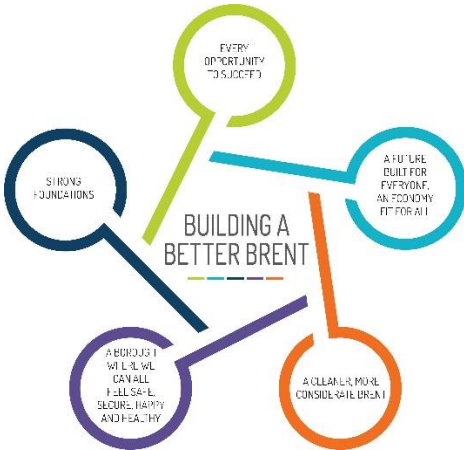


# DIGITAL PROGRAMME OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE 2022-26



December 2021

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## Executive summary

This document provides an outline business case for an extension of the Brent Digital Programme to 2026. It supports the implementation of the 2022-26 digital strategy, building on and maximising the benefits from the strong foundations put in place by the 2019-23 digital programme.

The Covid19 pandemic has highlighted the crucial role of digital technology in the way we live and work, and has accelerated the move to online for many more citizens, businesses and organisations. At the same time it has exposed greater inequalities, including digital exclusion, and increased the risk that those who do not have access to digital devices, fast broadband and sufficient data are left even further behind. For this reason, we have produced a new digital strategy to refocus our priorities as we emerge from the pandemic and better prepare us for the future. This business case sets out the investment required to implement this strategy and the benefits it will deliver.

This business case aligns with other initiatives such the Shared Technology Services (STS) technology roadmap which will ensure Brent has robust and secure technology to meet its needs.

By committing to this business case and the digital strategy, we will continue to develop as a digital place and a digital council. We will work to ensure local residents, partners and businesses are able to thrive in the digital future, and play active roles in shaping Brent into a digital borough where technology is used to improve the lives and life chances of everyone.

### Financial cost benefit analysis

The core capital investment required to deliver the new digital strategy is £9.3m over the programme period, starting from 2022/23. Total cumulative savings of £14.8m are forecast after year 4, with an estimated recurring annual saving of £3.9m after 3 years, based on new, enabling and efficiency savings. The planned end of the programme is March 2026.

Separately, £4.2m is sought for a Business Support Fund (£2.0m) and devices for every digitally excluded household (£2.2m). Although these projects bring significant benefits, they are hard to quantify and measure and therefore the £4.2m investment is not part of the return on investment calculation for the programme. The Business Support Fund which will give local businesses access to a digital device, Microsoft package, bespoke skills and training, a market place and E-Commerce platform. The devices project will provide a digital device for every digitally excluded household in Brent by 2025 (8,000 devices).

### Deliverables

Figure 1 shows the programme broken down into key deliverables. The programme is organised into five themes:

- **Access** - Improving access to information and resident’s services. Making sure that council systems are easy to use for all residents
- **Digital Place** - Having consistent technology and connectivity available to enable Brent to be a digital borough that is accessible for both businesses and residents. This includes improved access to public Wi-Fi for residents
- **Digital Inclusion** – Identifying digitally excluded residents and providing access to devices and digital skills to enable all residents across Brent to safely participate in the digital world
- **Data and Smart devices** – Using our data to better understand our customers and improve the way we deliver services by making quick and robust decisions for residents.
- **Digital Workplace** - Ensuring staff have access to technology that will enable them to work efficiently and to have the digital skills to effectively use existing and new technology

Theme	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
<b>Access</b>	Further website improvements		
	More services on My Account		
	Automation (RPA, AI, chatbots, virtual agents)		
	Improved customer access for key services including Environment, Housing, Adult Social Care, Children’s Services		
	Planning system replacement		
	Pipeline of Dynamics projects/ systems rationalisation		
<b>Digital Place</b>	Increased connectivity		
	Digital jobs		
	Business Support Fund		
<b>Digital Inclusion</b>	Digital champions		
	Digital skills		
	Digital devices		
<b>Data and smart devices</b>	Data lake		
	Internet of things hub		
	Biometrics		
<b>Digital workplace</b>	Rollout of Office 365		
	Digital skills training for staff		

