

1. What does digital transformation mean to BCC?

For Bristol City Council, digital transformation means the use of technology to solve traditional problems. It seeks to fundamentally change how the council operates and engages with citizens and partners. It goes beyond basic improvements to current systems and working practices as it enables services to be delivered in more effective ways and provides the opportunity to reflect citizens’ preferences.

2. What is the vision and ambition for digital transformation?

“Digital transformation is focused on developing better ways to deliver council priorities and services, enabled by the use of modern technology, tools and availability of integrated information.”

The ambition for digital transformation work is to deliver a digital experience to citizens comparable to the other areas of their lives. From our current IT strategy, we have the goal of “Delivering services that our users and citizens expect and deserve.” This remains a key driver for digital transformation.

It looks to build on what we already have today, enabling us to transform service delivery to minimise operational costs while maximising the quality, responsiveness, and effectiveness of services for our citizens. Ultimately our investment in technology will allow BCC’s finite resources (people and funding) to be focused on frontline delivery and doing the work that only people can do.

Digital transformation will change the way the council approaches the delivery of services that meet the needs of the city, the citizen, and council officers. This is by enabling service areas to gain control of the information they use and have the tools available to engage in the way they wish to work.

It also looks to support a future vision of a council that encourages inclusion, independence and enablement of all its citizens.

Our digital aspirations over the coming years will be underpinned by four critical digital ambitions:

- **Engage the citizen** – provide easy digital access to council services
- **Empower the employee** – enable council officers to work anywhere and use the technology to make it easier to collaborate and do their jobs to better support our citizens
- **Optimise operations** – provide access to the data and tools to enable the services to improve effectiveness and efficiency
- **Transform the service** – enable and support the ability of services to provide a step change in the way they deliver their services

3. What are the anticipated benefits?

Digital transformation continues to focus on delivering direct benefits and helping to enable the Corporate Strategy. The key benefits being delivered to citizens, council officers and the organisation are as follows:

Area	Benefits
Citizens and public facing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide easy, clear, and responsive access to services ● A digital experience that is comparable to other areas of their lives – at least meeting their digital expectations ● Provide a range of access channels that meet different citizen needs and preferences - allowing digital service resolution for those who want it, and easier access to Council staff for those who need or prefer it ● Reduce and automate steps needed in customer transactions to make things quicker ● Fewer outages

Council staff and teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work anywhere and more flexibly • Technology that's integrated, efficient and easy to use, with streamlined and automated processes, allowing staff to use their expertise to focus on their core service delivery to citizens • Increased visibility of the end-to-end service, so staff can provide best experience to service users
The Council (whole organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of automation to allow council resources to focus on frontline service provision • Reduced operating costs & increased financial resilience • Maximised cyber security, and minimised risk of data breaches • Improved visibility and reporting on process compliance • Fewer outages and increased resilience • Easier to multi-skill staff as well as redistribute resources (people and funds) to where needs them the most • Easier to translate raw data into intelligence and insight that supports service transformation

4. What are principles that we will be working to?

Success in digital transformation is predicated on strong principles being adopted and used to guide the wide range of projects and enhancements delivered in close collaboration with council service areas. The key principles are:

Principle	Implications
1. Design for the citizen	<p>Digital delivery should be 'user' centric - this means designing for the customer/ citizen or staff who will be using the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Services should be easy-to-use ➤ Services users should receive a consistent experience, regardless of which Council service is being accessed ➤ Build things so citizens only need to 'tell us once' ➤ Encourage capture of richer data to underpin the improvement in frontline services and provide transparent information to citizens
2. Digital is a long-term enabler	<p>Do things properly and holistically, not just deliver for today. An approach whereby we can do more long-term which is sustainable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make intelligent finance decisions that include strategic investments and align the benefits with strategic ambitions ➤ Drive towards a council that is configured for continuous digital change and able to respond to the fast- and ever-changing world of technology ➤ Establish digital transformation as a key capability to help council services transform

