Driven by Digital Strategy

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL

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Wolverhampton is going through a period of significant transformation with new investment, new opportunities, and new challenges.

We are an ambitious city and high performing council, with a strong track record of delivering effective core services. Embracing Digital is part of this journey; Wolverhampton was one of the first cities in the world to host a 5G accelerator hub, making us truly a world leader in emerging technology. Looking to the future, it is becoming increasingly clear that Digital now presents an opportunity to answer the financial challenge facing the public sector. Digital technology is a powerful deflationary force in an inflationary economy because of the enormous increases in productivity it can bring.

The rollout of the Our Future Council Programme gives us an opportunity to maximise how we use Our Digital to deliver more for less. Whilst the City of Wolverhampton Council has a strong track record of managing its finances and is in a comparatively strong financial position, local authorities across the country are facing unprecedented financial challenges and the organisation is not immune to challenges in the sector.

This strategy sets out our ambition to progress digital practice within our organisation, enabling us to deliver more for less, and improving outcomes for the people of Wolverhampton. This framework will underpin decision-making and service provision across all levels of the council, transforming our services for residents, businesses and those who visit and work in the city.

By embracing new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, we can maximise the opportunities presented in the digital age - cementing our position as a digital leader in the public sector. Responsible governance and oversight will underpin our practice, ensuring that we make good use of emerging technologies both to innovate, and to use our data more effectively to deliver early intervention to improve the lives of all Wulfrunians. Strong governance will ensure that everything we do will be safe, secure and ethical.

This Driven by Digital strategy sets out:

- what we want to achieve;
- how we will achieve it; and
- key milestones on our roadmap to digital transformation.

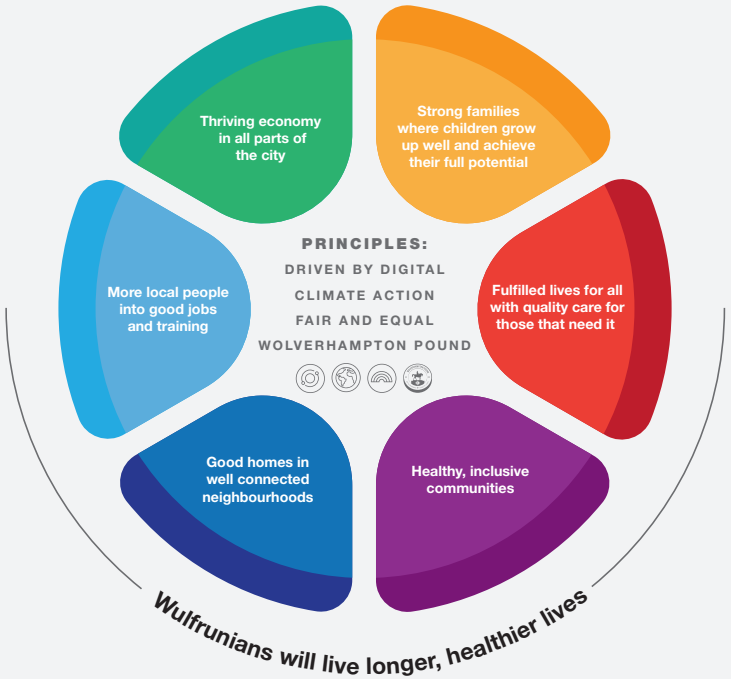
National Digital Landscape

Digital underpins the modern economy. It fuels innovation in business and has revolutionised the way organisations work both in the private and public sector, driving growth and boosting productivity. In January 2025, the State of Digital Government Review found that there were £45bn of unrealised savings and productivity benefits which could be achieved through full digitisation of public sector services, making it one of the most powerful levers available to government to improve efficiency, delivering more for less.

The UK government has set out its roadmap for Digital and Data, joining up government, upskilling civil servants to maximise digital opportunities, and delivering user-friendly public services which deliver better outcomes for the public. It has also emphasised opportunities in emerging technologies, delivering the 'fourth industrial revolution' through full utilisation of Artificial Intelligence. The Government's AI Action Plan sets out its intention to turbocharge growth in the private sector and drive productivity gains across the public sector by:

- Laying the foundations for AI to flourish; developing AI Growth Zones across the country with better access to the energy grid, and rapidly developing compute capacity.
- Boosting adoption across public and private sectors; a new digital centre of government will pilot new ideas, revolutionising how AI can be used to improve citizens' lives.
- Keeping us ahead of the pack; A new team, UK Sovereign AI, will ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of AI, directly investing in companies, from start-ups to joint ventures with commercial partners, using the heft of the state to ensure that the UK is the best place to do business.

There are certainly lessons here to be learnt for councils across the country. Local Government forms the backbone of the public sector. It delivers essential services to the public and collaborates both with government departments, and nearly all other public entities. With significant financial constraints facing the sector, Digital must be viewed as an opportunity. Councils nationwide are welcoming digital transformation to address our financial challenge whilst meeting resident expectations. By embracing Digital, City of Wolverhampton Council can boost productivity within the organisation and support delivery of the Our Future Council Programme, benefitting the lives of all Wulfrunians by ensuring that we can continue to deliver for residents with less resources.



Our City: Our Plan is the Council's overarching strategic framework, developed with over 4500 local people and stakeholders. It sets out how we will work with our partners and communities to build a more prosperous and inclusive Wolverhampton where everyone can share in the opportunities and success of our city.

Our plan is structured around six priorities and driven by four principles, all shaped by local people. Everything we do as an organisation supports delivery of these priorities. Whilst they are presented as six separate priorities, they are interlinked and support one another. We cannot deliver in isolation, and we continue to work as 'one council' and 'one city' for residents, local businesses, people who work and visit here, and all those providing services for the city.

Our Future Council

The council has a strong track-record of establishing clear, robust plans to manage its resources, invest in the city and protect the most vulnerable – despite reduced government funding, rising demand for services and increasing costs. However, there are major challenges ahead. The reality is that our funding levels no longer meet the level of service we currently provide. Between 2010 and 2024, the Council has seen its core spending power decrease by 17.4% in real terms, over the same period our settlement funding has decreased by an estimated 63.6%.

