



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

BIS Digital Strategy

How BIS will redesign its
information, transactions and
digital engagement around the
needs of users

DECEMBER 2012

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1. Executive Summary

Our Digital Strategy sets out how we will redesign our information, transactions and digital engagement around the needs of businesses, students, employees and consumers. This strategy will contribute to economic growth through improved policy outcomes, easier to use services, more open policy making and greater efficiencies.

We are committed to the ambition, set out in the [Government Digital Strategy](#), to deliver digital services that are so straightforward and convenient that those who can use them will choose to do so, and to provide assisted digital support for those who cannot. To do this we will:

- Ensure strong leadership in BIS and partner organisations by developing our network of digital leaders and ensure there are appropriately qualified service managers in all organisations with significant transactions and other important digital services
- Deliver an ambitious programme to re-design all major services, building on our existing projects in the Student Loans Company, Land Registry and Companies House. We will initiate exemplar projects in the Insolvency Service, Intellectual Property Office, Land Registry and National Apprenticeship Service as part of their major programmes for becoming digital organisations. These six organisations deliver 177 of 241 BIS transactional services and 94% of transaction volume.
- Audit our capability to deliver digital services and provide the right support, training and encouragement to improve skills and confidence, including specialist training where needed. Identify best practice in digital delivery, including private sector organisations, to give a benchmark for BIS and partner organisations.
- Create a network of service managers and other digital specialists across BIS and its partner organisations: a collective pool of expertise that can act as internal change agents, providing a constructive but challenging influence and promoting good practice.
- Drive uptake of digital services by digitising paper-based transactions, improving user experience and raising awareness amongst customers and stakeholders.
- Support assisted digital for those who cannot use online services, including for learners through the National Careers Service and for business through the Business Link helpline. Promote Government using existing assets for assisted digital including the Post Office network, Citizens Advice and UK Online Centres.

- Help policy teams across the department use digital tools to listen, consult and engage stakeholders, by sharing good practice and examples of digitally-enabled open policy-making.

This is a challenging programme. BIS delivers many services to different customers through many different partner organisations. We are making progress, with three BIS partner organisations leading the way as part of the Government Digital Service's Transformation Programme: the Student Loans Company, Land Registry and Companies House. We will learn from these – and from our four exemplar projects – to overcome the cultural, organisational and technology challenges we face.

We will also ensure the strategy is implemented in a way that can outlast organisational changes within BIS and its partner organisations. We will draw on the support of the Government Digital Service to transform services for businesses and students across government, building on the work we are already leading to make it easier for businesses to take on their first employees. By integrating services across organisations, government can transform its offer to these important customer groups.

1.1 BIS Actions

Active digital leadership

Board member Stephen Lovegrove is BIS's digital leader, and there is an existing network of senior leaders responsible for leading on digital within BIS agencies and those arm's length bodies with a significant digital presence. We will ensure digital leaders are equipped to fulfil the role and create links and share good practice across the network.

Empowered service managers

The Student Loans Company has recently appointed a specialist service manager. We will work with Companies House, the Insolvency Service, the Intellectual Property Office, the Land Registry, the National Apprenticeship Service and the Skills Funding Agency to support existing service managers and explore how to fill the role where they do not.

Appropriate digital capability in-house, including specialist skills

We will undertake a full audit of digital demand and capability across BIS and partner organisations. We will ensure the right resources are in place to deliver our digital transformation programmes. This is likely to be a mixed model as demand is significantly different across the many and varied BIS organisations. A central portfolio team is in place to manage the implementation of the digital strategy across the department. We will identify all service managers, digital leaders, digital specialists and others to undertake digital training provided by Cabinet Office.

Redesign services with over 100,000 transactions a year

All BIS partner organisations responsible for services with more than 100,000 transactions a year are currently redesigning, or are planning to redesign services as digital by default. The BIS exemplar services are: Insolvency Service redundancy payments, IPO Online management of IP rights, Land Registry digital service delivery and the National Apprenticeship Service.

New and redesigned services will meet the Digital by Default service standard

As part of the implementation of the digital strategy we will establish a team in BIS to ensure all digital projects meet the digital by default service standard. We will engage early with teams across the department, agencies and arm's length bodies to provide constructive input at the right time and to quality assure before launch.

Move corporate web publishing onto GOV.UK

The BIS website went live on GOV.UK in December. We will work with BIS partner organisations to plan the migration of their websites where exemptions have not been granted. We will help partners build the necessary capability needed for transition. BIS partners will themselves fund and manage the necessary editorial work.

Drive uptake of digital services including by raising awareness

We will improve the usability of existing digital services (programmes are underway in the SLC and Companies House) to improve customer satisfaction and provide digital services where they do not currently exist (e.g. for many Insolvency Service and IPO transactions) as well as promoting digital channels to customers and stakeholders.

Adopt a cross-government approach to assisted digital

In each digital by default project – starting with the four exemplar projects identified in our strategy – we will identify what assisted digital provision is needed by users and determine the appropriate alternative channel for assisted digital delivery. We will reuse existing contracts for external assisted digital provision where appropriate. We will promote Government using existing assets for assisted digital including Post Offices, Citizens Advice and UK Online Centres.

Gather management information for transactional services

BIS partner organisations with high volume transactions have processes in place for gathering management information. We will work with GDS to refine the set of management information and extend reporting further where required. We will ensure all BIS exemplar services, and those subsequently redesigned, include automated management information reporting as part of

the project requirements.

Use digital tools and techniques to engage with and consult the public

BIS will build on existing successful examples of online, open policy making so all policy teams are able to use digital tools to support their policy work. By 2013 we expect all BIS policy teams to be listening to audiences online and engaging where appropriate. We will publish case studies of good digital tools and techniques being used to improve policy making.

Further details on BIS Actions are in Annex A.

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose

Improving our digital offer will deliver faster, simpler and more convenient services, better informed policies and more effective communications. This will help businesses to start up, grow and innovate, students to achieve their career ambitions and citizens to understand their rights, including in the workplace and as consumers.

This strategy sets out the opportunities for [BIS](#) and its [partner organisations](#) to transform our digital services, in support of the vision set out in the [Government Digital Strategy](#) published in November 2012.

2.2 Scope

BIS has a wide policy remit, therefore this strategy covers many different customer groups, delivery organisations, and services. The main customer groups for services provided by the department and its partner organisations are:

- **Businesses:** providing advice and support to help businesses start up and grow, tailored to their particular business needs and circumstances, making it simpler for businesses to fulfil their legal obligations and reducing regulatory burdens
- **Students and learners:** giving students and learners access to the information they need to make choices about their education and training and future careers
- **Employees and consumers:** ensuring citizens are aware of their rights, for instance in the workplace or as a consumer of goods and services, and are able to get support when needed

Transactional services are delivered to businesses, students and other customers through agencies, non-departmental public bodies and other partner organisations, as is much of the information, support and guidance that we publish. BIS partner organisations also provide services to specialist businesses, intermediaries and further and higher education providers.

This strategy also sets out how we will use digital to develop policy on:

- **Knowledge and Innovation:** promoting excellent universities and research and increased business innovation
- **Skills:** building an internationally competitive skills base and promoting more opportunities for individuals to realise their potential

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- Enterprise: boosting enterprise and making this the decade of the entrepreneur; and rebalancing the economy across sectors and across regions
 - Trade and investment: stimulating exports and inward investment
 - Markets: creating a positive business environment; protecting and empowering consumers; supporting flexible, fair and efficient labour markets

Government is committed to a strong and vibrant information economy in the UK, and the Government Digital Strategy supports this. There is a real opportunity for fast-growing businesses in the information economy, particularly SMEs, to develop innovative services and solutions which support the Government's digital offering, as well as taking advantage of bidding for Government ICT contracts. We will publish an Information Economy strategy in spring 2013 in partnership with business which will set out how we will deliver our vision for the future of the information economy.

3. The BIS Vision for Digital by Default

3.1 Direction of travel

People's time and money can be saved by making services easier to use. We will reduce the cost of compliance by providing simple, clear and comprehensive guidance that reduces the risk of prosecution.

Consistent services mean that people do not have to re-learn how to use them. Wherever possible we will bring services together to create joined up user journeys designed around user behaviour. Ideally, services will be integrated so users have a single view across a number of transactions and interactions with government.

BIS, working with GDS and [HMRC](#), has improved the process for businesses taking on their first employees by bringing all the information and transactions together into a single checklist. As a second phase of this work we will create a streamlined user journey across information and services on different websites (see Annex B, section 3.1 for further details).

Data about service users can be used, with their permission, to provide a personalised offering and to streamline interactions across multiple services. We will use feedback and customer insight to continuously improve digital and other services, and as input in to policy development.

Citizens and businesses should be able to access the data and information they need to make decisions, whether it is owned by government, the wider public sector or the private sector. Examples of 'open data' projects underway in BIS are given in section 4.4.

Services should, where possible, be made accessible anytime, anywhere, on any device. By using 'Application Programming Interfaces' (APIs) we will enable people to use our services wherever it is most convenient for them.

By creating an API, [Companies House](#) has enabled users to submit their accounts from within accounting software packages (further details in Annex B, section 3.8). Similarly [Land Registry's Business Gateway](#) allows customers to access services from within legal case management software packages. By creating a '[Unistats widget](#)' potential higher education students can find information on courses directly on university websites.

These changes will make it easier than ever before for the public to understand and comment on the policy that BIS delivers. This means engaging with people online before we consider proposed changes, to better understand what people really want.

When proposed changes need to be consulted on, we need to write about them more clearly, open up the changes to easier scrutiny and allow people to spread the word, by discussing their thoughts publicly and sharing these through their online networks. This will also demonstrate how people's suggestions and comments have influenced the outcome. The web can help us achieve all of this in a way that is accountable, easier for policy makers to facilitate engagement, and for people to access.

Each of the department's main customer groups – businesses, students and learners, employees and consumers – have different needs. This section further develops the digital by default vision for each customer group.

A. Businesses

The business customer group includes all businesses trading in the UK, including start ups, SMEs and large businesses as well as those considering starting a business.

Vision

We will provide businesses with the right environment to help them to start up more easily, become more profitable and grow faster than ever before.

Businesses will be able to access government information and support easily and quickly online. Regulatory guidance will be written in simple, clear language that users understand and can apply to their business.

Private sector organisations, including intermediaries, will be able to easily access and re-use our information and services to improve and enhance the support they provide to businesses.

Businesses will find it easier to engage and transact with government through a simple interface to manage personal information, pre-populate forms and submit multiple transactions across different government organisations.

We will use the full range of digital services available, including mobile technologies, to ensure we have maximum reach into the market and provide users with flexible solutions that meet their needs. We will ensure that disadvantaged groups that cannot use the internet can still access support through alternative channels such as telephone based services or highly targeted face to face support.

What we will do:

Digital, including online, mobile and social media channels, will play an important role in delivering our vision for the business customer. We will maximise the potential of each of these channels and, wherever possible, join them up to deliver a comprehensive range of business services that will:

- Improve our understanding of business user needs and help design better services that help businesses realise their ambitions
- Deliver targeted support where it delivers the greatest economic impact
- Stimulate demand for support by promoting the benefits of external advice
- Help businesses identify sources of good quality, impartial information and advice appropriate to their needs
- Support easier transactions with government
- Enable sharing of data across government to minimise burdens on businesses
- Encourage businesses to share information on the benefits of best business practice rather than introduce regulations

We will work with third party suppliers and oversight bodies to improve the quality of advice by setting new standards and capturing customer experience. We will enable private sector suppliers to access and use government information by syndicating content and allowing direct access to services through APIs, where it makes sense to do so.

We have already made significant changes to the way we deliver business support, replacing the Business Link network with easy to use online support and a targeted helpline, enabling more businesses to get the support they need and delivering savings for government.

B. Students and learners

The student and learner customer group includes those entering further and higher education and those undertaking skills training to improve career prospects or performance at work.

Vision

Learners (in further education), students (in higher education) and others who use our information and transactional services covering learning and work will find it easier to make choices and achieve their ambitions using digital services; both those provided by Government and those provided by the education sector.

They will be able to identify and use the digital services they need, moving quickly and easily between the services as part of a single user journey. With permission, service will automatically capture and reuse personal details.

They will have easy access to assisted digital delivery support where that is required – for example, [National Careers Service](#) telephone advisers able to support users of the service's digital channel.

Information and transactional services will be integrated from the user perspective, so that the information and choices made can be quickly taken forward into transactions required.

Digital services will "learn" more about the user as the user provides more information, helping them navigate the information and services most relevant to them.

What we will do

Our priority for digital delivery is to ensure that the user journey is as simple as possible, so that users can achieve their objective as easily as possible.

Our focus will therefore be on helping users create a seamless journey across both the information and transactional services we provide, and those provided by the FE and HE sectors. Ultimately, our ambition is for a fully syndicated service to learners and students, with content used and re-used. The main strands of our approach will include:

- Developing APIs to allow the functions of one service to be embedded within another, and allow more flexible user journeys across and within services.
- Mapping user journeys, gathering informal and formal feedback from users about their experiences and what would work best for them.
- Exploring the potential for digital service alignment around user needs – for example, through a personal online account – particularly where this would improve the timeliness, responsiveness and local focus of service delivery.
- Optimising the delivery of services via handhelds and tablets.
- Making appropriate links with commercial digital services where this will improve the user journey, including via 'plug-ins' and widgets.
- Reusing information and data from other websites within our digital services.
- Enabling the syndication of content to improve and add value to existing information used in digital channels – for example, National Careers Service information on job requirements is being repurposed by a third party site.
- Continuing to maximise the efficiency of back office connections between our services, covering both information and transactions.
- Making as much useful data for learners and students "open access" as possible, with a focus on data about FE and HE courses and the labour market.

Within each service, we will review and improve design and functionality in line with the digital by default service standard. We will also review and, where possible, improve interface and back office alignment with other departments' services, including the [Department for Education](#) and the [Department for Work and Pensions](#).

