

Local Digital Today 2014

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Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Foreword

Kris Hopkins

Member of Parliament for Keighley in West Yorkshire

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government



Growing digital opportunities

The power of digital technologies to both improve and innovate services whilst reducing the cost of delivery is clear and has been the subject of much discussion.

It is pleasing, therefore, to see so clearly from this research that more councils are finding more savings from their digital endeavours compared to last year. This is to be warmly welcomed, however I would urge those authorities not yet harnessing the power of digital in these austere times to do so urgently.

Digital technologies are generating estimated national savings of £322m today across local authorities – if all English councils were to achieve the same level of savings as those in this report we could save almost £500m as a sector.

In the face of austerity, demographic change and increasing citizen expectations, it is essential that local authorities use the latest technologies to design effective services for those with multiple and complex needs. They must work together to deliver services based around, and responding to, real people's needs.

Using digital technologies to facilitate this, to bring services together in a common sense way at a local level, will deliver better results for the citizen and save the taxpayer money too.

I therefore welcome the findings of this report and would urge local authorities to learn from each other, to share experience and to work together to fast track the benefits that digital technologies offer both our citizens and the taxpayer.

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1. Executive summary



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Our survey confirms, if there were any doubt, that in austere times local digital services and digitisation are seen almost universally in a positive light in local government.

Once again this year, as last year, our question asking people to agree or disagree with statements about the benefits of digitisation saw the majority agree or strongly agree with almost all of them. In a list of 14 positive statements, more than half of respondents agreed with 12 of them, and six of the statements were supported by about 90% or more respondents.

Digital savings on the rise

Perhaps most importantly, almost two-thirds of respondents (64.9%) now report at least some level of real savings, an increase of 4.5% on last year.

Even more significantly, of those who did report savings, the average amount reported to have been saved was about £1.4m, up from less than £1.1m last year. This represents an increase in average savings of some 31.6%, a huge shift in a single year. This underlines the enormous money-saving potential of greater use of digital technologies in providing public services.

If we were to extrapolate the new reported savings level across 64.9% of all English councils (echoing the proportion of our respondent councils that reported savings), it generates an estimated national savings total already achieved of £322m and a potential saving of £495m if all English councils were to achieve the same level of savings.

Looking to the future there could be every expectation of continuing these savings from digital work, year on year – over a decade this could lead to in excess of £5bn of savings to the public purse. Such estimates must, of course, be treated with caution but they generate some useful rough figures for debate in these austere times.

Undeniable benefits and service improvements

So what are those benefits respondents supported so strongly? They are that digital services ‘Enable staff to work flexibly and on the move’; ‘Facilitate service transformation’; ‘Help my organisation to deliver ‘better for less’; ‘Help our citizens to interact with us’; ‘Make the customer journey better for our citizens’; and ‘Make my organisation more cost effective’.

Most of these endorsement levels were slightly higher than last year, and two of the most significant score increases were shown in the two customer-facing benefits: ‘Help our citizens to interact with us’; and ‘Make the customer journey better for our citizens’. This shows that, as confidence in the benefits of digital services rises to new heights, the emphasis is turning ever more strongly on ensuring that services are user-focused.

However, the two highest score increases were firmly in the grounds of transparency and efficiency: ‘will improve accountability to the public through making the council’s performance more transparent’ and ‘make my organisation more cost effective’.

Key facts

Nearly 65% of respondents said that digital tools and technologies had delivered savings to their organisation, up 4.5% on 2013.

Respondents had saved on average £1.4m for their organisation through digital - £335k more than in 2013.

Local authorities are most keen to work with Cabinet Office, DCLG, DWP and HMRC.

Digital is already generating estimated national savings of £322m across local authorities – with the potential to save almost £500m if all English councils were to achieve the same level of savings.

What would be of most value to the sector?

94% - A set of common standards to enable data sharing across local services.

89% - A common form of ID assurance.

65% - A ‘local digital service’

Factors for digital success

When it comes to factors considered important for developing a digital approach, strong digital leadership came out top again this year (91.5%). However the second most important factor this year was “Sharing best practice and experience of developing local digital services” (86.5%), moving up a place from third last year. This boost is echoed by an even bigger rise of people rating as important “Hearing more about exemplars of digital success in public services” (up to 76.8% this year). Together, these responses indicate that the DCLG-backed Local Digital best practice-sharing programme has been pushing at an open door.

Who’s the leader?

This year’s responses to our question on who is leading digital activity in their organisations sees an interesting change.

While the three roles ranked highest - web manager; head of customer service; and head of IT/CIO – remain the same, web managers have moved from third place up to the top: from 51.9% last year to 70.6% this year, a jump of 18.7%.

However, breaking down the response by seniority reveals an intriguing disconnect: senior officer respondents said that the digital charge was being led by chief execs (52%) compared to just 34% of frontline/middle management officers saying that the chief exec was leading. Conversely, 43% of senior officers thought that web managers were leading, but 74% of frontline/middle management felt that the web manager was leading.

Nonetheless, these results indicate that the council website – whether accessed by the citizen from a traditional desktop computer or on the move, from a mobile device – is still seen by many as the main digital interface between an authority and its customers.

Following a strategy

Another welcome finding this year, in comparison with last year, is that the development of digital strategies is on the rise. This ties in with the push for greater leadership.

The number of respondents who state their authority has a digital strategy in place has risen by 12.4% to almost half of all councils (47.9%). This is mirrored by a similar drop since last year in the number saying they have an intention to create a strategy (now 38.3%).

This does mean however that the proportion of respondents stating their authority has no strategy and no intention of creating one has remained at about 14% (13.8%, compared with 13.9% last year). This is a relatively low proportion of councils but given the squeeze on budgets, can local government afford for 14% of its digital services work to be developed without a proper underlying strategy? Attention will focus on this figure next year, to see if it will shift.

The findings of our more detailed questions on digital strategy are also encouraging.

Almost nine in 10 respondents (86.1%) now agree with the statement that “A digital strategy would be a useful tool in ensuring that we make best use of digital technology in our organisation”, up by 4.9% on last year’s response. This does leave 13.9% split evenly between those who are neutral and those who disagree, however – suspiciously similar to the 14% or so that have no intention of writing a strategy.

Ready for the digital opportunity

A little more than two-thirds (67.3%) now feel digital developments form a key part of their authority’s general management strategy, up by 7.1% on last year. And a similar proportion (64.4%) feel their organisation is ready to embrace the

“Digital technologies have great capacity to make our jobs easier and to make it easier to collaborate with others... However, these beneficial outcomes are stunted by some IT policies and IT outsource agreements, making them too difficult or too expensive to implement and use to our advantage.”

“Digital will enable us to achieve savings by total service transformation across the whole organisation - with Digital Services at the heart of this - freeing up specialist staff to focus on the more complex cases.”

“Most of the ‘digital’ talk is about the front end and ignores the heavy lifting performed by back office systems. But changing the front end will only occasionally lead to service transformation. Simplifying the underlying business processes (or abolishing the redundant stuff) will transform the business.”

“(We need) a clear vision and clear communication of both the vision and the access routes to ALL stakeholders.”

