

Richmond upon Thames

digital & data

Strategy 2024

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Foreword

I am delighted to be able to introduce you to this Digital Strategy for Richmond upon Thames, the key strategic document that sets out the digital programme for supporting Richmond Council's priorities to make our borough greener, safer and fairer for all.

As we approach the second half of this decade, the challenges our communities face are becoming ever starker and the need to deliver local public services differently is critical. The cost-of-living crisis means people have less money in their pockets and are struggling to afford food, heating and housing costs. The impacts of climate change are increasingly present in our communities, with more frequent flash flooding, more extreme weather events and poor air quality. And we have an aging population, many of whom need care, but many others who just need help to continue to live active, healthy and independent lives.

Richmond Council is working hard to help our residents face these challenges, but we are doing this against a backdrop of the significant financial challenges facing the entire local government sector. Delivering good quality services, as efficiently as possible is essential – this is where digital comes in. Advances in technology, digital and the use of data open up a world of opportunities for us, our partners and local people.

We have already done a lot. We are part of a market-leading Internet of Things project with four other London boroughs, through the South London Partnership. In Richmond, the project has piloted air quality and traffic sensors, to give a data-led view of our public highways; gully sensors, to allow our street teams to prioritise the clearing of gullies and mitigate against surface water flooding, and in-home sensors, that monitor activity patterns and identify where a person may have had a fall or have been taken unwell.

We have also used data as part of our cost-of-living response, bringing together multiple data sets to identify households most likely to be struggling financially, so we can tailor support and make it as easy to access as possible.

And we have created a Richmond app, to make it more simple for our residents to access their council accounts, report issues and find out local information from their mobile device.

But as emerging digital solutions provide more and more opportunities, we must make sure we are adaptable so we can make our systems and processes as efficient as possible, meet modern expectations with our customer experience, and ensure our residents and staff have the skills, tools and connectivity they need to make the most of everything available to us. This strategy sets out how we will do this – building on our successes and continuing to innovate so we can realise efficiencies, deliver better services for everyone, look after our most vulnerable residents and support all local people to thrive and contribute to a better future for our borough.



Councillor Gareth Roberts,
Leader of Richmond Council



ZADIG & VOLTAIRE

Richmond Station ① ② ③
Richmond Green
RICHMOND RIVERSIDE
RICHMOND PARK

Bare Daddies

Context & aims

The local context

Richmond upon Thames is a vibrant, thriving part of London, that is home to all the very best the capital has to offer; strong communities stunning open space and an iconic heritage. It is home to nearly 200,000 people, but also to a thriving local economy, enriched by a diverse range of unique businesses. From large corporates to local independents, finance, retail, sport, science and innovation all call Richmond home, making the borough a significant contributor to the London economy.

Richmond Council has committed to making Richmond upon Thames a fairer place for all who live, work and are educated here. Digital inclusion is a key part of this, to make sure we are best equipped to support our most vulnerable residents, but also to ensure that everyone who lives here, or who makes a living here, is able to thrive.

Richmond upon Thames has made advancements in digital inclusion. However, there are pockets of the borough that still grapple with digital access and literacy issues.

Richmond's ongoing development is evident in areas like the town centre and Twickenham, which have become magnets for business and cultural activities. Our new digital and data strategy aims to leverage this growth, enhance connectivity and support stronger communities through digital inclusion.



We are starting from a generally strong position:

Broadband Availability

- 98.3% of Richmond upon Thames homes have access to superfast broadband (30Mbit/s), higher than the London average of 96.8%.
- 87.9% of Richmond upon Thames homes in have access to ultrafast broadband (300Mbit/s or greater).
- The proportion of residential premises in Richmond upon Thames unable to receive 10Mbit/s or 30Mbit/s is low (0.2% and 1.5%).

Internet user classification

- Most Richmond users are classified as e-Veterans and are frequent and experienced users of the internet. This group has higher levels of engagement for information seeking, online services, and shopping.

Our Aims

To contribute to Richmond Council’s commitment to improving digital inclusion, this digital and data strategy sets out how we will improve the quality of our services, make it easier for residents, partners and businesses to interact with the Council, and to enable us to be a more efficient, innovative and agile Council that is better equipped to respond to the changing needs of the communities we serve.

Our digital and data strategy will also be critical to us delivering our priorities, to make Richmond a greener, safer, and fairer borough.

Greater digital adoption and a focus on improving our digital infrastructure will support green initiatives such as increasing active travel, expanding electric vehicle charge points, improving air quality monitoring and managing other environmental risks such as surface water flooding.

Enhancing our use of technology, such as CCTV, and further building our data capabilities, will enable us to work proactively with the police and other key partners on improving safety and deterring crime.

Furthermore, our strategy will help place fairness at the heart of what we do. We will improve our support for those who need help with digital, ensure the services and information we provide online are accessible and simple and we will make better use of data and digital tools to enable us to provide early support and prevention.

Strategy Principles

There are three core principles that underpin our strategy:

Putting People First

Efficient and Effective

Agile and Innovative



We’re committed to making it easier to communicate with the Council. We know for many people they would prefer to interact with us online through digital channels and that they expect that experience to be quick, simple and seamless. Whether that involves booking, paying, applying, or reporting something; it should be simple and accessible, with the ability to track progress and status.

Whilst many people would prefer to interact with us online, we know that not everyone can, and this is why improving digital inclusion is one of our priorities in making Richmond a fairer borough. Some won’t have the skills or equipment needed to get online, and we know there will always be times where doing things online just isn’t the right way to provide the support or services that are needed. For those that lack the skills, confidence, or equipment to do things online, we aim to support them in achieving that goal. By improving our online services for those that want to do things online, it means we can better target resources to support those who simply can’t or where the support needed isn’t something that digital can solve.

However, people contact us, we know it can be frustrating when they are asked to provide information they have provided previously - in delivering this strategy, we will develop ways to prevent this from happening.

Improving recruitment and retention of Council staff is a priority. Ensuring our workforce has the skills they need to work effectively with digital tools and systems is essential. Not only does this enable us to make the most of the technology and systems we already have, but it also prepares us to adopt new technologies and ways of working with greater ease. Furthermore, a more digitally skilled workforce is better equipped to support residents in accessing the Council's online services. Engaging and collaborating with both residents and staff in the design of new digital services will be core to our approach in delivering our Digital and Data Strategy.

Efficient and Effective

In delivering our strategy, we will identify where we can streamline repetitive manual activities, through better integration and automation. For example, using automation to remove the need for staff to spend time on entering information from a customer enquiry form into a system. This will increase capacity for staff to focus on opportunities for innovation to identify new approaches and models that will enable us to become a more effective organisation, and improve the speed of our services for residents.

Our corporate plan outlines Richmond's strong commitment to looking after those who need our help. Prevention and earlier action will be a cornerstone of delivering the support and services that people need, and at the point when it matters most, so in addition to looking at innovation in our digital tools, we will improve the way with share and use data. This will enable us to work more proactively across Council services and with our partners to identify opportunities to act earlier in responding to needs and challenges as they emerge, rather than once they grow in size and complexity.

Agile and Innovative

As well as increasing capacity for innovation, this strategy also looks at how we will build a culture of innovation enabling us to be an agile council, able to adapt quickly to the changing needs of the communities we serve. To do this we will focus on collaboration and learning, not just within the Council, but with partners across the public sector who are facing a similar set of challenges.

Our Themes

We have focused our strategy around six key themes.

These are based on research conducted by the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) looking at examples of good practice for Digital Strategies in Local Government. Our Themes are:

- Digital Inclusion: Bridging the digital divide for residents, partners and businesses, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity and skills to participate in the digital world.
- Digital Services: Enhancing the way that residents, partners, businesses and other members of the public interact with us through digital channels and improving the systems and processes to enable efficient and effective service delivery.
- Technology: Ensuring we have a solid technology foundation that supports robust, secure and well-connected platforms to enable effective service delivery, and opportunities for innovation
- Data & Insight: The tools, processes, skills and culture required to use data in safe, ethical and impactful ways, enabling us to better understand what we do currently, and informing what we do next.
- Digital Workforce: Enabling and supporting a digital culture, with an equipped and empowered workforce, able to deliver change and innovation in a digitally optimised workplace.
- Digital Place: Expanding connectivity across the borough and using smart technologies to support new insights and early prevention

Linked Strategies, Plans and Enablers

This Digital and Data Strategy is one of a number of existing or in-development strategies and delivery plans that will enable Richmond Council to improve the way we deliver services, and support residents, partners and businesses to interact with us and others effectively in a digital world. Some of these will be more detailed strategies which directly underpin the core themes above, whilst others will be enabled by and enablers to the Digital and Data Strategy