C. Employees and workers

The employee/customer group includes all those with a contract of employment including workers, employees, contractors and directors or office holders.

Vision

Employees and others (such as intermediaries) who use our information and transactional services will find it easier to understand their employment rights and what they can do if those rights are being abused.

Information will be clear, accurate and timely and provide a sufficient level of detail to enable the user to be fully informed. When users need more detailed information or advice tailored to their individual situation this will be clearly signposted. Information and services will be consistent with that provided to employers.

Our digital information and transactions will support other channels provided by our partner organisation [Acas](#) (including a helpline and face to face conciliation services) and the [Pay and Work Rights Helpline](#) which provide advice tailored to individual situations. By providing adequate online guidance we will reduce avoidable contact with helplines thereby freeing up time to deal with users complex queries.

Employees will be able to find and use information and transactions related to employment legislation and regulations, easily regardless of which government department or agency is responsible for that information or service.

What we will do

BIS and partner organisations will provide a range of informational services to employees (and employers) using digital channels. We will use digital to:

- Provide accurate and timely guidance on employment law to employees and to the stakeholders and intermediaries who represent and support them.
- Promote awareness of employment law to support compliance and resolving issues that arise.

- Provide services that address the needs of employee and employers with their different needs but in a consistent and joined up way that reduces unnecessary duplication.
- Support the work of our partners Acas and Pay and Work Rights Helplines provide in giving advice.
- Provide a better customer journey for all government employment related content and, where appropriate, "cross sell" related information and services such as adult skills and apprenticeships.
- Gain insight into customers via metrics, feedback and evaluation that can be used to drive continuous improvement of information and services delivered, and to inform policy development.

The Redundancy Payments Service 'exemplar project' will provide a significant opportunity to gain early experience in improving digital provision to this sector, and can act as a model for other organisations and services (see [Annex B, section 2.4](#)).

D. Consumers

The consumercustomer group includes those purchasing goods and services from businesses trading in the UK. [Citizens Advice](#) is responsible for all central government funded advice and support for consumers. Citizens Advice also provides wider support to help people solve the problems they face in their lives, including financial and legal issues.

Vision

We want to ensure that UK consumers are treated fairly, know their rights and can use them effectively. We want to put consumers in charge so that they are better able to get the best deals for themselves, individually and collectively, and also help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. In helping people deal with a broader set of practical issues, Citizens Advice aims to help people take control.

We will make getting advice that helps people solve their problems as easy as possible, whoever the person and whatever their personal circumstances. We will provide excellent digital services so those that can will start online at adviceguide.org.uk, including by using kiosks within Citizens Advice Bureaux. Those that need tailored support will use the central telephone advice line or get advice face to face within the Bureaux network.

Users will get a seamless, integrated advice offer across digital and other channels by using the same core information and tools across the entire organisation. Citizens Advice has an extensive real-time information system on the problems people are dealing with day-by-day and we will use this to promote and improve the services people need most, as well as to inform wider policy work.

What we will do

Citizens Advice is improving the range of practical, interactive tools provided online to help with the resolution of consumer and other issues, including budget planners and template letters. Citizens Advice will:

- Further improve and simplify advice provided online, ensuring it is aligned to the contemporary problems people face, as well as improve the range and relevance of interactive advice tools offered.
- Fully integrate user journeys across all advice channels and topics, so clients can start their enquiry in one channel and move seamlessly to others without needing to repeat information.
- Identify opportunities to provide advice to users of existing online communities, building on the successes of the interactive money advice forums provided in partnership with [MoneySavingExpert.com](https://www.moneysavingexpert.com).
- Make the rich dataset of trends and issues available on a real time basis to policy makers and campaigners to inform better policy.
- Develop the use of social media channels to engage people in the work of Citizens Advice.

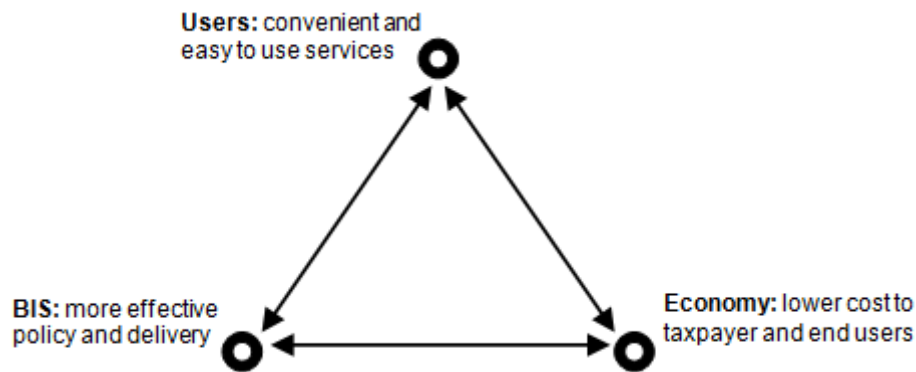
Other BIS customers

There are a number of BIS partner organisations that provide services to customers outside of the main broad customer groups above, including the academic community (the [Technology Strategy Board](#) and the [Research Councils](#)), the wider public sector (the [Met Office](#)) and intermediaries including lawyers ([Land Registry](#)), IP attorneys and the legal profession (IPO), accountants (Companies House) and Insolvency Practitioners (the [Insolvency Service](#)). Partner organisations have a digital vision for services and customers at a level of detail not covered in this strategy.

3.2 The rationale

The department's Digital Strategy will support growth in the economy. By delivering digital services that are convenient and easy to use we can:

- better meet the needs of our customers, whether they are businesses, students and learners, employees or consumers
- better achieve our policy objectives to support economic growth by boosting enterprise, helping businesses start up, grow and innovate and creating an internationally competitive skills base
- provide high-quality services at lower cost, delivering a good deal for the tax payer



These three aims of the strategy are mutually supportive and will in turn help the department support private sector investment, enterprise and innovation. The time is right for BIS to move to digital by default – for our users, the department, the taxpayer – and ultimately for the benefit of the UK economy.

A. Better services for users

We will provide digital services that: save users time and money; are consistent, joined up or integrated; are personalised where appropriate; give users access to data to help them make their own decisions; are accessible in a way the end user chooses.

B. Better achieve our policy objectives

Digital can help BIS achieve policy outcomes across its broad policy remit, including:

- Knowledge and Innovation: promoting excellent universities and research and increased business innovation
- Skills: building an internationally competitive skills base and promoting more opportunities for individuals to realise their potential
- Enterprise: boosting enterprise, making this the decade of the entrepreneur; and rebalancing the economy across sectors and across regions
- Trade and investment: stimulating exports and inward investment
- Markets: creating a positive business environment; protecting and empowering consumers; supporting flexible, fair and efficient labour markets

C. Deliver cost savings and efficiencies

Delivering better services will deliver efficiencies and savings for Government, businesses and citizens. [The Digital Efficiency Report](#) estimates that moving services online could save BIS and its customers £220-350m. BIS:

- has more than twice as many transactional services as any other department with more than 50% of services not being offered digitally
- is the fourth department by volume of transactions, after HMRC, DWP and [DfT](#), with around one-third of transactions not being undertaken digitally
- has the third highest potential efficiency savings after HMRC and DWP

The report notes that departments such as BIS, responsible for a large number of transactional services, face the challenge of making investment cases for transforming lower volume services where savings per service will be relatively small. Most of the transactional services delivered by BIS and its agencies and arm's length bodies are low volume: over 200 services have less than 100,000 transactions per year and more than half have fewer than 10,000 per year.

The savings identified from moving to digital services may have already been included in business plans. Furthermore, of the 37 large transaction services, over half are delivered through trading funds, and any savings are likely to result in lower fees to service users.

3.3 Digital supporting policy outcomes

Pursuing our digital strategy will improve the impact of BIS policy for each of our four customer groups. For businesses our digital strategy will:

- Improve their efficiency by sharing examples of best practice and reduce their risks when engaging suppliers of external advice. This will help improve profits, contributing more to the economy and improving business long term viability.
- Improve compliance with the law and increase business confidence about their legal obligations. For instance in taking on staff and complying with employment law, particularly for first time employers.
- Encourage more people to think about starting a business as an alternative to paid employment.
- Encourage more businesses to take on their first employees.
- Encourage significantly more SME's to export and promote the attractiveness of the UK as a destination for inward investment.

- Increase the skills of the workforce making it easier for businesses to fill vacancies and continue productivity.
- Improve business management and leadership skills to improve business performance, adopt best practice and unlock sources of potential funding.

For students and learners, better digital services will:

- Provide individuals with the information and advice they need to be informed, empowered consumers of education and training.
- Increase levels of participation in learning.
- Help learners and students to choose pathways which lead to greater returns, both personally and for the economy.
- Reach out to individuals who face barriers to engaging in learning, both through digital and assisted digital services.

In the area of employee services, a digital by default approach will:

- Provide people with the information they need about their employment rights by ensuring employees who have employment law issues know where to get advice and help.
- Promote pre claim conciliation as part of more formal dispute resolution procedures thereby reducing the number of cases ending up in Employment Tribunals.
- Protect those workers most likely to be exploited by unscrupulous employers, for example migrant workers.
- Ensure that employers have information and advice that is consistent with that available to employees.
- Improve online access to services for employees (and their employers or specialist representatives), starting with Redundancy Payments (Annex B, section 2.2).

For consumers (and citizens more generally) digital services will:

- Make society fairer, by helping people to solve their problems.
- Contribute to improved policy outcomes across government, particularly in the areas of consumer detriment, benefits, debt, employment, housing and energy.

4. Current position

4.1 BIS customers and their needs

Each customer group has distinct needs.

Business users include business owners, specialists within large businesses, those thinking about starting a business, those closing down or transferring ownership of businesses, overseas businesses establishing themselves in the UK and private sector suppliers of business advice and intermediaries.

Businesses need easy access to accurate, up to date information, advice and guidance on current regulations, as well as information and support to help start up and grow businesses. Business users also need quick and simple government transactions, including filing accounts, applying for licenses, schemes and initiatives. Businesses need a personalised service based on their previous interactions with government, their business type, and the stage of their business in the business lifecycle.

Students and learners include current and potential students in Higher Education and learners in Further Education, as well as those looking at how skills can help them develop or change their career. There are 3 million FE learners and over 2 million HE learners in England each year. Our services are also used by the broader adult (19+) population in England.

Students and learners need timely and accurate information to help them make choices about learning and work, and easy access to simple to use transactions to put their plans into practice. This includes access to finance for their study.

Different types of **employees** (e.g. workers, employees and contractors) have different rights and responsibilities but all need clear and accurate guidance on employment law, consistent with that provided to employers. Some will also need support and advice tailored to their specific situation when dealing with workplace disputes.

Consumers need data and information to help them make the right decisions about purchasing goods and services. They also need to understand their rights and be able to use them effectively. Some consumers will also need to take action when they have been treated unfairly.

People have different needs depending on the type of service they are accessing. Those who need to use government **transactional services** generally do so because they have to. They want quickly and easily to find and complete the transaction at a time and place that suits them. Most people want to self-serve but those lacking in confidence and ability may need support from government.

All customer groups want clear and concise **guidance** from Government on their rights and responsibilities as defined by legislation and regulations. They also need to know that the information is up to date and accurate.

People in many situations want **advice and support** from government which is authoritative and clearly from the official source, as well as marketing and campaigns to drive awareness and change behaviour. They also need encouragement to make the right decisions and to learn and share experience with their peers or networks.

Those with a close interest in the department want the opportunity to **shape and influence government policy**. They need to use the channels and online spaces that they are most comfortable with to engage with us. They need to be listened to and get feedback on how their contributions have been acted on. Our audiences need to be reassured and updated about emerging policy changes.

4.2 Our services

BIS and its network of agencies and arm's length bodies provide many services to different customer groups. The table below summarises the different types of services provided by BIS and its partner organisations to each of the customer groups. This is not an exhaustive list but highlights some of the highest volume and highest profile services.

	Transactional services	Guidance on legislation and regulations	Information, advice and support	Engagement in policy making
Business	Filing information and accounts at Companies House, applying for patents, trade marks, designs at IPO, filing for insolvency, export licensing	On company law, consumer law, employment regulations and export control	On starting up and growing a business and exporting; the benefits of a skilled workforce and supporting business innovation	On all business-facing policy, including through business representative groups
Students and learners	Applying for student finance and applying for apprenticeships and graduate internships	On provision of financial support and access to education and training	Help in choosing courses, making career choices and finding financial support	On skills and further and higher education policy

Employees	Insolvency Service Redundancy Payments (other services provided by HMRC, DWP, etc.)	On employment rights including on national minimum wage.	Help resolving disputes with employers through ACAS and Pay and Work Rights Helpline	On changes to employment law
Consumers		On consumer rights	On resolving disputes and seeking redress through Citizens Advice	On changes to consumer policy and consultations
Others	E.g. with Land Registry, e-commerce sales at Ordnance Survey and research grants from Research Councils	For specialist audiences, e.g. Insolvency Practitioners, conveyancers, FE providers	E.g. on the role of science in society	On other relevant policy areas, e.g. science policy

Transactional services

BIS and its partner organisations are responsible for 241 transactional services (view it on the [GDS transactional explorer](#)). Organisations delivering the highest volume transactional services (over 100,000 transactions a year) are:

- Companies House
- Insolvency Service
- [Intellectual Property Office](#)
- Land Registry
- Skills Funding Agency's [National Apprenticeship Service](#)
- [Student Loans Company](#)

The organisations delivering the largest number of transactional services are:

- Intellectual Property Office – 77 separate transactions
- Insolvency Service – 69 separate transactions

99 BIS services are already provided through digital channels and 142 are not. Most of the high volume transactions are provided digitally but there is a long tail of low volume transactions which are not. Further details are available in section 3.2 above and on the GDS transaction explorer.

Guidance on rights, responsibilities and regulations

[GOV.UK](#) will become the single government website and definitive source of information on rights, responsibilities and regulations. BIS guidance that was previously provided on Business Link and Directgov has been re-written for the GOV.UK website.