Digital will:

“...provide an opportunity for data analysis to improve public services and highlight areas of concern.”

“... help us to provide services we wouldn't otherwise be able to maintain.”

“... facilitate co-creation - be a disruptive force to challenge current structures and processes.”

opportunities that digital technologies bring – a rise of 6.5%. However, this does still leave 15.8% of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree that their authority is ready to embrace digital opportunities, down only marginally on last year's 16.4%. As with the proportion who seem set to continue with no strategy, while relatively low overall, this is a high enough level to cause concern.

Progress slow and steady

Moving to look at the current level of digital service development, it seems that it has not risen significantly – or at least is not reported to have risen significantly, as it may be tricky for respondents to assess.

Respondents reported a slight rise in the percentage of individual services that are fully digital, to 27.7% (up 2.9% on last year), so close so three in 10 services. By volume, the proportion of transactions reported as digital remained similar, at 37.8% (down 0.2%).

This would seem to mean that progress on the ground is slow, although we have noted that response levels to this question were low, as they were last year, which might suggest it is a difficult question for respondents to assess accurately. More in-depth research may be needed.

What is holding us back?

The top six barriers cited as holding back digital development this year are: Legacy systems and ICT infrastructure; Lack of development funds; Unwillingness to change / non-cooperation of colleagues; Lack of in-house digital skills; Culturally uncomfortable for the organisation; and Supplier inflexibility.

The first of these, legacy systems, received far higher ratings than the others, being cited by 86.0% of respondents, nearly 20% more than the next highest barrier and up by 13.3% on last year. One of the barriers further down our list, 'Supplier inflexibility', also showed a big jump in citations – up by almost a fifth (17.1%) to 51.0%.

Taken together, these findings could show that as the move towards digitisation accelerates, problems with replacing or overhauling legacy systems become more accentuated. Over time, however, as more legacy systems are finally removed or replaced and new more flexible cloud-based procurement practices become the norm, we would expect this problem to ease.

Another barrier that has seen a significant rise in mentions on last year is lack of in-house digital skills, up by 15.7% this year to 57.6%. Reasons for this shortage could include a lack of funds for recruitment and training. We could also speculate that its effects might be worsened by a reduction in the use of external consultants, also linked to budget cuts.

Given that leadership is seen to be so important for successful digital services (see question 6 above), it is of some concern that "Lack of leadership (senior management / elected councillors)" also shows fairly high on our list, coming in at number 7 and reported by 45.5% of respondents (up very slightly on last year's 43.6%, though this may not be statistically significant). Whether this is a genuine lack or a perception, a lack of digital leadership reported in almost half of councils responding is an issue which needs to be addressed.

What could help?

When it came to rating specific ideas we suggested as having possible value to the sector, a new question this year, we saw a very high positive response – both at about 90% – to the proposal of common standard for data sharing and a common form of ID assurance. These are both matters in development by Government Digital Service in its work implementing the next phase of the Public Services Network (PSN), so can be taken as a strong endorsement of this work.

"There is currently not enough motivation or understanding in the organisation to think about digital as anything other than a money saving device. Awareness needs to be raised at a senior level about the benefits of digital as currently there is a lack of understanding and therefore commitment (monetary and in officer time)."

"Digital technologies could enable my organisation to waste time and money on ICT solutions rather than business solutions or service delivery solutions."

"An inappropriate application of digital solutions could entrench digital exclusion, poverty of outcomes and disenfranchisement of the people who most need our services."

"There must be equality of access. If telecoms are unable or unwilling to provide this then a Public Service Obligation will be required - 95% or 98% coverage isn't good enough if your area always falls into the 2% or 5% of not-spots."

"Outsourcing of IT has prevented most IT innovation as the contractor is not interested in providing a service - but in their own profit margins."

"Perhaps local government needs a coordinating body similar to GDS but right now there is no urgency or drive behind digital projects apart from those directly related to channel shift and moving to digital by default."

More controversial is what appears to be strong support for greater national offers of specific technologies and platforms that councils can use, rather than simply shared standards: an issue that has polarised opinion in local government this year. Some see such ideas as suggesting encroachment of central government on local autonomy, particularly if use of national solutions are ever mandated: but solutions led and managed by local government nationally, and voluntary to use, could help address such fears.

Whatever the detail of how it could be implemented, however, support for some action in this area seems clear. More than two-thirds of respondents (68.0%) said they would value a common transaction engine for council web services; almost as many supported the ideas of a special digital service organisation for councils (65.3%); and three-fifths (59.6%) backed a common technology platform for council websites (59.6%).

Clearly, this is one political minefield that cannot be circumvented, and the debate is set to continue into the general election and beyond.

Central and local working together

On the related subject of which central government departments of agencies are considered the most likely to help councils transform services and deliver cost savings, the Government Digital Service and related parts of the Cabinet Office unsurprisingly rated highest (23.8%). But the Department for Communities and Local Government was not far behind (21.1%), in what could be seen as another endorsement for the Local Digital Campaign.

DWP was also highly rated (19.7%), showing the importance assigned to online services relating to benefits in the run up to digital-by-default Universal Credit. However the Department of Health and NHS was not highly rated (2.7%), which may be a concern in the lead-up to closer digital working between health services and local government in 2015 as health and social care are integrated.

Top priorities for service redesign

In fact, health and social care integration did show up high on the list of organisations' top priorities for service redesign in the next 12 months.

It came in joint third place, below the more predictable (and linked) priorities of cost and efficiency savings (38.2%) and customer self-service (30.9%) and alongside the more generic 'business transformation'.

It was cited by almost a quarter of respondents (23.5%) – a high proportion given that we were asking people to list their top priorities. It seems clear that health and social care integration, driven by legislation, is set to become a key driver of digital development in local government from next year.

Internal digital skills needed

The key digital skills that respondents say their organisations need to build internally fall under a few clear themes, many of which echo the priorities highlighted by the previous question and other findings of this year's survey.

Many of the skills sought are in customer-centric design, with the top two being user needs (54.6%); and customer journey (50.5%).

Security is one theme here that has not shown up elsewhere in the survey with the same prominence, suggesting a possible shortage of cyber security skills in the sector. It is cited as key by 37.4% of respondents.

"In 2014 no one can efficiently run a large business without IT. Digital is not new. All managers should be working to continuously improve their service (streamline, reduce cost, improve quality etc): which means adopting or modifying the IT systems that deliver the service."

"The organisational culture has been holding back the council for years - and the challenging transformation programme is losing key personnel due to the resistance to change at all levels."

"Buy-in across the organisation and the willingness to invest time and money will make long-term savings."

"Standard procurement procedures would ensure products meet basic standards with a preference for open source technologies."

"Standardisation of digital services with a level of flexibility for regional variations would mean big savings across the country."

"(We need to) get buy in from the services we deliver and get them to understand that we have to transform the way we work with digital as the default option in order to safeguard the services we deliver."

2. Results

2.1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Digital technologies?