Linked Plan / Strategy	Description	Status
Achieving For Children Digital Strategy	The corporate plan presents the Council's priorities for residents for the period from September 2022 to March 2026.	Available
Digital and Data Strategy Action Plan	Detailed delivery plan outlining activities, time frames, monitoring, and performance measures.	In progress: Expected Q1 2024/2025
Digital and Data Strategy Investment Case	Costed business case outlining the investment required to deliver the Digital and Data Strategy Action Plan.	In progress: Expected Q1 2024/2025
Technology Roadmap	Roadmap outlining the key priorities and actions for technology investment and deployment.	Ongoing / Available
AI Strategy	Strategy guiding how we use AI technologies to augment human decision-making, focussed on enhancing human capabilities, not replacing them. This strategy will ensure AI applications align with our organisational goals, driving innovation while upholding ethical standards.	Expected Q3 2024/2025
Customer Access Strategy	Strategy to outline customer-centric service delivery and transformation. This will align with Digital Service theme priorities and bring together customer experience and demand management	In progress: Expected Q2 2024/2025
Digital Place Strategy	Detailed strategy and action plan that will underpin the Digital Place Theme.	In progress: Expected Q1 2024/2025
Cyber Security Strategy	Strategy setting out how we will manage cyber risks, protect digital assets, and respond effectively to security incidents.	In progress: Expected Q2 2024 /20 25
Adult Social Care Digital Strategy 2021-24	The Adult Social Care Digital Strategy 2021-24 sets out how we will embed technology as a core part of the way we deliver services to adults.	Available
Achieving For Children Digital Strategy	Achieving for Children: IT and Digital Strategy 2024-2027.	Available

Digital Inclusion

Our vision is for every resident in Richmond to have what they need to participate online with confidence.

Our aim is to support all residents to have the equipment, connectivity, and skills they need to achieve this. A key part of this vision is recognising the critical role that libraries play in promoting digital inclusion. As hubs of knowledge and learning, libraries provide essential access to digital resources and educational opportunities.

Richmond upon Thames is highly digitally enabled. 98.3% of homes have access to super-fast broadband, higher than the London average, and most people are frequent and experienced users of the internet. There are very high rates of education and a lot of highly qualified professionals - 60% holding university degrees, the 3rd highest in London. Over 50% have managerial or professional occupations and Richmond were in top 30 areas that responded to the Census online. Despite this, there remains areas of challenge for some of our residents in accessing and using online services and facilities, and it is therefore, a corporate priority to improve digital inclusion. Libraries, with their free internet access and digital literacy programmes, play a crucial role in addressing these challenges. To achieve this priority, we need to have a better understanding of the range of digital inclusion support available to Richmond residents and work to address gaps in provision.

Our Goals

Access

Improving affordable internet access is a key priority for us. We're dedicated to overcoming barriers, such as cost and equipment availability, to ensure everyone in our community has the opportunity to get online.

Skills

Having the skills and confidence to interact digitally is an essential skill for the time we will live in; not just in interacting with the Council but in almost every part of life. We aim to ensure that residents, businesses, and colleagues in the Voluntary & Community Sector are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to interact online with confidence.

Connections

We know there is a range of existing support for digital inclusion within the Council and our community partners, but recognise it is uncoordinated and not fully understood. Our goal is to enhance collaboration and create a more cohesive support system, identifying and bridging gaps to ensure effective digital connectivity for all.

Our Priorities

Connecting the system and improving support

In order to maximise the impact of the digital inclusion work that takes place in Richmond upon Thames, we first need to have a better understanding of the different support that is available. We will build on this understanding by identifying where there are gaps in support, where there is duplication and will identify opportunities to maximise funding to further enhance the overall offer.

Creating a network of Digital Champions

In order to deliver widespread change, you need people to champion the cause. We aim to develop a network of Digital Champions across the borough, who will be equipped with the skills and resources required to support those who are digitally excluded. Our network of Digital Champions will include Council staff, partners, and volunteers from the community. They will enable us to expand the reach of support at scale and pace, while also supporting our priority to better connect systems.

Improving access and connectivity

In order to widen the reach of access for digitally excluded residents, we will improve the availability of access to self-service computers, devices and high-speed Wi-Fi in our public buildings. We will work to proactively engage with residents to educate them about government assistance programmes and leverage improved relationships with industry providers to seek opportunities to provide subsidised packages for low-income households.

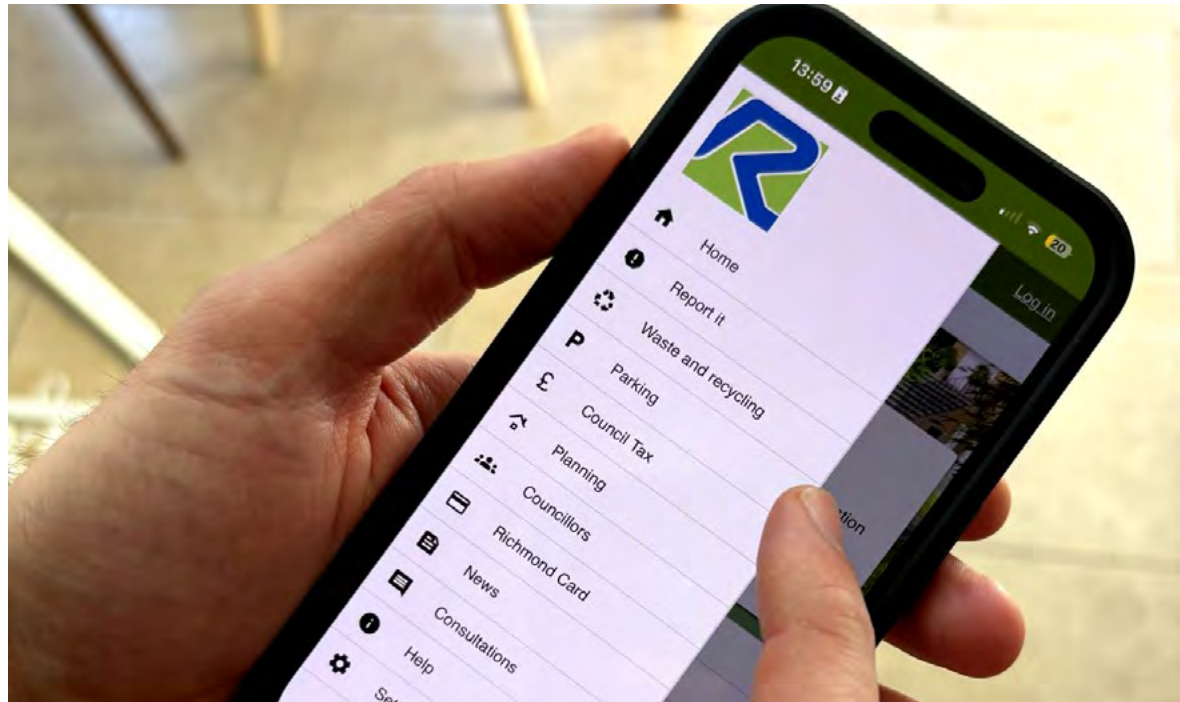
Digital Services

Our vision is to make using our services easier and quicker for our residents, and to make better use of our resources through smarter use of our technology. Furthermore, digital can play a significant role in supporting local democracy and participation.

Improving access and use of open data, electronic consultations, and online access to council meetings can enhance transparency and foster a more engaged community.

The demand for online council services is significant. In 2022, the Council received 2.4 million visits to its website, with over 240,000 digital form submissions across 300 forms.

We are committed to making it easier to communicate with the Council and to joining up systems and processes to ensure seamless handling of customer contacts. In September we introduced the Richmond App which is one of the first steps in delivering this ambition. This is one example of how we are providing Richmond residents fast and easy access to services and enabling them to report issues. We understand that design and content are as important as the technology solutions themselves and will ensure the design standards we develop continue to make this a key requirement. As we continue to deliver our vision, we will use technology to streamline customer contact and automate service demand. Through these efficiencies we can ensure that we are able to focus on supporting those who most need our help.



CASE STUDIES

Richmond App

The free mobile app launched in September 2023 brings together a range of essential council services with one log in, including the management of parking permits or booking a bulky waste collection. It is integrated with the Richmond Card, giving easy access to library self-service kiosks and exclusive offers from local businesses. It will enable residents to easily report issues such as fly-tipping, potholes and broken streetlights, check their council tax accounts or find out the date of their next garden waste collection at the click of a button. The app also shows any live planning applications within 250 metres of a home address.

As of December 2023, the app has been downloaded over 3,000 times and has several hundred users each week.

Achieving for Children Automation

Achieving for Children (Richmond Council's Children Services) are using Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to enable faster triaging of children services' referrals, introducing efficiencies into the process. The 'bot' helps to enter some of the referrals received into the back-office system, reducing the time spent by staff in doing this manually, speeding up the process and freeing up resources for more valuable activities.

Digital Services - Our Goals

Easier

Ultimately, we want to make things easier, both for us as a Council in how we handle and process demand for services, but importantly for residents who need and use those services.

