Our Digital Strategy

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1.0 Foreword

This Digital Strategy sets out the shared vision of the London Borough of Sutton and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames outlining how we will use technology to help us realise our ambitions for the borough. It explores the opportunities presented by the adoption of new technologies in order to improve the lives of the people that live and work here as well as businesses and visitors.

There are a number of pressures on Local Government including demographic change, the rising cost of services and to deliver services with significantly reduced budgets, and higher resident expectations. Whilst the Boroughs have high levels of connectivity and digital skills we recognise that not everyone has, so we will ensure we continue to offer phone and face to face to ensure we are inclusive.

An increasing number of places are turning to "smarter" approaches in planning their future, in creating a modern infrastructure and in delivering services. We are playing an important role in shaping thinking in how innovation can be harnessed to improve our boroughs. The councils are committed to adopting such "smart city" approaches to cope with the many challenges ahead and to create new opportunities for business and local communities.

We have spoken to residents, businesses, partners, experts, voluntary sector to gather views from the tech sector, universities, councils, and community groups.

This strategy sets out how the councils visions have evolved, and underpins and complements the council's existing strategies and vision.

Cllr Sunita Gordon ,
London Borough of Sutton

Cllr Jon Tolley,
Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames

2.0 Our Digital Vision and what it means

Our Vision
To engage and empower stakeholders to help provide the services they need through the use of future technologies, making it easier and improving lives.

Improving the Borough through better connectivity.

Our vision is informed by the following principles:

- **S**hape demand -redirect resources to where they are most needed

- **E**ngage with communities and businesses – using digital platforms

- **R**esilience -delivering fit for purpose infrastructure for the future

- **V**FM- delivering cost effective services

- **I**nclusive (Digital) -included in everything we do

- **C**itizen focused - rather than service focus
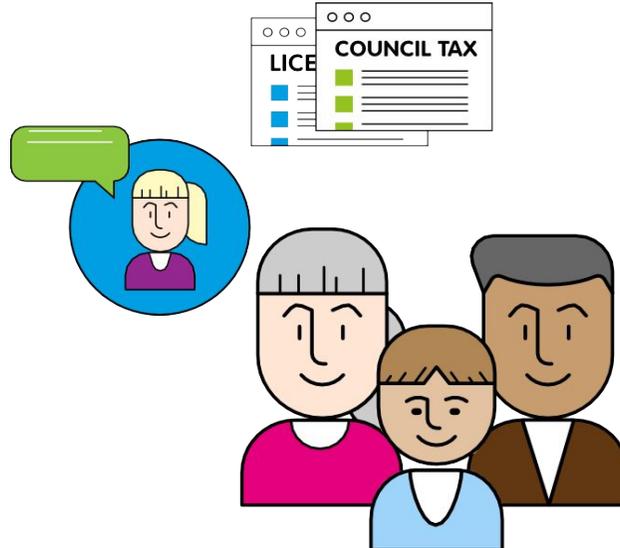
- **E**nable self service
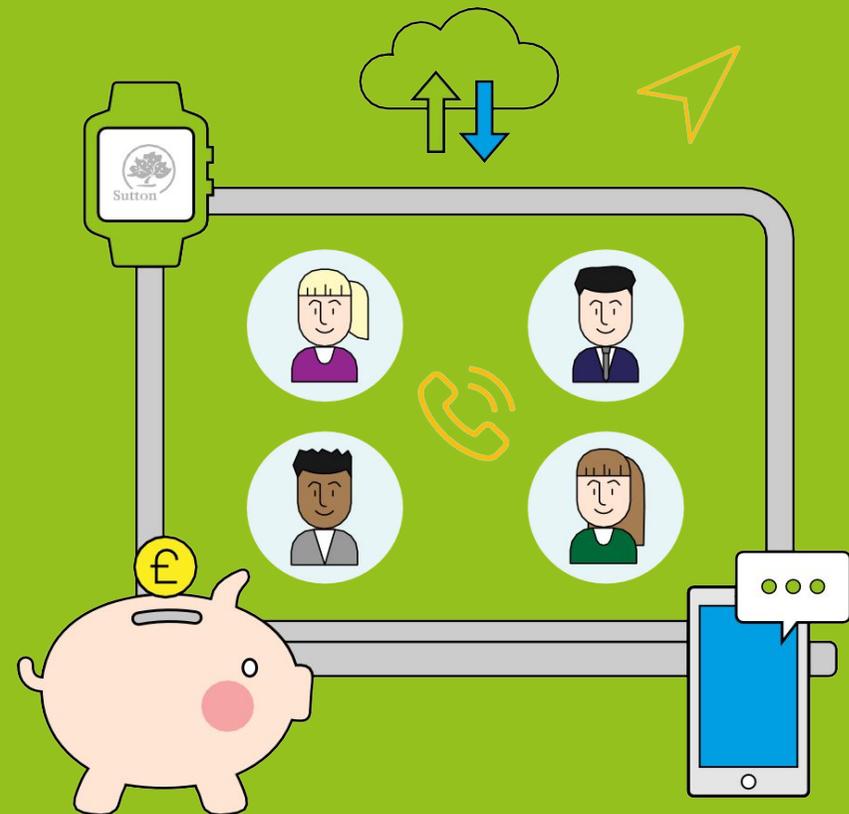
3.0 Realising the Vision...