Year on year comparison: 'Agree' or 'Strongly agree'	2013	2014	% Change
Enable staff to work flexibly and on the move	92.1%	93.1%	1.0%
Facilitate service transformation	89.9%	90.2%	0.3%
Help citizens to interact with councils	84.0%	89.6%	5.6%
Help my organisation to deliver 'better for less'	91.0%	89.6%	-1.4%
Make the customer journey better for our citizens	84.4%	88.9%	4.5%
Make my organisation more cost effective	79.8%	87.3%	7.5%
Help officers to provide 'assisted digital' access where necessary	83.1%	79.6%	-3.5%
Enable our officers and elected members to better collaborate internally with colleagues	77.6%	74.1%	-3.5%
Enable our officers and elected members to collaborate with colleagues in the wider public sector	72.5%	72.5%	0.0%
Provide a base for sharing services and business processes with other organisations	61.8%	67.6%	5.8%
Enable elected councillors to engage with the citizens they represent	62.3%	66.5%	4.2%
Will improve accountability to the public through making the council's performance more transparent	49.1%	64.3%	15.2%
Help to regenerate our local economy	37.6%	41.3%	3.7%
Enable us to flexibly outsource services and business processes to other organisations	34.9%	39.9%	5.0%

The five highest rated responses to this question this year were the same as last year: to enable staff to work flexibly and on the move; to facilitate service transformation; to help my organisation to deliver 'better for less'; to help citizens to interact with councils; and to make the customer journey better for citizens.

All these benefits were seen as features of digitisation by about 9 in 10 respondents this year, with another factor now rating almost as highly: to 'Make my organisation more cost-effective'.

If we look at the shifts in scores for these responses individually, however, an interesting pattern emerges: the two factors here relating to customer engagement - 'Helping citizens interact with councils' and 'Making the customer journey better' – have both seen small but significant increases in their absolute scores this year (+5.6% and +4.5% respectively). It seems that engagement and accessibility have moved to the top of the agenda.

Cost-effectiveness has seen an even higher jump this year, with its absolute score rising by 7.5% to 87.3%.

It is also worth noting that the highest year-on-year rise of all occurs lower down the list: The proportion of respondents agreeing that digital technologies "Will improve accountability to the public through making the council's performance more transparent" rose from about half last year (49.1%) to almost two-thirds this year (64.3%), a rise in scores of +15.2%.

This may point to the rise in prominence of the open data movement nationally, with various organisations, conferences, unconferences and hackathons supporting the government's and councils' own work in releasing data to improve transparency and accountability.

It is also worth noting that overall, scores generally rose (only falling slightly for three responses, and with no major falls). As all these answers are gauging how people see digital technologies as beneficial in various ways, it suggests there is rising awareness in local government of all the benefits digital technologies can bring.

When offered a free text response to the follow-up question, "What other things will digital technologies help your organisation to do?" several respondents raised the potential for greater use of analysis of data – including staff, performance and customer data – to drive service improvement.

"Use big data as a means of better partnership working"./ "Provide an opportunity for data analysis to improve public services and highlight areas of concern"

Examples included "Understand and better manage performance - both customer service and service delivery. Enhance customer insight to help improve service delivery"; "Provide an opportunity for data analysis to improve public services and highlight areas of concern"; "Better understand and use of staff capabilities"; and "Use big data as a means of better partnership working".

These responses highlight awareness of the potential spin-off benefits to managers and strategists of embedding digital delivery methods across local public services.

2.2 Are the following important in successfully developing a digital approach in your organisation?

Year on year comparison: Important	2013	2014	% Change
Digital leadership within my organisation	92.7%	91.5%	-1.2%
Sharing best practice and experience of developing local digital services	81.9%	86.5%	+4.6%
An internal skilled digital resource to support and drive this work	83.7%	84.5%	+0.8%
A clear corporate commitment to promoting digital skills and digital inclusion within their communities	N/A	84.5%	N/A
Leadership across local government about developing digital public services	80.3%	80.7%	+0.4%
Sharing of data / information between organisations	77.4%	80.6%	+3.2%
Creating a guiding digital strategy for my organisation	78.0%	80.1%	+2.1%
Creating a business case for any digital-led change	85.4%	78.3%	-7.1%
Hearing more about exemplars of digital success in public services	70.1%	76.8%	+6.7%
Access to shared digital assets (for example: code developed by one organisation being freely available to all)	73.0%	73.6%	+0.6%
A pool of high quality suppliers of digital tools, skills and	59.0%	63.6%	+4.6%

technologies			
National government's digital strategy	50.0%	58.6%	+8.6%

One striking feature of the response pattern to this question is the number of factors considered as important for a successful digital approach: all 12 factors are rated as important by more than half respondents, and 10 of the factors by more than 7 in 10 respondents. It was a similar pattern last year (though one factor this year is new).

Digital leadership emerges once again as the single factor most commonly ranked as important for success: at 91.5% this year, this represents a very small reduction on last year's score, but at -1.2% this is not statistically significant.

"Buy in from all parts of the organisation especially elected members as they drive the political agenda."

More significant is the move from third place last year to second place this year of "Sharing best practice and experience of developing local digital services"; at a score increase of almost 5% (+4.6%) it seems there is a rising appetite for sharing ideas and information about how to run successful digital projects.

This view is supported by an even greater rise in the proportion of respondents rating "Hearing more about exemplars of digital success in public services" as important: up from 70.1% last year to 76.8% this year: an absolute score rise of 6.7%.

However the largest increase in 'Important' ratings comes at the bottom of the table, where 'National government's digital strategy', while still seen as a relatively lesser factor in digital success by local councils, has nevertheless risen to a firm majority view. From a rating of 50% last year, national government strategy is now considered important to councils' digitisation by 58.6% of respondents this year.

The biggest dip in ratings year on year comes in the scores for the success factor: "Creating a business case for any digital-led change". This fell from 85.4% considering it as important last year, to 78.3% this year. While still highly rated, this shift is a slight puzzle: perhaps it points to the fact that the business case for greater introduction of digital technologies is now more readily accepted, and so making the case is seen as a less important issue: but more research would be needed to determine the precise reasons.

Finally, it is revealing that the response to this year's new potential success factor, "A clear corporate commitment to promoting digital skills and digital inclusion within their communities", has entered the table high up, at joint third, with 84.5% of respondents rating it is important. Digital inclusion is clearly regarded as a key aspect to local public service digitisation, a theme supported by responses elsewhere in this year's survey.

Asked the follow-up question: "Are there any other things that are important in successfully developing a digital approach?" some responses added some useful extra detail to the top factor: 'Digital leadership within my organisation'.

One said the nature of such leadership should include "An experimental mindset – 'done-and-out-there' is better than 'perfect-when-eventually-launched'". In a similar vein, another responded: "Evolving rather than 'giant leap' approach - test what works to build consumer and user confidence. Don't promise more than you can deliver."

Leadership needs to come from politicians as well as senior managers, said one respondent: "Buy in from all parts of the organisation especially elected members as they drive the political agenda."

"A means, and a commitment, to enable and support the more digitally adept officers and councillors so they feel confident in raising new solutions and new ways of working, and a mentoring scheme to assist the digitally less able."

