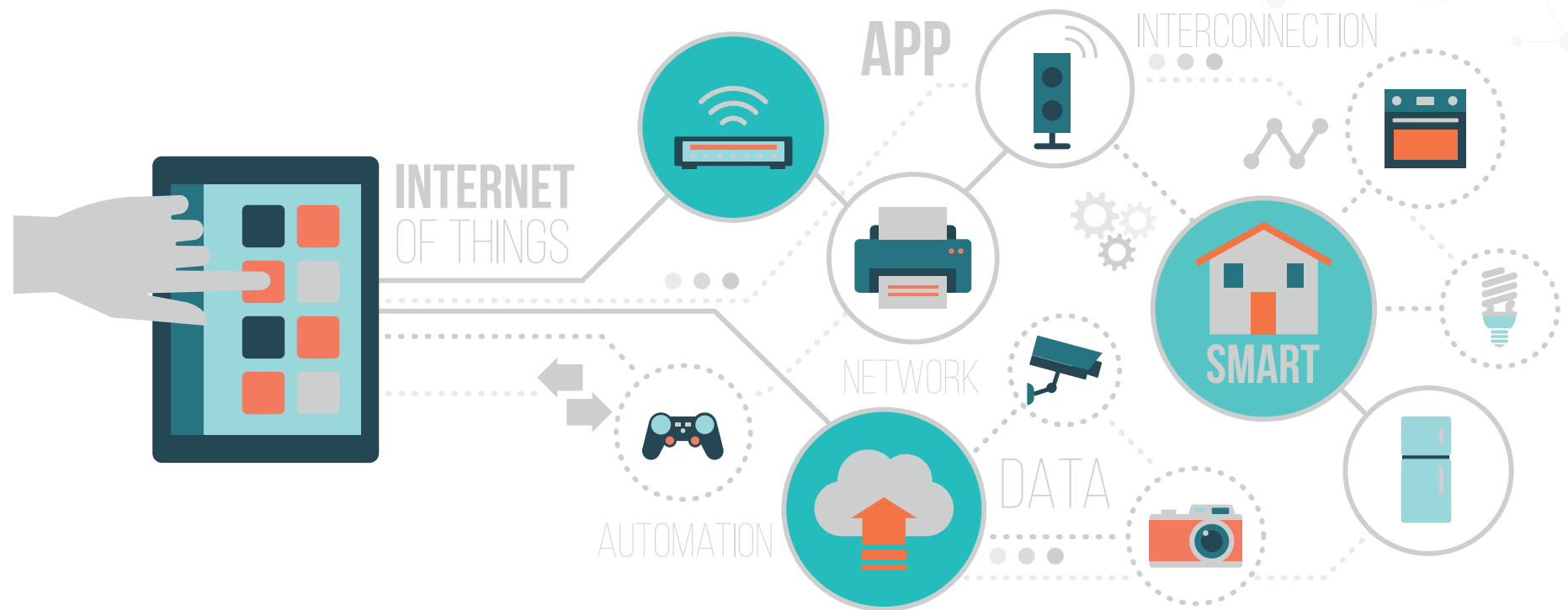
- We recognise that digital innovation is often best delivered through effective collaboration with a wide range of partners – nationally, across London, sub regionally and locally across all sectors. We will work to strengthen and focus existing partnership arrangements on to digital initiatives for the mutual benefit of all the stakeholders concerned. We already have a high concentration of tech businesses and we will work towards creating create a larger provision of private and public sector space for tech start ups..



# SERVICE INNOVATION

## SERVICE INNOVATION

- There are many opportunities to change the way we deliver our services. Key to this will be the progression of our work on data analytics to make better more joined up use of the information we hold, and the use of the outputs from our innovative Internet of Things project with neighbouring Councils to enhance a wide range of services. We will take a sensible and proportionate approach to risk – not being afraid to innovate with prototype emerging technologies where there is a sound business case to do so.





# A COUNCIL THAT IS EASY TO DEAL WITH

- Our website is modern and fresh, but there is no room for complacency. As well as continuing to make our online web services easier to use we will expand the range of services within the **Richmond Account** and look to introduce new innovative ways for users to deal with the Council, especially via mobile devices when people are on the move. This will include an online version of our ground breaking **Richmond Card**, offering residents a wide range of services and discounts.
- We will also look to exploit the potential of social media to improve the way we engage with our residents and service users. And in line with our commitment to be a listening and engaging Council we will ask our residents via our annual survey about our digital approach and act on what they tell us
- We increasingly deliver services in partnership with others and across sectors. These sometimes quite complex relationships will only thrive if we are an open, modern organisation for others to deal with.



# HOW WE WILL REALISE OUR DIGITAL AMBITIONS

The detail of our digital work programme is set out below. We are determined to have the right enablers in place to deliver this programme and to address the common barriers faced when progressing digital initiatives, and will be guided by the following principles:

- The digital landscape is multi-layered and complex. For many digital is already the new norm and we must deliver on their expectations. For others we must in time help to change expectations and behaviours, so that no one gets left behind. We will do this by engaging early, raising awareness and providing training and support
- We must become a more intelligent organisation, enshrining rigorous data management processes in all that we do. We will do this by rolling out our new approach to information governance and building on the work we are commencing on data analytics, always ensuring that the security of our data is paramount
- Where appropriate we will seek to maximise the potential of our current systems and technologies wherever we can, re-engineering processes around the resident, always considering which channels will best meet their needs
- Our ambition is to place our residents and local businesses at the heart of all that we do and to use digital to the fullest extent possible in support of this. We are a complex organisation delivering a very diverse range of services, at time of financial challenge. It will take time – but through the judicious use of new approaches, learning where we can from others, we will move to a position where all service delivery is tested through a digital lens to ensure we continue to innovate
- We must be realistic – digital transformative change requires leadership, resource, talent, organisational effort and investment in getting the underlying technology right. We must be honest with ourselves about whether we have enough of these in place at any given time, and we will develop robust and transparent governance involving Members and residents so that our progress is visible to all
- Our work programme below therefore is an evolving one, focussed on deliverable benefits in the short to medium term. We will engage with partner organisations and other stakeholders to inform its development and it will change and grow - but our work will remain anchored in the principles set out above

# DIGITAL LANDSCAPE

## INNOVATIVE



### DIGITAL BACKBONE

- Fibre
- Low Power networks?