Most other websites that provide compliance and legal guidance will be transitioning onto the GOV.UK website, including Companies House, Land Registry, [Export Control Organisation](#) and the Insolvency Service. Additional information on consumer and employment rights and regulations will continue to be provided on the Citizens Advice and Acas websites.

Government will ensure that all users, including those with unusual or specific personal situations, or who need to access detailed guidance on the policy that affects them, are well served by government websites. We will provide simple to use guidance that it is nonetheless complete and as legally certain as possible.

Information, advice and support

BIS and its partner organisations are responsible for providing information and advice for both businesses and citizens to help them make important decisions and address issues they are facing, including:

- advice for new businesses starting up, including sources of finance
- helping established businesses to grow by, for instance, exporting or investing in skills and training
- independent and impartial careers advice to help those in most need identify learning, training and work opportunities
- supporting people dealing with consumer issues
- helping employees and employers deal with workplace disputes
- stimulating and supporting business-led innovation (see TSB case study, [Annex B, section 3.7](#))

Engagement in policy making

Agile, open and iterative policy design can help BIS to be more transparent and accountable in its policy making, including by:

- Testing and developing new ideas before formal consultation and as a channel for the formal consultation period of policy making.
- Evaluating the impact of policy work, and allowing the public to continue to provide feedback once policy has been made.
- Listening to what our audiences are saying about existing policies and issues in order to identify areas where policy, or people's understanding of policy, might be improved.
- Reassuring and updating the public on emerging situations.

There are some good examples across BIS and its partner organisations of digital channels already being used for engagement in the policy making process:

- BIS and the [Skills Funding Agency](#) are currently monitoring and reporting on online discussion of careers and learning taking place in strategic locations on the web. This will inform further improvements to services we provide such as the National Careers Service.
- The department uses web chats, blogs and online communities for engagement; activity on earned channels such as Twitter Q&A has been well received, when the department has participated in the spirit the audience expects.
- The Focus on Enforcement and Employee Ownership policy teams have been effective in using digital channels to gather ideas and engage people in formal consultations. (Annex B, section 3.5)
- The Met Office is using off-the-shelf digital platforms to deliver an effective and valued service built on social media tools metoffice.gov.uk/news/social-media and Annex B.

4.3 BIS and partner organisations' structure

The landscape for delivery of digital services in BIS is very complex, with around 50 partner organisations. This includes:

- Four departments: BIS, [ECGD](#), [OFT](#), [UKTI](#)
- Eight executive agencies: Companies House, Land Registry, Insolvency Service, Intellectual Property Office, [National Measurement Office](#), [Ordnance Survey](#), Skills Funding Agency and [UK Space Agency](#)
- Many non-departmental public bodies, including: Acas, [HEFCE](#), Research Councils, Student Loans Company, Technology Strategy Board, [Competition Commission](#) and [UK Commission for Employment and Skills](#)

- Five are established as Trading Funds: Intellectual Property Office, Companies House, Met Office, Ordnance Survey and Land Registry
- Many other partner organisations, including independent charities: Citizens Advice and [Citizens Advice Scotland](#), [NESTA](#) and the [Design Council](#)

The department itself delivers few digital services directly, but commissions them from other organisations and uses digital channels to engage the public in policy work:

- Some partner organisations' primary purpose is to deliver public services, including the Trading Funds above, the National Measurement Organisation, Insolvency Service and Technology Strategy Board.
- Other organisations undertake a mixture of policy, engagement and service delivery work (Skills Funding Agency, OFT, Citizens Advice, HEFCE and Acas). Many do not deliver significant transactional services but use digital to inform and engage their audiences (Research Councils, UK Space Agency, UKTI).
- Lastly, many organisations have no significant public facing element to their work (e.g. Competition Commission) but use the web to publish corporate information and meet their transparency obligations.

The organisational structure, processes, systems and capabilities are necessarily very different in each organisation. Some organisations, for instance Companies House and Land Registry, have significant internal digital development teams that work using agile and user-centric methods. Some have strong in-house ICT capabilities but bring in specific specialist skills (agile project management, user-centred design) when needed. Others have a central team to provide an 'intelligent customer function', but rely on third parties for most technical development work.

[Post Office Ltd](#) is a Government-owned Company which operates at commercial arm's length from Government. The strategy for the future of the Post Office includes increasing the services it delivers for both national and local Government, including services that support the digital agenda. BIS supports the Post Office in its ambition to compete for and win more commercial contracts from Government. A good example of the potential role of the Post Office is the work it currently undertakes for DVLA. Post Offices capture and transmit customers' digital data in-branch, which feeds into an otherwise digital process for driving license applications. The Post Office is also a strong candidate for the provision of assisted digital services to Government, providing access and support for those accessing digital public services.

Section 5.2 will consider in more detail the different capability requirements in BIS and its partner organisations and how we manage this necessary complexity.

4.4 Current plans and projects

Given the number of BIS partner organisations and the number of services we are collectively responsible for, there are many digital projects underway at any one time. Some projects are driven by changes in policy and legislation; others are driven by the need to deliver user-centred improvements. Some are minor, iterative improvements to existing services or ways of working; others are radical transformations of entire organisations; and some involve the launch of new services.

Because of the diverse and devolved nature of the organisations involved, these projects are not managed centrally as a single programme in BIS. They are managed locally by the respective partner organisation, as a response to their specific user and business needs. We have highlighted in this section some of the high impact and high profile projects currently underway.

Applying for a student loan

Nearly 90% of student loan applications are completed online but user satisfaction rates are low and support calls to the contact centre are high because the services are not easy to use. With support from GDS, The Student Loans Company has embarked on a programme to rebuild the interface for all their online transactions using user-centred methods and an agile approach (details in Annex B, section 1.1). The first new transaction, for part time students, went live in November 2012 and has been shown in testing to be a step-change improvement in usability. Further details are provided in Annex B, section 1.1. The 2012 Budget statement made a commitment that, from 2014, government services will only go live if the minister responsible can demonstrate that they can use the service themselves. In October, two years ahead of the schedule for the test, David Willetts, Minister of State for Universities and Science, successfully completed the application process in just 15 minutes.

Standardising Local Land Charges

Local Land Charges vary widely across different Local Authorities. The lack of standardisation in price, delivery time and format causes usability issues for those searching for Local Land Charges. The Land Registry has collaborated with GDS to explore options for providing a standardised set service across Local Authorities.

A prototype of the service is being developed and this will be used to support a full business case for the project. As well as meeting user needs, the redesigned service will help shift significant transaction volumes to digital channels. Further details are provided in Annex B, section 1.2.

Filing company accounts

Companies House is currently working to improve the customer experience and user journey for web filing services and is also implementing an additional digital transaction in April 2013 to allow the filing of company charge (mortgage) information. The organisation will also improve its search services and is planning a fundamental overhaul of digital services to provide an integrated customer experience across both filing and search services. Further details are provided in Annex B, section 1.3.

Employing people for the first time

When taking on their first employees, businesses need to be able to easily navigate their way through all legal obligations and process owned by different government departments without getting lost or confused in the process. Businesses need confidence that they are complying with all regulations and will not inadvertently break the law, but they are time-poor and want to complete the process quickly and easily. BIS is committed to making this process as simple as possible for businesses.

Working with the GOV.UK team at GDS, BIS has delivered a tool that lists the five things potential employers need to do when employing staff for the first time and links to further information, tools and HMRC transactions off the GOV.UK website. BIS, GDS and HMRC are working together to deliver a second phase which will provide users with a 'guided walk' through their legal obligations when they take on their first member of staff. This will ensure users are not lost along the way so they complete the process of employment as quickly as possible. Further details are provided in Annex B, section 3.1.

Understanding apprenticeships

As part of a framework review of the National Apprenticeship Service, we have been conducting detailed user research to understand our audience. We have carried out contextual interviews with around 65 young people, employers and providers from all over the country. Based on these interviews as well as existing research, we have created a set of personas for each audience group. They are representative of the unique needs of each segment, and are based on user behaviour rather than demographics. Based on the personas, we have created a set of user journeys that will inform the conceptual wireframes for a new apprenticeship service. Further details on the apprenticeship exemplar service are provided in Annex B, section 2.4.

Promoting exports

[Open to Export](#) is a new digital platform delivered in collaboration between UK Trade & Investment and hibu, designed to bring UK businesses best practice knowledge and bespoke advice to help them enter new markets and successfully operate overseas. Annex B, section 3.1

Helping consumers

Citizens Advice has recently expanded and improved its online offer to consumers, including detailed advice and guidance on the most common issues, online decision making tools to guide people through problems to the right solution, and template letters and other tools to help people take their issue to resolution. By integrating these online services with its face to face services and new Consumer service helpline, Citizens Advice now offers a comprehensive suite of consumer help.

Digital technology provides an opportunity to empower citizens and businesses by making data more widely available. Several projects are underway in BIS and its partner organisations to improve public access to data.

Using data to empower users

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is developing a tool to bring together all sources of labour market information that can help people make career choices. The outcome will not be a new website but a tool to give third party developers access to the data in order to develop their own applications.

HEFCE provides official data on each UK university and college's satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey, jobs and salaries data after study and other key information for prospective students through its [Unistats](#) web tool. A new version of the tool was launched in September 2012 with a much improved user interface and access to a broader data set. HEFCE is undertaking a major review of student information needs starting in 2013/14.

The [FE Choices](#) website enables users to search and compare provider ratings for qualification success rates, learner destinations and learner and employer satisfaction.

As part of its consumer empowerment strategy, *Better Choices: Better Deals*, BIS has launched its 'midata' programme. A partnership between Government, consumer groups and major businesses, that aims to give consumers access to the data created through their household utility use, banking and internet transactions and high street loyalty cards. Government will not be building a web tool or releasing the data; instead it is working to encourage organisations to release the data they hold and to stimulate the market to develop services to provide the consumer with insight about the data.

Land Registry provides free access to property price data that allows users to track and compare property values across England and Wales. This data set is used by many commercial organisations, such as Rightmove and Zoopla, to enhance their own products and services.

Collaborating on research

The RCUK Gateway to Research Project will allow public access to information on research funded by the Research Councils. A beta version will be released in December 2012 with the full system being launched by the end of 2013. The Research Councils are also working together to put in place a common web publishing platform for their websites. Annex B, section 3.6.

Annex B provides further information on these and a number of other projects underway across BIS and its partner organisations.

5. Gap and requirements analysis

5.1 An evaluation of our services

Excellent transactional services

There are some excellent examples of digital transactional services in BIS. For example, 75% of all transactions completed with Land Registry and 73% of all transactions completed with Companies House are done digitally, customer satisfaction is high and both are committed to a programme of iterative improvements to the user experience. The Student Loans Company has recently released a radical improvement to the user interface for its part-time student loan application. The Export Control Organisation and the Queens Award's Office – both in core-BIS – have achieved 100% digital take-up of their services by withdrawing non-digital channels.

There are significant improvements needed to a large number of transactional services across BIS. Firstly we need to digitise as many of the 142 services that are currently not available through digital channels. Non-digital services are predominantly provided by the Insolvency Service and IPO.

Just as significantly, we must exploit in full the potential of digital technology to radically improve the user experience and deliver back office efficiencies. In many situations across BIS, previously paper-based services have been put online without transforming them. Customer satisfaction and digital take-up levels are consequently low.

Information, advice and guidance

Guidance on legislation needs to meet the needs of all. Achieving policy outcomes often relies on reaching those with the most complex needs and we need to make sure this detail is provided and can easily be found on GOV.UK. For instance where simple guidance on the National Minimum Wage may answer the needs of most people but there are specific audiences, such as care home employers and interns, who require guidance specific to their situation.

Over the next 18 months many BIS partner organisations will be transitioning their websites across to GOV.UK. These organisations address specific audiences and use digital in different ways to achieve very different business objectives. We need to work with GDS to ensure that these organisations are able to meet the needs of their users, and that we are able to create excellent user journeys across corporate content, information and guidance, campaigns, transactions and more interactive content that may remain off platform.

We are keen to develop better relationships with third parties to put our content and services where the users are. For instance, business support content is currently being syndicated out to Local Enterprise Partnerships. We want to fully exploit this new capability by developing application programming interfaces and syndicated feeds to disseminate tools, services and information more widely.

Improving the range and relevance of interactive advice tools offered will be important to tailoring advice to the specific personal situation of users.

We need to be more effective at using digital channels, including GOV.UK, to change behaviour. Information and campaign activity should be integrated to support policy objectives. This approach can, for instance, help businesses make decisions that will support growth, including exporting, innovating and developing skills in their workforce.

We need to increase the reach of existing services by better promotion and marketing. The National Careers Service has a user satisfaction rating of over 90% but usage of some parts of the website is not as high as we expected. The [FE Choices website](#) contains a very rich dataset but levels of usage are still relatively low.

Engagement in policy-making

We need to make sure that good examples, from across BIS, of using digital channels to open up the policy making process become the norm. All civil servants should feel empowered to use the appropriate tools to engage directly with their audiences. During formal consultation on policy, we should use a digital first approach across the board.

We should be as effective in using our partners' digital channels, and established online communities, as we are in using our owned channels. For almost every BIS policy area there is an external, established, and often vibrant, online conversation. These consist of forums, social media groups, comment threads or Twitter hashtags. We should use these existing communities to test policy ideas and build relationships before initiating a formal consultation, ensuring that policy-making begins with digital.

Digital teams in BIS and partner organisations should be thorough in identifying and understanding the digital and social networks used by our audiences.

Customer-centric transformation of services

Across government, there has often been a failure to radically transform services to provide an integrated customer experience. For some time information has been provided on central websites – previously Directgov and Business Link, and latterly GOV.UK – in a way that groups content around user needs. The same level of transformation has not been achieved for other

services, notably transactions. One exception is work to allow joint filing of company accounts at HMRC and Companies House.