Another response suggested how senior managers might be able to achieve these goals: "A means, and a commitment, to enable and support the more digitally adept officers and councillors so they feel confident in raising new solutions and new ways of working, and a mentoring scheme to assist the digitally less able."

"Buy-in and commitment from senior civil servants and ministers" / "Political consistency across government"

In line with the increase in respondents this year placing importance on the national government’s digital strategy for local progress, one respondent answered: “buy-in and commitment from senior civil servants and ministers”; and another said: “Political consistency across government”.

Changes to procurement and development practice, and promotion of open standards and open source solutions were proposed by others as further key factors in successfully developing a digital approach.

“Agile development and design can help the public sector to deploy apps quickly and to their choice, rather than one size fits. Open source sharing code can help support rapid development”, said one. Another said: “Standard procurement procedures that ensure products meet basic standards, with a preference for open source technologies.”

2.3 Who is leading on digital activities within your organisation?

Roles leading:	2013	2014	% Change
Web Manager	51.9%	70.6%	+18.7%
Head of Customer Service	57.5%	64.3%	+6.8%
Head of IT/CIO	68.3%	62.4%	-5.9%
Head of Transformation	42.4%	45.0%	+2.6%
Chief Executive	45.1%	39.6%	-5.5%
Individual Service Heads	39.4%	34.0%	-5.4%
Frontline Officers	21.9%	30.2%	+8.3%
Elected Members	39.1%	28.8%	-10.3%
Chief Digital Officer	N/A	26.2%	N/A
External Consultants	8.9%	22.8%	+13.9%
Head of Finance	23.6%	17.1%	-6.5%
Suppliers	12.0%	15.8%	+3.8%

There has been some interesting movement since last year in people’s view of who is leading digital activity within their organisations.

The three highest rated roles remain the same: web manager; head of customer service; and head of IT/CIO, pointing towards a continuing spread of responsibility across local government between explicitly digital/IT roles and customer service.

However the order has changed: heads of customer service have marginally overtaken heads of IT/CIOs by moving up by 6.8% to 64.3% while heads of IT have slipped back by 5.9% to 62.4%. Leapfrogging them both are web managers, moving from 51.9% last year – so only rated by about half of respondents as having a key role – to 70.6% this year, some 18.7% higher.

We should not read too much into this jump – clearly, all three are considered key digital roles across most of local government, and respondents were able to choose more than one role as a leader, so it is not clear how strategically powerful web managers might have become. Nevertheless, it seems to indicate that the council website – which these days, is often if not mostly accessed from a mobile device – has become the key digital interface between an authority and the citizens it serves.

Also highly rated are heads of transformation – at 45%, up slightly on last year’s 42.4% - pointing to the importance of digital technologies in authorities’ process of transforming their business processes in response to ongoing budget cuts.

The most senior general leadership positions –chief executives and elected members – have fallen back on last year’s response levels, which might be of concern if the trend continues next year. However these scores may simply reflect the fact that the main seat of digital leadership in a local authority rests at a level below the top, within IT, web or customer services.

Percentage of Seniority Level saying that a Role is leading on digital:	Chief Executive	Head of IT/CIO	Head of Customer Services	Head of Transformation	Web Manager
% of Level 1 saying role is leading	52%	65%	57%	26%	43%
% of Level 2 saying role is leading	22%	51%	57%	35%	54%
% of Level 3 saying role is leading	34%	54%	58%	38%	74%

Responses were also broken down by Levels of seniority groupings. The results proved interesting: Less than three quarters (74%) of lower management / frontline officers (Level 3) indicated that their web manager was leading on digital, whereas just 43% of chief and assistant chief executives, members and directors (Level 1) indicated that their web manager was leading the digital charge. This disconnect suggests a worrying lack of consistency and cohesion around digital leadership in organisations.

The other disconnect highlighted by this sub-analysis is that over half of Level 1 executives (52%) identified the chief executive as leading on digital, whereas just 22% of Level 2 (senior managers and officers) and 34% of Level 3 officers identified the chief executive as a leader in this area.

Offered the follow-up question, “Does anyone else lead on digital within your organisation?” a few people said the head of communications, marketing or communications team.

Other one-off mentions included the head of regeneration; security officer; project managers; middle tier staff; and “a Continuous Improvement Team who put digital at the heart of all service improvement”. Another added: “Residents and local businesses contribute significantly”.

“For us it was a joint approach within the customer services section with chief officer, head of service and service heads working together to find the best way forward and continuing to drive this change with regular reviews and updates.”

Other respondents said a mix of people, working together, were taking a joint lead on the digital service agenda, again reflecting a complex picture overall. One said: “For us it was a joint approach within the customer services section with chief officer, head of service and service heads working together to find the best way forward and continuing to drive this change with regular reviews and updates.” Another said: “There is a mixture of people who are involved with digital technologies: specific people have specific responsibilities for specific elements.”

2.4 Has your organisation created a digital strategy?

	2013	2014	CHANGE
Yes	35.5%	47.9%	+12.4%
No, but we intend to create a digital strategy	50.6%	38.3%	-12.3%
No, and we have no intention of creating a digital strategy	13.9%	13.8%	-0.1%

Overall the number of respondents who state that their authority now has a digital strategy in place has risen by a significant 12.4% to almost half of all councils (47.9%). This is mirrored by an almost precisely equal drop in the number saying they have an intention to create a strategy, which now stands at 38.3%.

This does mean however that the low but significant proportion of respondents stating their authority both has no strategy and no intention of creating one has remained stubbornly unmoved, at 13.8% (down just 0.1% on last year). This may remain a fairly low proportion, and perhaps some of the gap may be caused by a lack of awareness of strategy work on the part of survey respondents, but it is surprising that any council in 2014 should have no intention of creating a digital strategy.

2.5 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Digital Strategies?

Agree or strongly agree:	2013	2014	% Change
A digital strategy would be a useful tool in ensuring that we make best use of digital technology in our organisation	81.2%	86.1%	+4.9%
Digital developments form a key part of our management strategy	60.2%	67.3%	+7.1%
My organisation is ready to embrace the opportunities that digital brings	57.9%	64.4%	+6.5%

The findings of our detailed questions about views on digital strategy are encouraging, as positive responses have strengthened in all three areas.

Almost nine in 10 respondents (86.1%) now agree with the statement that “A digital strategy would be a useful tool in ensuring that we make best use of digital technology in our organisation”, up by 4.9% on last year’s response. This does leave 13.9% split evenly between those who are neutral and those who disagree, but no respondents strongly disagreed with this statement.

A little more than two-thirds (67.3%) now feel digital developments form a key part of their authority’s general management strategy, up by 7.1% on last year. And a similar proportion (64.4%) feel their organisation is ready to embrace the opportunities that digital technologies bring – a significant rise of 6.5%.

As with the main question on strategy, however, this does still leave a notable rump of respondents who disagree or strongly disagree that their authority is ready to embrace digital opportunities: of 15.8%, down only fractionally on last year’s 16.4%. Of these, about a third – 5.9% of respondents – strongly disagree with the statement.