Quicker

In addition to making things easier, we want to make things quicker for both staff and residents. By streamlining the process and utilising new technologies, our aim is to reduce the number of steps needed to access information or services. This will make it faster and more efficient for people to get what they need. Our focus is to remove any barriers and simplify interactions to improve service delivery.

Smarter

By leveraging technology, we can work more intelligently and efficiently to deliver services in a more effective manner. This approach will allow our staff to focus on activities that are make a difference to the residents and communities we serve.

Digital Services - Our Priorities

Making it easier for people to access services online

We're working to transform our digital services to be more user-friendly and available around the clock, simplifying how everyone—from residents to businesses—uses our online platforms for services, bookings, payments, and more. Our goal is to provide an easy and consistent online experience that fits into the busy lives of our community, empowering them to engage with our services on their own schedule.

Improving how we manage customer contact

We are shifting towards digital solutions to minimise the need for more traditional contact methods, aiming for more efficient processes and convenient user interactions. By understanding contact patterns and improving online information, we'll enhance service accessibility, user satisfaction, and free up staff to help those who require more support and deal with more complex work.

Streamlining our back office

We are committed to enhancing our back-office efficiency by advancing system integration and automation, reducing manual tasks, and enabling staff to focus on strategic work that benefits our community.



Technology

Our vision is to invest in the right technologies to maximise efficiency, drive innovation and bolster cyber security.

Technology is the backbone of our ability to deliver services for our residents. It is what keeps our data safe and secure, protects us from cyber threats, and facilitates all service delivery. In 2016, we invested in significant changes to our technology infrastructure to successfully deliver the Shared Staffing Arrangement between Richmond and Wandsworth Council, an innovation that has delivered estimated savings of up to £10 million per year for local taxpayers in each authority, while also enhancing cyber security.

Technology will continue to play a pivotal role in delivering all council priorities, from enabling our use of data to target early intervention and support for our most vulnerable residents, to enhancing our digital services, improving our resilience against cyber threats, and delivering efficiencies.

CASE STUDIES

Technology Infrastructure Achievements

The following technology achievements have not only enhanced cyber security but also delivered a number of other benefits. The standardisation of network protocols and security hardware has streamlined operations, whilst secure remote access has facilitated flexible working. The 24/7 Managed Security Operations Centre ensures constant vigilance over potential threats, contributing to a safer digital environment. The migration to cloud and integrated platforms has modernised workflows, improved efficiency, and reduced costs, all whilst minimising potential cyber-attack vectors. The deployment of Wireless 6 has enabled a fully mobile workforce with high-speed network access, enhancing productivity without compromising security. These achievements have successfully balanced operational efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and cyber security.

- One single joined network between Richmond and Wandsworth facilitating integration between all services.
- Single vendor firewalls and security hardware deployed over both councils, standardising our security posture.
- Single Domain space – all devices can be managed with same corporate policies.
- Light touch VPN(remote connectivity) services deployed allowing for fully flexible working.
- 24hr Managed Security Operations Centre. Our estate is now monitored for cyber-attacks 24/7.
- Migration to Cloud – Allowing modern ways of working and the ability to quickly provision data analytics related infrastructure such as the newly built data lake.
- Migration to fully integrated Microsoft Teams with telephony. This negates need for additional telephony devices and a has shown a cost reduction of 600k per annum in telephony charges for the council.
- PowerBI analytics platform made available to all users across the SSA.
- New Wireless 6 solution deployed to Modern Workspace areas. Wireless 6 facilitates fully mobile workforces by offering high speed network access with the stability of “wired” platforms.

CASE STUDIES

Care Technology

Care Technology is defined as the use of convenient, accessible, and cost-effective technological and/or digital products or services that support people's independence. As part of the council's Transforming the Future programme, staff have been providing a range of smart home technology and voice enabled devices, such as smart speakers (e.g. Amazon Alexa), smartphones and tablets, smart doorbells/plugs etc.

Ruils Assistive Technology Project

The council commissioned Ruils – an independent living charity run by and for disabled people - to offer a range of devices, software, and equipment to enable residents to live more independently, including a range of smart home technology. Ruils staff in the project assess people's needs and agree an assistive technology package that enables the person to live more independently.

Internet of Things Project (IoT)

The council have worked with sheltered housing providers in partnership with South London Partnership to monitor activity in the home to identify where there are any changes to normal behaviour. Data gathered from the use of these digital devices will enable us to identify changes in needs sooner and support people to independent for longer.

Technology - Our Goals

Streamlined

Our aim is to use technology to maximise efficiency and effectiveness across our services. This means enhancing customer-facing platforms and integrating advanced tools like AI and automation, whilst also ensuring our technological backbone is robust and secure, forming a solid foundation for all our digital activities. This dual focus on front-end innovation and back-end stability is key to delivering better services in a secure and efficient manner.

Tech-smart

Our aim is to be tech-smart in the way that we approach our investments, focusing on technology that not only fulfils our business needs but also adheres to high standards of design, functionality, and user experience. This includes choosing technology that simplifies data access and integrates seamlessly with our existing tech infrastructure.

Collaborative

We will harness technology to foster collaboration and drive innovation, seeking opportunities to explore new possibilities and enhance our capabilities in prototyping and testing a range of technologies. By partnering closely with others in our sector, we aim to co-create and trial innovative solutions, paving the way for shared advancements and success.

Technology - Our Priorities

Optimising our existing technologies

The Council have already invested in a range of technologies that could be rolled out further across the organisation. Our first priority is to ensure we are optimising the technologies that we already have as rapidly as possible

Strategically managing our technology investment

Without a strategic approach to technology investment, there is risk that the technologies we procure are fragmented and provide challenges around consistent user experience and interface, easy access to data and broader interoperability with the wider technology estate. We aim to develop clearer standards and better governance arrangements to ensure this is managed more strategically and will ensure that this is built into our technology procurements

Exploring new technologies:

The pace of technological change is faster than ever before, and emerging technologies are offering ever-more effective ways of meeting the needs of service users and enabling greater efficiencies in the way service demand is handled. It will be critical for us to develop an agile approach to testing, appraising and deploying new technologies, drawing upon opportunities for collaboration with counterparts in the public sector and technology partners.

Data & Insight

Our Vision

Our vision is to make data integral to all we do as a Council.

Work to progress Council's data maturity began in 2019. The Council has invested in developing data skills and our data and analytics have helped tackle some of the hardest challenges we have faced in the past few years, including effective COVID-19 response and recovery, understanding need and delivering targeted support during the Cost of Living crisis, and timely support for Ukrainian refugees through our Homes for Ukraine programme. Our data projects to date have helped us save time and money, improved commissioning and procurement, played a critical role in progress towards meeting climate change goals, helped provide a higher-quality evidence base and improved understanding of residents' needs.

Data is one of our most valuable and powerful assets. It is critical to supporting innovation, delivering digital solutions, and providing the best possible services for residents, local businesses, and our partners. Joined up service delivery and digital services will not happen without joined up data.

To achieve this vision, we need a data-enabled culture, high-quality data, effective data governance with faster access to information for those who need it to make decisions, a skilled workforce, and corporate data management solutions.

Success would mean improved customer services, end-to-end digital services, better planned and delivered services, prevention and earlier intervention. Officers would have a comprehensive 'single view', be more data-confident when making decisions on high-quality evidence, prevention of fraud, and higher productivity by reducing repetitive and manual processes. Having simple and secure access to data held by third party contractors will be key to achieving this, and a key focus for our future technology investments. Beyond council functions, improved data maturity will also help us work more effectively with our partners on shared projects and priorities.



CASE STUDIES

LIFT Project

Richmond have procured and established the LIFT (Low Income Family Tracker) Platform. The platform pulls together a variety of local authority (and external) datasets on low-income households to enable us to identify the impact of welfare policy changes on individual households, allow us to run targeted campaigns with households who are not claiming benefits they are entitled to, and work in a more preventative way with households to maximise their incomes, support families at risk of eviction and evidence the return on investment of support.

Example in action

- Richmond (in partnership with London Councils and the GLA) used LIFT to identify households who were eligible for, but not claiming, Pension Credit. These households then received targeted letters at the start of 2023 encouraging them to apply.
- For Richmond, 40 households subsequently applied for pension credit, bringing in £141,048 directly to those households in pension credit entitlements, back dated payments and 2023 Cost of Living Payments. Over the likely lifetime of the claims, this is expected to bring over £947k into the pockets of those households.

Digital & Insight - Our Goals

Data-Enabled Culture

We are working to develop a culture where high-quality data and insight are part of decision making at all levels, whether strategic or for direct client care. We aim to empower colleagues to understand and articulate the part data plays in their roles and to have confidence to use data to measure outcomes and impact. Staff will work collaboratively, including diverse skillsets and promoting the use of insight across teams where possible.

Strong Data Governance

Safe and secure data is our top priority. Our goal is to maintain data that is secure, high quality, well-managed and is easily accessible and shareable both across the organisation and with key partners. We aim to achieve this through robust enterprise data management solutions, providing a comprehensive framework that supports our service delivery and decision-making processes.