Our immediate focus is on making sure that transactional services are provided digitally and are easy to use. The subsequent focus will be on transforming services from BIS partners and other government departments in a truly customer centric way.

This is particularly relevant to businesses who are often repeat customers of many different government transactions, and where there would be significant benefit from a single 'account' with government. The 'Taking On an Employee' project is a first attempt to integrate services from different government departments around a single user need – businesses taking on their first employees. We will apply lessons learnt from this project to other business needs.

The situation is also relevant to students and learners where we should integrate customer journeys across different services including information about career and study choices, data on courses and transactional services to apply for funding. This is in part being driven by policy developments, such as the expansion of Higher Apprenticeships which cross both FE and HE sectors.

Across all customer groups we will work with GDS and other government departments and agencies to identify how our information and services can be joined up to create better customer journeys, and how we can join up back-end systems to improve the way customers transact and move between services.

Opening up our data

As well as building better services, within and across government departments, there is an opportunity to stimulate the delivery of new and innovative services by third parties by opening up access to data. For instance the "LMI for All" programme being implemented by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, will move a range of large scale datasets on 'Labour Market Information (LMI)' into a format which will be accessible to third parties. In higher education, the full Key Information Set (currently 31,000 courses) is freely available through Government Licence to third party website providers to analyse and present to students.

The Public Data Group (PDG) consists of four BIS Trading Funds: Companies House, Land Registry, Met Office and Ordnance Survey, all with definitive datasets. Its objectives include using the organisations' experience, knowledge and existing relationships to deliver improvements and innovations in public service delivery and efficiencies in the public sector. PDG's initial collaborative work-streams include tackling counter fraud through better access to data and services, and consideration of a national public asset database to support efficiencies in the public sector and private sector growth.

Use of customer data

We are keen to develop ways of capturing customers' experience of using government services in order to improve the way they are delivered – providing a feedback loop from service delivery to policy development. We need to develop a range of mechanisms that capture customer behaviour and feedback in a format that can be used by officials in all departments to create better policy and services. We need to adopt common approaches to evaluating the success of digital activities.

As an example Citizens Advice wants to ensure that the wealth of information they hold about the problems and issues that their clients face, including as consumers, is available on a real time basis to improve policy and to enable better campaigning.

5.2 An evaluation of organisational readiness

Different BIS partner organisations deliver very different digital service at different scale and complexity. Some partner organisations are purely focussed on delivering services to the public; others are essentially Government-facing organisations.

In order to better understand this complex picture we have undertaken an initial and very high level evaluation of digital maturity across BIS organisations. We asked the 24 BIS partner organisations, all delivering digital services and/or with significant digital interaction with customers, to self-identify their level of capability on the [European Digital Capability Framework](#). The Framework defines five levels of digital capability in an organisation from "no awareness" (level 1) to digital being "at the heart of policy and strategy" (level 5).

We then mapped this against the complexity of the digital services they provide. Tier 1 organisations are responsible for high volume and high complexity digital services or web operations; where delivering digital public services is a core business activity. Tier 2 organisations deliver significant digital services at lower scale or complexity. Tier 3 organisations are responsible for some transactional services and/or significant digital engagement, publishing and policy making. Tier 4 organisations use digital channels for important digital engagement, communications and policy making.

Looking at the analysis in the chart below it is reassuring that, on average, those organisations providing the most complex digital services, self-identify with the highest digital maturity. Every BIS organisation delivering public information and transactions should aspire to be at least at a maturity of level 3. There are some obvious outliers, particularly those organisations with complex services at a digital maturity of 2.

To develop this analysis further we will undertake a full audit of digital demand and capability across BIS partner organisations. We will also identify best

practice in digital delivery, including in the private sector, to give a benchmark for BIS and partner organisations. Based on this assessment, we will make recommendations for developing capabilities, including training and senior support and leadership, as well as putting in place adequate resources and structures to deliver our digital programme.

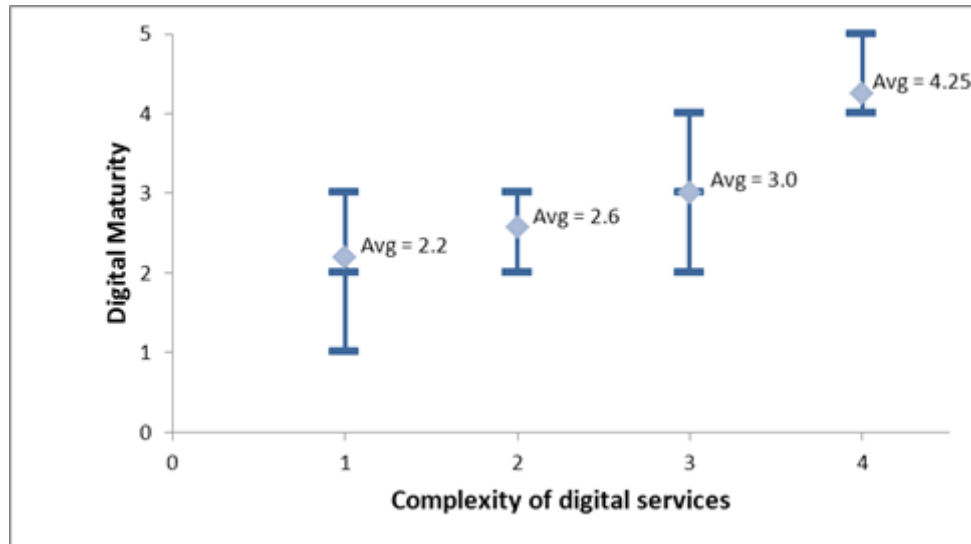


Figure 1: Digital Maturity vs. Complexity of BIS and its partner organisations

Given the complex nature of BIS and its partner organisations a one-size fits all approach to specialist skills is not likely to be appropriate. We expect to recommend a mixed resourcing model, combining full in house teams in those organisations with greatest demand; a combination of in-house and out-sourced specialists for others; and some centralised resourcing provision for smaller BIS partner organisations.

All BIS organisations with a significant digital presence need to ensure they have effective digital leadership, and that there is a good level of capability and confidence in using digital technologies across the whole organisation. Most organisations will also need, as a minimum, a professional digital engagement team and a specialist digital 'intelligent customer function' to identify options for digital delivery of services, procure effectively where external expertise is needed, manage projects and deliver quality, user-centred products.

5.3 Barriers to change

We have outlined an ambitious programme of change that will affect the delivery of transactional services, information, policy making and communications across a large number of diverse organisations. This will not be straightforward but we are confident that we are able to make the change.

Government is not ahead of the curve here, and many barriers are now more easily surmountable than at any other time: technology is more ubiquitous and

commoditised; the financial case has been well made; and society is embracing digital in all other areas.

Becoming digital by default requires much more than just effective use of technology. Critically it also means thinking about the user first, basing operational and policy decisions on data and making progress through repeated, small changes that can be tested with users. The greatest challenges are in culture, capability and structure.

Culture, organisation and capability

There is significant organisational inertia in the civil service. Policy teams need to be able to understand how fast moving digital technologies and trends can help to deliver policy outcomes. Increasing the understanding of the full range of digital channels available and engaging with policy teams is central to changing the culture.

I started out on the helpdesk

Linked to the point above, organisations must have the ability to formally update 'digital' roles that have changed substantially during the course of 3-4 years and may have been spread across different areas of an organisation.

In policy, digital can be perceived purely as a communications activity for promotional purposes rather than policy-making. Digital engagement is often seen only in the context of websites and owned channels. Loss of corporate websites and less reliance on owned channels is seen as detracting from an organisation's value or independence.

We think this is what they want, so can we have a tool to deliver it please?

In many organisations there is a perception that engagement with users is only useful if it yields the 'right' answer. This often leads to projects across all degrees of the digital spectrum that do not best serve the needs of a user. Furthermore, digital tools and techniques are not always used effectively by staff in the course of their work.

More work needs to be done to sell the value of digital engagement and the contribution it can make to policy and deliver outcomes. Many teams are unaware of the level of digital channels visits and engagement, basic online user behaviours and the expectations of our customers in regards to digital information and services.

We'll speak to them nearer the time

Lack of early, meaningful engagement with stakeholder organisations and our audiences can devalue the policy making process. If we are to make best use of the web for open policy-making, then digital has to turn policy making roles into that of facilitators between external groups.

This service cannot be delivered digitally

Even for services that will always be primarily delivered offline, there is always an opportunity for digital to enhance or complement the service, for instance allowing users to book or provide feedback on a face to face interaction.

Delivering excellent digital services requires people to work in cross-functional teams, and across organisational silos – both across government, across departments and within organisations. Where there is disconnect between policy teams and delivery teams; between ICT and the wider business; and between service delivery and communication, there will be a disjointed user experience. An over reliance on outsourced specialist technical expertise can mean organisations lack the capability in house to respond to customers needs.

Digital is just about computers, right?

Organisations need to acknowledge the breadth of digital skills and activity that are required. It is no longer acceptable for digital to reside solely in IT or communication teams, nor for digital to implicitly depend on technology spend or simply social media.

There is a lack of skills and expertise in some areas across BIS, as explored in section 5.2. There is a continuing need to refresh our skills in response to evolving technologies and this is often difficult within the civil service environment. Digital needs to be embedded into personal objectives and business objectives.

The frequent difficulty in sharing data between departments is also a barrier to creating excellent digital services designed around the needs of users. The constraints on sharing data are generally not legal but are cultural.

Finance

The [Digital Efficiency Report](#) has identified the potential benefits of moving to digital services. Achieving these efficiencies will require upfront investment and in the current economic climate there are issues around affordability to overcome.

Technology

In some organisations current back office systems are a significant barrier to developing better digital services. The SLC is making improvements to the user interface as well as rebuilding their back-office banking systems to improve the customer experience. The Insolvency Service case management system is unable to support effective digital delivery for some transactions. The IPO has several separate customer databases which prevent the business having a single view of their customers and customers having a single view of their transactions with the IPO.

Common platforms will help address some of these issues, including identity assurance. There is also a risk that centralised platforms, such as the GOV.UK publishing platform, become a bottleneck and brake on service innovation.

Legislation

We have reviewed all relevant legislation and there are very few legislative barriers which would prevent the development of BIS digital services. There is, for example, only one provision in the Companies Act 2006 that requires a paper rather than an electronic document; whereby the registrar will send a letter to a company to inquire whether it is carrying on business. Some Insolvency Service transactions cannot currently be carried out digitally for example transactions which involve court processes.

As our digital by default projects are carried out, we will look in detail at each area to identify whether any legislative change is required, either under the Electronic Communications Act 2003 or otherwise, to facilitate the effective digital delivery of our services. We will work with Cabinet Office to overcome any legislative barriers identified.

Society

Digital exclusion is a reality for a [significant proportion of the population](#). We need to better understand the level of digital exclusion in some of our target audience segments, including SMEs. What is clear is that some important policy objectives depend on us effectively reaching the socially, and often digitally, excluded. Examples include Citizens Advice and the National Careers Service.

BIS funding makes a significant contribution to improving the nation's digital and internet skills and tackling digital exclusion. Colleges and other providers use their adult skills budget to respond flexibly to the need for digital training in their local communities. We are working alongside other departments to support the network of [UK Online Centres](#) which provide help to those who are most disadvantaged to take their first steps to get online, including access to digital public services.

6. Implementation

BIS is committed to becoming a digital by default organisation. There are important benefits – for users, for the economy and for government – to BIS and its partner organisations developing simple to use and convenient digital services. We do not underestimate the scale of the challenge, due to the number and type of different services we deliver, and the varied nature of BIS partner organisations.

6.1 Capability audit

During the first half of 2013 we will build on initial work on identifying the capability in BIS and partners by doing a full audit of both digital demand (scale and complexity) and capability across BIS. We will identify best practice in digital delivery, including in the private sector, to give a benchmark for BIS and partner organisations. We will work with GDS to identify the range of different specialist skills that BIS organisations may need.

We will work collaboratively across the department, its agencies and arms-length bodies – and at a cross-government level – to make sure all parts of the department have access to the capabilities they need. This is likely to be a mixed model, including organisations:

- with almost all required digital capabilities in house
- with core expertise in house and the ability to source specialist skills either from across the department or wider government, or from specialist SMEs
- with core digital communications and publishing skills and an intelligent customer function (understanding business requirements, procurement, project management) but reliant on the market for specific technical skills
- partially dependent on centrally provided digital communications and publishing skills and a centrally provided intelligent customer function

A central portfolio team and governance structure is in place to manage the implementation of the digital strategy across the department. This will include taking forward actions to improve digital capability across BIS and its partner organisations.

6.2 Leadership

The initial focus for BIS and its partner organisations will be on developing the leadership and capabilities needed to become digital by default organisations. The primary challenge for BIS is to ensure that the culture within each organisation supports the delivery of excellent digital services. We will

develop and communicate a common and shared vision of successful digital delivery across BIS.

We have 'digital leaders' in all BIS organisations with a major digital presence. We will work with the [Government Digital Service](#) to make sure these digital leaders have the support they need to lead the change within their organisations. We will create a network of digital leaders from across BIS to learn from one another about transforming organisations to be digital by default.

Digital projects and programmes will continue to be led and managed by individual partner organisations or teams within the department. We will establish processes for managing and assuring a portfolio of projects across a wide range of partner organisations to ensure they successfully contribute to achieving our digital by default vision and meet the digital by default service standard.

6.3 Expertise

We will also create a network of service managers and other digital specialists across BIS and its partner organisations. This will act as a collective pool of expertise that can act as internal change agents. By working collectively these specialists will be able to do for BIS what the Government Digital Service does for Government, providing a constructive but disruptive influence, as well as promoting existing good practice.

6.4 Transforming digital services

Important digital by default projects are already underway in the Student Loans Company, Land Registry and Companies House. We will now focus efforts on achieving meaningful transformation by implementing four new exemplar digital projects.