Figure 1 - Roadmap

# 1 Introduction

## Purpose of OBC

**1.1.** This document provides an outline business case for continuing a programme of activity to build on the foundations that have been put in place by Brent's digital programme since 2017. It sets out the investment required to deliver a refreshed digital strategy. Implementation of the new strategy will enable the council to fully leverage the benefits of the investment made to date and will secure further benefits; improving services to our customers whilst maximising opportunities for efficiencies. It will also ensure that the council is able to future proof its existing technology to better meet crises such as Covid-19.

## Background

**1.2.** This business case sets out a programme of work designed to deliver the draft digital strategy 2022-26. It sets out the potential costs and projected benefits for the proposed programme, alongside details of the technology investment and projects which will be delivered. The majority of benefits are achieved through technology enabling transformation of service delivery across council services.

**1.3.** A financial model provides detail of the costs, including programme and technology enablement, and initial savings from project delivery to show the return on investment. The programme includes a number of key initiatives (see **figure 3** for a full list):

- The roll-out of Office 365 to increase collaborative working and so that officers can work on any device anywhere
- Adult Social Care projects to improve the resident experience, join up back office systems and improve efficiency
- Improvement and modernisation of Planning systems to improve the customer and user experience
- Support for the Redesigning Local Services programme to improve the resident experience and the integration of back office systems for environmental services
- Projects to improve services and increase efficiency of back office systems in CYP
- Housing projects to build on earlier work and maximise benefits through further enhancements and integrations
- Further website improvements to make it easier for residents to access services and information easily on a range of devices, and to ensure a more personalised experience
- More services on MyAccount and further MyAccount enhancements to support self-service and improved access to a wider range of services for residents 24/7
- An Internet of Things (IoT) hub to capitalise on IoT technology, its ability to help us improve services and to take a more responsive and preventative approach to supporting residents. To also generate new insights for areas from air quality and waste management to transport use, all of which will improve our environment and support our Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy
- A Business Support Fund which will give local businesses access to a digital device, Microsoft package, bespoke skills and training, a market place and E-Commerce platform
- A digital device for every digitally excluded household in Brent. This supports the Mayor of London's Digital Access for all ambition of supporting every Londoner to have access to good connectivity, basic digital skills and the device or support they need to be online by 2025

- Development of the data lake use cases to support the better use of data to drive improvements to services across the Council.
- 1.4. In addition to this, work with all services will continue to be undertaken to determine where Microsoft Dynamics and technologies such as Robotics Process Automation (RPA) and artificial intelligence (AI) can be used, supported by improved customer interfaces to drive an improved resident experience and better outcomes.
  - 1.5. The programme will also deliver a number of projects which have gained funding from the council's strategic investment fund:
    - Take Your Shot initiative to provide support to Brent start-up enterprises and entrepreneurs. It will support the Black Community Action Plan as there will be a particular focus on entrepreneurs from Black and Ethnic Minority groups.
    - 296 digital packages for children and young people in Brent to assist them with accessing online learning at home and to improve their digital skills
    - Local shopping app to support local businesses and to give residents access to a local online marketplace and e-commerce
    - A business database which the council can use to conduct a strategic analysis of the Brent business base and to engage a wider number of businesses in our business support offer
    - A pilot business support fund for 100 business. If the draft 2022-26 business case for the digital strategy is agreed, this will be rolled out more widely.