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build the council's reputation as a key partner to drive citywide and citizen change. Act as a catalyst. ➤ A strong underlying technology platform with broad capabilities and effective security and suite of tools that can help enable all parts of the Council ➤ Move to rationalise the application estate to drive data-driven process improvements in service efficiencies and IT cost savings ➤ Use our assets wisely and for the best outcomes and cost-effectiveness
<p>3. Establish common approach for Digital</p>	<p>All digital delivery within the council, irrespective of internal or external, should sit within a single, standardised governance framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Digital services should reuse strategic platforms and core technology i.e., 'do things once' ➤ Digital outcomes will be delivered by change projects and programmes, and support the Corporate Strategy ➤ Drive efficiencies through common approaches and processes, skills rationalisation, and information reuse ➤ Take out complexity, risk and cost of outdated, unsupported and cumbersome legacy IT ➤ Assurance and governance such as cybersecurity, procurement, strategy, maintainability etc. should be owned by the respective services and governed by digital transformation governance. All work should be compliant by default. ➤ Digital delivery should be owned by the one digital governance forum ➤ Identify a clear roadmap of work – define initiatives, programmes and projects that best align/support ambitions and minimise non-strategic activity ➤ Ensure all applications feed the data lake to allow the information to be used and reported on across the council
<p>4. Delivery to include use of a commissioning approach</p>	<p>A commissioning model should be established to use the right partners at the right time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Move to a multi-vendor, cloud-based, easy-to-access, digital ecosystem ➤ Use partners to accelerate delivery and benefit from external capability and experience

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- Strategy and outcomes (benefits and savings) should be owned by the service areas
 - Solutions and approaches to meet outcomes should align with agreed Digital principles based on sponsorship and agreement with the service area and governed through appropriate corporate process(es)
 - Procurement approach enhanced to ensure alignment to and compliance to digital strategy
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5. How does this align/connect to corporate strategy?

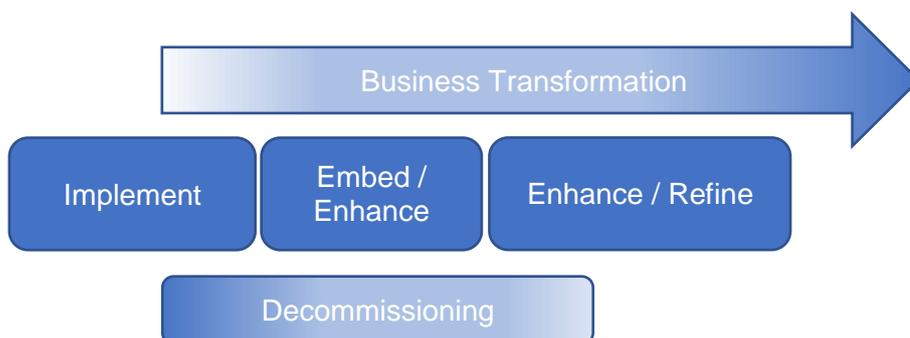
Technology increasingly underpins everything we do, and digital transformation will be a critical enabler to delivering the 22-27 Corporate Strategy. The council is well into the journey to provide the necessary technology and information resources to meet the emerging council challenges. The next stage of digital transformation will continue the development of the technology backbone and focus on achieving savings. The following specific strategy goals are underpinned by digital transformation.

<p><i>Development Org</i></p>	<p><i>“The council is larger than most of its counterparts and not always more efficient or effective. We need to consider what the right size, shape and scale is for the city’s future needs, streamline processes and target our limited resources to those most in need given the financial pressure we face.”</i></p>
<p><i>ED02 One Council</i></p>	<p><i>“We need to work more smartly and intentionally together as ‘One Council’.</i></p>
<p><i>ED03 Employer of Choice</i></p>	<p><i>“Support them with improved digital tools and technology.”</i></p>
<p><i>ED04 Data Driven</i></p>	<p><i>“We own a wealth of information and data, and through an ongoing programme of digital transformation we are able to do more with it.”</i></p>
<p><i>ED05 Good Governance</i></p>	<p><i>Resilience theme – “We must keep a good financial grip and manage things effectively without making things too bureaucratic and unwieldy, because part of being resilient means being able to be fast, flexible and adaptable in what we do.”</i></p> <p><i>Resilience - “Build Bristol’s city resilience through early intervention, minimising our contribution to future environmental, economic or social shocks and stresses. Build our ability to cope by learning from our past, taking a preventative approach and planning for long-term outcomes that support resilience.”</i></p> <p><i>“Make sure that we are financially competent and resilient, offering good value for money.”</i></p>

With many of the IT Strategy 2018-2023 goals met and with the publishing of a new Corporate Strategy, the IT Strategy is now undergoing a refresh and is due to be brought to Cabinet for approval in June 2022.