- Intellectual Property Office – Online management of IP rights: companies, intermediaries and individuals will be able to apply for, track and manage their patents, trademarks and designs in an integrated on-line service that is far easier and more convenient to use.
- Insolvency Service Redundancy Payments: employees facing the challenge of redundancy will be able to apply for and access financial support from Government in a more immediate and easy to navigate manner than current channels allow, as will the insolvency practitioners administering cases.
- Land Registry Digital Service Delivery: home buyers and business intermediaries will be able to search for, gain data on and register property in the UK without the delays inherent in current disjointed, paper based systems.
- National Apprenticeship Service: customer journeys across information and transactions will be integrated so individuals can find information

tailored to their needs and search and apply for opportunities in an engaging and inspiring way. Employers will be able to self-serve quickly and easily to advertise vacancies and identify suitable candidates.

These exemplar and existing digital by default projects are part of organisation-wide digital transformation programmes that should radically improve the delivery of services to BIS customers. The six organisations involved deliver 177 of 241 BIS transactional services and 94% of transaction volume. Further details on these projects are provided in Annex B, sections 1 and 2.

6.5 Developing good practice

We will learn by doing, both within and across BIS and its partner organisations.

We will build confidence at all levels of the department in our ability to deliver excellent digital services by showcasing the achievements and benefits of our exemplar and other digital by default projects.

We will build a set of case studies (by March 2013) of online policy making and use these to develop confidence and capability across BIS and partner organisations. We will refocus efforts on creating great digital content that can be distributed across multiple channels, and move away from a reliance on corporate websites. We will learn from our customers by making sure the right feedback loops exist, both within delivery organisations but also from delivery organisations to policy teams.

Annex A – Actions from the Government Digital Strategy

Action 1: Digital Leadership

From the Digital Government Strategy: Departmental and transactional agency boards will include an active digital leader

- departments will have in place an engaged, active, board-level leadership of service transformation
- Digital Leaders will lead on development and delivery of departmental digital strategies.

BIS has appointed a board member, [Stephen Lovegrove](#) (Chief Executive of the Shareholder Executive) to lead the department's Digital Strategy. That work reports through the Operations Committee to the Department Executive Board.

There is also an existing network of senior leaders in all BIS partner organisations with a significant digital presence, appointed to lead on their digital strategy. We will ensure that digital leaders in each organisation are equipped to fulfil the role as set out in the Government Digital Strategy.

Partner Organisation digital leaders will consider the implications of the BIS and Government digital strategies on their customers, services and operations and ensure the principles and actions become embedded in their organisation's business plans. The department will ensure this network of digital leaders work collectively to share experience and expertise, and to address common issues. Digital Leaders met as a group, including with senior GDS officials, in July and we will continue to draw digital leaders together to create links and to share and learn from good practice.

Action 2: Redesigning services

From the Digital Government Strategy: Services handling over 100,000 transactions each year will be re-designed, operated and improved by a suitably skilled, experienced and empowered Service Manager

- Service Managers will be in place for new and redesigned transactions from April 2013
- Departments will ensure all transactional services have clearly identified Service Managers by March 2015

Companies House, the Insolvency Service, the Intellectual Property Office, the Land Registry, the National Apprenticeship Service, the Skills Funding Agency and the Student Loans Company (SLC) all deliver services handling over 100,000 transactions each year.

Work is already underway to ensure appropriately skilled Service Managers are in place, starting with the SLC who have recruited a specialist Service Manager. The GDS Service Transformation team worked with the SLC to ensure that this person is suitably skilled, experienced and empowered.

From April 2013 we will work with other BIS organisations that are redesigning services to be digital by default to identify or recruit suitable service managers. For exemplar services we will ensure that securing service managers is included within project scoping.

For existing transactional services which are not being redesigned, by summer 2013 we will work to identify:

- the current Service Manager, if there is one, and how the Service Manager role can be filled if there is not
- what further support service managers needs in terms of training, development and senior sponsorship

Action 3: Digital capability

From the Digital Government Strategy: All Departments will ensure that they have appropriate digital capability in-house, including specialist skills

- departments will have sufficient specialist capability to assess and manage their portfolio of digital services
- plans to improve departments' digital capability will be included in departmental digital strategies and business planning process

We will undertake a full audit of digital demand and capability across BIS partner organisations by spring 2013, building on the review of marketing capability already underway across BIS. We will also identify best practice in digital delivery, including in the private sector, to give a benchmark for BIS and partner organisations. Based on this assessment, by summer 2013 we will make recommendations for developing capabilities, including training and senior support and leadership, as well as putting in place adequate resources and structures to deliver our digital programme.

The appropriate resourcing and structure is likely to be a mixed model, combining: full in house teams in those organisations with greatest demand; a combination of in-house and out-sourced specialists for others; some centralised resourcing provision for smaller BIS partner organisations.

Following the move to GOV.UK, by spring 2013 we will also complete the rationalisation and professionalisation of web publishers in core BIS.

A central portfolio team is in place to manage the implementation of the digital strategy across the department, as well as to ensure that projects and programmes underway across the department are aligned with the Government and BIS digital strategies.

Action 4: Support and training for staff

From the Digital Government Strategy: Cabinet Office will support improved digital capability across departments

- Service Managers will be offered an extensive programme of training and support, run by Government Digital Service from summer 2013
- senior officials across all departments will be offered training to highlight the strategic opportunities offered by digital from summer 2013
- the revised Graduate Fast Stream programme will look for placement opportunities with a digital delivery service
- digital skills development across all grades will be a priority in the Civil Service Capabilities Plan, likely to be published in November 2012, supported by Civil Service Learning

By spring 2013 BIS will identify all Service Managers, Digital Leaders, relevant senior officials and specialists to take part in digital training. Digital Leaders across BIS and its partner organisations will actively support the uptake of digital capability building through training in all organisations and across all grades of the civil service.

Action 5: Exemplar services

From the Digital Government Strategy: All Departments will redesign services with over 100,000 transactions per year. For the 7 transactional departments [including BIS]:

- 3 significant 'exemplar' services will be agreed with Cabinet Office and identified in departmental digital strategies in December 2012, alongside delivery plans
- redesign will start by April 2013 and the service must be implemented by March 2015
- following this and using the learning from the exemplars, departments will redesign all services handling over 100,000 transactions each year, unless an exemption has been agreed

All BIS partner organisations responsible for services with over 100,000 transactions (see list at Action 2) are currently redesigning their services, or are planning to do so. BIS has identified 4 exemplar services that will be redesigned as digital by default.

Intellectual Property Office – Online management of IP rights

Companies, intermediaries and individuals will be able to apply for, track and manage their Patents, Trade Marks and Designs in a simple to use and integrated on-line service that is far easier and more convenient to use than the current paper based approach.

Insolvency Service – Redundancy Payments

Employees who are facing the challenge of redundancy will be able to apply for and access financial support from Government in a more immediate and easy to navigate manner than current channels allow, as will the insolvency practitioners administering cases.

Land Registry – Digital Service Delivery

Home buyers and business intermediaries will be able to search for, gain data on and register property in the UK, without the need for the delays inherent in current disjointed, paper based systems.

National Apprenticeship Service

All customer journeys across information and transactions will be integrated so individuals can find information tailored to their needs and search, view and apply for opportunities online in an engaging and inspiring way. Employers will be able to quickly and easily self-serve to engage with Apprenticeships and advertise vacancies and identify suitable candidates.

Further details are provided on these projects in Annex B, alongside details on other digital by default projects underway in the SLC, Companies House and Land Registry. All of these projects are part of organisation-wide digital transformation programmes that should radically improve the delivery of services to BIS customers.

Action 6: Digital by Default service standard

From the Digital Government Strategy: From April 2014, all new or redesigned transactional services will meet the Digital by Default service standard.

We will work with the Government Digital Service to help set the digital by default service standard. Once it has been agreed and published we will work to ensure that all new or redesigned BIS services meet the new standard, and existing services are redesigned to meet the standard where possible.

All BIS Partner Organisations responsible for significant transactional services are currently redesigning, or have plans to redesign their services (see Action 5). From 2013 all digital projects will be assessed by the department to ensure they meet the service standard before agreement to proceed is given.

Action 7: Single government website

From the Digital Government Strategy: Corporate publishing activities of all 24 central Government Departments will move onto GOV.UK by March 2013, with agency and arms length bodies' online publishing to follow by March 2014

- resources for the transition to GOV.UK will be included in departmental digital strategies

As one of the trailblazer departments in the move of publishing activities to GOV.UK the BIS website went live in December.

As a trailblazer BIS is well placed to advise both GDS and our partner organisations on the work that is involved for their move to GOV.UK by March 2014. This will be challenging given the varied nature of their work, but the digital team at BIS will assist partners in planning their move, including building the necessary capability and resource, and communicating the transition to users and stakeholders. BIS partners will fund and manage the necessary editorial support themselves.

Action 8: Driving uptake of digital

From the Digital Government Strategy: Departments will raise awareness of their digital services so that more people know about them and use them

- departments will set out plans to encourage channel shift in departmental digital strategies. These will be reviewed annually
- departments will publish plans that clearly identify the savings they expect to make as a result of increased use of digital services

BIS partner organisations have been actively working to encourage people to use digital channels. In most cases further channel shift will only be achieved by building digital services where they do not exist or redesigning existing services to make them easier to use.

Across all services we will take action to drive uptake of digital channels and by summer 2013 we will identify opportunities for further channel shift in

existing digital services. In many situations in BIS and partner organisations awareness is not the primary constraint on uptake.

Take up of digital transactional services is generally high and many services are already delivered exclusively digitally – for instance export control licensing, applications for [Queens Awards for Enterprise](#) and the [Graduate Talent Pool](#) service within BIS (Annex B, section 3.2). Some of our high volume services already have very high digital take-up, for instance Companies House achieves 73% for registrations and 99% for search and Land Registry achieves 75%.

We are pursuing an ambitious programme of service redesign outlined in under Actions 5 and 6. Programmes are underway in the SLC and Companies House (Annex B, sections 1.1 and 1.3) to radically improve the customer experience. Three of our digital by default exemplar projects will digitise a large number of paper transactions. The Insolvency Service will achieve 42 and IPO will achieve 100.

Many BIS services will remain multi-channel services, particularly where user needs or business needs require tailored, in-depth interaction with customers. The National Careers Service provides face to face advice for hard to reach groups. The [Business Link contact centre](#) provides advice and guidance for those whose needs cannot be met online. Acas conciliation services are generally best delivered face to face. In all these situations we will exploit the full potential of digital to support and enhance these targeted face to face and telephone services.

Action 9: Assisted digital

From the Digital Government Strategy: There will be a cross-government approach to assisted digital. This means that people who have rarely or never been online will be able to access services offline, and we will provide additional ways for them to use the digital services

- departments will explain in their digital strategies how they will ensure that digital services include a consistent service for people who have rarely or never been online

BIS is committed to supporting people who cannot use digital services. As BIS services are redesigned as digital by default services we will assess how to support those who cannot use digital services through an assisted digital approach.

This approach to assisted digital will begin with the four exemplar projects identified in our strategy. Full business cases for these projects will determine the level of assisted digital support needed, based on a thorough understanding of the needs of service users. We will also determine the appropriate alternative channel for assisted digital delivery which will be

dependent on commercial, user and business requirements. We will work with other government departments to reuse existing contracts for external assisted digital provision where appropriate.

We support the use of existing government-sponsored providers – including Post Offices, Citizens Advice Bureaux and UK Online Centres – to deliver assisted digital support to citizens and businesses.

Action 10: Tendering and procurement

From the Digital Government Strategy: Cabinet Office will offer leaner and more lightweight tendering processes, as close to the best practice in industry as our regulatory requirements allow.

BIS welcomes the support that Cabinet Office and the Government Digital Service will provide to departments on tendering and procurement. BIS also strongly supports this initiative as it will help support a vibrant information economy, one of the Government's strategic sectors to support our growth agenda.

Action 11: Common technology platforms

From the Digital Government Strategy: Cabinet Office will lead in the definition and delivery of a new suite of common technology platforms which will underpin the new generation of digital services.

BIS welcomes the support from Cabinet Office and the Government Digital Service on common technology platforms. Developing an effective and customer-centric approach to identity assurance, particularly for businesses, will be important for BIS and partner organisations undertaking further digitisation of secure services.

The Public Service Mapping Agreement provides common access to Ordnance Survey geographical data for all central and local government. This is in effect a common mapping platform for government. (Annex B).

Action 12: Removing legislative barriers

From the Digital Government Strategy: Cabinet Office will continue to work with departments to remove legislative barriers which unnecessarily prevent the development of straightforward and convenient digital services

- Departments will identify existing legislative barriers in their departmental digital strategies

We are not currently aware of any significant legislative barriers to achieving digital by default for our services. Further details are provided in section 5.3. We will work with Cabinet Office to identify any legislative barriers, in particular as we rebuild services to be digital by default.

Action 13: Management information

From the Digital Government Strategy: Departments will supply a consistent set of management information (as defined by the Cabinet Office) for their transactional services

- departments will begin reporting against defined data-sets from April 2013
- digital by default services will include automated collection of management information

BIS partner organisations with high volume transactional services (Student Loans Company, Land Registry, Companies House and the National Apprenticeship Service) are working with the Government Digital Service to report cost per transaction data for digital and other channels. In early 2013 we will work with the Government Digital Service to refine the standard set of management information. We will ensure all BIS exemplar services, and those subsequently redesigned, will include automated collection of management information as part of the project requirements. Departments also require full management information on content on GOV.UK. We are working with GDS to ensure we are able to track customer behaviours in a way that supports policy work.

Action 14: Digital engagement and consultations

From the Digital Government Strategy: Policy teams will use digital tools and techniques to engage with and consult the public

- departments will incorporate plans in their departmental digital strategies to listen to and understand conversations in social media, use the insight gained to inform the policy-making process and to collaborate more effectively with partners

BIS will build on our trailblazing examples of online, more open, policy making, sharing best practice in policy development and consultations, so that all teams are able to use digital tools appropriately to listen, consult and engage our audiences. By spring 2013 we will publish five examples of better policy making being achieved through use of the public web. These should include examples of:

-
- using third parties' digital channels to broaden participation
 - using social media channels to receive responses to consultations
 - clearer descriptions of proposed policy, supported by rich media
 - real time engagement between officials, ministers and the public

By the end of 2013 we expect all teams to be listening to what their audiences are saying online, and using digital tools to engage wherever it is appropriate.