### **Building on the 2019-23 strategy and programme**

- 1.6. We began our digital journey in 2017, working with businesses, residents and different areas of the council. Since then we have implemented a single resident online portal and improved connectivity across the borough by 21% in the last four years.
- 1.7. Covid-19 has further demonstrated the importance of digital access in the modern world. As part of our digital response to the pandemic we have provided devices and connectivity to digitally excluded residents through the Resident's Support Fund (RSF) and have run pilots for groups such as some older residents to improve their digital skills and participation in virtual services. As a council, we have had to adapt the way we work to ensure we are able to meet the needs of residents while working virtually. As an example, we have piloted a virtual appointment system for births, marriages and deaths registrations. We have also supported local businesses to have access to digital skills training so that they have the opportunity to adapt and succeed.

### **What we have achieved**

- 1.8. Significant progress has been made on planned activities alongside a range of additional work to develop forms and systems to support the response to the pandemic. These have helped the council in making grants and other support quickly available and accessible for residents and businesses. The infrastructure put in place to deliver the programme has made it possible to develop rapidly a number of systems to support the council's response to Covid-19, for example the Covid-19 resident support fund, shielding and inbound calls questionnaire, test and trace, surge testing , additional restriction grant and business grant form.
- 1.9. As part of the 2019-23 strategy:

- connectivity throughout the borough has increased (Full Fibre To The Premises broadband is now available across 25.5% of the borough)
- residents and business have gained more digital skills training (over 200 residents have benefited);
- MyAccount has been improved; residents can access more services when and where they want;
- chatbots and virtual agents have freed up officer time and supported residents (saved over £20k of officer time in 2020/21);
- RPA has sped up manual processes, improved accuracy, delivered additional tasks such as reporting for Covid-19 and saved officer time to be used on more productive tasks (saved over £190k of officer time in 2020/21);
- more systems have been rationalised and built on Dynamics (total of 16 services, 80% of them have residents facing forms and case management) , making for a more consistent experience for residents and staff;
- and a data lake has been developed, allowing us to better utilise different types and formats of data to inform decision making and improve service delivery.

**1.10.** The original business case figures for the 2019-23 programme are below. 23/24 was intended as a year to fully embed and maximise benefits from the programme with a budget of £1m to support this work. As part of these proposals, it is intended for this £1m to be brought forward to 22/23 be used to help support the roll-out of Office 365, as well as delivering the first phase of improvement work for Adult Social Care projects, and the placement of systems for Planning. These two projects were submitted as Strategic Investment Fund bids earlier this year and it was agreed that they would be taken forward as part of the next phase of the digital programme. The total cost for these projects exceeds £1m, but the 22/23-25/26 business case makes provision for future years.

Digital programme 2019/23 cost benefit analysis						
Investment	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	£ 4.5	£ 4.0	£ 3.0	£ 1.0	£ -	£ 12.5
Savings/Income	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
<b>TOTAL CUMULATIVE SAVINGS/INCOME</b>	£ 1.7	£ 2.8	£ 3.8	£ 4.1	£ 4.1	£ 16.6
<b>Annual Profile</b>	£ (2.7)	£ (1.2)	£ 0.8	£ 3.1	£ 4.1	£ 4.2

Figure 2 - 2019-23 Business case financial

**1.11.** As a result of Covid-19 the actual cumulative savings delivered to date are slightly below target. However, an additional £2.8m in social investment was achieved, ranging from support for London Borough of Culture work, digital skills training for residents and staff, reduced digital development costs and full fibre programmes. We are confident that these savings will be achieved by the end of 2023 and that further savings will be delivered using the investment set out in this business case.

**1.12.** To date we have successfully achieved many targets and outcomes that directly contribute to our ambition of becoming a digital place and digital council. These include:

Theme: Access

- Over 90% of the website now meets accessibility criteria, an increase of over 38% since early 2020. Our re-platformed website which will be launched later this year will be even more accessible and provide an improved experience for customers.
- We have improved our resident online portal so that users have self-serve access to essential services such as housing needs, housing benefit and council tax 24/7 through any device.
- We have improved the security of the online portal to ensure that residents' information is stored more safely within the council.
- The Brent 'My Account' has enabled us to join up residents' interactions with the council by having one login to interact with a range of services.
- We have implemented a new feedback system providing residents with a simplified way to contact the council.
- We have introduced virtual agents (chatbots and web chats) in our online services to instantaneously answer residents' questions about council services and connect them with relevant information and forms, improving their experience when interacting with the council.