Our Council response to the financial challenge will be driven through the 'Our Future Council' programme, which has identified the following areas of focus:

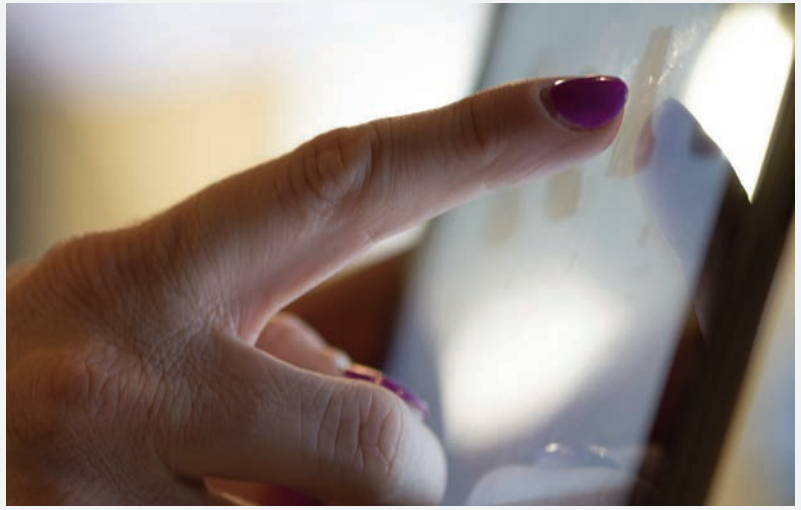
- Efficiencies
- Review of revenue budget pressures
- Reviewing the Capital Programme
- Income generation and cost recovery
- Alternative delivery models

Driven by Digital

Our organisation is Driven by Digital. Now more than ever, digital skills and connectivity are vital to ensure our residents can access services and enter the job market. The city is at the forefront of digital infrastructure and innovation. We are continuing to build on significant improvements in fixed and mobile connectivity and continue to use the power of digital to transform the way we deliver services.

Embedding Our Digital as one of the Our Future Council Workstreams will help enable us to meet the financial challenge facing the organisation. Whilst The City of Wolverhampton Council has a strong track record of managing its finances and is in a comparatively strong financial position compared with other local authorities, across the sector, universal services are unlikely to remain affordable in all instances. It will therefore be necessary to move towards a more targeted approach, based on data and evidence and capitalising on digital technology to ensure consistent, high outcomes for residents. The Our Future Council programme sets out our ambition to continue to identify opportunities to deliver all services as efficiently as possible, utilising digital and technology.

At the heart of our organisation, we aspire to create a digital centre of excellence which is recognised locally and nationally. To achieve this, technical elements undertaken in other services must be directed through our central Driven by Digital Board, as they play a pivotal and instrumental role in the delivery of this strategy, strengthening how the organisation delivers for local businesses, residents and those who work in or visit the city.



Our Driven by Digital Strategy is designed to complement our Digital Wolverhampton Strategy, which sets the framework for a live, action orientated partnership approach to delivering our overarching aims for the city:

- Wolverhampton is a Gigabit and Smart City with futureproofed digital infrastructure including full fibre broadband and 5G utilised to transform delivery of services and develop new applications to unlock its potential.
- 100% digitally included Wolverhampton ensuring all residents have the access to devices, connectivity and skills to take advantage of what digital has to offer and that the Council continues to support those who are not digitally connected at home.
- Growing the Digital Economy and talent pipeline building on our futureproofed infrastructure to start and grow businesses creating jobs for local residents meeting skills needs for the future

Futureproofed Digital infrastructure is the backbone of a modern thriving economy driving productivity and spreading growth and in delivering effective and efficient public services. Covid-19 accelerated the adoption of digital services by several years and digital is critical to power economic and social recovery.

The City of Wolverhampton's proactive approach to supporting the rollout of futureproofed digital infrastructure is proving effective with the commercial rollout of full fibre broadband and 5G across the city underway, connecting residents and businesses to Gigabit Connectivity.

Our Digital Wolverhampton strategy also sets out how we can maximise the benefit locally: tackling the digital divide, supporting residents to get online and improve digital skills, supporting businesses to digitalise and introduce smart technology to support the delivery of services. Going forward, digital needs to be considered the 4th utility – and this same principle applies to our own organisation.

What Do We Mean by Data and Digital?

Throughout Our Driven by Digital Strategy, we will use the terms data and digital. This is how we define them:

Data: Factual information, including measurements and statistics, collected, examined, and used to inform decision making. Data can be information in a digital format which can be easily processed and transmitted, though some data presents in a physical format.

Digital: Digital is about more than just technology; it is about applying the culture, practices, processes and technologies of the Internet-era to respond to people's raised expectations, utilising new technologies to create value, improve efficiency, modernising how we deliver better outcomes for our residents.

Automation

Our Digital teams strive to automate as many processes, as possible. This includes using a vast array of available software to promote and share business intelligence within the authority where the system and data sharing rules allow. For both internal and external statutory and partnership reporting, data is shared on a need to know and need to hold basis. This is accompanied by a senior manager sign off, a service level agreement and / or a data sharing agreement. This ensures all data held by the council goes through a robust, internal sign off procedure before anything leaves the service / organisation.

Data Driven Decision Making

All decisions made by the Council should be supported by quality data. We actively promote and support a data driven culture, clearly explaining the benefits of the approach to colleagues across the organisation. Day-to-day, the Data and Analytics team actively work with colleagues across the council to ensure that all data reporting is modernised and readily, effectively communicating and working with the service to support developments where data is not already embedded.