Annex B – Digital by Default projects

Three BIS partner organisations are already working on Digital by Default projects with support from the GDS Service Transformation team. These are the Student Loans Company, Land Registry and Companies House. In addition to these three projects, which are already underway, the department has identified four new Digital by Default projects which will serve as exemplars in our programme to rebuild transactional services around user needs. These projects are summarised below.

1. Current Digital by Default projects

1.1 Student Loans Company Digital Delivery

What is the user need?

Students rely on the [SLC](#) to ensure they can receive the funding they need to allow them to go to university. There are a range of products available, including loans and grants paid to students to support them directly, and tuition fee loans paid to higher and further education institutions. SLC manage these payments for all eligible students from England and the EU on behalf of BIS as well as students from NI and Wales on behalf of the Devolved Authorities.

What problem with the existing service will the project address?

Each year, over 1.1m applications for Student Finance are handled by the Student Loans Company. For many, it is their first time having any interaction with either the Government or a financial institution.

Individuals' circumstances can be very different. A number of variables (such as residency, income, dependents, nationality, previous qualifications, disability) determine the applicants' entitlements. This means that the application process requires a substantial number of questions to be asked of an applicant. All in all, approximately 350 potential questions exist for a full time higher education applicant.

Returning and prospective students currently apply for and manage their student finance through the on-line application accessed via GOV.UK. 90% of applications are completed on line, however this complex process has a user dissatisfaction level of 64%. There are at present between three and four calls per application, and it is estimated that approximately 60% of calls to the SLC are 'avoidable' – that is with a simpler, more tailored and interactive online service these calls would not be required.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

The SLC Digital Delivery Programme has been working closely with the Government Digital Service (GDS) to improve usability, and has been identified as one of the first major online transactions that GDS will support going live on the new GOV.UK platform.

GDS has endorsed the programme and has recommended that it be set up on a permanent basis with a core of permanent SLC staff. Over the coming years the SLC Transformation Programme will change both business and ICT operations in order to provide customer focused, robust and efficient solutions and services.

The analysis to support the procurement of core systems replacements will run through to 2013 with the view to an initial go-live in 2015.

Over the period of September 2010 to 2011, the SLC handled 4,758,016 calls. This required between 340 and 765 staff, at a monthly cost of £1,486 per staff member. An analysis of highest volume calls shows that a significant portion of 'avoidable' calls could have been addressed through:

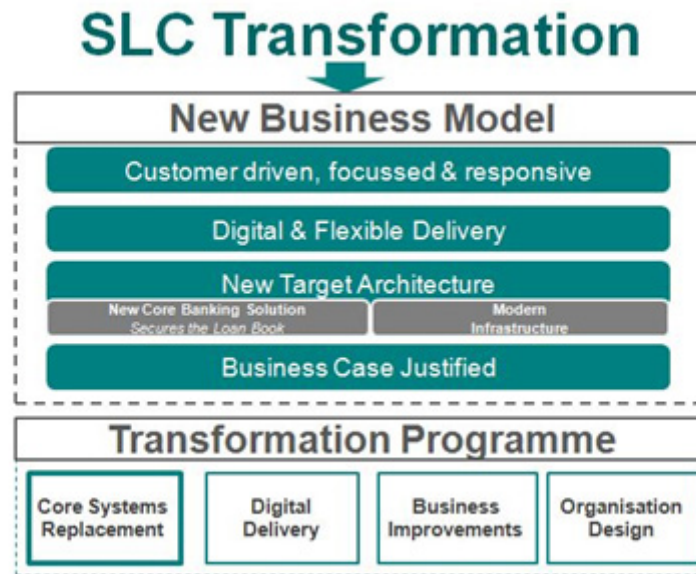
- better information, advice and guidance
- better confirmation of transactions having been completed
- clearer navigation through processes
- clearer delineation of sponsor (parent/partner) / student dependencies
- correction of poor functional design (e.g. password reset)

The Customer Insight team expect savings of approximately 60% of avoidable calls based on their involvement in the User Experience Testing. This is estimated to be £1.775m per annum.

What approach is being taken?

The Student Loans Company has established a programme to deliver a simple, efficient and satisfying experience to users applying for and querying their financial support. Initially a project mandate was established to replace the legacy higher education full time application on Directgov. Subsequently applications for part time tuition fee loans and 24+ Advanced Learning Loans have been brought into scope to ensure these new products benefit from the user centric approach and agile delivery techniques.

In time a number of other user groups (EU students and students applying for disabled student allowance), products and channels will come into scope. Any project where there is an online consumer transactional element will be developed by the programme.



At the core of the Digital Delivery Programme is an agile delivery methodology which delivers working software in small increments. Periodically these increments are tried out by target users and if they find elements difficult, modifications are made. The Digital Delivery Programme has the following goal:

“Improve customer satisfaction while simultaneously decreasing the number of incorrect/incomplete online applications and minimise the level of assistance throughout the process”

This provides the team with a clear vision to guide their day-to-day decision making. A number of measures are being established to verify delivery against the goal, including:

- Decrease in volume of calls by call reason per application
- Feedback from User Experience Testing
- On-line satisfactions surveys
- Analysis of Analytics (time to complete applications / drop-outs)
- Number of complaints raised by application area
- Decreased volumes of chaser letters
- The number of applications that are received with incorrect evidence

- The number of applications that can be processed automatically without assessor intervention.

How will the project help with channel shift?

The SLC already has high online take-up rates, with close to 90% of applications being made online. The aim of the programme is to continue to increase this, but more importantly to reduce the need for customers to seek support from the contact centres when using the online transactional services.

How will the project help develop digital leadership and capability?

In order to be able to make decisions quickly and to ensure that customers are kept at the heart of design, it was decided to build a delivery-focused cross functional team. This is led by the Product Manager, who prioritises the requirements that are to be built by the team, verifies designs and implementation and works along with the Product Management Group to create a roadmap for the programme that ensures that the most pressing user requirements are prioritised. The Product Manager is a member of SLC's senior management team and reports directly to the executive. In addition to this, the project team has two full time User Interface designers, a full time Editor to create information, advice and guidance at the point of need and a User Acceptance Tester to ensure the system is continually tested.

The Digital Delivery Board has three company executives and a director from GDS, ensuring that the programme has the appropriate level of senior support and visibility. It has been extremely beneficial to the project in helping to achieve change, as the development approach and design have required different procedures than those of traditional project management methods.

Other aspects of the project relevant to the Government Digital Strategy

This project aligns with the Digital by Default strategy and the aims of GDS. Of particular relevance is the clear user-led nature of the programme, and the highly effective business value led incremental delivery model. By taking an incremental approach and constantly reconfirming the solutions with customers and operational users confidence that the resulting systems will meet their needs has been shown to be justifiably high.

1.2 Land Registry – Local Land Charges (LLC)

The provision of LLC searches is a statutory service provided by 354 Local Authorities (LAs) across England & Wales. The service offered varies greatly across the LAs with prices ranging from £40 to £220, processing time ranging from 2 to 20+ days and formats varying from Authority to Authority.

What is the user need?

Local Authority Land Charges apply to all types of land and property and are a binding obligation on property or land, which passes to successive owners or

occupiers. Searches of these records provide essential information in the conveyancing process, and are an integral requirement by a lender for securing a mortgage.

Solicitors and conveyancers require this information for property purchases to take place, while the citizens need to understand the obligations attached to a potential property purchase.

An Official Local Authority LLC search is divided into two parts:

- A search of the Register of Local Land Charges which contains details of all local land charges registered against land or property that are binding on the current owner and all successive owners of the land
- The form "Enquiries of Local Authority" (known as forms CON29 'R' and 'O') supplements the Register of Local Land Charges by seeking information which is outside the scope of a land charge but relevant to an intending purchaser/mortgagee by giving information about the property and the effect on it or proposed effect e.g. planning, building regulations, highways.

What problem with the existing service will the project address?

The lack of standardisation of searches resulted in the citizen not having a clear view of the property purchase they are due to make. The variation in search prices has resulted in a postcode lottery. Stakeholders asked Land Registry if they could explore providing the service at standard prices, delivery times and format. Land Registry has identified three further problems with the service:

- Variation in the quality and format of data held in Local Authorities
- A declining level service in Local Authorities
- Limited accessibility for property professional and citizens.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

[Land Registry](#) has collaborated with Government Digital Service (GDS) to explore options for providing a standardised service to customers and to make the data held by Local Authorities accessible for customers and private sector organisations.

A prototype will address the viability of the Land Registry providing the Local Land Charges service as a standardised service, while seeking technology and standards for publishing the Con 29 information and providing access to Local Authority information, not currently easily accessible.

Business case overview

- Prototype cost - £1.3m
- Forecast five year cost - £16m (subject to results of prototype)
- Current cost of service across Local Authorities - £69m
- Projected running cost of service by LR - £5.8m (subject to results of prototype)
- Reduced cost of search provision

Customer and other benefits

- Standardisation of service: Customers will be able to lodge search requests through Land Registry's electronic channels and receive searches at a standardised price, service level agreement and format.
- Costs and environmental impact: Provides an opportunity to reduce costs such as postal and manual processing. Supports customers' efforts to cut back on paper.
- Land Registry Strategy: Unlock efficiency in the public sector and land and property market. Maximise the re-use of data for the benefit of the wider economy. Increase and extend the assurance and compliance to the housing market.

Key milestones

- Prototype – November 2012 – December 2013
- Full HMT Business Case – December 2013
- Implementation starts April 2014 and finishes by 2017
- Full migration of the service to Land Registry begins– April 2014

What approach is being taken?

The prototype has been developed by our own in-house IT team, product development and operational staff within Land Registry in collaboration with GDS using agile methodology.

Land Registry is exploring new technology for the publication of data with GDS.

Land Registry will seek partnership arrangements with SME's and other stakeholders with expertise in this area for delivery of the entire service. A number of partnership options are open to Land Registry and they will be explored through engagement and a series of industry days throughout the prototype.

The features of the approach:

- Iterative development starting with Proof of Concept
- Regular Focus Group meetings with Local Authorities throughout development
- Prototype development rolled out to small number of customers to test
- Local Authorities involved in review and sign-off of data quality standards for the register
- On-site technical and operational support provided to prototype Local Authorities
- Customer and Local Authority case studies used to explain benefits
- Industry days with private sector stakeholders affected by the service, in order to set data standards for publication of data
- Ongoing legal and policy development with Communities and Local Government and other stakeholders – Law Society; Coal Authority; Land Data.

How will the project help with channel shift?

Approximately 25% of Local Land Charges data is not currently held in a digital format – Land Registry will seek to digitise that data during the project.

Searches are not currently delivered to the customer without manual intervention – Land Registry believes it can deliver searches of single residential properties without manual intervention through its current electronic channels. This represents 57% of Local Authority searches which could be processed entirely electronically. The total number of searches currently purchased by customers is 1.2 million per year. Con 29 information is not currently easily accessible for the customer – Land Registry intends to publish that data to open standards and provide licensing agreements for access to that data.

How the project will help develop digital leadership and capability?

Digital delivery of services is a key priority for Land Registry and this project has been given the highest priority in Land Registry, providing a clear focus and leadership from its boards. The extensive research undertaken in the last year with Local Authorities and customers highlights the close synergies in Land Registry capability in the operational delivery of this service. This service will be an extension of our current capability. Customer relationships will be managed through our customer teams. Land Registry has 150 years experience of managing and maintaining registers and has been delivering electronic searches since 1997 therefore this service is a natural fit with our future strategy.

Other aspects of the project relevant to the Government Digital Strategy

This project aligns perfectly with the Digital by Default strategy and the aims of GDS. GDS is looking to work with local, not just central government and this project provides a perfect opportunity to digitise a key data set that has been described by some as 'the crown jewels of local authority records'.

1.3 Companies House Single Service: Radical redesign of filing and search services

What is the user need?

Companies House's customer base needs to interact with [Companies House](#) to register company information, and to search company information. Digital uptake is currently at 73% across the range of registration transactions and 99% for search. Companies are required to file certain information with the Registrar, and it is incumbent on Companies House to make this process as quick and simple as possible. Customers searching information on the register do so for a wide variety of reasons, but usually to inform business decisions. To help facilitate decision making, it is important that Companies House make this information as readily available as possible, through simple and user-friendly services.

What problem with the existing service will the project address?

Currently there are two digital channels available to customers filing information; WebFiling, a web-based service, and Software Filing, an XML-based service which allows the submission of data from software packages. Screen based services for searching information are Companies House Direct (CHD), a subscription based service, WebCheck, a pay-as-you-go service and the Companies House app. Companies House also offers a range of means of accessing data, including xml and URI (Uniform Resource Identifier) services and the provision of bulk data.

Companies House's developments are focused on improving the customer experience and user journeys for web filing services. We will also be implementing an additional digital transaction in April 2013 to allow the filing of company charge (mortgage) information.

In the future we will also address our ageing search systems. Having made some improvements, we are now planning a more radical change to our services which will provide an integrated approach and customer experience for both filing and search. We are also planning to provide accounts information as data for the first time.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

The incremental improvements made to date have been well received by customers. This is attributable in large part to the user testing and feedback built in throughout the development process. Making filing services quicker

and simpler benefits both the customer and Companies House: the customer expends less time and effort on complying with statutory requirements and is more likely to get it right first time (a further time saving), whilst Companies House benefits through reduced resource requirements for processing a higher quality input.

What approach is being taken?

Companies House uses an agile development approach (Scrum). Developments are based on customer insight and feedback, with early concept testing and iterative usability testing forming an integral part of development. We are currently developing a usability suite to enable us to carry out this important activity in-house.