Theme: Digital place

- We have worked with providers to retrofit fibre cabling to over 6,000 premises within Brent's housing stock, increasing our residents' access to full fibre broadband at affordable prices.
- We have successfully worked with providers to connect 15 community buildings, helping to ensure everyone can benefit from improved internet access and improve the public services delivered from these buildings.
- Throughout the pandemic our digital programme enabled us to quickly develop new processes to help set up local test and trace and other key systems, providing vital support to over 33,000 residents.

Theme: Digital inclusion

- Through our Resident Support Fund (RSF), which helps those affected financially by the pandemic, we have provided devices and internet access to over 200 digitally excluded residents.
- We have partnered with Social Box, a community interest group that refurbishes organisations' laptops, to distribute 55 council laptops to residents via Brent's Living Room, the Refugee Support Network and the homeless community. These laptops were given to residents who wanted to develop their digital skills.
- We have worked with Infosys to provide 25 laptops to housing tenants to support them to access the new housing portal. This approach has enabled residents to improve their digital skills and actively engage with services and family members.



Theme: Data and smart devices

- Through working with Mobile Network Operators to better use data, we have been able to understand how people use spaces by measuring footfall and time spent in our local areas, which has helped generate intelligence to inform the recovery of high streets after the pandemic.
- We are one of the first councils to establish a data ethics board to ensure oversight and proper use of data within an ethics framework.
- We have established a data lake which gives us the capability to look across all the data we collect when delivering services, providing customer insights that have informed service improvements.
- Our new Rent Arrears Management Solution (RAMS) is used to identify when tenants begin to miss rent payments and automatically alert case officers that additional support may be required for the resident, successfully preventing escalating debt.

Theme: Digital workplace

- By investing in technology and skills for staff we successfully delivered council services without disruption throughout all stages of the pandemic, including new and enhanced services for our residents to help them to stay safe and well.
- We have piloted virtual appointments in our births, marriages and deaths service, enabling residents to choose to access this service remotely.
- We have partnered with Microsoft to offer over 20,000 hours of digital training for staff across the council, supporting new skills for improved services.

## 2 Strategic case

### Delivery

2.1 Figure 3 sets out the key themes set out in the digital strategy and the initiatives that will be delivered to implement these.

Themes	Initiatives
<p><b>Access</b></p> <p>Improving access to information and resident's services. Making sure that council systems are easy to use for all residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision for Adult Social Care projects to support residents and improve officer productivity. To include: self-assessment tool, financial assessment tool, improved digital front end for residents, better integrations between systems, data to support better decision making and a single view of clients, digital toolkit to signpost support for residents.</li> <li>• Improvement and modernisation of Planning systems to improve the customer and user experience</li> <li>• Support for Housing projects to improve the customer experience and increase officer productivity. To include integrations and enhancements.</li> <li>• Support for CYP projects to help service users and officers. To include phase two of the pathway app.</li> <li>• Support for the Redefining Local Services programme in Regeneration and Environment to further improve the resident experience and services. To support customer focussed systems, integration across back office systems and data to inform improved services.</li> <li>• Work to enable the delivery of a re-designed customer access offer at the Civic Centre</li> <li>• Scale up the use of Virtual appointments and virtual agents</li> <li>• Introduce voice bots for telephone numbers on the automated call distribution system Further website improvements to make it more personalised, easier for residents to access the information and services they need 24/7 from any location and device</li> <li>• Improved online forms which better integrate into back office systems providing a more efficient and effective service</li> <li>• A further development of MyAccount to allow third parties to support residents who need additional assistance</li> <li>• More services on MyAccount where residents can access them easily and securely</li> <li>• Improve our citizenship system so that residents can book ceremonies directly</li> </ul>