2.6 Your organisation today...

	2013	2014	% Change
What percentage of your organisation's individual SERVICES are 'Digital by Default' - or 'Digital by Design' - today?	24.8%	27.7%	2.9%
What percentage (by volume) of your service TRANSACTIONS are digital today?	38.0%	37.8%	-0.2%

While the numbers reporting digital strategy work are on the rise, levels of actual “digital by default” or “digital by design” services and transactions reported have not changed significantly.

Respondents did report a slight rise in the percentage of individual services that are fully digital, from 24.8% last year to 27.7% this year, so edging nearer to one third of all services. This is an appreciable number, though the rise at 2.9% is on the margins of statistical significance.

By volume, the proportion of transactions reported as digital remained almost exactly the same, with a statistically insignificant fall of just 0.2% to 37.8%.

Overall this does mean that a significant number of council services and transactions have embraced digital technologies, though progress appears slow.

Finally however, it should be noted that response levels to this question were low, at about half of all survey respondents – and that a similar low response occurred last year. This suggests that about half our respondents – and hence many in local government, at all levels - are unclear about the exact current picture of digitisation at their council.

2.7 Have digital tools and technologies delivered any savings to your organisation over the past 12 months?

Digital savings in past 12 months	2013	2014	% Change
Yes	60.40%	64.90%	4.50%
No	39.60%	35.10%	-4.50%

Our finding here is straightforward, and extremely positive: almost two-thirds of respondents (64.9%) now report savings for their authority over the past year that can be attributed to digital tools and technologies. This is an increase of 4.5% on last year, a significant increase given the numbers of local authorities overall, and the fact that average savings have also risen (see next section).

If yes, how much money has your organisation saved?

	2013	2014	% Change
Average savings from Digital (of those reporting savings)	£1,064,567	£1,401,316	+31%

A number of respondents were able to cite specific amounts for savings to their authorities arising from the use of digital tools and technologies, ranging from the tens of thousands up to several million pounds. On average, the saving reported was some £1.4m, up by about one third of a million (£336,749) on last year's reported average.

If we were to extrapolate this reported increase in savings across the same proportion of English councils as the proportion of our respondents who reported savings (64.9%), or 230 authorities, then we generate a nominal or estimated current national savings total of an estimated £322m. And if we were to extrapolate the average saving across all councils, to see how much would be saved if just the current average level of digital services were to become universal across local government, we see a potential saving of £495m.

This tallies closely with an estimate from Socitm in 2012 that if all UK councils were to shift most customer interaction online, about £500m would be saved. In fact, as our figures only cover England, it seems savings of this order are already being realised: and as we would expect average savings from digitisation to keep rising as well as the spread across the country to keep expanding, the true final savings levels could reach much higher amounts.

2.8 What is holding back digital development in your organisation today?

	2013	2014	% Change
Legacy systems and ICT infrastructure	72.7%	86.0%	+13.3%
Lack of development funds	59.4%	67.3%	+7.9%
Unwillingness to change / non-cooperation of colleagues	49.7%	58.8%	+9.1%
Lack of in-house digital skills	41.9%	57.6%	+15.7%
Culturally uncomfortable for the organisation	50.6%	56.3%	+5.7%
Supplier inflexibility	33.9%	51.0%	+17.1%
Inflexible procurement processes	42.4%	49.5%	+7.1%
Lack of leadership (senior management / elected councillors)	43.6%	45.5%	+1.9%
Not understanding the customer journey	38.9%	43.2%	+4.3%
Lack of buy in from senior management / members	32.9%	41.9%	+9.0%
Lack of customer insight / evidence of user need	39.8%	39.4%	-0.4%
Interpretation of legal requirements eg Data Protection	26.1%	29.5%	+3.4%
Poor local broadband access	40.1%	27.7%	-12.4%
Lack of supplier digital skills	16.4%	24.2%	+7.8%
Inability to market citizen take up of digital services	21.8%	24.2%	+2.4%

Six barriers were cited as holding back digital development by more than half of respondents: these are Legacy systems and ICT infrastructure; Lack of development funds; Unwillingness to change / non-cooperation of colleagues; Lack of in-house digital skills; Culturally uncomfortable for the organisation; and Supplier inflexibility.

Clearly, these can all be serious problems.

One barrier, however, received far higher ratings than any other: Legacy systems and ICT infrastructure, cited by some 86.0% of respondents - nearly 20% more than the next highest barrier and up by 13.3% on last year's figure (when it was also the highest cited).

Clearly, changing legacy systems and equipment remains the biggest single barrier to rapid digital development in local government. Cost may be part of the equation here (lack of funds is the second highest barrier cited), as legacy systems can be expensive to change. Over time, however, as contracts expire and more and more legacy systems come to the end of their natural lives, however extended, we would expect this problem to be eroded.

Two other barriers show notably large increases on last year's response figures: lack of in-house digital skills, up by 15.7% to 57.6%; and supplier inflexibility, up by 17.1% to 51.0%.

We can speculate that the first of these problems, a lack of in-house skills, may have been exacerbated by budget cuts leading to job cuts, or an inability to hire new people even where new digital skills are identified as needed. The second, supplier inflexibility, may be linked to our top barrier of legacy systems: if councils are keen to change legacy systems but cannot due to inflexible contracts, for example, this will be both a problem with legacy systems and supplier inflexibility.

An interesting side-note is that the largest drop in perceived barriers to digital development is seen in perceptions of poor local broadband access: cited last year by 40.1% of respondents, this has dropped this year to 27.7%, showing that this element of our national infrastructure is improving and may be closing one element of a potential digital divide.

Other one-off mentions included: Confusion over responsibilities; PSN requirements; and Poverty in local population most needing to use services.

2.9 Would any of the following be of value to the sector?

	No	Yes
A set of common standards to enable data sharing across local services?	6.2%	93.8%
One common form of ID assurance across local public services?	11.2%	88.8%
One common transaction engine for local council web services?	32%	68%
A special digital service organisation for local government?	34.7%	65.3%
One common technology platform for local council websites?	40.4%	59.6%

While all our five suggestions were cited by a majority of respondents as potentially of value to the local government sector, there was a very high positive response – at just over and just under 90% respectively – to the proposals for a common standard for data sharing and a common form of ID assurance.

This is a ringing endorsement for increased policy focus on common data standards across the public sector, as well as a common authentication and security regime – all matters in development by GDS and the Public Services Network.

Lesser but still majority support was given to the more radical concepts of a single shared transaction engine for council web services; a single digital service body for councils; and a common technology platform for council websites. The devil here is in the detail: clearly there is an appetite for some form of nationally shared local technology services and systems, but exactly what form it should take, and who should be in charge of it have yet to be worked out. Any national digital service organisation for local government would need to be local government-led to gain councils' trust, and to what extent common technology platforms or transaction engines could or should be mandated in local government, or left voluntary to use, is a political minefield.

Nevertheless, the level of backing here for the concept of shared platforms and technologies is high, and a timely contribution to this debate.

2.10 Which are the top Central Government departments or agencies that could help you transform services and deliver cost savings?