We will realise our vision by:

Enabled Workforce
Using data and technology to enable workforce to be more agile, flexible and more productive through improved processes and online services, improve efficiencies and reduce cost

Enabled Customers
Using data and technology to fundamentally redesign and deliver a service in a different way. Change the way we connect and communicate with residents to understand their needs and ambitions.

Enabled Communities
Using data and technology to enable a Smart Cities approach to encourage growth, automation and monitoring that work beyond organisational boundaries.

We have also incorporated our work with leading digital colleagues in other London boroughs, both formally through the South London Partnership, Greater London Authority and Government Digital Service to generate opportunities in innovation, data, technology and infrastructure aligned to the Government's digital agenda.

Realising our plan will improve our processes and systems to reduce costs

Reducing our costs will help us realise the priorities, actions and activities of our overall ambitions

Our Digital Strategy will help support and deliver the borough's vision to be a Smart Place, enabling the delivery of a number of benefits to customers and our borough as a place

4.0 Benefits to our Customers ...

Better use of information & digital technologies our stakeholders will benefit in a number of ways:

- Improved outcomes by redesigning our services with our customers needs in mind:
  - Increased online payments, bookings, reporting and applying
  - Increased self-serve and improved websites including navigation and content
  - Increased collaboration between the councils and their communities via increasing our communication channels and becoming data-led organisations

- Greater use of open data across all areas of the Council, which will mean we are more transparent and allowing us to work closer external providers to improve services.

- Drive out inefficiencies through increased automation in our routine and transactional activity, allowing staff to focus on actions and providing better outcomes and operating in more agile way.

- Centralised records of our customers, allowing a single view of data enabling us to simplify and reduce interactions between customers and different council departments. This will provide a foundation for the council's longer term ambition of providing a 'one touch' agent with other agencies i.e. the ability to hold a central record of the customer accessed by a number of agencies.
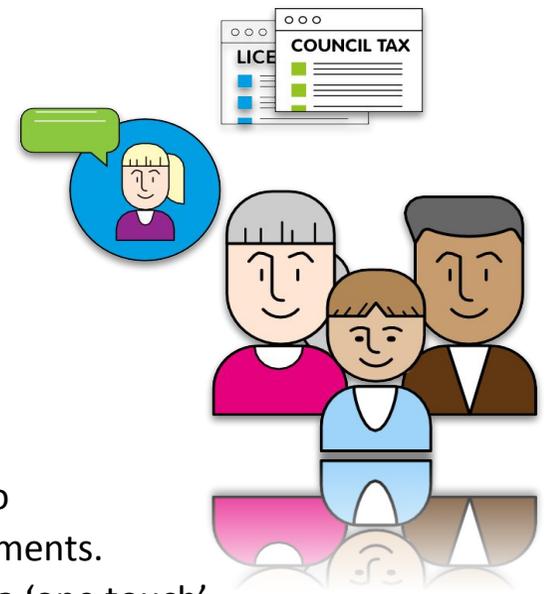
4.0 Benefits to our Boroughs

A borough that is better connected through a public network, allowing inter-connectivity between business, public body organisations, customers, increasing collaboration and attracting more business, creating job opportunities

Our Smart City strategy is aimed at being a collaborative, connected and responsive borough. Our plan is to use digital technologies and uses city-wide data to respond to our citizens' needs. We have already started identifying the challenges we face in the borough and will improve outcomes for local residents, partners and busin such as health/well-being, energy, connectivity, transportation, utilities and others.