Themes	Initiatives
<p><b>Digital Place</b></p> <p>Having consistent technology and connectivity available to enable Brent to be a digital borough that is accessible for both businesses and residents. This includes improved access to public Wi-Fi for residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further roll-out of 5G and an increase the number of properties with FTTP to further improve connectivity in the borough</li> <li>• The expansion of a local shopping app and a Brent e-commerce platform, building on a pilot for 250 SMEs in Brent</li> <li>• LPWAN (low-power wide-area network) to support the introduction of monitoring sensors that provide real time information to our systems</li> <li>• Work with new organisations and providers to increase technical employment and apprenticeship opportunities</li> <li>• A Business Support Fund which will give local businesses access to a digital device, Microsoft package, bespoke skills and training, a market place and E-Commerce platform</li> </ul>
<p><b>Digital Inclusion</b></p> <p>Identifying digitally excluded residents and providing access to devices and digital skills to enable all residents across Brent to participate in the digital world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A digital device for every digitally excluded household in Brent</li> <li>• 500 digital champions by 2025 to support residents to get online and improve their digital skills</li> <li>• 20,000 hours' worth of self-study digital skills training to all residents by the end of 2022</li> <li>• A digital inclusion map, through partnership working with LOTI, the GLA and other LAs, which details where digitally excluded residents are in the borough, the digital skills training available to them and the barriers to them becoming digitally included. This will inform the areas of investment required to enable residents to become digitally included.</li> <li>• Digital skills training for our Community and Voluntary sector to meet resident needs and provide digital services</li> <li>• Further development of Brent's Digital Inclusion network to ensure the programme of work meets the needs of residents</li> </ul>

Themes	Initiatives
<p><b>Data and Smart devices</b></p> <p>Using our data to better understand our customers and improve the way we deliver services by making quick and robust decisions for residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further develop our data lake to help us maximise our data, make better decisions and increase debt collection</li> <li>• IoT hub to capitalise on IoT technology and its ability to help us improve services and take a more responsive and preventative approach to supporting our residents</li> <li>• Implement sensors to monitor the impact of transport changes on air quality, resident behaviour and noise pollution</li> <li>• Through participation in the Microsoft Green500 programme we will monitor the impact of new technology and develop new approaches to support our Climate Emergency priorities. This includes approaches, where appropriate, for retrofitting our housing stock with energy efficient materials, encouraging investment in electrical vehicle charging points and identifying opportunities to use solar powered energy</li> <li>• Use sensors in building to identify required work at an earlier stage sustaining living conditions and reducing the costs of repairs in some circumstances</li> <li>• We will explore the opportunities to use biometrics (e.g. passports, fingerprints or iris scanning) to validate individual's identities therefore reducing the need for individuals to present several paper documents</li> <li>• Assistive technology for adult social care to increase independence</li> <li>• As part of our systems review we will explore opportunities to rationalise our asset management systems</li> </ul>
<p><b>Digital workplace</b></p> <p>Ensuring staff have access to technology that will enable them to work efficiently and to have the digital skills to effectively use existing and new technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll-out of Office 365 and secure collaboration with third party partners, so that officers can access council applications anywhere anytime and on any device</li> <li>• The technology and skills to support hybrid working</li> <li>• Digital skills training for staff</li> <li>• Invest in digital apprenticeships to develop the digital skills available within the council</li> <li>• Support for Oracle Cloud and AIMs projects</li> <li>• Further roll out of Govmail and DocuSign to save officer time and increase productivity</li> <li>• Increase in use of electronic document storage to reduce costs and increase security</li> <li>• Continue with automation in the form of RPA and run AI pilots</li> <li>• Further rationalisation of systems</li> </ul>

Figure 3 - Themes and initiatives

## Benefits

**2.2** The key benefit themes for the programme and the benefits underpinning them are below in figure 4. These are outlined in more detail in Appendix 1.