Central Government department or agency	Response
Cabinet Office/GDS/GOV.UK	23.8%
Communities and Local Government	21.1%

DWP	19.7%
HMRC	6.8%
DVLA	4.1%
Department of Health/NHS	2.7%
HM Treasury/Crown Commercial Service	2.7%
Home Office	2.7%
BIS	2.0%
Dept for Transport/Highways Agency	2.0%
CESG	1.4%
Other/unknown	10.9%

Some 64.6% of respondents picked one of three departments or agencies: Cabinet Office/GDS; DCLG; and DWP. Choices were fairly evenly spread between these “big three” digital support departments, with Cabinet Office/GDS edging it, as one might expect since cross-government and cross-sector digital support services are being steadily centralised there.

DCLG is clearly looked to for digital leadership as well, coming top of the list for about one-fifth of councils (21.1%). DWP came third, with universal credit set to be implemented as a major ‘digital by default’ service connecting with benefits payment by local councils.

Beyond that, other departments with high volumes of citizen transactions overlapping with or provided through local government, such as HMRC, the Department of Health and the Home Office, figured to some extent, though not on anything like the same high levels.

2.11 Top priorities for service redesign in the next 12 months

Top service redesign priorities	Response
Cost and efficiency savings / staff reduction	38.2%
Customer access / self service	30.9%
Business transformation	23.5%
Health and social care integration	23.5%
Single customer account / portal	16.2%
New website / online forms and transactions	16.2%
Improved customer service	11.8%
Mobile platform/site and apps	10.3%
Front and back office integration	8.8%
CRM	8.8%

Highways / street scene	7.4%
IT infrastructure	7.4%
Digital inclusion	5.9%
Housing / housing benefits	5.9%
Environmental services	4.4%
HR / payroll	4.4%

This was another new question this year, with respondents invited to cite up to three top priorities for service redesign in their authorities.

In the responses, it was little surprise that cost and efficiency savings and staff reductions are top of the priority list: in some ways, the surprise is that this was only cited by 38.2% of respondents.

Customer access to digital services, and self-service, was the next most-cited aim of service redesign, and several of the other priorities cited link in with this theme including single customer accounts and portals; new websites and online transactions; improved customer service; and new mobile platforms.

Another of the highly rated priorities, 'business transformation', also has echoes of both these themes: efficiency savings, plus service redesign around the customer.

The only other major service redesign priority in the next 12 months is driven by legislative change: health and social care integration was cited as a top priority by 23.5% of respondents, and will clearly be a significant driver of digital development in local government in the year to come.

2.12 Key digital skills to build internally

	Not Important	Important	Key	Important or key
User needs	1.0%	44.3%	54.6%	98.9%
Customer journey	2.1%	47.4%	50.5%	97.9%
Service design	4.0%	53.5%	42.4%	95.9%
Security	5.5%	57.1%	37.4%	94.5%
Digital inclusion	9.4%	56.3%	34.4%	90.7%
Digital strategies	9.5%	56.8%	33.7%	90.5%
Identity assurance	12.0%	55.4%	32.6%	88.0%
UX design	20.2%	49.4%	30.3%	79.7%
Web development	11.6%	58.9%	29.5%	88.4%
Agile	13.5%	63.5%	22.9%	86.4%
Social media	16.1%	65.6%	18.3%	83.9%
Procurement	30.3%	55.1%	14.6%	69.7%

Performance dashboards	29.3%	59.8%	10.9%	70.7%
Coding for non-techies	60.2%	32.3%	7.5%	39.8%

The key digital skills that respondents say their organisations need to build internally again fall under a few clear themes, some of which echo the strategic priorities highlighted by the previous question.

Many of the top skills sought are in customer-facing design: the top three are user needs (54.6%); customer journey (50.5%) and service design (42.4%), while UX also features with a high score (30.3%),

However security is a new key theme here, suggesting that there may be a shortage of cyber security skills in the sector. It is cited as key by 37.4% of respondents; and identity assurance is not far behind.

Two others worth noting are digital inclusion (34.4% say key), a theme that has emerged elsewhere in this survey; and digital strategy skills are cited by a similar proportion (33.7%).

We are struggling to do more with fewer resources, so partnership working and resource sharing is very important for procuring services and developing knowledge.

Local government is going to look dramatically different over the next few years. It will become a mixed economy of different organisations and sectors providing services in different ways, commissioned by the council. More collaboration across regions and councils is required for economies of scale. Only services that are essential or statutory or maybe add value will be retained. We also need to get citizens to take control of their own lives where they can, as limited funding in the future will mean we can only deliver services to the few, not the many.

No one sensibly would argue that the approach is wrong, merely the capacity and focus to do so with the level [and timescale] of cuts occurring. With elections looming in May as cuts become visible it will be interesting to see how policy develops around shared services, which is generally not conceptually liked at the moment... [the] political appetite to relinquish local control historically has been low, so it will be challenging.

We have to always remember those customers who have impairments which could exclude them and not remove other access channels which suit their needs.

Standardisation of digital services with a level of flexibility for regional variations would mean big savings across the country.

3. Methodology & response

An in-depth online survey was completed by 143 public servants across local services. Broken down by seniority, job function and organisation type:

Seniority Level	% of response	Example job functions
Level 1	16%	Chief executives and deputies/assistant chief execs; chief operating officers; directors of finance; directors; assistant/deputy directors in central government; chief constables/fire officers; councillors/chairs and vice-chairs / members; all heads of IT.
Level 2	48%	Assistant/deputy directors (except central govt); 'heads of'; senior managers.
Level 3	36%	Middle management, team leaders, frontline officers and other users.

Council type	Type Total	Number Responding	% of Type Responding
English Counties	27	22	81%
English Districts	201	38	19%
English Unitaries	56	24	43%
London Boroughs	33	20	61%
Metropolitan Districts	36	11	31%
English TOTAL	353	115	33%
Scottish Unitaries	32	6	19%
Welsh Unitaries	22	4	18%
N Ireland Districts	26	0	0%

3.1 Participating Organisations

Allerdale Borough Council	Darlington Borough Council
Bassetlaw District Council	Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) (multiple)
Bath & North East Somerset Council (multiple)	Derbyshire Dales District Council
Birmingham City Council	Dorset County Council
Bolsover District Council	East Devon District Council
Bolton Council (multiple)	East Sussex County Council (multiple)
Bracknell Forest Borough Council (multiple)	Elmbridge Borough Council
Bradford City Council	Essex County Council
Brighton & Hove City Council (multiple)	Gloucestershire County Council
Bristol City (multiple)	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Guildford Borough Council
Cambridge City Council (multiple)	Hammersmith & Fulham London Borough (multiple)
Camden London Borough	Hampshire County Council (multiple)
Cheshire East Council (multiple)	Harborough District Council
Cheshire West and Chester Council (multiple)	Harlow Council
Chorley Borough Council	Hart District Council
City of London Corporation	Havering London Borough (multiple)
Craven District Council (multiple)	