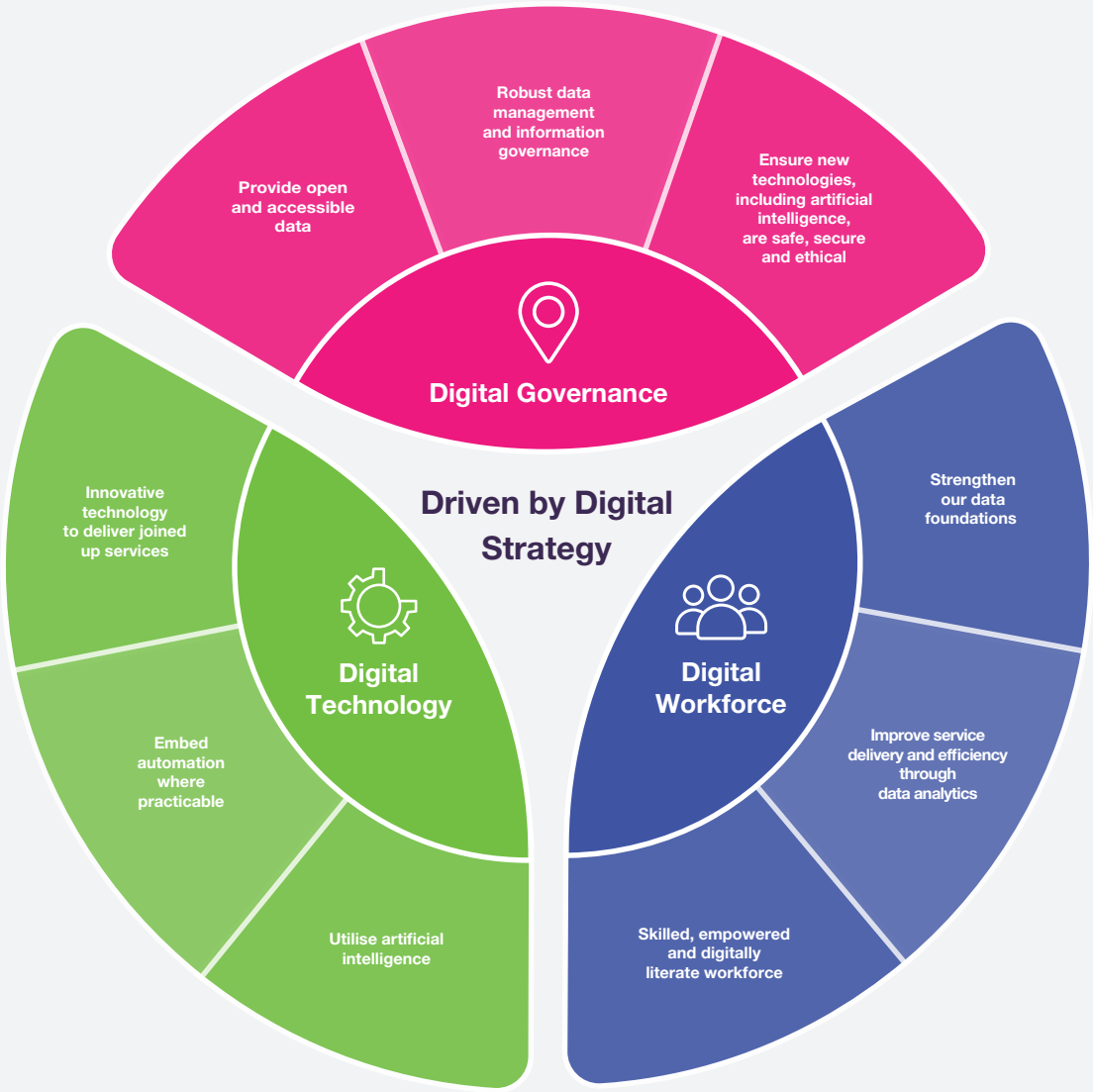
My Account

Our new and improved citizen portal - 'My Account' - offers a fuller and more integrated range of self-help functionality powered by AI and automation. This portal is undergoing continuous improvement to provides residents with a seamless and user-friendly experience, allowing them to access council services, make enquiries, and manage accounts online. For those who do not yet feel comfortable with online platforms, there will be alternative options available to contact the Council including face to face support at the Civic Centre.

Data Protection by Design and Default

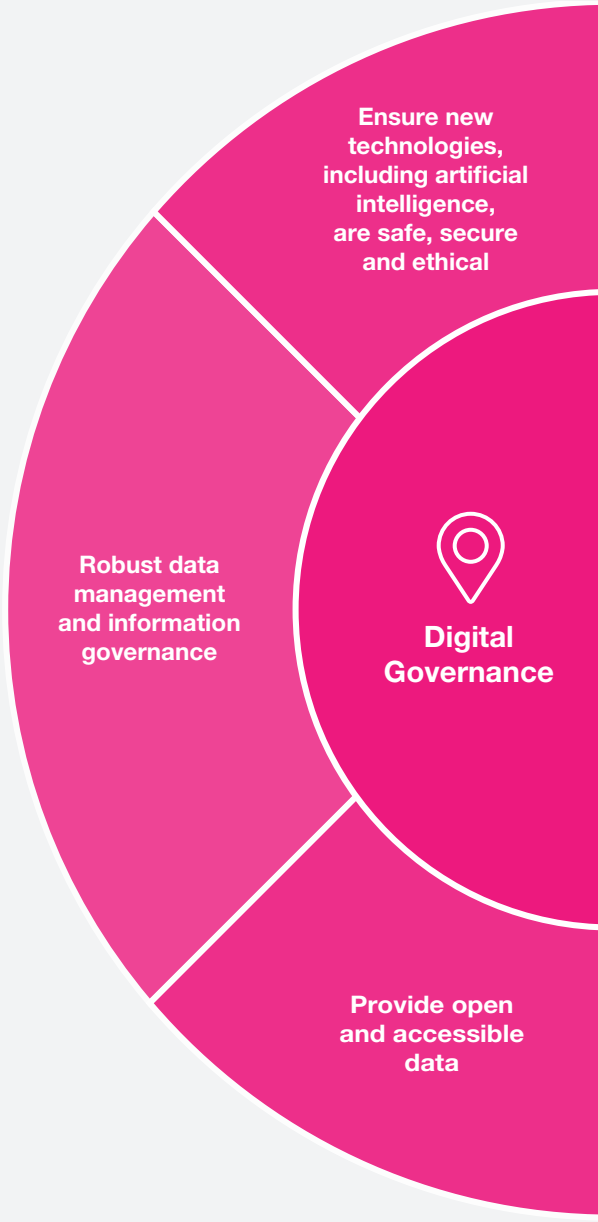
Our Information Governance team has worked closely with internal teams and services on new initiatives, projects and processing over many years to ensure that data protection and privacy by design is considered and included by default and is embedded into everything that we do surrounding personal data from inception and throughout the lifecycle of any data processing activity. Through the use of robust Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs), we have ensured that the Council complies with its legal obligations around data protection and can evidence that it has in place the appropriate technical and operational measures to safeguard individual data rights.