	<b>Benefit theme</b>	<b>Supporting benefits</b>
<b>1</b>	Customers are able to transact and participate securely, easily and conveniently in a way which meets their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents will be able to access more services online at a time and place that is convenient for them, and on a device of their choosing</li> <li>• Businesses will be able to access services in one place when and where it suits them</li> <li>• Enable greater access to services for residents who need more support as they can use trusted third parties to help them access their digital services</li> <li>• Quicker and easier access to information as a result to continuing website improvements</li> <li>• Save resident and officer time by using bio-metrics to prove identification, rather than relying on presenting documents in person</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	We are better able to use and share data to understand customers enabling us to deliver services which meet their needs and collaborate with partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement in performance information and data analysis will support planning, decision making and service improvements</li> <li>• The Data Lake will support a “single view” of vulnerable adults and children, predictive analytics, supporting early intervention and reducing demand on frontline practitioners</li> <li>• The increased ability to analyse communication with customers through chatbots will improve our understanding of issues and challenges impacting on residents</li> <li>• We will be able to more efficiently support and communicate with business as all the data about them is in one place</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	We work more efficiently and effectively enabling staff to have the right tools and departments to realign resources to provide better services, and, deliver financial benefits and generate income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPA will automate mundane processes, improve accuracy, increase speed, and save officer time</li> <li>• Investment in EDM and Dynamics systems will reduce processing times (e.g. through enabling a single view of the customer)</li> <li>• There will be income generation through commercial developments</li> <li>• Savings will be generation through rationalisation of systems, reducing licensing and support costs</li> <li>• Officer productivity will be improved by efficiencies in processing and ways of working e.g. new online forms</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating existing systems and ensuring they are secure will help avoid the cost of cyber-attack or data breach</li> </ul>
4	Residents and businesses can access the right digital infrastructure and skills to succeed and innovate within a growing local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full fibre roll outs will enable residents to access faster, more robust and futureproof broadband</li> <li>Roll out of 5G connectivity will enable wider use of Smart Home technology and provide a platform for innovation</li> <li>Digital skills training will enable and increase residents' ability to access jobs and services</li> <li>Devices for every digitally excluded household will improve digital skills, increase residents' access to services, reduce social isolation, and increase access to employment and educational opportunities</li> <li>The business support fund will help support the local economy and jobs by bringing more businesses online and helping them connect with a wider customer base</li> </ul>
5	We use technology to provide a healthier, safer, cleaner borough for residents to live in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internet of Things devices will allow residents to live more independently for longer</li> <li>Implementation of Smart city devices will enable better management of challenges including air quality</li> <li>The Green500 programme with Microsoft will identify opportunities to roll out smart devices to help Brent to achieve its ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.</li> </ul>

Figure 4 - Benefits

**2.3** A clear set of stretching, measurable targets has been developed as part of the 2022-26 strategy against which delivery of the programme will be measured.

### 3 Economic case

#### Investment required

- 3.1** Implementation of the previous strategy focused on building on the groundwork, initial testing and piloting that had taken place. This strategy is about further capitalising on the pilots and building blocks, enabling greater benefits to be delivered for residents. This phase of work will focus on ensuring accessible and secure digital services for residents at the same time as supporting Brent's programme of recovery from Covid-19. More than ever, we need all residents and businesses to feel that they have the digital skills and connectivity they need to thrive.
- 3.2** The core investment required is estimated at £9.3m over the programme period. Based on work carried out to date, total cumulative savings of £14.8m are forecast after Year 4, with an estimated recurring annual saving of £3.9m after 3 years, based on new, enabling and efficiency savings.
- 3.3** Investment is required to:

**Support and develop the programme** – With sufficient programme governance and coordination so that it can work with services to define, resource and deliver key change projects and follow through efficiency and benefits realisation.