Hertfordshire County Council (multiple)
 Hillingdon London Borough
 Inverclyde Council
 Isle of Wight Council
 Islington Council
 Kensington & Chelsea Royal Borough Council
 Kent County Council (multiple)
 Kingston Upon Thames Royal Borough Council
 Kirklees Council
 Lambeth London Borough
 Lancaster City Council
 Leeds City Council (multiple)
 Leicester City Council
 Liverpool City Council
 Melton Borough Council
 Milton Keynes Council (multiple)
 Monmouthshire County Council (multiple)
 Neath & Port Talbot County Borough Council
 Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
 Newham London Borough (multiple)
 North Devon Council
 North Kesteven District Council
 Nottingham City Council
 Oxford City Council
 Oxfordshire County Council (multiple)
 Poole Borough Council (multiple)
 Portsmouth City Council
 Preston City Council (multiple)
 Reading Borough Council
 Renfrewshire Council
 Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
 Rother District Council
 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
 Ryedale District Council
 Scottish Borders Council
 Shetland Islands Council
 South Lanarkshire Council
 South Tyneside Council
 Southampton City Council
 Southwark Council (multiple)
 Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
 Sunderland City Council
 Sutton London Borough
 Swindon Borough Council
 Tamworth Borough Council
 Tandridge District Council
 Tandridge District Council (multiple)
 Torbay Council
 Torfaen County Borough Council
 Tower Hamlets Council (multiple)
 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
 Uttlesford District Council
 Waltham Forest Council (multiple)
 Warrington Borough Council

Warwick District Council (multiple)
 Warwickshire County Council
 West Dorset District Council
 West Lothian Council
 West Sussex County Council (multiple)
 Worcestershire County Council
 Worthing Borough Council (multiple)

3.2 Job Titles

Assistant Area Manager - Libraries
 Assistant Director - Regeneration and Property Services
 Assistant Director Organisational Development & Transformation
 Business Analyst (multiple)
 Business Change Analyst
 Business Development Officer
 Business Improvement
 Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services
 Cabinet Member for Sustainable Homes & Communities
 Campaigns Delivery Manager
 Chief Executive
 Chief Information Officer
 Chief Officer - Customer Services
 Chief Officer - Information Services
 Communications
 Communications Manager
 Community Engagement & Learning Officer
 Community IT Engagement Officer
 Corporate Communications Manager
 Corporate Director
 Council Deputy Leader
 Councillor (multiple)
 Customer Contact Manager
 Customer Insight & Improvement Officer
 Customer Programme Manager
 Customer Services Manager
 Democratic Services Officer
 Development Programme Manager
 Digital Communications Officer
 Digital Development Manager
 Digital Innovation Manager
 Digital Officer
 Digital Projects Manager
 Director - Customer Access
 Director of ICT Services
 Director of Information Services
 E-Communications & Website Manager
 Electronic Communications Officer
 E-Service Team Leader
 GIS/Land Charges Modernisation Manager
 Group Manager, Business, Systems & Customer Support

Head of Access to Services	Political Leader
Head of Business Support Services	Principal Information & Communications Officer
Head of City Services	Principal Service Development Manager
Head of Communications	Product Manager
Head of Communications & Insight	Programme Manager
Head of Corporate Programmes	Programme Manager (Transformation Team)
Head of Corporate Strategy	Programme Office Manager
Head of Democratic Services	Project Manager - Adult Social Care & Public Health
Head of Digital Access	Project Manager - Business Change
Head of Human Resources	Project Manager (multiple)
Head of ICT	Project Officer
Head of ICT & Business Transformation	Project Support Officer (Adult Social Care)
Head of IT & Transformation	Research & Consultation Officer
Head of Organisational Development	School Admissions Manager
Head of Planning Services	Senior Customer Services Manager
Head of Revenue Service	Senior Digital Services Officer
Head of Revenues & Benefits	Senior Finance Officer (Recovery)
Head of Strategic Development (Learning)	Senior Integration & Web Officer
Head of User Experience	Senior IT Projects Officer
Home Options Coordinator	Senior Technical Officer
ICT / Strategic Client Coordinator	Senior Trading Standards Officer
ICT Applications & Development Support Lead	Service Improvement Lead
ICT Architect	Service Improvement Manager
ICT Developer	Shared ICT Services Manager
ICT Project Manager	Strategic Spatial Analyst
ICT Service Delivery Manager	Strategy Manager
ICT Strategy Lead (Children's Capital)	Strategy Officer
ICT Systems Co-ordinator	Systems Analyst
ICT Technical Services Manager	Team Leader - Spatial Data
Improving the Customer Experience Programme Director	Team Manager
Information & Technology Manager (Highways)	Transformation Manager
Information Management Officer	Web & Content Manager
Information Officer	Web Communications Manager
Information Systems Development Manager	Web Consultant - Channel Migration Project
Information Systems Strategist	Web Content Manager (multiple)
Interim Corporate Business Transformation Manager	Web Developer
IT Officer	Web Editor (multiple)
IT Policy, Strategy & Security Manager	Web Manager (multiple)
Lead Member for Health & Wellbeing Initiatives	Web Officer
Licensing	Web Project Manager
Location Services Manager, ICT	Web Services Manager(multiple)
New Media Assistant	Web, Marketing & Efficiency Officer
New Media Officer	Webmaster (multiple)
Performance Officer	Website Editor
Policy & Projects Officer	Website Officer

3.3 Questionnaire

LOCAL DIGITAL TODAY - 2014

Page One of Two

What does 'Digital' mean to you? Will it help to deliver more efficient, effective local services that meet both the needs of our citizens and the organisations that deliver those services?

Last year we conducted a ground-breaking piece of research into councils' use of digital as a tool to both improve local public services and reduce costs. [The results were published by our Minister of State, Brandon Lewis, last October.](#) Now we want to learn what has changed since then, and we need your help - please tell us your thoughts and experience of digital today in the survey below.

Thank you in advance for helping with this important research,

*Sheenagh Reynolds, Assistant Director Digital, DCLG & Local Digital Programme Director
Helen Olsen, Managing Editor / Head of Communications, Local Digital Campaign*

1) Please enter your name (This, along with job and organisation information is needed for ANALYSIS - however all results will be reported ANONYMOUSLY) _____

2) Please enter your job title: _____

3) Please enter your organisation name: _____

4) Where you work in the organisation: I am a...

- Elected member
- Chief Executive /Director or Assistant Chief Executive
- Customer Service / Transformation Head
- Head of IT / CIOs or Senior IT Manager
- Digital Practitioner (web teams etc)
- Service Head
- Front Line Officer

5) Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Digital technologies?

Digital technologies will...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral / Don't Know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Help my organisation to deliver 'better for less'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make the customer journey better for our citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help officers to provide 'assisted digital' access where necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give equal access to all citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make my organisation more cost effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Facilitate service transformation	()	()	()	()	()
Enable staff to work flexibly and on the move	()	()	()	()	()
Help our citizens to interact with us	()	()	()	()	()
Enable elected councillors to engage with the citizens they represent	()	()	()	()	()
Will improve accountability to the public through making the council's performance more transparent	()	()	()	()	()
Provide a base for sharing services and business processes with other organisations	()	()	()	()	()
Enable us to flexibly outsource services and business processes to other organisations	()	()	()	()	()
Enable our officers and elected members to better collaborate internally with colleagues	()	()	()	()	()
Enable our officers and elected members to collaborate with colleagues in the wider public sector	()	()	()	()	()
Help to regenerate our local economy	()	()	()	()	()

What other things will Digital technologies help your organisation to do?