Driven By Digital Strategy – Plan on a Page



As we continue to embrace technology, it is vital that we embed good governance as our cornerstone. This means that we prioritise ensuring that all technology and data used by the organisation is safe, secure and ethical. Good digital governance guarantees oversight so that all technology solutions used by the organisation are designed with robust cybersecurity measures to protect against potential threats and vulnerabilities. It also ensures the organisation is supported by contemporary technical architecture to deliver secure, and efficient, operational and agile working.

This also means robust information and data governance within the organisation. Information governance is broader in scope, covering all types of information, digital and non-digital through its lifecycle and provides a strategic framework for ensuring the compliant use of data. Data governance helps provide structure in the management and use of digital data, ensuring quality, integrity, accessibility, and security of data within digital systems. Information and data are critical to every part of the council's business. Managing and using it correctly, protecting it appropriately and making it available to both stakeholders and the public enables the council to fulfil its objectives, deliver improved services and increase our standing with the public.



Digital Governance

Provide Open and Accessible Data

Data held in varying formats across incompatible systems can make it difficult for council employees to work at pace and share information with residents and partners quickly. By ensuring data is easily accessible, and available to all who require it, we can work more efficiently and ensure that residents receive the support they need more quickly. We also strive to empower our residents and partners with quality information that, where appropriate, is open and accessible to the public in a way that complies with good governance and information security legislation.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Publish information in accordance with the mandatory requirements of the local government transparency code.
- Provide a comprehensive overview of City of Wolverhampton through our data hub - WV Insight.
- Ensure our officers have access to quality contemporary data through open and accessible dashboards.
- Maintain our Model for Information Sharing practice with partners which enables lawful, secure, fair and ethical data sharing to deliver better, more efficient, public services.
- Continue to foster a culture around Data Protection by Design and Default to ensure that privacy and ethical rights are incorporated into any new initiative involving data.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Ensure information is shared appropriately and lawfully.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the current city-wide Wolverhampton Information Sharing framework.
- Ensure requests for information around public, environmental and personal information are responded to within statutory timeframes.
- Ensure WV Insight continues to share an up to date, comprehensive picture of the city enabling partners and the public to access the latest data, statistics and reports for Wolverhampton.
- Ensure the Data Protection Impact Assessments are up to date and incorporate digital and AI so that information risks can be identified and mitigated from the inception of any new process, project and initiative involving personal data.

Robust Data Management and Information Governance

Robust Data Management and Information Governance means that all data is ethically sourced, well looked after and kept secure. Managing our data and using it correctly, protecting it appropriately and making it available to both stakeholders and the public enables the council to fulfil its priorities and deliver improved services. We will achieve the right balance between making information available where appropriate, whilst ensuring that robust protection is in place.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Continually improve the Councils information management framework to achieve greater value from our data to aid in informing decisions and achieving better outcomes for our communities.
- To be open and transparent in the way the Council operates, providing easy access to data and information.
- Provide assurance to residents and partners through compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Deliver compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks through our commitment to maintaining relevant accreditations including:
  - Public Services Network (PSN)
  - Data Security and Protection (DSP) Toolkit
  - Cyber Essentials Plus
  - Archives Service Accreditation (National Archives)
- Always ensure compliance with Freedom of Information requests and personal data requests, providing information in line with our statutory obligations.
- Continue to embed the culture change from manual to digital records management processes across the organisation, including retention and destruction policies for both digital and non-digital records.
- Ensure a robust IG policy framework is in place which is continuously reviewed and updated to ensure all policies and underpinning procedures remain fit for purpose.
- Ensure officers complete the mandatory protecting Information training so that they are aware of their responsibilities around managing and protecting both the Council's data and resident's data.

Digital Governance

Ensure New Technologies, Including Artificial Intelligence, are Safe, Secure and Ethical

In a world where systematic international competition will have significant impacts on security and prosperity around the world, the UK government has set out its aim to become the most trustworthy jurisdiction for the development and use of AI, one that protects the public and the consumer while increasing confidence and investment in AI technologies in the UK.

City of Wolverhampton Council will always ensure that the use of new technologies, including Artificial Intelligence remains safe, secure and ethical.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Prioritise robust cybersecurity measures and regulatory compliance in all digital and data-related activities.
- Vigorous and stringent provisions around Security, Network and Business Continuity.
- Ensure any use of generative AI is done lawfully ethically and responsibly.
- Develop our governance and regulatory regimes at pace with the fast-changing demands of AI, maximising efficiencies whilst protecting the safety, security, choices and rights of our residents.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Establish the Driven by Digital Board with a clear remit to ensure all digital programmes and any new technologies adopted meet our governance and regulatory standards.
- Ensure delivery of an external scan of network each annum, alongside frequent internal scans of the network to ensure it remains robust and secure.
- Retain penetration testing of internal and external solutions, and test and implement security patches.
- Review and update the following on an annual basis:
    - Information and Cyber Security Policy
    - Cyber Incident Response Plan
    - Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Policy
    - Data Protection Policy
- Create a Data Ethics policy and review it on an annual basis.
- Ensure officers complete mandatory Cyber Security Training.
- Update or remove bespoke legacy solutions to newer technologies or seek alternative third-party solutions.