**Further embed a digital platform** – The Dynamics platform, supported by Sharepoint EDM, has been rolled out to Housing Management, Brent Customer Services and across core corporate systems such as complaints management. The next phase of the programme will build on opportunities through and 'bundling' of common processes to drive savings, create a data rich environment and 'single view', reduce the number of business applications and drive greater integration and automation of systems. It will also see an expansion of the MyAccount offering with more services available through the portal.

**Strengthen the digital infrastructure and ecosystem** – It is crucial that we future proof our technology and our services to meet the demands, expectations and shocks of the modern world. Some of the planned new initiatives are hybrid working, the rollout of Office 365 and enabling technologies that have not been explored before such as artificial intelligence and machine learning.

**Maximise benefits from initial pilots** – A key element of the programme to date has been to carry out small scale pilots of new technologies such as RPA. These have identified opportunities to generate significant savings through further roll out of these technologies across council services, as well as potential opportunities to generate income by selling expertise to external organisations. This investment will support work to maximize the benefits from initial investment through wider implementation.

## Critical success factors

3.4 Some of the critical success factors in delivering this programme are set out below in Figure 5.

Success factor	Description
<b>We will place customers at the heart of all we do</b>	We will achieve this by designing and building services around the customer and delivering digital services by design and choice.
<b>We will be innovative in our use of technology</b>	We will be open to new ways of working and using emerging technology to 'break the rules' and bring new and more radical ways of working and service delivery to the table which meet our residents needs
<b>Good decision-making</b>	Our key decisions on how services are delivered will be based on effectively using strong data and insights analysis.
<b>Our staff will be agile</b>	We will create a culture that supports staff to be an agile, digitally skilled and solution-focused workforce

Figure 5 - Critical Success Factors



## 4 Financial case

### Budget context

- 4.1** The Council faces challenging financial targets in order to maintain a balanced budget. At the same time, demand for services is increasing and residents' expectations of the quality of front-line services continues to rise. Many back office services that support our activities are stretched as a result of savings already made. The extension of the digital programme will build on work to date and continue to assist with addressing the joint challenges of the need to continue to make savings with the increasing expectations of customers for a high quality service.
- 4.2** The core capital investment required to deliver the draft digital strategy is £9.3m from 2023 onwards. Based on work carried out to date total cumulative savings of £14.8m are forecast after Year 4, with an estimated recurring annual saving of £3.88m after 3 years, based on new, enabling and efficiency savings.
- 4.3** Separately, £4.2m is sought for a Business Support Fund (£2.0m) and devices for every digitally excluded household (£2.2m). The Business Support Fund which will give local businesses access to a digital device, Microsoft package, bespoke skills and training, a market place and E-Commerce platform. The devices project will provide a digital device for every digitally excluded household in Brent by 2025 (8,000 devices). These projects will bring significant economic and social benefits to the borough and will support recovery from the Pandemic, but by their nature do not bring short term financial benefits to the Council. As a result the investment in this work has been separated from the £9.3m transformation funding in this business case.

## Investment model

4.4 An assessment of costs and savings has been undertaken for this outline business case based upon the following:

- **Cost of the programme and the proposed digital programme resources** –The programme will be temporary until spring 2026
- **Cost of technology enablement** such as Dynamics, RPA, and EDM implementation support and data and security tools.
- **Savings and income** – based upon the assumptions for headcount, third party savings, new revenue streams and cost avoidance/demand management.
- **Savings** defined as **New** (i.e. not in current budget savings or plans), **Enabling** (i.e. supporting delivery of agreed savings targets, these projects give a further level of confidence to delivery), or **Efficiency** (i.e. providing opportunities for departments to increase efficiency which could include cashable savings to support delivery of new savings targets).

4.5 Figure 6 shows the return on investment for the programme, with investment shown by theme. 26/27 costs are included to show the money required to maintain the existing projects, which is mainly for skeleton staffing and a digital development team to support officers with any issues that arise with the technology. Costs for digital inclusion and place appear low. This is because success in these areas is reliant on partnership working and applying for funding. Also, the business support fund and devices for every digitally excluded household support these themes and the separate costs for these are outlined in Figure 7.