6. Roadmap and Journey (incl. where are we now and where are we trying to get to)

The overall approach for digital transformation is shown below:



Looking back

In [July 2018](#), Cabinet was informed of the outcome of an external review of BCC's IT. This review highlighted a variety of fundamental issues to address, as well as the scale and costs of change needed to modernise the Council's IT landscape to comparable modern standards.

- *"Critical service management systems, processes and tools are not in place which results in significant manual overhead"*
- *"Rudimentary management information and telemetry is not in place."*
- *"The resilience of the current estate is low [...] and lack of transparency of underlying infrastructure."*
- *"Running the current estate with its complexities and legacy debt is both costly and high risk."*

Progress to date

Although BCC had a low starting baseline, a great deal has been achieved in the last four years in both the technology foundations and developing an information architecture that will support more effective and timely decision making across the council:

- The IT Transformation programme (ITTP) successfully delivered key technology platforms and rolled out new devices to end users. This has been a critical capability for BCC officers during the Covid pandemic and integral to ensuring continued provision of services throughout 2020-22. BCC would not have been able to respond as effectively without these changes. This now provides the opportunity to support further smarter working, and we can now shift our focus to making best use of these platforms across the organisation and maximising investments already made.
- Whilst the new platform replaces a significant amount of legacy infrastructure, it has not yet all been decommissioned and cashable savings remain tied up in the IT estate. Focus will be given to completing migrations and removing legacy; transitioning from the current hybrid technology environment to a fully modernised environment. This will also help achieve simplification of the IT service and allow staffing levels to return to a lower level and ease budget pressures.
- Given increase announced in Microsoft licence costs, along with new third-party spend commitments (with historical contracts/licences not yet closed), there is pressure to increase the pace of delivery of benefits to capitalise on the investment.

The next stage of digital transformation aims to deliver the following change:

The scale of the transformation for Bristol means there is still a suite of IT change and digital transformation work to do to deliver the council's digital ambitions and maximise the potential benefits to service users and the organisation. This requires further investment.

The work on the technology platform can now shift to focus on improving our digital capability by helping council officers make best use of these new tools and innovate within their services. By exploiting the collaboration and information management capabilities, staff are now better equipped to be able to join up across the organisation and develop new and better ways of engaging citizens and delivering services.

Broadly the required work for the next phase of digital transformation falls into the following categories.

- Improve citizen experience by providing better access channels and options for citizens to engage; whether digitally or otherwise.
- Provide assistance to service areas to help them digitise processes and ways of working to provide better experiences for their service users.
- Facilitate delivery of Council budget savings, for which many are dependent on further development and optimisation of the IT estate e.g., Common Activities Programme.
- Complete ITTP work originally planned, where it has been partially completed or final outcomes are not yet fully achieved.
- Further optimise the platform to benefit from more advanced and new features. This will put the core IT infrastructure on sounder footing to enable future transformation and ultimately allow retirement of more of the 'legacy estate'.
- Expand the use of tools and platforms introduced through ITTP, and exploit, to translate the investments into cashable savings and extend the technology further to deliver business benefits.
- Focus on review and optimisation of IT related third-party contracts and third-party spend to identify opportunities for termination, downscaling or renegotiation.
- Continue review of IT operating model and changes to ways of working as the IT estate changes from legacy to cloud-based. Support the skill-set changes necessary to help maximise the benefits from the new platforms
- Ensure the work is delivered using compliant procurement/contract processes and provide assurance of compliance and management of corporate risks e.g. security, data compliance.
- Help to rationalise applications and where possible move Line of Business (LoB) systems to cloud-based alternatives or cloud platforms.

Work is underway to scope a 'Digital Transformation Programme' which aims to deliver many of the outcomes above.