Improved flows and interactions between the borough's public bodies, will facilitate the smart and strategic use of information and data in order to develop services that are responsive to the social and economic needs of communities.
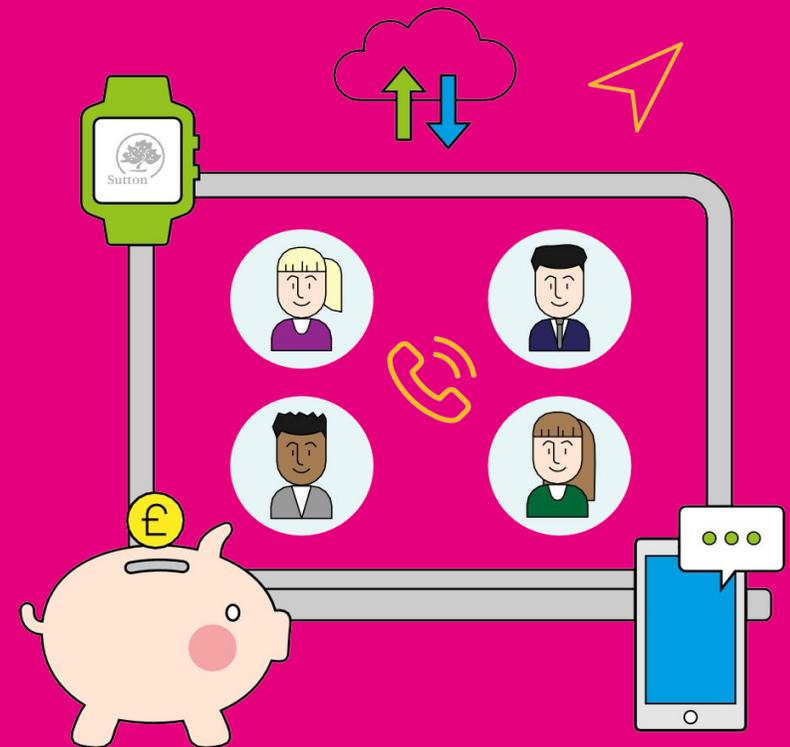
5.0 Approach ...

As we move towards delivering digital services, we need to redesign how services are delivered from the customer's perspective; to become a truly digital council rather than an online simulation of existing manual processes.

An example, the creation of an online form to trigger a call back from council, is different from providing a truly digital service. In a truly digital service, the submission of the form would automatically trigger the appropriate action, required to fulfil the customer's request.

We are currently undergoing a full assessment of our ways of working, the back office systems and how information is managed.

Many of the services we provide are physical activities such as recycling collections or care for vulnerable adults. These may not be digital products but the processes that enable a resident to receive these services can become digital to the fullest extent. These can include online booking of appointments, digital payments, online application forms and access to customer profile information.

5.0 Approach ...

We will enable the "digital by design" approach by:

Diverting calls away from the contact centre and face-to-face interactions at the Service Points with ease of use for digital services, saving money, time and officer expertise through the implementation of the Customer Access Strategy

Providing our customers with a choice to transact online using a personalised account

Reviewing website content, using web analytics and statistics to constantly improve the information. We will prioritise the most popular transactions - allowing customers to intuitively find what they need on the website

Ensuring that we review all services from a customer journey viewpoint to ensure true Digital Transformation puting users at the heart of the process

Making services accessible online 24 hours a day on any device including smartphones, tablets etc, so that applications and payments can be made at any time, anywhere, in a way that meet the demands of our customers

This is keeping pace with other modern businesses and institutions therefore aligned with our customers' expectations of access to public services and products, whilst always being inclusive.
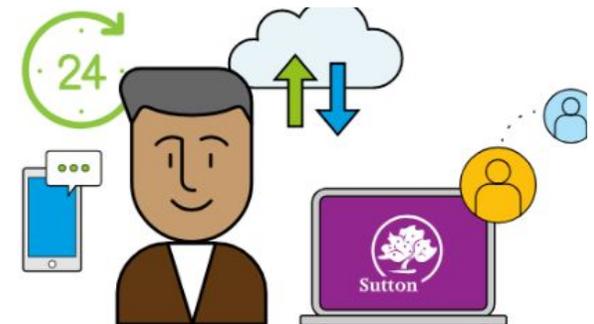
6.0 Our Digital Journey

We have already delivered a number of key digital outcomes:

- Digital Strategy approved by Council Members (Kingston, Nov 16. Sutton, July 2017)

- Updated Website enabling more online transactions and improved SOCITM rating

- Initiated a new Smart Cities project designed to identify the challenges we face in both councils. We are currently trialling three innovative solutions to improve outcomes for local residents, partners and businesses

- We have undertaken a review of the current digital infrastructure which has helped to shape our thinking in improving connectivity, realising an inclusive broadband provision and enabling a Town Centre Wi-Fi solution across all main centres in the borough. This will improve digital connectivity and outcomes for current and future residents, businesses and visitors