Insight Rich and Data Driven

Through provision of timely analysis and data products, our goal is to fully integrate Data Analytics and Insight into our organisational fabric, enhancing our ability to make swift, informed decisions and track and monitor performance across service lines. Our skilled analysts will produce high-quality evidence to inform planning and delivery of programs, ongoing improvements through robust performance measurement and monitoring, data solutions and automations to improve productivity and customer service, and innovative analyses to help us anticipate and respond to future challenges and demands.

Data and Insights - Our Priorities

Drive a Cultural Change

In order to drive the organisational shift towards a data-enabled approach across all levels, we will continue to focus on improving staff's data literacy and addressing the issue of data mistrust, while simultaneously working on actively integrating data into decision-making, commissioning and procurement processes.

Establish Strong Data Governance with Improved Data Access and Quality

To help maintain the trust of our residents, businesses and partners and drive service innovation, we will review our data governance approach to keep data safe and secure while enabling us to maximise its potential. Developing clear data sharing policies will help protect the data we hold and make it easily available to those with the right permissions. Data quality assessments and improvement plans will regularly address any quality issues to ensure available evidence can be relied on. Our approach will ensure our data use is ethical and legal.

Introduce Enterprise Data Management and Architecture Solutions

We will support streamlined service delivery through solutions such as a data lake and master data management to bring together diverse data sources.

These measures aim to enhance efficiency, make it easier to find pertinent information, foster innovation, and enable proactive decision-making. This strategic approach to data management is key to unlocking the full potential of our data assets and adapting to future community needs.

Data and Analytics to Deliver Continue Delivering High Quality Services

We are dedicated to embedding a robust data culture for informed decision-making and refining our service delivery through advanced data literacy and skills development. We are committed to utilising data-driven insights to enhance efficiency and responsiveness in public services, ensuring our team is equipped to adapt to the evolving demands of our community. Our strategic focus on data integration and analytics aims to bolster service quality and foster continuous improvement in serving the needs of our residents.

Skilled Workforce

Our vision is to equip, empower, and inspire our workforce to drive innovation and deliver effective and efficient services for our residents.

The council currently has digital skills training provision, a network of digital skills champions, and makes use of the Data Masterclass for Senior Leaders offer. Organisational change has also been undertaken to establish senior leadership for digital, data, and technology. Reflecting our corporate priority to make staff skills an area of focus for our digital and data strategy and to improve recruitment and retention, the council will build on this work by developing clear digital training pathways, identifying digital skills competencies, and embedding these within our recruitment and talent management processes.

CASE STUDIES

Following Data Masterclass

One of the examples of our efforts to improve the data literacy of the Council workforce is the rollout of the Data Masterclass. This online training programme developed by ONS and 10 Downing Street is designed to help staff across the public sector make better use of data. The course focuses on building an understanding of the value of data in decision-making and learning how to identify opportunities presented by data analytics and data science.

This initiative has been supplemented by the build of a comprehensive Data Literacy page on the internal learning and development platform available to all employees. The page contains a variety of training courses, articles, and other resources to help the staff get started on the journey to improving their data skills. With a wide selection of development opportunities on offer, the staff can find an option tailored to their needs, from definitions of basic concepts to extensive coding courses.

Microsoft 365 Champions

Following a productivity and adoption workshop with Microsoft in 2020, the M365 Champions Group was born. The vision of this group was to empower staff to support each other and make the best use of the available technologies by taking up training and workshops delivered by Microsoft and self-learning tutorials. The champions were also included in the early adopters group, enabling them to preview new apps or new features within existing apps which are not generally available to the public.

Skilled Workforce - Our Goals

Equipped

Having a workforce that is equipped with the skills and knowledge to make effective use of the tools available to them is essential. We aim to ensure that as a minimum, all staff have a set of core digital skills, but we also want to go further than that and identify the digital skill sets that will enhance specific roles and career pathways.

Culture

We want to create a culture where staff are empowered to beyond the basics to develop new skills that will support and drive new ways of working. We need to develop a rounded approach to support to enable this to succeed. Not only does this mean changing the way we think about digital skills, it means we have to embed ways of supporting staff's digital development within our workforce development planning.

Innovation

At the heart of it, we want to support our workforce to feel more equipped, more inspired, and more empowered to think and act creatively so that technology can help us deliver better services for our residents and communities. We don't just want to be an effective Council, but an innovative one.

Skilled Workforce - Our Priorities

Developing a Digital, Data and Innovation Skills Hub

We will develop a new digital skills hub to provide all staff with ongoing, role-specific training, enhancing service delivery through the strategic use of digital tools and fostering a culture of continuous innovation and effectiveness.

Aligning Digital and Data Skills to roles, recruitment, and development

We will integrate digital skills into our hiring and development processes, ensuring clarity in our digital expectations from the outset and fostering skill growth from day one. This includes a focus on attracting and nurturing top talent for technical roles, securing our organisation's future in digital transformation.

Developing dedicated Digital Transformation capacity

We're focused on building a skilled digital transformation team with the right mix of technical and strategic skills to not only initiate but continually advance our digital efforts. Central to this is a sustainable resourcing model that prepares us for both current and future digital challenges, promoting long-term growth and adaptability within the Council.

Digital Place

Our vision is to have a digitally connected borough that provides the foundations for thriving communities, economic prosperity, and rich insight. Digital place can help reshape how our community experiences the spaces they are in, including providing on-the-spot information and supporting easy navigation.

Richmond has made significant strides in bridging the digital divide, with efforts made to provide broadband access to all households, schools, and businesses. However, certain pockets of the borough still face challenges, which are being addressed through targeted initiatives.

There is broad and proven recognition that the provision of full fibre and 5G digital infrastructure drives economic growth and enables social inclusion and cohesion. Delivering and maintaining robust digital infrastructure will support delivery of a wide range of our corporate priorities, including Richmond's Net Zero ambitions, improving flood resilience, delivering the Air Quality Action Plan, and remaining a leading council on electric vehicles.



CASE STUDIES

Flood Sensors

Richmond Council participated in a trial of flooding sensors placed in 12 gullies across Richmond upon Thames as part of the South London Partnership's InnOvaTe Project. These sensors allowed council officers to monitor rising water levels and alert the borough's drainage contractors to respond quickly to any surface water flooding. By monitoring water levels, the sensors highlight both localised issues (such as leaves blocking a gully or drain) or more significant system blockages, which need attention from Thames Water. The project also generated data to support long term insights helping the council to understand and predict the impact of flooding on the drainage system.

Digital Place - Our Goals

Connected

We aim to develop improvements to our borough-wide digital infrastructure to ensure connectivity for every resident, business and service. By expanding our digital networks, we're setting the foundation for robust, high-speed internet access across the borough, bridging the digital divide and fostering an environment where innovation and communication can thrive, and will unlock new opportunities for economic growth and community engagement.

Growth

We aim to support economic development across the borough. By providing robust, high-speed connectivity and fostering a tech-friendly ecosystem, we aim to attract and support innovative businesses, enhance local commerce, and create employment opportunities. This strategic investment in digital capabilities is intended to stimulate a dynamic economic landscape.

Data-Smart

We aim to leverage smart city technologies to deepen our understanding of the borough's dynamics. By expanding devices and sensors, we aim to capture real-time data which will be instrumental in enhancing our environmental sustainability and public safety. This approach will provide us with actionable insights that will enable us to work more proactively, enriching the quality of life for our residents through data-driven innovation.

Digital Place - Our Priorities

A borough that is easy to work with

A key priority for us is to put the right governance in place internally to ensure we have a clear focus and alignment within the Council, and to make it easy for others to work with us. By creating a Digital Place Programme Working Group and instating pivotal roles like a Digital Place Ambassador, Champion, and Lead, we aim to unify our Digital Place Strategy efforts, streamline processes, and create a fertile ground for working with industry providers.

Growing the digital eco-system

Our vision is to further integrate smart technology throughout the borough's infrastructure, enhancing our digital ecosystem and stimulating economic growth while improving residents' daily lives. By leveraging data for intelligent decision-making and fostering innovation, we will aim to become a technologically forward-thinking borough, with a commitment to sustainable development and a drive for digital urban innovation.

Collaboration and Innovation

Building alliances with neighbouring authorities, public sector partners, local businesses, voluntary sector organisation, and innovation bodies working with the public sector will be a key area of focus. Through these partnerships we aim to share resources, expertise, and foster a joint approach to digital place transformation, enhancing the boroughs' technological landscape and public services. Our Economic Development Office (EDO) will provide advice to help businesses adopt digital, and we will work with our voluntary & community sector partners to access best practice advice on digital skills and adoption. Through these collaborative efforts, we will create a dynamic digital place ecosystem that drives innovation, attracts funding, and positions Richmond as a key contributor to London's broader smart city development.