How will the project help with channel shift?

With the level of electronic services at over 99% any changes to the look and feel of search services are aimed at improving the customer experience, rather than driving digital take-up.

For filing information, at November 2012 overall digital take-up stands at 73%. However, this masks a differential between the current 49% take-up for accounts filing, and other documents at an average of 76%. Within this average figure, there is a significant difference, with digital take-up of incorporation and annual returns at 97%.

Currently, 92% of transactions (by volume) with Companies House could be carried out electronically, and the company charge project mentioned above will raise this to around 94%. However, this enablement is through a relatively small number of transactions and there remains a long tail of approximately 200 low volume transactions (each representing below 1% by volume) that are not currently e-enabled. Whilst Companies House is mindful of the need to identify a simple and cost effective digital solution for these transactions, the real improvements to electronic take-up and customer benefits currently stand to be achieved through improving usability of existing electronic services.

In short, the improvements are currently not expected to digitise those transactions that are not currently enabled, but we do anticipate that they will contribute to the customer experience and position us to drive electronic take-up.

How will the project help develop digital leadership and capability?

As the project will focus on iterative changes, there will be minimal impact on Companies House's digital capability. However, as Companies House develops new search services, like the URI service and mobile applications, digital capability within Companies House is enhanced. Our concentration on improvements of this nature and our focus on them as a fundamental means of driving up customer satisfaction send out a strong message to our staff

about our commitment to a digital future and to our customers about our commitment to the provision of excellent digital services.

Other aspects of the project relevant to the Government Digital Strategy

Regarding the Cabinet Office Identity Assurance programme, we see a functioning identity ecosystem as of benefit to both citizen and business customers for government services, and are therefore eager to ensure that the aims for such a system should consider the needs of both groups.

2. Exemplar Digital by Default projects

2.1 Intellectual Property Office – Online management of IP rights

The project will ultimately enable [IPO](#) to meet the strategic goals for a fully electronic environment and new electronic services to meet customer demand. It will transform the way customers interact with IPO using digital as the primary channel for registering, managing and maintaining Intellectual Property (IP) rights.

The initial focus for delivery will be an online renewal service for Patents and an Identity Assurance Solution to authenticate users and protect their IP rights. The online Patent renewal accounts for over 370,000 transactions per annum for the IPO and ranks as one of the top priority requests by our users in a recent customer survey.

What is the user need?

IPO users interact with the IPO in order to register their IP rights to cover Patent inventions, Trade Marks and Designs for their commercial protection. Once granted users need to continue to interact with the IPO in order to manage and maintain their rights which involves regularly renewing their protection.

IPO users need information and guidance in the use of IP rights which includes acquisition, management, infringement and opposition.

IPO services are also used by European and Worldwide users to register and maintain their rights in the UK and Europe which requires the flow and exchange of information and data between national offices and other international patent organisations e.g. European Patent Office.

Customer insight through user surveys has shown there is a high demand to make more services available electronically in particular renewals, maintenance of register details and management of payment accounts.

What problem with the existing service will the project address?

The current online service offering is limited to a small number of transactions and does not cover the full range of services offered by the IPO. Some of the

existing electronic services are not 'end-to-end' or are via third parties and are not available online.

Customer information is currently held in separate legacy applications which is not conducive to enabling a joined up electronic service offering. The internal business processes involve manual data input and validation which need to be made more efficient. The web systems infrastructure requires a refresh to meet open data/interoperability requirements, user centred design (user journey) and support electronic as the primary customer channel.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

The estimated project costs are in the region of £2.8 million over three years. The benefits the project will deliver include increased user satisfaction through convenient and easy to use online services and internal efficiencies through less manual processing and re-keying, as users shift to online from paper forms. The project will also implement open data standards to improve communications between the IPO, users and other national intellectual property offices. The project will start in 2012 and is expected to complete in 2015.

What approach is being taken?

The project will partner with a third party supplier using a government framework to procure an agile software development approach for the new service. The online renewal will be used to build confidence and capability to deliver the rest of the online services. It will adopt a user centred strategy to ensure user needs are at the heart of the project.

How will the project help with channel shift?

The project will deliver the electronic capability for our users to carry out all their transactional services with IPO online. The online service will be quick, convenient and easy to use with a greater differentiation over the traditional paper forms which will be used to market the new online service.

The project will empower users to self-manage their interaction with IPO with new electronic capability, for example an online account management function. It will also investigate new electronic services for mobile and smart devices.

How will the project help develop digital leadership and capability?

The project will develop:

- the IT in-house capability to support and deliver electronic services;
- metrics for the effective management of the new services;

- the digital leadership capability for managing and developing e-services e.g. Product Owner/Manager.

Other aspects of the project relevant to the Government Digital Strategy

The project will require a user registration and level 2 authentication solution to provide secure access to pre-published information. It will work with GDS and the Identity Assurance Supplier framework contract to source the solutions. The solution will require authentication for the citizen user, intermediaries and businesses in the UK, EEA and outside the EEA.

2.2 Insolvency Service – Redundancy Payments (RPS)

What is the user need?

Citizen/Business - Less duplication of being asked to provide information; earlier claim resolution; and improved assurance in the accuracy of decisions taken/payments made; enablement of electronic communication and self-serve enquiries.

Specialist - The ability for insolvency practitioners to feed information from their own case systems direct to [The Insolvency Service](#) and to receive claim updates automatically, a reduced administration requirement (less paperwork, post, processing) so lower costs.

Government - Automated data flows between The Insolvency Service and the other government bodies, in particular DWP for universal credit & recoupment, significantly reducing administrative workloads and reducing need for benefit payment adjustments.

What problem with the existing service will the project address?

At present The Insolvency Service offers few online enabled processes. It recently enabled an online excel spreadsheet, which allows Insolvency Practitioners to submit case details via an XML feed rather than in paper form. However, this is only the semi-digitisation of a single transaction, rather than enablement of the end to end process.

Long and complicated forms have to be completed often requiring assistance from the IP or RPS, resulting in delays to claim settlement as errors in data require manual processing and indexing causing slower claim settlement at a higher cost to all stakeholders.

Current process delays and lack of clarity drives high level of avoidable telephone contact.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

- Investment of up to £1.68m and operational costs of £2.39m will provide £1.43m savings over six years.

- The project is expected to take two to three months to be ready to approach potential suppliers, with a delivery phase of between nine and twelve months thereafter.

What approach is being taken?

- We will commission external expertise to test products and findings already available and to work with internal team members and transfer skills. An internal project manager will be appointed – and be coached by the external experts.
- The live project will use GDS best practice in agile implementation to deliver a relatively early inception phase, which can then be refined through alpha and beta releases.
- We will adopt a participative process, working with groups of colleagues, government and external customers and stakeholders in different locations, co-developing the design via workshops.

How will the project help with channel shift?

- The RPS project will result in 42 transactional services being digitised and a total of around 1.4m transactions per year shifting to digital channels

How will the project help develop digital leadership and capability?

- Presents RPS as a 21st Century customer focussed organisation.
- This management team are committed to digital engagement. The automation of the current high volume of manual/paper processes would deliver significant early benefits.
- Release staff cost associated with basic processing work = lower unit cost per transaction.
- Making submission of important data simpler, less post/paper reliant and enabling faster, accurate, "right first time" data which is checked at point of entry for all stakeholders.
- It will achieve connectivity with wider government – e.g. DWP for universal credit purposes and as a potential digital assistance partner (Job Centre Plus) - whilst improving service to the citizen and specialist customer groups.
- Successful delivery will demonstrate the capability of GDS and suppliers to other areas of the Insolvency Service, improving confidence for wider roll-out of online delivery organisation-wide.
- The base infrastructure of the RPS project (hosting, identity assurance solutions) would form a key enabler to potential delivery of debtor

petition reform proposals currently being debated as part of the [Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill 2012-13](#).

Other aspects of the project relevant to the Government Digital Strategy

- BIS funding has only been made available for 2012-13 to complete project scope and definition and for supplier liaison. Funding has not yet been approved for actual delivery in 2013-14.
- Management of secure access to the portal remains unclear. The costs indicated herein include provision of such security, but whilst meeting all necessary security standards, this must be a "plug-in" to enable replacement by GDS solution. As such the Insolvency Service is keen to work with other organisations with similar identity assurance needs, and to utilise any government-wide initiatives in this area, or in the area of secured hosting.

2.3 Land Registry – Digital Service Delivery

Land Registry has recently developed a new Business Strategy that has been designed, amongst other things, to drive efficiency in, Land Registry, the conveyancing process and across the wider public sector. A key objective of the strategy is to 'Digitise the information and registration elements of the conveyancing process'.

95% of Land Registry's current information services are already received electronically. To meet the registration element of this objective a 'Digital Service Delivery' programme of work has been identified that will significantly drive up electronic lodgement of registration applications beyond the current 30%, enable self-service, re-use of data and bring significant customer benefits.

The services Land Registry offers fall into two broad camps, Information Services and Registration Services. These services are primarily used by professional, conveyancing customers.

Information services are made up of a number of applications that a conveyancer makes to Land Registry prior to the exchange of contracts. These include:

- Searches of the Index Map (SIMs) – a search to see if the land is registered
- Official Copies – requesting copies of the register, title plan and any documents referred to on the register
- Official Searches – submitting a request to protect their clients interest prior to completion

Registration services are made up of four application types and are submitted to Land Registry post completion. The four types are:

- First Registration (FRs) – These are applications where the land has not previously been registered and involves submitting the bundle of historical deeds that prove legal title.
- Dealings – These are applications that affect the whole of a registered title, such as a sale and purchase, remortgage or protection of a third party interest. There are numerous transaction types that can be registered.
- Dispositionary First Leases (DFLs) – These are applications for the registration of a lease for a term of 7 years or more.
- Transfers of Part (TPs) – These are applications where part of a registered title is sold off or remortgaged.

The objective of Digital Service Delivery is to re-engineer the processes and technology to connect the series of applications into one joined up process that re-uses data and tailors the user journey depending on what they are trying to achieve. It will also provide opportunities for customers to self-serve.

This programme is in the early planning stages and will be delivered through a series of projects and releases. Subject to more detailed planning and confirmation, it is envisaged that Searches of the Index Map (SIMs) will be the first deliverable and used as an exemplar project. In the year 2011/12 over 1.5 million SIMs applications were made to Land Registry and as such there is significant benefit to be derived from further digitising the service.

What is the user need?

A buyer does not become the legal owner of a property in England and Wales until they have been registered on the Land Register.

Aligned to this, is the need for customers to know if there are any issues associated with the title they are purchasing, or the application they are submitting, that need to be resolved before the transaction can proceed and ultimately be registered. Therefore the ability to submit applications for registration in the knowledge they have been received quickly and securely, and that the results of those applications are accurate and be acted upon with confidence is very important for customers.

In addition conveyancing has become an ever more competitive business and customers are increasingly cost conscious. Reducing the administrative cost of doing business is a very real need for firms.

What problem with the existing service will the project address?

The Digital Service Delivery programme as a whole, will address two fundamental issues. Firstly, while there have been notable successes with digitising certain registration transactions (such as the discharge of a mortgage on redemption where 83% are lodged electronically) over 60% of substantive applications are currently entirely paper based. Secondly, from a registration perspective, the sale or purchase of a property is treated as a series of independent information and registration transactions, rather than a set of interconnected steps along a single path. These two issues result in a significant administrative overhead and an amount of duplication for both the organisation and our customers in submitting and processing applications.

Although circa 57% of SIMs are already lodged electronically, they still require manual intervention to provide the customer with details of whether or not the land in question is registered. This means that a customer has to wait for the information whilst the application is processed, which may cause them a short delay in proceeding further. From an internal perspective, the service is labour-intensive and costly for Land Registry to provide.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

Land Registry is in the process of finalising its business strategy for the next five years. At the time of writing we are still waiting for formal ministerial approval. Further detailed planning work is still required to firm up initial estimates and timescales.

Subject to detailed planning work, the initial estimates for the SIMs element are:

- Project Cost: circa £1.5m
- Cumulative net benefit: over five years of c.£9m worth of staff time savings
- Timeline: business case approved March 2013; free online service launched January 2014; chargeable on-line service launched March 2014

Providing a digital solution for SIMs will enable customers to self-serve for information that will be instantly available, enabling them to proceed seamlessly with their transaction. It will also significantly reduce the time and effort spent in processing SIM applications, ultimately leading to a reduction in registration fees. **What approach is being taken?** The resourcing assumption for the programme of work, including the SIMs element, is that the development will be undertaken by a combination of in-house product development and IS teams, supplemented by external resources where needed and appropriate. Standard features of Land Registry digital projects will apply, such as:

- Iterative development starting with Proof of Concept

- Regular Focus Group meetings with customers throughout development
- Prototype development rolled out to small number of customers to test
- Customer involved in review and sign-off of wireframes / design and functionality
- On-site technical support provided to prototype customers
- Customer Case Studies used to explain benefits
- Internal casework personnel used to help build and review service prior to launch of internal changes
- Used standard IT practice where possible e.g. RSS feeds for eDespatch Notifications
- Working with software suppliers to integrate the service into case management systems

How will the project help with channel shift?

The Digital service delivery programme will help achieve the ambition that over 90% of all applications to Land Registry will be made digitally.

For SIMs in particular, it is anticipated that over 90% of all applications will be made electronically, and of those 50% will be capable of being completely automated through self-service.

How will the project help develop digital leadership and capability?

Digital is a key strategic priority for Land Registry. The Digital Service Delivery programme, and the SIMs element, will be tracked at the highest levels in the organisation, providing a clear focus and leadership from the very top. At an operational level, our 'Customer Team Leaders' manage the relationship with our customers and part of their responsibility is to help migrate customers from paper to digital channels. SIMs will provide an excellent opportunity for them to practically display the benefits and show leadership in promoting digital to both their staff and customers.