- We are in the process of replacing our existing Customer Contact platform with a new Digital Customer Platform, which is designed to deliver a variety of services for our residents and local businesses, promoting self-service and a better customer experience

- Implemented a corporate digital content platform to improve communication channels across multiple sites

- Launched a Digital Ambassadors initiative enabling like minded individuals to embed digital change and increase awareness within service areas, our partners, residents and members

- Complete Digital modernised Libraries across Kingston and Sutton

- Codesigned and delivered 'Connected Kingston' a social prescribing website that aims to help residents feel more involved in their community, meet new people and make some changes to improve their health and wellbeing

- Installation of free Wifi in Kingston with Sutton planned as part of the Town Centre masterplan

To make our residents' and users' days better through delivering great digital solutions.

7.0 Priority Areas - Digital Initiatives

Our digital vision will be delivered by a set of digital initiatives guided by our aforementioned principles.

Our Customers: **Residents, businesses and visitors are the ultimate recipients of our services. We will consult and involve in the design of new and upgraded services.**

What we have done:

We have developed our processes and culture to meet the differing needs of our clients. In designing new solutions, we have considered the requirements of all stakeholders, so that the principle of a single 'Digital Platform' can be delivered. Our staff will have a client and customer focus in all their work.

We are reviewing our services across the Council, identifying opportunities for Digital Transformation ensuring we prioritise to support the strategy, ensuring they become digitally inclusive to allow our customers and businesses to interact through the web and increase the ability to self-serve.

What we will do:

We want to develop our workforce to ensure the have the skills to be able to use and be innovative with digital technologies. Ensure that the communication between the business and IT is clear and consistent in putting the customer first.

We will communicate and share information regularly, openly and proactively to set expectations with the initiatives we are working and what outcomes they will deliver.

We will continue to enable and support our Digital Ambassadors across both Council's to drive the innovation and change with all employees and partners.

Innovation & Technology:

We will become a leader in digital thinking across all areas of the councils, and increase the digital capabilities of staff right across the businesses. Teams will extend across colleagues and partners to create and support new Digital services together

What we have done:

Prioritised and consolidated projects into a single digital programme that is required to deliver the principles of the Digital Strategy and preparing for transformational change in the future

We are committing to invest further in the development of the staff in the Digital & IT service and across the Council, not only in the important technical skills that need to be kept up to date, but in the wider set of commercial and contractual competencies that are required to perform a technical leadership role

What we will do:

We will investigate the migration of our on-site data centres to the Cloud to ensure that we are able to be take advantage of the flexibility and resiliency that that offers and free the Councils from being tied to specific buildings.

Availability and resilience become key as we provide more services digitally, adopt flexible working practices, integrate data with our partners, and create a smart city environment. We will provide 24*7 availability and fit for purpose support for our services

We will ensure that our applications are modern and fit for purpose, cloud based where security allows and reliable, commissioning following a Digital Design review to ensure we meet the Customer Journey

Engagement

A joined-up set of systems that are designed to work efficiently together is a key goal. We will put in place new cross-cutting IT governance arrangements to ensure that systems and resources are deployed and implemented in a consistent and intelligent way

What we have done:

We have performed a review of the portfolio and identify the common applications of greatest value that can be shared and standardised across the service

We have established a Digital Design Authority function that becomes an integral part of the overall IT Governance processes, acting as the Technical Design Authority (TDA) for the authorities and owning the Enterprise Architecture

We are using the Government Digital Service, digital design principles, that put the customer at the heart of service design and have engaged customers though work including: Registration Services, Public Health, visitors to Council buildings

What we will do:

We will ensure that we embed customer engagement and customer feedback into all areas of the Council's Digital work, we will consult and engage for all major change work across the Councils

The efficiency, scope and influence of the Digital & IT Shared Service will continue to be developed, as well as members and senior officers to ensure it aligns closely with the ambitions of the councils and their partners

Training is easily accessible across the borough, and is delivering the skills and confidence which people need both to transact digitally, and to work. We will continue the Digital Ambassador scheme across the Councils to ensure our staff and partners have the required digital skills

Partnerships

Our Digital & IT Shared Service will continue to develop partnerships through closer collaboration with existing and new partners in the public, private and third sectors

What we have done:

The emerging London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) is intended to drive and share good practice across the city, led by the Mayor's office. We have joined this development and to align our own IT and digital developments with the other participating boroughs.

We are managing our suppliers and develop stronger links between our organisations to our mutual benefit. In particular, we will aim to to share much more closely in suppliers' new digital innovations as soon as they emerge, continuously innovating technology with suppliers to deliver improved outcomes.