Waste and recycling

Collection day: **Monday**

Next fortnightly green waste collection: **29 Jan 2024**

[View calendar](#)



Parking

Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ): **KA - Kew**

Times: Monday to Friday 10am to noon (Bank and Public holidays free)

This property is eligible for [Parking permits](#).



Ward councillors



[Councillor Alice Bridges-Westcott](#)

Kew

Liberal Democrat Party

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**Priorities
& roadmaps**

Appendix 1

Theme Priorities and Roadmaps in detail

Digital Inclusion

Priority 1

Connecting the system and improving support

To improve the effectiveness of digital inclusion initiatives in Richmond upon Thames, a better understanding of the existing support is essential. Our initial step is to map out all the current support offerings available across the borough. We aim to understand the type of support, who can access it, who provides it and how it is funded. This will help us to pinpoint areas where support is lacking and to identify where there is overlap.

Following this, we aim to work with our partners to strategically identify and target gaps in support. By understanding where needs are not being met, we can collectively tailor our efforts to fill those voids and enhance the support network. At the same time, we will work to address any unnecessary duplication of services.

We also recognise the importance of funding in improving digital inclusion work across the borough. Therefore, we will work more collaboratively within a better-connected system to actively seek out and optimise opportunities to maximise funding. This will not only help to maintain current support but also enable support to be expanded to more people and have a greater impact.

Lastly, we believe it will be important to ensure that we develop better ways of monitoring the progress and impact of the digital inclusion work that is taking place. We will work with our partners to improve the way that we collect and share this data.

Through a more joined up approach, we aim to strengthen the digital inclusion support system, fostering a more digitally inclusive environment for residents, partners and businesses in Richmond upon Thames.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Establishing an internal lead for digital inclusion	We will establish an internal lead for Digital Inclusion who will be responsible for ensuring we have a clear understanding of what Digital Inclusion offers exist across the borough.	Q3 2024/2025
Mapping the existing provision	We will undertake a mapping exercise to establish: what type of service is provided; who commissions/owns/ provides it; cost of the provision; how it is funded, and lead contacts.	Q4 2024/2025
Identifying Gaps, duplication and opportunities for consolidation	We will identify where there are gaps within the existing provisions that exist as well as duplication. We will identify where opportunities exist to consolidate and optimise the overall offer across the borough.	Q1 2025/2026
Maximising available funding	We will join up better to proactively identify funding opportunities and work more collaboratively to secure funding, leveraging our Digital and Data Strategy and a more connected system of support to increase success rates.	Q2 2025/2026
Development of a Digital Inclusion scorecard	We will develop a Digital Inclusion scorecard to report and monitor digital inclusion activity and impact.	Q4 2024/2025

Digital Inclusion

Priority 2

Creating a network of Digital Champions

To deliver widespread digital change, a diverse array of advocates is crucial. We're looking to build a broad network of Digital Champions throughout the borough, drawing from various segments of our community. This will include council employees who are at the frontline of our digital services, local businesses whose daily operations are rooted in the digital economy, partner organisations that interact with a wide demographic, and voluntary & community sector organisations that have deep connections within our neighbourhoods.

Additionally, we'll engage residents who are passionate about digital accessibility, recognising their potential to influence change from within. Each group will bring unique perspectives and skills, crucial for supporting those currently outside the digital fold. Council staff will bring insight into what is needed to interact with Council services effectively, small business representatives will understand the needs of others in the small business community, partner organisations know the challenges their service users face, voluntary groups will add their grassroots reach, and residents will provide real-world feedback and community engagement.

This inclusive approach ensures that our network of digital champions will be rich in knowledge and experience, allowing for a comprehensive support system. They'll not only extend the reach of digital support but will also contribute to a more interconnected and informed network, tailored to the varied needs of our entire community.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Options appraisal for a Digital Champions delivery partner	We will carry out an exercise to identify the best way to develop and manage a network of Digital Champions. Key considerations will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided • Sustainability of the model • How it will support and enable a more connected system of Digital Inclusion support • Value for money. 	Q2 2024/2025
Targeted Recruitment Digital Champions	We will identify key roles, individuals, partners organisations and active members of the community who would be ideally suited for Digital Champion roles. We will take a targeted approach to optimise take-up from these groups in order to provide a firm foundation to build upon.	Q4 2024/2025
Broader Recruitment Campaign for Digital Champions	We will develop a public facing campaign encouraging the wider community to come forward and become Digital Champions.	Q1 2025/2026

Digital Inclusion

Priority 3

Improving access and connectivity

To help ensure all residents can get online, we to further improve digital access in our public buildings. This initiative will see an enhancement in the provision of self-service computers, handheld devices, and high-speed Wi-Fi across our public buildings.

Part of the work of our new Digital Place Programme Group will be to work more closely with the industry in this sector to secure more support for low-income families. This will include negotiating with internet service providers to offer affordable connectivity packages and collaborating with device manufacturers to provide discounted or refurbished devices for those who cannot afford them.

We will also work to proactively engage with residents to educate them about government assistance programs that can help subsidise internet and device costs, such as LOTI's data bank.

By doing so, we aim to further bridge the digital divide and provide all members of our community, especially those who have been digitally excluded, with the tools and connectivity they need. This will not only expand access to digital services but will also foster long-term digital literacy and inclusion.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Reviewing the existing provision in our public buildings	We will undertake a review of the existing provision within our public buildings, which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing what devices are available for public use across our estate Reviewing quality and access to Wi-Fi in public buildings Identify where gaps exist geographically and where there are known areas of greater digital exclusion or poor connectivity. 	Q3 2024/2025
Develop a proposal and implementation plan for improving access	We will develop a proposal to outline how we aim to improve access in public spaces and how this will be prioritised.	Q3 2024/2025
Identify opportunities to secure funding to support an expanded offer of access in public buildings	Aligning with the action under Digital Inclusion Priority 1 to maximise funding available, we will identify where opportunities exist to support this week.	Q3 2024/2025
Identify and promote wider support for devices and connectivity	We will work proactively to identify the different support available to residents through external initiatives and promote this through a range of channels.	Q3 2024/2025

Digital Services

Priority 1

Making it easier for people to access services online

We are committed to redefining how residents, businesses and partners interact with us digitally. In short, we will make our online services easy to use, whether that’s applying for a service, making bookings, payments, or reporting issues.

We understand the importance of a seamless, consistent, and accessible online experience and are dedicated to reducing the complexity often associated with using multiple portals and logins.

Our efforts will focus on creating a more streamlined online environment, where improving the customer experience is a priority. This will include more intuitive tracking, allowing users to monitor the progress and status of their inquiries and applications with greater ease.

We aim to improve the quality and availability of information around the clock. Accessing our services should not be limited by our office hours so we will leverage both innovative and proven technologies to ensure our services and information are available whenever users choose to deal with us.

By prioritising the availability and user-friendliness of our digital channels, we aim to empower our residents with the ability to interact with Council services on their terms, leading to a more engaged, informed, and satisfied community.

WHAT WE’LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Design, functionality and user experience standards	Develop new standards for all customer-facing forms, systems, and portals - incorporating a tiered approach that defines expected standards at each level.	Q4 2024/2025
Online Service Maturity Model	Adopt a model to assess current online service offers and to categorise new/future services upon their introduction.	Q4 2024/2025
User-centred Design Methodologies	Introduce customer-centric design methodologies and capabilities within the organisation to drive improvements in user experience.	Q4 2024/2025
Reviewing governance	Establish improved governance to oversee the introduction of new technologies, ensuring they meet minimum and ideally higher-tiered design and functionality requirements.	Q4 2024/2025
Review Existing Service Offers	Appraise the existing service offers against our design, functionality and user experience standards and our Online Service Maturity Model.	Q2 2025/2026
Develop a prioritised pipeline of online service improvement projects	Building on the review of our existing service offers we will develop a prioritised pipeline of projects, focussed on raising the quality of our online offer.	Q4 2025/2026

Digital Services

Priority 2

Improving how we manage customer contact

Our aim is to reduce the need for traditional methods of contact, such as phone calls and in-person visits, by creating more user-friendly online platforms and by improving the way we monitor and analyse the reasons that people contact us. This will not only make our processes more efficient but will also allow users to interact with our services at their convenience.

The adoption of AI-assisted technologies like chatbots and voicebots offer the opportunity to provide high quality customer services even during busy times and when our offices are closed. Through these technologies we can provide immediate responses and assistance, helping to improve user satisfaction and enabling our customer service teams to concentrate on assisting those that require more support and dealing with more complex enquiries.

We will introduce new and better ways of monitoring and understanding the reasons that people contact us. This will enable us to continuously improve the information available online and through other channels, while also ensuring we reduce issues that result from service failures or inefficient processes.