Digital Governance

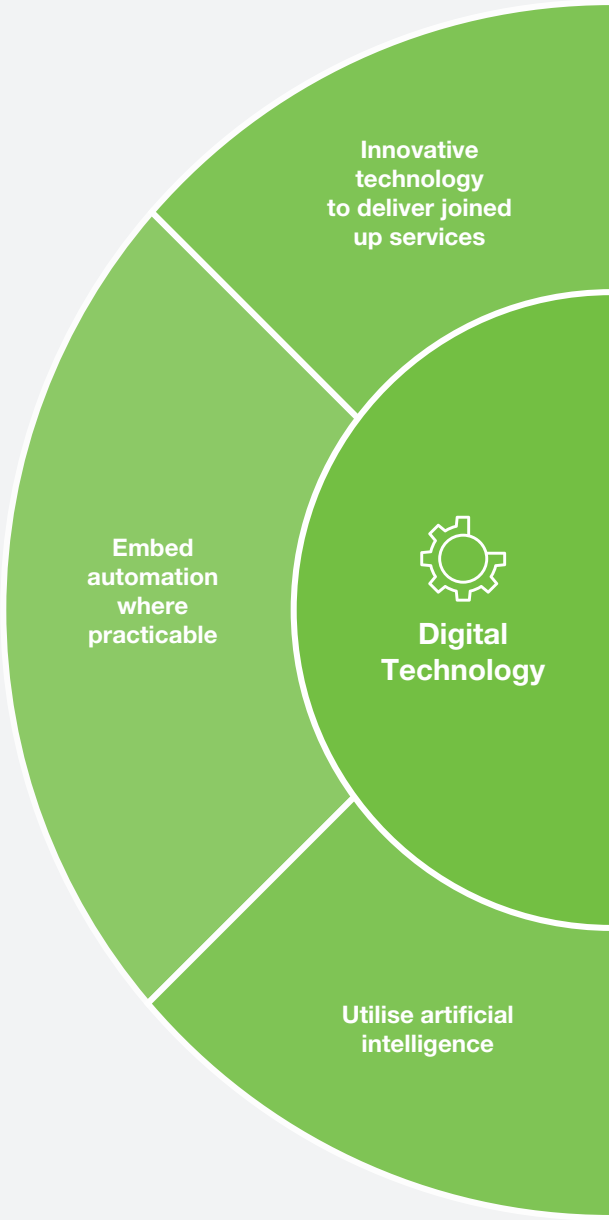
- Regularly review our AI Charter, ensuring continued safety and security in our use of Artificial Intelligence.
- Continuous hardening of CWC Digital Assets in line with best practice and industry standards.
- Continuously assess third-party suppliers to ensure that their cyber, information governance, and data security practices align with industry best practices and frameworks.
- Ensure that the development and deployment of Artificial Intelligence technologies adhere to ethical principles, including fairness, transparency, accountability, and respect for privacy.
- Work collaboratively across the organisation to ensure we apply robust governance in all procurement activities.

Digital Technology

Empowering our workforce means ensuring access to the right technology. Technology is the cornerstone underpinning our ability to deliver for our residents in the digital age. It ensures the security of our data and facilitates better service implementation. It also underpins our aspiration to develop one golden record for the organisation where it is ethical and compliant to do so. This will ensure that when residents and businesses contact the council, they only need to provide information once, rather than to each service that they interact with.

Underpinned by ethical and compliant governance, Artificial Intelligence and automation can significantly enhance the digital workforce by streamlining operations and reducing the burden of repetitive tasks. For example, AI-powered chatbots can handle routine enquiries from residents, freeing up staff to focus on more complex issues. In Children's and Adults' social care, AI agents can assist in case management by analysing data to identify patterns and predict potential issues, enabling early intervention and better outcomes for vulnerable individuals.

This strategy sets out our ambition to utilise Digital Technology to enable our Digital Workforce through ongoing engagement with officers and trade unions, ensuring that technology is utilised to reduce burdens on staff. By embracing new technology, we can enhance service delivery, engage with more residents, and streamline operations. This not only ensures better outcomes for the people of Wolverhampton but will also underpin the implementation of Our Future Council programme creating efficiencies and ensuring the Council can continue delivering best value with the resources available to us.



Innovative Technology to Deliver Joined Up Services

At a time where resources are scarce, innovative technology becomes ever more vital in our drive to deliver better outcome for our residents. Our aim to embrace technology means ensuring staff have access to the right equipment to deliver for residents. Technology can be seamlessly integrated and will drive efficiency and enable savings across the organisation.

Embracing technology also means enhancing customer facing platforms to ensure residents can engage with the council in the way that best suits them. Our new and improved citizen portal - 'My Account' - will offer a fuller and more integrated range of self-help functionality powered by AI and automation. This portal will provide residents with a seamless and user-friendly experience, allowing them to access council services, make enquiries, and manage their accounts online.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Collaborative Access: Work collaboratively to ensure all services have access to the tools, systems, and technologies needed to deliver services for residents.
- Enhance User Experience: Focus on creating intuitive and user-friendly interfaces that improve the overall experience for end-users.
- Increase Efficiency and Enable Savings: Implement solutions that streamline processes, reduce manual effort, optimise resource utilisation, and act as an enabler to deliver efficiency savings and service improvements.
- Ensure Scalability and Innovation: Develop and implement scalable infrastructure that can easily accommodate growing user bases and increased demand, enabling the delivery of innovative solutions without compromising performance.
- Promote Integration: Facilitate seamless integration with existing systems and third-party applications to create a cohesive technology ecosystem.
- Cloud Migration: Aspire to migrate all services and solutions, including third-party solutions, to the cloud.
- Provide Secure and Contemporary Systems: Ensure that all technology solutions are designed with robust cybersecurity measures to protect against potential threats and vulnerabilities and develop contemporary technical architecture to deliver efficient operational and agile working.

Digital Technology

- Drive Continuous Improvement: Foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement by regularly updating and refining technology solutions based on user feedback and emerging trends.
- Custom Software Solutions: Custom software solutions tailored to the specific needs of our council can greatly enhance workforce efficiency.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Leverage technologies such as Fabric and structured data methodologies, combined with comprehensive support from various council services, to create a 'golden record' for residents and businesses that engage with the council.
- Transition existing development efforts to a low code platform where feasible.
- Integrate user experience (UX) and accessibility standards across all in-house developments and third-party systems.
- Streamline service delivery by rationalising the software and systems utilised.
- Relaunch an enhanced citizen portal, "My Account," providing a more comprehensive and integrated range of self-help functionalities.
- Implement green computing practices where practicable to contribute to reducing our carbon footprint.
- Develop a custom-built case management system for social care can integrate various data sources, providing a comprehensive view of each case and enabling more informed decision-making.

Embed Automation Where Practicable

Smart technologies, such as automation, are rapidly changing UK public services, enabling better and more efficient service delivery, as well as enhancing resident engagement and participation. Automation does not mean replacing people – this is about updating dated processes to make them more efficient. By automating repeated manual tasks, we can save valuable staff time to ensure council officers have the capacity to focus on the needs of our residents. In this way, automation increasingly demonstrates its value as an assistive tool.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Reduce manual intervention processes and replace them with automated processes.
- Automate reporting - where the system and data sharing rules allow – using a vast array of available software and AI tools to promote and share business intelligence within the authority.
- Work with services to automate business activities to increase productivity.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Automate reporting in line with system and data sharing rules, clearly flagging where there is a concern over data quality.
- Work with managers at all levels to determine any sensitive data and data owners within the organisation, restricting access to information as required, including the use of row level security in Power BI applications and AI tools
- Work closely with system and subject matter experts to ensure data extraction from systems and dissemination of data is done in a safe and secure way, including the use of modern encrypted methods such as APIs and webservices.
- Complete delivery of:
    - Automatic transcribing of Social Worker Visits for automating the updating of service user's records (Magic Notes, Azure Transcribing Services)
    - Automating the translation of documents.
    - Analysing of manually processes with a view to using AI and Automation to increase efficiency and cut costs.
    - Map out integrations between our back-office systems to enable the 'golden record.'