Other aspects of the project relevant to the Government Digital Strategy

We will use, amongst other things, Digital Service Delivery to embed the roles of Service Managers within the organisation. As part of that, SIMs will have a Service Manager appointed. The capture of appropriate cost and customer satisfaction metrics will be developed as an integral part of the solution and the services will be developed around the needs of the users in line with the spirit and standards of the Government Digital strategy.

2.4 National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

The apprenticeships landscape has changed significantly since the inception of [NAS](#), both in terms of NAS's role but also the external landscape in which NAS operates. NAS systems and websites were developed against a remit that has in many areas changed and expanded. Now is the right time to redesign digital services provided by NAS around the needs of employers, candidates and providers.

What is the user need?

Potential apprentices need to get advice on apprenticeships and find and apply for vacancies. Parents need to be able to support their children through the process. Employers need to understand the benefits of taking on apprenticeships, the process to do so, and to advertise vacancies. Training providers need comprehensive information on the apprenticeship frameworks.

What problem with the existing system will the project address?

The current websites do not provide good user journeys, in particular between information and guidance on the Apprenticeship.org.uk information website and the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service transactional website. In particular the website and underlying systems need to be redesigned around the needs of employers to allow them to self-serve.

NAS was created in 2009 and its main citizen facing Apprenticeship vacancy service was constructed within a very short timescale to meet a ministerial directive. Whilst comprehensive stakeholder engagement was carried out to support the development of the system and wider service, it was not built using a robust approach to user-centred design. A number of tactical projects have made improvements based on feedback from users. However, the user journeys need to be re-designed around user needs to ensure NAS, the SFA and other agencies can fulfil their business objectives.

The main Apprenticeships.org.uk website has also significantly evolved since its inception, but the current platform lacks the flexibility to allow NAS to respond to user needs and a fast-changing policy landscape.

The underpinning systems and websites have been developed as standalone systems. The CRM system is increasingly used by all Employer facing teams but is not web enabled, which makes it difficult to use the system remotely. Separate systems means it is impossible to effectively track customer data and report management information. The system lacks the flexibility needed to provide reporting for ministers, BIS and NAS.

What are the expected costs, benefits and timescales of the project?

The expected cost of the definition phase (which will include prototyping) is £750k. The work will be completed by April / May 2013 with a view to full system development completing in early 2014.

The definition phase will deliver working prototypes to develop options and a full requirements specification and reference architecture for development.

The benefits delivered by the overall programme would be to enable NAS to respond to the requirements from the recent Holt and Richards independent reviews of apprenticeships, as well as to improve the user journey leading to an increase in the number and quality of candidates and applications.

What approach is being taken?

The work so far has consisted of three streams:

- User experience work which has carried out extensive contextual research with employers, candidates and providers, culminating in the creation of marketing segmentation, personas and user journeys
- LEAN analysis that has shown where system changes can deliver efficiency improvements
- Interviews with NAS senior management

This, along with the recommendations from the recent Holt and Richards reviews, has given us the information required to develop a strategic plan to change the working model for NAS.

As part of the definition phase, it is intended to engage a developer via the Gii Cloud framework to work with our User Experience team and NAS to create some working prototypes to test ideas. Requirements will be gathered and a reference architecture developed. Based on this a full business case will be developed for full programme.

How will the project help with channel shift?

One of the main aims of the project is to enable users (candidates, employers and providers) to 'self-serve' using the available digital tools. It is intended that the digital channel will be the first port of call for most users and that the use of the telephone support channel will decline as the new system becomes available.

How will the project help develop digital leadership and capability?

This development is intended to enhance the offering of the digital channel. It will move the NAS team away from their current approach of dealing with many callers by telephone and will enable them to manage the business from a digital perspective.

It will require a change in approach for the department and the content and user experience will need regular maintenance to ensure that it is up to date,

relevant and user-friendly. This will require NAS to develop further their skills in digital delivery and will give NAS a platform on which to build further digital services as they become required.

Other aspects of the project relevant to Government digital strategy

NAS was not given an exemption from moving the Apprenticeship.org.uk website onto GOV.UK. Further work is needed to understand what this means, including how we can ensure that any changes are to the benefit of our users, and our ability to deliver NAS business objectives.

3. Other BIS projects and cases studies

3.1 BIS 'Taking on an Employee' Phase 2

When taking on their first employees, businesses need to be able to easily navigate their way through all legal obligations and transactions owned by different government departments without getting lost or confused in the process. Businesses need confidence that they are complying with all regulations and will not inadvertently break the law, but they are time-poor and want to complete the process quickly and easily.

Phase 1 of the tool lists the five things potential employers need to do when employing staff for the first time and links to further information, tools and HMRC transactions off the GOV.UK website. The user journey through the process of taking on an employee is therefore not seamless.

Phase 2 will provide users with a 'guided walk' through their legal obligations when they take on their first member of staff while ensuring that the integrity of the central 'checklist' is maintained throughout the user experience by implementing 'send and return' functionality for external tools. This will ensure users are not lost along the way and they complete the process of employment as quickly as possible.

Very early estimates put the cost at 'up to £10k'. It will also require GDS to commit editorial and developer time to the project to make the changes on GOV.UK. The benefits will be a reduction in business time spent on employing someone; increased clarity for businesses about what they need to do; increased compliance with employment law and payment of taxes. The project will deliver by March 2013.

We are taking a user-centred approach to Phase 2 of 'Taking on an Employee'. We will engage with business users throughout the development process. We have already involved 'Accelerator', a business incubator, the BIS Business Challenge Panel and other key stakeholders.

This project is a key example of Government joining up services across departmental boundaries (HMRC, BIS, GDS and the FSA) in a user-centred way. 'Taking on an Employee' will be hosted on GOV.UK but is dependent on changes being made to external websites and transactions. We hope that the

technical solution used to implement 'Taking on an Employee' will help GDS and departments meet other user needs that require interactions across multiple department or agency systems.

3.2 BIS digital only services

A number of BIS services have been Digital by Default for some time:

- [The Export Control Organisation](#), which is the UK's licensing authority for strategic export controls, has had a fully electronic licensing system, the SPIRE export licensing system, since 2007.
- [The Graduate Talent Pool](#), which encourages employers to offer graduate internships and advertise them to recent graduates, was launched as a web only service in 2009.
- [The Queen's Awards](#), which recognise outstanding achievements by UK businesses, introduced an online application form in 2005. The application and assessment process became an end to end online process in 2012.

3.3 Met Office website

The [Met Office](#) provides a wide range of weather and environmental services to a diverse range of customers. 90% of its services are delivered via a single web platform, which often represents the largest Government website.

The Met Office is subject to public service delivery targets for digital reach that require that weather and warning information is discoverable and accessible by as wide an audience as possible. Its paid-for commercial services operate within a highly competitive market and with a healthy commercial weather sector. The Met Office needs to continually innovate to improve its digital services and ensure that they remain compelling and meet growing consumer and business expectations.

The website is regularly benchmarked against other public web delivery systems, which demonstrates that it is both cost effective and highly performing. There is a continual development programme, which is user centric and evidence led. For example significant improvements have been made to the Public Weather mapping environment.

The weather and climate is of interest to all, which requires that information is delivered in varying levels of detail and via a variety of channels and digital services. The Met Office works hard to ensure that varying levels of information is consistent.

Significant weather situations require skilled interpretation of data. At organisations where weather is a significant factor face to face consultation between experts remains the most effective and efficient way to mitigate risk and predict impacts.

3.4 Ordnance Survey

[Ordnance Survey](#) (OS) is Great Britain's national mapping agency, providing the most accurate and up-to-date geographic data, relied on by government, business and individuals.

OS provides free and unrestricted access to a large range of its mapping via OS OpenData™ that helps to underpin a range of applications, develop innovation, promote government transparency and encourage greater take up of geographic data.

Public sector bodies in England and Wales can access most OS data, for free at the point of use, through the Public Sector Mapping Agreement (PSMA). Since coming into effect in April 2011, the agreement and subsequent use of accurate geographic data has helped to realise around £16 million in savings and now has over 2,700 members. Public sector bodies in Scotland can also access Ordnance Survey data under a similar agreement - the One Scotland Mapping Agreement.

OS is working on a number of digital projects with public sector bodies that enable more joined up Government by underpinning data sharing and address validation. These include enabling the Department for Work and Pensions to link their databases through common address referencing in order to tackle fraud and error in the benefits system; validating online voting for the Electoral Reform Transformation Project; and providing a common platform for the 'Tell It Once' service enabling Government data bases to be updated with a single notification following a change in a person's circumstances.

OS data is being used across the country supporting vital public services including effective bus routing, waste collection management and town and city planning. Geographic data is also being used to support digital services, and has become an important tool for engaging with citizens through many central and local authority websites.

Mapping data is also being used to support applications for mobile devices. The Department of Health are using Ordnance Survey mapping to support their Walk4Life campaigns. Mapping data is used in the popular free Walk4Life mobile app allowing users to plot and record their walks.

3.5 Focus on Enforcement

The Better Regulation Executive (BRE), which leads on regulatory reform across Government, is engaged in an innovative "crowd sourcing" exercise to gather feedback and evidence on how regulatory enforcement operates in practice.

To date the Government's focus has been on regulation itself. In the 2012 Budget a new approach, [Focus on Enforcement](#), was announced: to look not at the rule, but at how it is enforced. Evidence shows that how a regulator behaves when it meets a company profoundly affects whether that company finds a regulation helpful.

Through the Focus on Enforcement website, the BRE is carrying out a series of sector based reviews looking at how enforcement of legislation and rules is experienced from the point of view of companies.

Users of the website are asked to tell BRE about their experience of how regulatory enforcement operates in areas where a review has been launched, including how it could be improved or best practice shared. At the same time users are asked to give ideas for future FoE reviews and to explain why these areas of enforcement should be scrutinised.

In addition to receiving comments, the team are also using the website to communicate with external stakeholders by posting blogs on the progress of the reviews and will be using the website as a portal to publish the outcomes of each review. In doing this, users of the website can be more engaged in the full process – from suggesting the idea, feeding in evidence through to seeing outcomes – all in much quicker time (and in a more interactive format) than would be possible through a traditional consultation exercise.

The website has received over 12,000 unique visitors since it launched in late March 2012, with an average conversion rate (the number of unique visitors who post a comment) of 1.5% , although the site has recently achieved a 3% conversion. The BRE consider the vast majority of comments submitted to have been relevant and high quality. The exercise has allowed BRE to reach a much wider audience than would have been the case via a more traditional consultation exercise (i.e. a web published consultation document). The Team have also recently started using Twitter - a new approach proving to be highly successful at reaching interested companies.

3.6 Research Councils – common platforms

The seven UK [Research Councils](#) are responsible for co-ordinating and funding particular areas of research, including the arts, humanities, and all areas of science and engineering. While individual bodies established by Royal Charter, the Research Councils work closely together.

The Research Councils have been digital by default since 2005 for processing research proposals and awarding grants to the research community. Since April 2011 this service has operated as a joint system with common functionality across all seven councils.

The Research Councils are looking to improve the digital experience of users and operational cost effectiveness, by developing a common web platform (and content management system) for their websites. The migration of websites follows a phased approach. Phase 1 involves migration of two

Councils and the RCUK Strategy Unit and is on track for completion by April 2013. The websites are also being reviewed to ensure a more simplified and harmonised user interface.

The Research Councils are also working on a joint project to allow public access to information on research funded by them. The RCUK Gateway to Research Project will provide information on who, what and where the Research Councils fund, and outcomes and outputs from that funding, linking to already available open access repositories and/or data catalogues where possible. The project will have a particular focus on delivering a system that links innovation intensive SMEs with the UK research base.

3.7 Technology Strategy Board – digital collaboration

The [Technology Strategy Board](#), which stimulates technology-enabled innovation by promoting, supporting and investing in technology research and development, has promoted networking activity in support of innovation by launching an online collaboration space.

The [_connect](#) service, which was launched in 2010, provides a common online environment for the research community to publish articles, gather comment and discuss innovation related topics. Groups can be of any size, private, moderated or public, with responsibility for content devolved to the group administrators. Users can build profiles for themselves and the organisations they represent. An upgrade to improve the user interface of the platform is planned.

3.8 Companies House – joint filing and software integration

As well as improving its own web services, Companies House is looking at ways to make it easier for companies to file company information digitally and combine linked services.

It is working with software providers to encourage the take-up data filing services, as it recognises that filing data via an accounts software package (rather than entering it on the web) is a much more convenient means of filing data for a large proportion of its customers.

Companies House has also extended its web incorporation service to offer customers the chance to supply information to register for corporation tax (which is automatically passed to HM Customs and Excise) at the same time.

3.9 FE Choices

Government wants to ensure that learners and employers have the information they need to choose the provider that best meets their learning and training needs. By empowering learners and employers to make informed choices through better access to information, we create competition and incentives for providers to be responsive to learners and employers.

Government collects and publishes on a consistent basis some of the key information learners and employers say they need to make choices. The [FE Choices](#) website enables users to search and compare provider ratings for qualification success rates, learner destinations and learner and employer satisfaction. We are making this information more useful and accessible by integrating it with the National Careers Service to provide a one-stop shop for advice, information and comparative provider data and by making available information at a more granular level wherever possible e.g. about the course or subject, as well as the provider.

3.10 UKTI Open to Export

[Open to Export](#) is a new digital platform delivered in collaboration between UK Trade & Investment and hibu. The service is designed to bring to UK businesses best practice knowledge and bespoke advice to help them enter new markets and successfully operate overseas. Through the service, UK businesses have the opportunity to:

- Explore potential international opportunities for their business
- Get bespoke answers from experts and other experienced exporters
- Access practical insights on important overseas issues
- Connect with experienced UK businesses and service providers
- Find relevant products, services and events
- Share their expertise with other companies looking to go global

This new online business community is free to use and was successfully launched on 29th October 2012. All of the information, answers and advice on Open to Export are contributed by the users, service providers and key partners.

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This publication available from www.gov.uk/bis

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BIS/12/1370