Continue to work with partners within the South London Partnership to maximise the use of data and systems for the benefit of the area.

What we will do:

Work with partners to create a connected community, with faster broadband, wifi, mobile coverage, shared infrastructure. Close working with our partners, businesses, university and residents to understand local needs and challenges, and to help us identify/develop innovative solutions.

We will create and drive forward work focussed on joint working with health and the third sector, liaising with colleagues in other agencies to develop both short-term and longer-term solutions that will support and enable this way of working.

Data & Information

Information is the councils' most valuable asset. We aim to organise it reliably, accessible and securely so that it can be exploited to improve decisions and to drive innovation and automation.

What we have done:

We have implemented an integrated and coordinated approach to Information Management that is aimed at enabling the organisations to exploit their information and knowledge to better achieve their objectives. By managing information as an asset, maintaining it regularly and to agreed quality standards, we will be able to improve the value that the organisations can get from their information resources, leading to well-informed decisions and actions through good data, reporting and dashboards.

What we will do:

We will implement suitable systems, processes, interfaces and platforms to enable the councils to manage and publish their information easily and effectively.

We will be more open and transparent with data across the Council, developing our open data portal to allow residents to access data in relation to information including: health, education, environment, council spending, and contracts.

We shall develop close relationships with counterparts in partner organisations such as the NHS and the third sector to agree common shared collaboration tools and practices based on industry standards.

We will recognise investments in open data, open standards, and open software as an investment in the public good by enabling code and tools to benefit the wider community. We will share data by default to encourage open innovation and published APIs will be required of our suppliers.

We will develop the skills required to ensure that we are getting the best value from our data and enable us to turn it into information, insight and intelligence.

A Digital Platform

We will create a Digital Platform, hosted in the 'cloud' and running the latest applications in a reliable, flexible and resilient way. The platform is software that underpins all future council services, and will provide clarity, responsiveness, consistency and security for our customers.

What we have done:

We are ensuring strong governance of of our shared platform for the benefit of all clients, with common clear and consistent policies and processes making life easier for all. We are sharing network capacity for the benefit of all clients, reducing costs significantly compared with dedicated links.

What we will do:

We will deliver a Customer platform that will enable customers to book, pay, report and apply for services, quickly and easily at times that suit them. Enable customers to have a better end to end journey, track progress and enable the Council to communicate easier.

We will ensure the highest standards of security while creating a flexible, efficient open platform that will reduce overall costs for the boroughs and their partners. We will build once and reuse where we can across our environment.

We will work to establish an 'Internet of Things' network and review use cases for service delivery including: parking/transport; street lighting; creation of new data; security; independent living; independent travel; supporting economic growth and business retention.

We will complete our adoption of Google G-Suite and continue to reap the flexibility and collaboration benefits of the applications. We will operate as Google First in our approach and push to increasingly integrate the suite with our line-of-business systems.
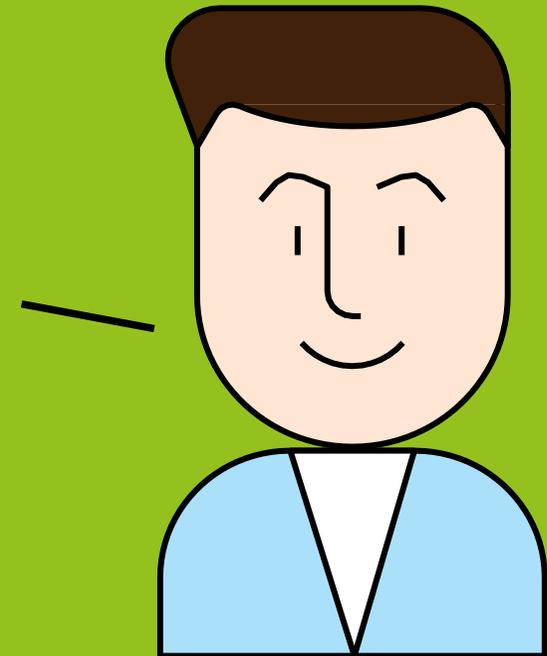
As services are increasingly delivered securely but more cheaply and conveniently in the 'cloud', we will grasp those opportunities, and it will quickly become our default delivery method. To create economies of scale, we will share our

We are excited about the opportunity to set out the challenges and Initiatives for a new Digital Strategy across Sutton and Kingston.

As leaders and advocates in the delivery of digital government, we believe that our learning and insights can help transform government, build long term foundations, unlock growth and help lives everyday.

We have a responsibility to our residents and local communities to play an important role in the delivery of digital government.

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