- Explore further opportunities such as:
  - Automating the processing of FOI requests, significantly reducing the time and effort required to handle these requests.
  - Automating approval workflows to enhance efficiency and reduce delays.
  - Automating the application and renewal processes for permits and licenses to reduce paperwork and processing times.
  - Automating debt recovery processes to improve efficiency and ensure timely follow-ups.

Utilising Artificial Intelligence and Other Evolving Technologies

Much as the industrial revolution galvanised manufacturing, and the internet transformed access to information, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a general-purpose technology – with the potential to revolutionise every aspect of our lives. In the public sector, AI is increasingly being recognised for its ability to streamline operations and elevate the quality of public services.

Generative AI tools and AI agents can play a pivotal role in transforming the way we deliver council services. For example, AI-driven content generation tools can assist in drafting reports, creating presentations, and generating insights from data, saving valuable time for our staff. In social care, AI agents can analyse case histories and suggest personalised interventions, improving the quality of care provided to residents.

By leveraging AI, we can harness data-driven insights to improve public health, bolster cyber security, and refine service delivery, ensuring informed and impactful decisions. In this way, AI can be used to assist council officers in ensuring better outcomes for our residents, delivering more for less and supporting the implementation of the Our Future Council Programme

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Capitalise on our successful pilots of new tools such as Microsoft Co-Pilot.
- Harness new tools such as generative AI transform our delivery of services.
- Leverage AI tools to enhance our data driven insights.

- Develop a structured deployment plan for new technologies that includes staff training, pilot testing, and an assessment of scalability.
- Work with our partners to seek out and optimise funding opportunities to support digital innovation.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

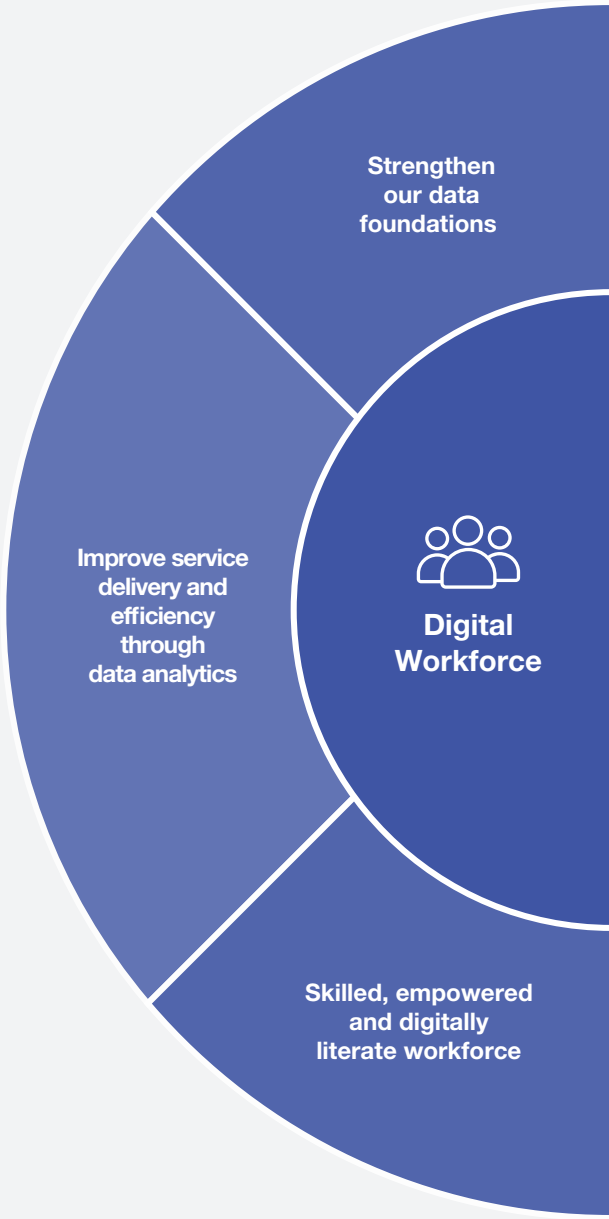
- Create an AI roadmap annually, setting out key milestones for the next twelve months.
- Implement an Omnichannel Solution which incorporates AI to deliver a variety of customer service functionalities including:
  - Telephone solution
  - Chatbot
  - Web chat
  - Email
  - Text
  - Social Media
- Embed Fabric across the organisation to enable machine learning, smoother automation and predictive analytics.
- Build on our successful trial of 100 Copilot licences to understand how Copilot can be used effectively in the organisation.
- Work in collaboration with Microsoft and Phoenix to set up workshops which will be available to the wider organisation.
- Work in partnership with Phoenix to further embed AI within the organisation.
- Continue exploring opportunities to maximise efficiencies through utilisation of new and emerging technologies.

Digital Workforce

In order to maximise the opportunities that the digital age offers us, we need to ensure that our workforce is empowered. A digitally empowered workforce can improve outcomes for residents, delivering efficiencies at a time where resources are stretched and enabling our staff to dedicate their time to our residents rather than to manual or analogue tasks. This means enabling our workforce by ensuring they have access to the right tools, information and training to do the job. It also means maximising confidence in both the use of, and the benefits of, technology in our daily work, achieved through ongoing engagement with officers and trade unions, to ensure that technology is being utilised to reduce burdens on staff and minimise the need for retraining or redeployment.

This strategy also provides an opportunity to embed the principles of data maturity, the national measure for determining how effectively an organisation is using their data. The model views success through several lenses to help better understand how effectively we are using data including:

- Uses - How do you get value out of data?
- Leadership - How much is data regarded as a major organisational priority?
- Culture - What are the attitudes to data in your organisation?
- Skills - How data literate are your staff?