## AGILE



### OPTIMISE

- Current systems
- Leverage 365
- Re-engineer processes

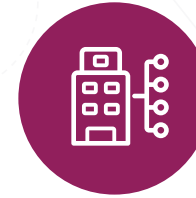
## OPEN



### DIGITAL ECONOMY

- Workspaces
- Innovation hubs / incubators
- Networking
- Support and Advice

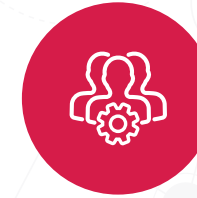
## LEARNING



### INTERNET OF THINGS / SMART CITIES

- Waste services
- Smart parking
- AQ monitoring

## COLLABORATIVE



### EMPOWERED RESIDENTS

- Training
- Access

## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Customer experiences - Web / App  
Transform service delivery  
Use data for insights

## OUR DIGITAL WORK PROGRAMME

### PRIORITY THEME - CONNECTIVITY

WHAT WE WILL DO	INDICATIVE DATES FOR PRIORITY DELIVERABLES
We will enable residents and businesses to tell the Council about poor broadband speeds and mobile coverage – and we will then liaise with suppliers to encourage them to provide fast reliable connections for all	Website content to enable reporting to the Council – by end Q3 2019
Work with suppliers to ensure that the Council is an easy place for them to do business, balancing respect for our borough's unique heritage and environment whilst facilitating the easy roll out of digital infrastructure	Ongoing

### PRIORITY THEME - INCLUSION

WHAT WE WILL DO	INDICATIVE DATES FOR PRIORITY DELIVERABLES
Continue to provide free <b>IT taster sessions</b> in our libraries	Ongoing
In Adult social care, work with providers to help them take full advantage of digital opportunities for example, communicating securely by email with GPs on prescriptions, thus improving record keeping and data security across the sector and the use of Wifi for residents to stay in touch with families, thus reducing social isolation and improving family and social relationships	TBC
Carry out an Equalities Impact Needs Assessment [EINA] on specific digital initiatives as they are developed, ensuring the needs of all service users are protected when making changes to services including via the use of assisted digital support at the point of access	Ongoing

## PRIORITY THEME – COLLABORATIVE WORKING

WHAT WE WILL DO	INDICATIVE DATES FOR PRIORITY DELIVERABLES
We will sign the government's <b>local digital declaration</b> , committing us to working in partnership with other organisations	By end Q2 2019
We will consult widely on this Strategy via the forthcoming Resident's Attitude Survey and other forums, ensuring the needs of residents and businesses are fully reflected as we develop our future direction	By end Q3 2019
We will maintain strong governance at both an Officer and Member level, ensuring all elements of our work are co-ordinated and joined up from a service user point of view	Ongoing
We will work with local businesses to better understand their needs in relation to digital developments, including the provision of flexible touch down office space for small start ups to use	TBC
We will participate in the South West London Health and Care Partnership Interoperability Programme – data sharing between Health and Social Care to improve transfer of care between settings such as hospital and the home and helping professionals make the best decisions about care.	TBC

## PRIORITY THEME – SERVICE INNOVATION

WHAT WE WILL DO	INDICATIVE DATES FOR PRIORITY DELIVERABLES
<p>We won't reinvent the wheel - we will focus our Digital and IT Board, attended by senior managers across the organisation, onto identifying digital best practice from elsewhere with a view to adopting it at the Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>To inform service improvement and effective use of resources, develop an organizational vision and strategy that informs how data is collected, stored and analyzed by the council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardized collection will make analyses easier</li> <li>• Ensure high quality information is collected that can be kept up to date</li> <li>• Vision will facilitate best practice and ensure we comply with GDPR and information security principles</li> </ul>	<p>To develop a number of proofs of concept by end Q4 2019/20</p>
<p>We will continue to modernise our own IT infrastructure via a clear architectural vision for all our technology, designed to support more collaborative shared working across service areas</p>	<p>Produce integrated technology road map by end Q4 2019/20</p>
<p>Explore the use of a range of new digital technologies, including via our participation in a South London Partnership £4m <b>Internet of Things</b> IoT project, to improve a range of street scene, environmental, social care and other services</p>	<p>To identify and agree a number of proofs of concept by end Q3 2019/20</p>
<p>As well as IoT we will identify a pathfinder project in each area of service delivery, to demonstrate the art of the possible and help build capacity, skills and momentum within the Council</p>	<p>Pathfinders to be identified by end Q3 2019/20</p>

## PRIORITY THEME - A COUNCIL THAT IS EASY TO DO BUSINESS WITH

WHAT WE WILL DO	INDICATIVE DATES FOR PRIORITY DELIVERABLES
Undertake a light touch review of our website, refreshing and modernising some elements, and reviewing the ease of use for the most common tasks	By end Q3 2019/20
Implement new approaches and systems to ensure we are more joined when we deal with service users, improving efficiency and the customer experience for all	Phase one complete by end Q4 2019/20
Review our approach to the Richmond Card and Richmond Account with a view to moving onto modern technology platforms and increasing take up	Options appraisal complete by end Q4 2019/20