Overall, by increasing our focus managing demand through digital innovation and user empowerment, we will make our services more accessible and efficient and enable our workforce to focus on activities that add further value to residents and communities we serve

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Demand Management Framework Development	Develop a framework for analysing and categorising incoming demand to identify how and where it could be handled more effectively.	Q2 2024/2025
User Adoption and Channel Shift Planning	Develop adoption and channel shift plans for all new systems and online service enhancements to ensure smooth transition and usage.	Q4 2024/2025
Review of Contact Channels	Conduct a review of customer contacts to pinpoint high volume, low complexity contacts that could be managed more efficiently and to identify service failures and ineffective processes.	Q1 2024/2025

Digital Services

Priority 3

Streamlining our back office

In addition to our priorities to ensure our online offer and demand management is the best it can be, we are equally committed to continuous improvement and efficiency of our back-office functions.

A key part of this will be in how we improve integration and automation within and between our systems. We will use technology to connect our systems more effectively, making it easier for information to move from one system to another and reducing the need for manual intervention. Automation will play a pivotal role in this, where routine, repetitive tasks are managed by intelligent systems, freeing up our valued staff to engage in more strategic, value-adding activities.

The intent behind this focus is clear: to reduce the time our staff spends on manual, repetitive tasks such as data re-entry and inefficient processes. By doing so, we not only enhance our operational efficiency but also open up new opportunities for our staff to contribute to activities that directly support and benefit our residents. This shift is not merely about saving time and money – it’s about repurposing it towards more meaningful and impactful work that aligns with our commitment to serving the community with excellence.

WHAT WE’LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Departmental Process Mapping	Conduct high level mapping across all departments to identify and list processes that are suitable for automation, end to end integration or other technology enabled efficiencies	Q4 2024/2025
Efficiency Project Pipeline	Develop a prioritised pipeline for upcoming efficiency projects, ensuring strategic alignment and resource allocation.	Q1 2025/2026
Integration with Broader Review Programmes	Forge developmental links to broader process review programmes, guaranteeing that automation projects complement and enhance wider organisational initiatives.	Q1 2024/2025
Automation Project Methodology	Develop a comprehensive automation project methodology and resourcing model, in alignment with the overarching Digital Workforce and Technology themes.	Q4 2024/2025

Technology

Priority 1

Optimising our existing technologies

We're focussed on getting more from the technology we already have. We will review the existing tools and platforms we have so that we can make sure we are getting the most out of them. This means making sure these tools help our staff do their jobs more efficiently and give our residents better services.

We'll review the areas where they are being used currently, establish whether there is room for improvement and capture any learning so that we can incorporate this into future rollouts in other parts of the Council.

We will work across services to understand their needs and identify the right technologies that could be used to support service delivery. Not only will this help us to help to ensure we are optimising what we have, but it will help us identify service needs that could be supported by investment in future technologies.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Appraise the current utilisation and adoption of existing technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what technologies have cross-service application Identify where these are currently deployed. Establish how effectively they are currently being optimised and capture learning from usage and implementation. 	Q3 2024/2025
Identify additional services where there is a use-case for existing technology platforms	Capture use-cases where existing technology solutions could be applied. Assess the potential impact, cost and return on investment.	Q4 2024/2025
Develop a pipeline of work for rolling out existing technology	Prioritise use-cases by areas where the impact of implementation will be greatest.	Q1 2025/2026
Implement pipeline of technology rollout	Develop implementation plans and user adoption activity. Monitor impact of implementation and report on benefit realisation and return on investment.	Q2 2025/2026
Sustainability Planning for Technical Roles	Develop long-term sustainability plans to decrease and manage the dependency on expensive interim resources for highly skilled technical roles.	Q4 2024/2025

Technology

Priority 2

Strategically Managing our Technology Investment

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, the way we invest in technology can have a significant impact on our operations and service delivery. Without a considered and strategic approach, we run the risk of adopting technologies that don't work well together, leading to a disjointed experience for users and a challenging environment for data accessibility and system integration. Our aim is to mitigate these risks by being thoughtful and deliberate about the technology we choose to implement.

To navigate these challenges, we're focusing on developing clear, robust standards that will guide our technology investments. By setting these standards, we aim to ensure consistency in the user experience, streamline access to data, and achieve seamless integration across our entire technology suite. It's not just about having the latest tools; it's about having the right tools that fit into a cohesive, well-functioning ecosystem.

Better governance structures will play a pivotal role in this new strategic direction. We are committed to creating governance frameworks that will oversee our technology procurements, ensuring that every investment is evaluated for its strategic fit and potential to enhance our broader technology infrastructure.

Ultimately, by embedding these standards and governance processes into our procurement practices, we will build a more interconnected and efficient technological environment. This will empower our workforce, improve services for our residents, and lay a strong foundation for future innovation and growth.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Establish Clear Standards	Define and document clear standards for user interfaces, data access, and system integration to guide technology use.	Q4 2024/2025
Implement Governance Frameworks	Set up governance structures to oversee technology selections, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives. This will form part of the function of the Governance Review outlined in Priority 1 under the Digital Services Theme.	Q4 2024/2025
Strategise Technology Procurement	Develop procurement strategies that prioritise long-term value and fit within the established technology ecosystem..	Q4 2024/2025
Ensure Integration and Interoperability	Regularly review and adjust technologies to maintain seamless integration and system-wide compatibility.	Q2 2025/2026

Technology

Priority 3

Exploring new technologies

In today’s world, technology is advancing at an unprecedented rate, bringing new tools and systems that can significantly improve how we meet our service users’ needs. Emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, process automation and smart devices hold the promise of not only enhancing user experience but also streamlining the way we manage and respond to service demands. As these technologies evolve, they open up possibilities for more personalised, efficient, and responsive services.

To stay ahead, we must embrace a structured approach to incorporating these advancements into our services. This involves rigorous testing and careful evaluation to ensure that each new technology aligns with our service goals and delivers real value. It’s about more than just keeping up; it’s about strategically choosing and implementing solutions that will propel us forward.

Crucial to this process is the spirit of collaboration. By partnering with other public sector entities and technology experts, we can share knowledge, resources, and best practices. Together, we can navigate the complexities of the digital landscape, ensuring that we leverage the collective expertise to benefit our communities.

Our commitment is to be at the forefront of this technological wave, shaping the future of service delivery through innovation and collaborative effort. By doing so, we aim to not only improve the efficiency of our services but also to enhance the lives of those we serve.

WHAT WE’LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Technology Testing	Establish a process for evaluating new technologies, including setting criteria for testing and defining success metrics.	Q3 2024/2025
Technology Appraisal	Create a framework for assessing the potential impact of new technologies, considering cost, efficiency gains, and user satisfaction.	Q3 2024/2025
Technology Deployment	Develop a structured deployment plan for new technologies that includes staff training, pilot testing, and scalability assessment.	Q3 2024/2025
Collaborative Innovation	Foster partnerships with other public sector bodies and tech companies to share knowledge and co-develop solutions.	Q2 2024/2025
Optimising External Funding	Working with our partners, seek out and optimise opportunities for funding to support digital innovation.	Q4 2024/2025

Data and Insight

Priority 1

Drive a Cultural Change

The biggest enabler towards unlocking the value our data holdings is the development of a data culture. Data culture is decision culture. To become a data-enabled organisation, high quality data and insight needs to be part of decisions at all levels to help make better decisions – from organisation right down to transactional level.

We aim to have colleagues who can articulate the part data plays in their role. We also want data to be seen as everyone’s business, with high-quality data being collected the first time, and those spotting data quality issues reporting them immediately. To achieve this, we need an even adoption and growth in data maturity across the Council.

A key part of this work will be improving data literacy in the organisation to bridge the gap between data analytics and business needs. Familiarity with data possibilities, tools and techniques, and demystifying jargon will build confidence and reduce the hesitation and adoption due to misunderstanding and unfamiliarity.

WHAT WE’LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Quality insight and analytics to guide decision making at all levels	Explore options to integrate data into all existing decision-making processes including commissioning and procurement processes. Explore options to ensure technical capabilities are evenly available across the council to support decision making. Embed data improvement activities in existing projects and initiatives.	Q3 2024/2025
Data-confident workforce	Promote the use of data, insight and user experience to build culture of continuous service improvement. Address the issue of data mistrust through relevant training sessions. Deliver data literacy training for all staff, especially decision makers. Develop internal culture of sharing impact of data projects and lessons learned to improve understanding of the power of data using case studies and success stories.	Start Q1 2024/2025 (Ongoing)
Culture of Collaboration	Include a requirement for key data and digital projects, especially those with a resident focus, to include diverse skillset, including input from resident-facing roles. Continue to build and grow the successful Analyst Group as place to discuss issues, share successes, develop skills and resolve challenges.	Q2 2024/2025 (Ongoing)

Data and Insight

Priority 2

Establish Strong Data Governance with Improved Data Access and Quality

The aim of data governance principles and processes is to ensure that data is trusted and high quality, is accessible and available, and the roles and responsibilities around data ownership and governance are clear. Data governance is more than information security and legislative compliance. As we grow in data maturity our data governance also needs to grow to enable us to use our data holdings effectively. Good quality, accessible when needed data builds confidence in evidence used to make individual or strategic decisions.