Strengthen our Data Foundations

Data is increasingly driving growth across the economy; it encourages innovation and supports our navigation of enormous challenges such as the Coronavirus Pandemic, allowing us to share data quickly and ethically.

The City of Wolverhampton Council ensures that decision makers are provided with reliable, secure data.

We will continue to ensure that our data is of an ever-increasing quality - by leveraging modern technology and integrating systems, we can create a virtual ‘golden record’ of citizens' data. This comprehensive and unified view of residents' information will enable the council to deliver more personalised and efficient services. For example, integrating data from various departments can help identify residents who may need additional support, ensuring that no one falls through the cracks. This approach not only improves service delivery but also enhances data accuracy and reduces duplication of efforts.

Without this solid foundation, inefficiencies can emerge and ultimately, poor or conflicting data can become a barrier to progressing our priorities. By ensuring our data is fit for purpose, recorded in standardised formats on future proof systems, and secured in an easily accessible interface, we can maximise the value of our data.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Continuing to work innovatively in the way we manage and use data throughout its whole life; creation, storage, use and retention/disposal.
- Ensuring our data is fit for purpose, by regularly assessing and monitoring our data quality and quickly rectifying issues.
- Aligning our processes with the data quality objectives outlined in the National Data Strategy.
- Driving consistent levels of data maturity throughout the organisation.
- Ensuring services across the council have the skilled staff required to meet their analytical needs.

Digital Workforce

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Transfer data from legacy systems to create a golden record that can be used by all applicable council systems.
- Integrate and embed the latest technology by market leaders to ensure that data is secure and centralised to eliminate instances of data sitting in silo.
- Identify data quality problems and support officers to rectify the issue to ensure that data is used to maximise benefits for residents. This includes identifying missing data, especially where it can help us to maximise support for those who need it most and understanding how different groups require support.
- Working across services to ensure they are working intelligently and are supported to embed best practice.
- Share datasets appropriately with central government, in line with the Single Data List guidance.
- Utilise the National Government's Data Maturity Model to measure our organisation's journey towards data mastery.

Improve Service Delivery and Efficiency Through Data Analytics

City of Wolverhampton Council always strives to deliver best outcomes for our residents in a Fair and Equal way. Through effective and compliant utilisation of our data, we can ensure that the right services are available for our residents. By using data to better understand our local community, we can better inform decision makers, develop innovative solutions, and deliver quality services to our residents.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Utilising analytical solutions to drive efficiencies and provide residents with the support they need at pace.
- Using data to identify the needs of our community and target our resources more effectively.
- Continue exploring how predictive insights can help us identify issues, requirements, and future service pressures to enable us to intervene at the earliest opportunity.
- Continually evaluate our use of analytics across the organisation so we can assess where it is most effective and capitalise on best practice.
- Ensure decision makers are informed by quality data and analytics.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Utilise new technology and existing relationships with market leaders to ensure we are working in the most efficient way possible, pushing ahead with appropriate use of the data to build predictive models, driving actionable insights within the organisation, including the upskilling of staff to ensure effective and efficient use of the technology.
- Maximise opportunities for data sharing within the Trailblazer Devolution Deal to ensure data is available for us to best support local businesses. This includes improving One Wolverhampton and working with partners such as Ofsted, Voice for Parents, Health, and Education to ensure that data is shared legally and appropriately.
- We will continue developing our approach to new technology ensuring that we can use data insights to develop appropriate solutions for our residents and make our services more efficient. This includes utilising SMART technology in our Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance vehicles to record and analyse data, ensuring resources are allocated appropriately according to the needs of the community, and SMART cameras to locate and resolve fly-tipping hot spots swiftly.
- Continue to ensure services have robust performance frameworks which feed into the Our City: Our Plan performance framework.
- Ensure all services have regular performance meetings and access to dashboards which help all staff complete their day-to-day roles with an opportunity to explain good performance and where there is room for improvement.

Skilled, Empowered and Digitally Literate Workforce

To ensure our organisation is Driven by Digital, we must embed digital skills across the entire organisation. Technology empowers us, but to utilise it effectively, the workforce must understand what the technology can do. We will make sure that our workforce remains digitally skilled, data literate, with a deep-rooted understanding of digital governance.

To fully leverage the benefits of AI and automation, investing in continuous training and upskilling of our workforce is crucial. Providing regular training sessions on the latest digital tools and technologies ensures that our staff remain proficient and confident in using these tools. This not only improves their efficiency but also fosters a culture of innovation and adaptability within the organisation.

Digital Workforce

By fostering this digital culture across the Council, we can support our staff to understand the value of Digital - understanding how robust, secure data can inform decision making and how we can all utilise technology to assist delivery of better outcomes for our residents.

This priority is underpinned by several objectives:

- Driving digital skills across the organisation, enabling colleagues to upskill and ensure that our officers are fully utilising data and modern technology.
- Fostering a collaborative culture which recognises data and analytics as a tool for effective service delivery.
- Enabling services to fully utilise the opportunity presented through the ownership of their data.
- Maintaining local and regional data networks with external partners to facilitate collaboration and the transfer of skills and knowledge.
- Embed the principle of data maturity across the organisation.

To deliver these objectives, we will:

- Provide officers with access to tutorials and training in digital skills.
- Continuous development and improvement of the mandatory protecting information e-learning modules
- Provide a training module for all staff who deal with complaints to ensure these are consistently dealt with efficiently, and to our high standards.
- Ensure that all dashboards are accompanied by a ‘how to’ guide to make data and analytics as straightforward as possible so officers understand how to utilise the information presented.
- Foster opportunities to upskill, with a suite of qualifications available in data.
- Continue utilising the intelligence team to present analysis to mangers.
- Train managers around data interpretation.
- Support regional and local efforts to improve the training of data engineers and data analysts, and wider data literacy in line with the region’s ambitions around digital skills and inclusion.

Delivery of this strategy is a key priority for the organisation, ensuring that we truly are an organisation that is Driven by Digital, embracing all the opportunities that new technology offers.

Our Driven by Digital strategy cannot be delivered in isolation. Partnership working is a key theme running throughout the plan; to realise our vision, we must continue to work closely with partners, developing skills and building on our strong relationship with stakeholders, including all employees and the trade unions, to ensure their buy-in and support.