6) Are the following important in successfully developing a 'Digital' approach in your organisation?

	Not Important	Neutral	Important
Leadership across local government about developing digital public services	()	()	()
Digital leadership within my organisation	()	()	()
National government's digital strategy	()	()	()
Creating a guiding digital strategy for my organisation	()	()	()
Creating a business case for any digital-led change	()	()	()
A pool of high quality suppliers of digital tools, skills and technologies	()	()	()
An internal skilled digital resource to support and drive this work	()	()	()

Sharing best practice and experience of developing local digital services	()	()	()
Hearing more about exemplars of digital success in public services	()	()	()
Access to shared digital assets (for example: code developed by one organisation being freely available to all)	()	()	()
Sharing of data / information between organisations	()	()	()
A clear corporate commitment to promoting digital skills and digital inclusion within their communities	()	()	()

Are there any other things that are important in successfully developing a 'Digital' approach?

7) Who is leading on Digital within your organisation?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Elected Members	()	()	()
Chief Executive	()	()	()
Chief Digital Officer	()	()	()
Head of IT/CIO	()	()	()
Head of Finance	()	()	()
Head of Customer Service	()	()	()
Head of Transformation	()	()	()
Web Manager	()	()	()
Individual Service Heads	()	()	()
Frontline Officers	()	()	()
External Consultants	()	()	()
Suppliers	()	()	()

Does anyone else lead on Digital within your organisation?

8) Has your organisation created a Digital Strategy to guide its digital developments?

- Yes
- No, but we intend to create a digital strategy
- No, and we have no intention of creating a digital strategy

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Digital Strategies?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral / Don't Know	Agree	Strongly agree
A digital strategy would be a useful tool in ensuring that we make best use of digital technology in our organisation	()	()	()	()	()
Digital developments form a key part of our management strategy	()	()	()	()	()
My organisation is ready to embrace the opportunities that digital brings	()	()	()	()	()

9) Your organisation and 'Digital' today...

	%
What percentage of your organisation's individual SERVICES are 'Digital by Default' - or 'Digital by Design' - today?	_____
What percentage (by volume) of your service TRANSACTIONS are digital today?	_____

10) Have digital tools and technologies delivered any savings to your organisation over the past 12 months?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how much money has your organisation saved?

Please enter the figure for pounds (£) saved to the nearest whole number: _____

11) What do you think is holding back 'Digital' development in your organisation today?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Lack of development funds	()	()	()
Culturally uncomfortable for the organisation	()	()	()
Unwillingness to change / non-cooperation of colleagues	()	()	()
Lack of leadership (senior management / elected councillors)	()	()	()
Lack of customer insight / evidence of user need	()	()	()
Not understanding the customer journey	()	()	()

Legacy systems and ICT infrastructure	()	()	()
Inflexible procurement processes	()	()	()
Lack of in-house digital skills	()	()	()
Lack of supplier digital skills	()	()	()
Supplier inflexibility	()	()	()
Inability to market citizen take up of digital services	()	()	()
Lack of buy in from senior management / members	()	()	()
Poor local broadband access	()	()	()
Interpretation of legal requirements eg Data Protection	()	()	()

12) In an ideal world, would any of the following be of value to the sector?

	Yes	No
A special digital service organisation for local government?	()	()
One common technology platform for local council websites?	()	()
One common transaction engine for local council web services?	()	()
One common form of ID assurance across local public services?	()	()
A set of common standards to enable data sharing across local services?	()	()

13) Which are the top three Central Government departments or agencies that could help you transform your services and deliver cost savings?

1st: _____

2nd: _____

3rd: _____

14) What are your organisation's top three priorities for service redesign in the next 12 months?

1st: _____

2nd: _____

3rd: _____

15) What are the key digital skills that your organisation needs to build internally?

	Not Important	Important	Key
Agile	()	()	()
Customer journey	()	()	()

User needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UX design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coding for non-techies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance dashboards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identity assurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16) Do you have any other comments?

17) Would you like to receive a copy of the report from this research once published?

Yes

No

Thank you for taking part in our survey.

The results will be anonymised and reported on the [Local Digital Campaign news blog](#).

A full copy of the report will also be available free of charge to public sector employees.



4. The Local Digital Programme

The Local Digital Campaign supports the delivery of excellent local public services by:

- Amplifying the best of digital innovation and culture change to accelerate use of digital to deliver better services and save money,
- Creating lasting two-way sharing between central and local public services.
- Discovering and nurturing development of standards and APIs to transform central-local service delivery

4.1 Three main streams

- **Discovery**
 - **Step 1:** We host a **Discovery** Day with a central government department that is undergoing change that will affect local authorities and or where a big service transformation issue has been identified. We use these events to identify priority issues, to scope potential projects to resolve them and test their feasibility.
 - **Step 2:** We hold **Co-Design** Days with service users, heads of service, policy-experts, and developers to design nationally scalable solutions. We develop prototype solutions and business cases and vote on those we want to pursue.
 - **Step 3:** After co-design, we work with the department in question to develop a business case and refine the product design so a business case can be accepted and the solution **co-developed**.
 - **Step 4:** We help to **launch** the solution and **drive take up** across local authorities in order to maximise benefits
- **Skills:** These events aim to improve the digital skills of local authority employees, focusing on the key digital skills in demand in local authorities.
- **Futures:** We run Local Digital Futures conferences to highlight the future of technology and public services that we need to be preparing for now. We also run Thought Leadership events and dinner debates to gather senior decision-makers and encourage them to work together.

4.2 Outcomes in 2014

As a result of Discovery and Co-Design days, we have identified significant potential savings for the public purse. We are working with departments to realise these in 2015:

- Accessing Land Registry property data to reduce fraud.
- Sharing DVLA data with local authorities to help them fill information gaps and deliver services more efficiently.
- A 'deferred payments calculator' that helps citizens considering their options in paying for care.
- 'Caresupermarket.com to help pull together sources of information about accessing care
- Standards and an Application Programming Interface (API) for council waste departments and suppliers
- Verify, check, deliver... automatic local-central attribute checking to transform service eligibility checking.

Meanwhile we are working with further departments to identify further opportunities for savings through central-local digital collaboration.

4.3 Campaign Events

The Local Digital Campaign held **41 events** in 2014, attended by **1,838 delegates**:

- **95%** of attendees would recommend our events to a colleague
- **88%** rated events as good or better
- **73%** identified improvements they could make in their organisations
- **68%** identified new ways of working.
- **58%** of attendees surveyed, from both local and central government, identified opportunities for collaboration.
- **52%** identified potential efficiencies for their organisation.
- **33%** identified savings.

4.4 Amplification

- www.localdigitalcampaign.com
- **Over 8,000 newsletter opens** a month
- Over 12,500 **views** for the news blog a month
- Across all our Twitter hashtags, our total reach to date is over **7.5 million impressions**.