Siloed data holdings lead to slower and siloed understanding and response. Currently, the challenge lies in the disparate nature of our data, which can slow down the process of understanding and response due to siloed information. To tackle this, we are setting our sights on developing comprehensive internal data sharing policies, complemented by tools and technology that streamline data discovery and access for our analytical staff. This will ensure data is secure, and use is timely and efficient enabling action on some of the biggest challenges we face.

We are also fostering stronger collaborations with key partners like the AFC, NHS, RHP and Police. Improved data sharing, will enhance service delivery and enrich our understanding of the local shared challenges and help tailor our services to meet their specific needs more effectively.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Data governance principles and processes review	Update the data governance approach to enable digital and data innovation, along with focus on keeping data secure and safe. Council data to be managed and treated as a corporate resource. Review and develop skills needed to implement data governance plans.	Q1 2025/2026
Zero-trust approach for data products	Implement a zero-trust approach for data products i.e., data and information access based on never trust, always verify.	Q2 2025/2026
Data quality reporting	Data quality assessment and data quality improvement plans for each of business-critical systems. Tools to help services monitor and report data quality progress.	Q3 2025/2026
External and internal data sharing framework review	Review internal and external data sharing policies, tools and procedures to ensure they enable streamline processes and are clear on the roles and responsibilities around data ownership and governance.	Q1 2025/2026
Data quality awareness and skills campaign	Through training and awareness campaigns, raise awareness around the importance of data quality and a build of culture of collecting correct information the first time, checking accuracy of information and fixing errors as they are spotted.	Q2 2025/2026
High-quality metadata and documentation	Controllers of each business-critical data will be expected to maintain high quality metadata (e.g. lineage, definitions) and documentation to enable usage.	Q1 2025/2026
Ready and understandable data access from vendors and contractors	As part of procurement and commissioning, ensure clear sight of data collected and it meets council needs. Council services able easily access and make use of this data.	Q4 2025/2026

Data and Insight

Priority 3

Introduce Enterprise Data Management Solutions

One of the most critical steps to generating value out of our data is to bring it together. A common challenge faced by all Councils is that we provide dozens if not hundreds of services, most of them with their own associated software and systems.

We recognise the importance of integrating data across numerous services and systems to enhance our digital offerings and understand local people and places to effectively serve our residents. To meet this need, we are focusing on the creation of a comprehensive data lake, allowing us to safely and efficiently test, develop, and deploy data-driven solutions. Alongside this, the development of a master data management system will enable us to accurately identify, match, and merge data across different systems, thereby simplifying processes and facilitating better decision-making.

These initiatives are vital in overcoming the current time-consuming and resource-intensive processes that stifle innovation and delay actions. Investing in these new tools and skills is not just about responding to immediate challenges; it is about laying the groundwork for a data-driven future that can adapt to evolving needs and maximise the full potential of the data we hold.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Develop a data management plan	Develop a data management plan that guides activities across the data cycle and all business critical data holdings.	Q4 2024/2025
Appraisal and development of Data Lake	Explore and appraise options to develop a Data Lake solution Develop a comprehensive data lake to test, develop, and deploy data-driven solutions.	Q2 2024/2025
Explore Master Data Management Solutions	A solution that lets us link data across business critical systems to develop solutions (e.g. 'Single View') to support services delivery.	Q4 2024/2025

Data and Insight

Priority4

Incorporate Insight and Analytics in all aspects of service planning and delivery

Insights and analysis based on our rich data holdings will play a vital role in tackling social care pressures, preventing homelessness, keeping residents safe, prevention and early identification of adversity, tackling climate change, responding to cost of living pressures and delivering value of money services for residents.

We're integrating the latest analytics tools and methods, making sure every bit of data we gather is effectively used to enhance decision-making and service quality. Our plan is to make our data services agile and responsive, aligning closely with the needs of our residents and ensuring maximum impact.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Advance performance measurement and monitoring	Incorporation of automation, more advance tools and richer data visualization into performance measurements and reporting to support ongoing monitoring and service improvement.	Q4 2024/2025
'Single View's of need	Bring data together to give front line staff full picture of residents they are serving e.g., single view of debt, single view of family.	Q2 2025/2026
Disseminate ready to use data and insight	Continue to provide ready to use data and insights on local population and local need to ensure common evidence base is used by everyone including officers, partners and community and voluntary sector.	Q1 2024/2025 (Ongoing)
Wider adoption of advance analytical techniques	Wider adoption of advance analytical techniques such as predictive modelling and forecasting to plan allocation of resources, enable prevention and early identification and anticipate future demands on services.	Q2 2024/2025 (Ongoing)
Automation of business processes	Work with services to automate data processing activities to increase productivity and speed up service delivery.	Q2 2024/2025 (Ongoing)
Explore use of AI solutions	Explore use of AI solutions and tools to process large amount of text to understand user satisfaction with a service. Council is committed to ethical use of AI and not using AI for punitive actions.	Q4 2025/2026
Promote new approaches to insight and analytic	Showcase projects to transform how insight and analytics can be incorporate into business as usual through series of short, repeatable proof of concept projects.	Q2 2024/2025 (Ongoing)
Develop Data & Insight Skills across the organisation	Feed into work under the "Skilled Workforce" theme to ensure there is high-quality training in place that caters to an array of roles and levels.	Q3 2024/2025 (Ongoing)

Skilled Workforce

Priority 1

Developing a Digital, Data and Innovation Skills Hub

We will develop a new Digital Skills and Innovation hub designed to support and empower our staff across all departments and experience levels, including those with advanced technical knowledge. This hub will serve as a foundation for continual learning, providing clear and tailored learning paths that align with individual roles and personal interests within the organisation.

The hub will provide comprehensive training on a variety of digital and innovation skills vital for modern service delivery. There will be something for everyone, whatever their role. It's about harnessing the full potential of digital tools and how to apply these to enhance the efficiency and quality of the services we offer.

Communication will be key in this initiative. We will share with our entire organisation why this digital skills hub is a pivotal advancement and how it will positively transform our work culture. It's about more than just staying current with technology—it's about enhancing our effectiveness, fostering innovation, and delivering services in ways that truly meet the needs of those we serve.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Skills Offer Review	Conduct a thorough review of the current digital and innovation skills offered by the council.	Q2 2024/2025
Training Package Development	Identify any gaps in the current skills offering and develop or acquire new training packages as necessary. Set minimum role-specific digital and data skills and option for employees to complete the training.	Q4 2024/2025
Learning Management System Appraisal	Evaluate the council's Learning Management Systems to determine which system offers the best functionality and user experience.	Q4 2024/2025
Comms and Engagement Plan Development	Create a communications and engagement plan that ensures our digital and innovation skills training is aligned with our corporate values and aspirations for digital development.	Q2 2024/2025
Data Career Pathway Design	Design a clear data career pathway for data expertise that allows data professionals in the organisation to advance their careers and upskill.	
GDPR and Data Governance Offer Review	Review and expand GDPR and data governance training offering to help analysts and non-analysts understand their roles and responsibilities.	

Skilled Workforce

Priority 2

Aligning Digital and Data Skills to roles, recruitment, and development

We're focusing on integrating digital skills into the fabric of our roles, recruitment, and development processes.

We're committed to making clear our digital ambitions right from the start, ensuring that our recruitment process communicates the digital skills we expect from candidates. Whether it's hiring individuals already equipped with these skills or nurturing them from the moment a new employee starts, we're dedicated to fostering a digitally fluent workforce.

Particularly for roles requiring high-level expertise, we're crafting a recruitment strategy targeted at hard-to-fill technical positions. Our aim is to draw in, engage, and cultivate exceptional talent, thereby laying the groundwork for a sustainable digital transformation infrastructure within our organisation.

A vital part of this strategy is to determine which digital skills are necessary for current and future roles, ensuring that our team is always ahead of the curve. We're also embedding digital skills into our appraisal and development frameworks, reinforcing the importance of digital proficiency across all levels of our operations.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Review of Digital and Data Skills in Job Descriptions	Perform an audit of job descriptions to identify and integrate desirable digital skills that enhance the effectiveness of roles within the organisation.	Q1 2025/2026
Recruitment and Development Strategy	Develop a comprehensive strategy for the development and recruitment of highly technically skilled roles, focusing on competitive attraction, retention, and fostering in-house talent for long-term stability.	Q4 2024/2025
Inclusion of digital skills development in objectives	Review and refine appraisal and supervision processes to ensure the inclusion of digital skills development as a standard objective, with active managerial involvement in setting and monitoring these objectives.	Q1 2025/2026

Skilled Workforce

Priority 3

Developing dedicated Digital Transformation capacity

Achieving our digital transformation objectives hinges on the presence of a dedicated, skilled team. We recognise the need for specialists who bring a depth of knowledge and a commitment to the digital cause, equipped to navigate and lead our ambitious transformation projects.