Digital advances provide an opportunity to address our financial challenge whilst delivering improved outcomes for our residents, but this must be achieved in collaboration with officers delivering services across the organisation, and with our external partners working across the city.

By embracing Digital, we can boost productivity within our organisation and support delivery of the Our Future Council Programme, benefitting the lives of all Wulfrunians by ensuring that we can continue to deliver for residents with less resources.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Driven by Digital strategy was launched as a 'living' document and we will regularly review and refresh it to ensure that the priorities remain current, relevant, and valid. We will do this through a continuous conversation with colleagues, local people, businesses, and partners - listening and learning from your feedback to help us keep improving our services. To measure success, we will continue to develop our performance management framework to sit alongside our Driven by Digital roadmap which sets out key milestones we will achieve over the next five years.

Our Digital Roadmap

2025

2025 Establish the Driven by Digital Board.

2025 Utilise smart technologies to deliver a contract centre - Omnichannel solution launched.

2025 Unified Information Technology Service Management Solution - Implement Halo across council services to deliver efficiencies and AI integration to streamline services.

2025 Implement Viva Learning to replace 3rd party solution.

2025 Adoption of technologies such as Microsoft Autopilot to drive efficiencies and improved customer experience.

2025 Migration from legacy technology (SCCM) to a modern service delivery approach using Microsoft Intune.

2025 Implementation of immutable backups to isolate our data within a Cyber Recovery Vault to enhance our cyber resiliency.

2025/2026 Introduction of AI Agents onto the corporate website for public use and on internal services for employee use.

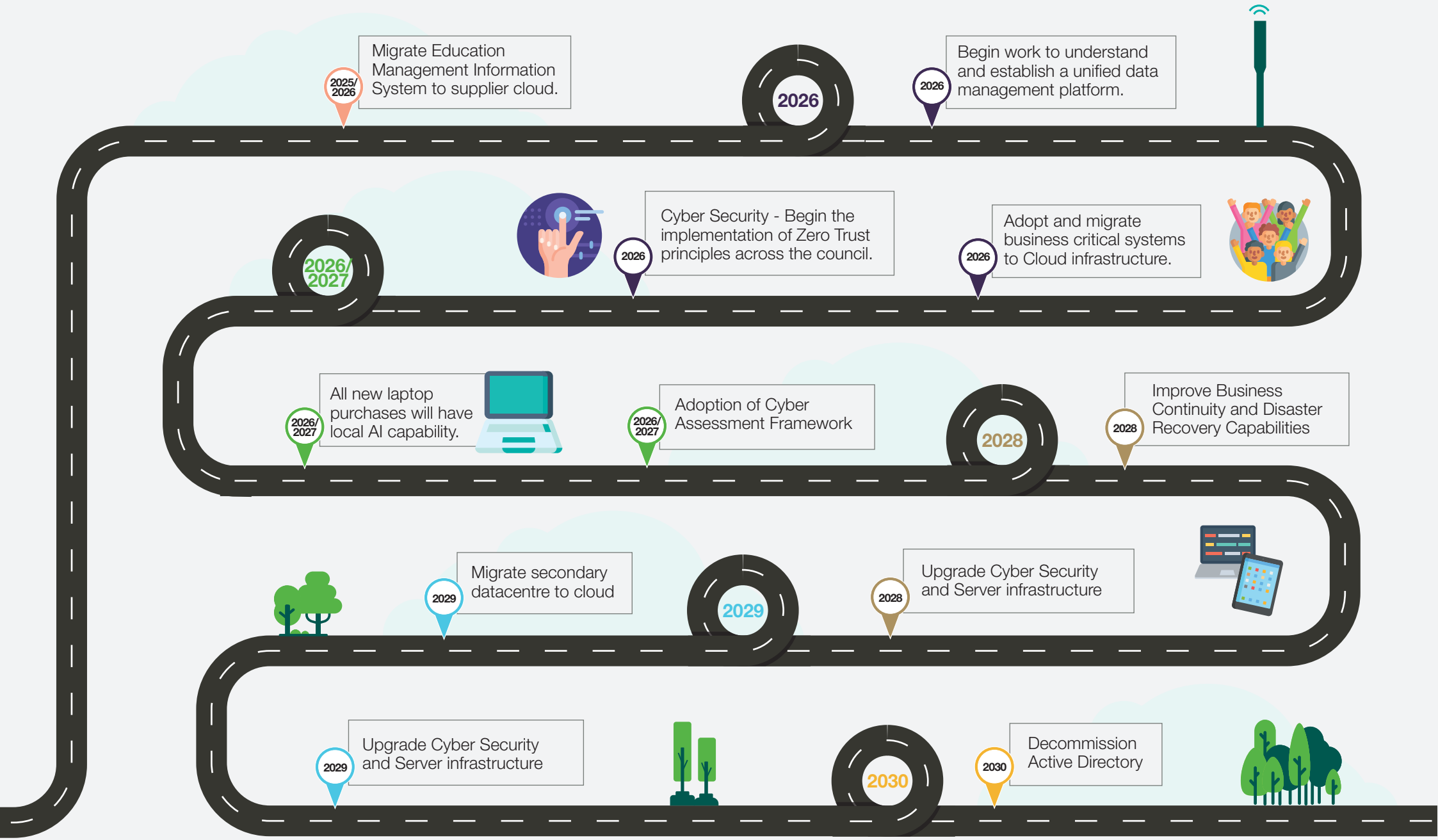
2025/2026

2025 Adoption of AI and Automation Technologies such as document translation and audio transcription.

2025/2026 Redevelop City People into a modern Employee Portal.

2025/2026 Redevelop My Account to include more services.

2025/2026 Migrate Agresso to supplier cloud.


2025/2026
Migrate Education Management Information System to supplier cloud.
2026
2026
Begin work to understand and establish a unified data management platform.
2026/2027
2026
Cyber Security - Begin the implementation of Zero Trust principles across the council.
2026
Adopt and migrate business critical systems to Cloud infrastructure.
2026/2027
All new laptop purchases will have local AI capability.
2026/2027
Adoption of Cyber Assessment Framework
2028
2028
Improve Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Capabilities
2029
Migrate secondary datacentre to cloud
2029
2028
Upgrade Cyber Security and Server infrastructure
2029
Upgrade Cyber Security and Server infrastructure
2030
2030
Decommission Active Directory

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