The aim is to develop a team that possesses the right mix of strategic foresight, technical expertise and service design skills, ensuring that our digital transformation journey is not only started but is continuously driven forward with expertise and efficiency.

Sustainability of this team is a key focus. We intend to establish a resourcing model that guarantees long-term viability, ensuring that our digital transformation capabilities are not just responsive to current needs but are also robust enough to adapt to future technological shifts.

This involves careful planning around recruitment, development, and retention strategies, creating a work environment that is conducive to long-term growth and career development within the digital transformation space.

In summary, our focus is to create a digital transformation team that is not only capable of delivering on today’s objectives but is also resilient and flexible enough to evolve with the digital landscape, ensuring sustained success in our digital transformation efforts.

WHAT WE’LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Core Role Identification for Transformation	Identify essential roles needed to lead and implement transformation initiatives and bridge the gap between business requirements, technology, and technical teams.	Q2 2024/2025
Capacity and Role Suitability Review	Review the organisation's current capacity and roles to assess suitability for these transformation functions.	Q3 2024/2025
Proposal for Role and Skills Alignment	Develop a proposal to align existing roles, capacity, and capabilities with new roles and skills, addressing any identified gaps.	Q4 2024/2025
Recruitment of Digital Transformation Team	Recruit new roles and re-align existing roles into a Digital Transformation Team.	Q1 2025/2026
Sustainability Planning for Technical Roles	Formulate long-term sustainability plans to decrease and manage the dependency on expensive interim resources for highly skilled technical roles.	Q2 2024/2025

Digital Place

Priority 1

A borough that is easy to work with

To realise our vision of becoming a borough that is seamless to work with, we are first focussing on developing the right governance to help achieve a clear focus in the Council and enhance our collaborative efforts. This internal alignment will be the basis we'll build on to ensure there are transparent processes and communication channels with external organisations, technology partners, and residents to improve connectivity and access to digital resources.

Central to this priority is the formation of a Digital Place Programme Working Group, which will be tasked with overseeing the implementation of our digital place strategy. The group will consist of cross-functional representatives, ensuring diverse perspectives and expertise are brought to the table. Alongside this, we will identify a Digital Place Ambassador—an elected member who will serve as the link between the council, its constituents, and external stakeholders, communicating the digital vision and ensuring community interests are at the forefront.

Furthermore, a Digital Place Champion will be designated to spearhead initiatives, address barriers to digital rollout, and act as a conduit for industry engagement. This role is crucial for navigating the complexities of digital infrastructure and fostering an environment conducive to technological advancement. To bolster these roles, a Digital Place Lead will be introduced at the executive level, responsible for strategising, driving policy, and enforcing the council's digital agenda.

These roles collectively form a governance structure that is designed not just for a joined-up approach internally, but also for effective external engagement. The ultimate aim is to create an ecosystem where businesses find it attractive and straightforward to invest and work within our borough.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Establish a Digital Place Programme Group	Form a dedicated group with representatives from key departments to coordinate digital infrastructure initiatives.	Q2 2024/2025
Appoint a Digital Place Ambassador	Select an elected member to represent digital initiatives, bridging the gap between the council, businesses, and residents.	Q2 2024/2025
Designate a Digital Place Champion	Assign a point of contact to address barriers, liaise with technology partners, and promote digital connectivity.	Q2 2024/2025
Create a Digital Place Lead Role	Appoint a senior executive to oversee the Digital and Data Strategy, ensuring alignment with the borough's overall objectives.	Q2 2024/2025
Streamline Internal Processes	Develop clear, documented workflows for internal and external digital collaborations and transactions.	Q4 2024/2025
Facilitate Technology Partnerships	Establish frameworks for engaging with technology partners to enhance borough connectivity and access.	Q1 2025/2026
Enhance Access and Connectivity	Implement initiatives to expand digital access to residents and businesses, prioritising inclusivity and support.	Q2 2025/2026

Digital Place

Priority 2

Growing the digital eco-system

We aim to embed more smart technology into our infrastructure across the borough, enhancing our digital ecosystem. Key to this mission is the strategic deployment of smart devices and advanced digital tools, which will not only help to boost economic growth but also enhance the day-to-day experience of residents.

This priority will see the boroughs harnessing data for smarter decision-making and service delivery, while attracting digital businesses and fostering a culture of innovation. We will actively seek out opportunities to collaborate with public sector and industry partners and identify opportunities to optimise funding for smart city initiatives. Through partnerships and investment in data-centric projects, the council will lead the transformation into a more efficient, connected, and technologically advanced borough.

An action-oriented framework will guide the integration of new technologies, prioritising interoperability with existing systems and close cooperation with industry partners. The focus will be on building a robust digital foundation that supports sustainable growth and supporting our aim to drive urban digital innovation in the borough.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Strategic Deployment of Internet Of Things (IoT) and Digital Tools	Identify key areas for IoT implementation, procure devices, and establish guidelines for data collection.	Q3 2024/2025
Partnership Development	Forge alliances with tech companies and academic institutions for collaborative projects and innovation.	Q1 2025/2026
Investment and funding for Smart City Projects	Secure and allocate funds for pilot projects that test new digital solutions, aiming for scalability and sustainability.	Q2 2025/2026
Data-Centric Project Focus	Prioritise projects that utilise data analytics for service improvement and operational efficiency.	Q4 2024/2025
Framework and Policy Development for Technology Adoption	Create policies that support tech enterprise, simplify procedures for tech deployment, and safeguard digital advancements.	Q4 2024/2025

Digital Place

Priority 3

Collaboration and Innovation

The priority is set on fostering collaborations with neighbouring local authorities and public sector partners. This collaborative approach is crucial for sharing innovative digital solutions and resources, thus enhancing the boroughs' digital landscape. It will allow pooling of ideas and resources, leading to more efficient and impactful digital projects. Partnerships with local authorities offer a platform to share best practices, explore joint funding opportunities, and increase leverage in technology partnerships. Our Economic Development Office (EDO) will provide advice to help businesses adopt digital, and we will work with our voluntary community sector partners to access best practice advice on digital skills and adoption.

Involvement with organisations like the London Office for Technology and Innovation (LOTI) and the Smart London Board (now replaced by the Data for London Advisory Board) will be key. These partnerships will provide insight into the latest digital trends and technologies. These collaborations will bring valuable expertise and support in implementing digital place technologies and smart city solutions across London's infrastructure, utilities, and public services.

This priority also aims to create a sustainable digital ecosystem that supports economic growth and enhances public services. By working collaboratively, we can more effectively attract funding and investment, optimise resources, and promote a culture of innovation. These joint efforts will not only contribute to the individual boroughs growth but also to the wider region, establishing Richmond as a key player in the digital transformation of London.

WHAT WE'LL DO

Roadmap Activity	Detail	When
Establish Collaborative Networks	Set up regular meetings with neighbouring local authorities, public sector partners, and groups like LOTI to exchange ideas and resources.	Q2 2024/2025
Partner with Technology Bodies	Engage with the Data for London Advisory Board and similar entities to stay abreast of digital trends and gain expert insights.	Q3 2024/2025
Joint Project Development and Funding	Identify and pursue joint funding opportunities for digital projects that benefit multiple boroughs.	Q1 2025/2026
Technology Partnership Forums	Organise forums with tech companies to explore collaborations and leverage combined resources for larger-scale initiatives.	Q1 2025/2026
Resource and Best Practice Sharing	Join or establish platforms for sharing resources, best practices, and successful digital project models among the partner entities.	Q3 2024/2025
Pilot Innovative Digital Projects	Initiate pilot projects to test new digital solutions and technologies, aiming for scalability and long-term impact.	Q1 2025/2026
Establish Collaborative Networks	Set up regular meetings with neighbouring local authorities, public sector partners, and groups like LOTI to exchange ideas and resources.	Q2 2024/2025

Appendix 2

Glossary of key terms

Cloud computing	The practice of using a network of remote servers hosted on the internet to store, manage, and process data, rather than a local server or a personal computer.
Data	There is no set definition of data. in this strategy data means information about people, things, and systems, with a focus on information available in digital format
Information	
Data analyst vs data scientist	In general, a data analyst will help you query, summarise, and process data, and a data scientist will apply analytic tools and techniques to solve specific problems.
Data analytics	Extraction of insights and meaning from raw data using specialised tools and techniques.
Data culture	
Data governance	A collection of practices and processes which help to ensure the formal management of data assets within an organisation.
Information governance	
Data availability	In this strategy we use ‘data availability’ to mean an environment which facilitates appropriate data access, mobility, and re-use of data for maximum benefit.
Data engineering	A set of processes aimed at creating interfaces and mechanisms for the flow and access of information. data engineers set up and maintain the data infrastructures that support information systems and applications.
Data foundations	In this strategy we are using the term ‘data foundations’ to mean data that is fit for purpose, recorded in standardised formats on modern, future-proof systems and held in a condition that means it is findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.