## Financial tables

Digital programme 2023/24 - 26/27 ROI by theme (£ millions)					
Investment	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
Access	2.25	1.38	0.30	0.05	3.98
Digital place	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Digital Inclusion	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.05
Data and smart devices	0.35	0.40	0.15	0.00	0.90
Digital workplace	0.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.78
Building blocks	1.20	1.20	0.60	0.40	3.40
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>4.79</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>9.30</b>
Savings/Income	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
Savings (Enabling) CDS	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	3.90
Savings (New) Licensing, etc.	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	2.50
Savings (Efficiency) Automation and increased productivity	0.40	0.50	0.90	0.90	2.70
Income (New) Income via increased debt recovery through RPA and RAMS	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	2.40
Income (New) via commercial opportunities	0.10	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.70
Social investment received	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.50	2.60
<b>TOTAL CUMULATIVE SAVINGS/INCOME</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>14.80</b>
<b>Annual Profile</b>	<b>(1.51)</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>5.50</b>

Figure 6 - Return on investment. Investment by theme.

Digital programme 2023/24 - 26/27 Business Support Fund and Devices for Every Digitally Excluded Household (£ millions)					
Investment	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
Business support fund	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.00	2.00
Devices for every digitally excluded household	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.00	2.21
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4.21</b>

Figure 7 – Business Support Fund and Devices for Every Digitally Excluded Household (£ millions).

**4.6** Savings and income assumptions are based on:

- Delivery of savings in Customer and Digital Services by using technology to support the realignment of services. These are already agreed savings targets and the Digital Programme's projects give a further level of confidence to delivery
- Licensing savings from rationalising systems and replacing them with Dynamics, SharePoint or another system (these savings offset the new licensing costs required to support the technology being delivered through the programme).
- Efficiency and productivity savings from online forms, RPA, chat bots, AI, machine learning, MyAccount, Dynamics, IoT and the data lake. Officer time is freed up by improving online forms and integrating into back office systems, removing unnecessary data entry and contact demand, and automating processes and responses to customer queries. The programme team and Finance will work with departments to identify where these can be used to deliver cashable savings. These efficiencies can also be used to manage additional demand or to allow officers to take on additional or more value adding tasks.
- Increase in debt recovery via RPA and rent arrears through RAMS
- Income generation through selling support and development expertise
- Social investment in financial and non-financial forms from partners and funding organisations

**4.7** The annual savings figures of £1.6m in year 1, rising to £2.4m from year 3 (a total of all new and efficiency savings and income listed above), will be included in the councils MTFS through cashable savings and/or reductions in the need for growth via cost avoidance. The allocation of such savings will be allocated to departments through the detailed businesses cases.

## 5 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Expected Benefits for 2023-26 Programme

## 6 Glossary of key terms

**AI - Artificial intelligence (AI)** is the simulation of human intelligence processed by machines, especially computer systems.

**Biometrics** are body measurements or calculations, including voice recognition and fingerprint scanning, that can be used as a form of identification and access control.

**Chatbot** – A **Chatbot** is a computer program that fundamentally simulates human conversations. It allows a form of interaction between a human and a machine via messages or voice command.

**Data Lake** – A **Data Lake** is a centralized repository that allows you to store all your structured and unstructured data at any scale. You can store your data as-is, without having to first structure the data, and run different types of analytics—from dashboards and visualizations to big data processing, real-time analytics, and machine learning to guide better decisions.

**Digital Twin** - a **virtual representation of an object or system that exists throughout its lifecycle**. It is updated from real-time data, and uses simulation, machine learning and reasoning to help inform decision-making.

**Dynamics** – **Microsoft Dynamics** is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for managing a company's interactions with current and future customers. It often involves using technology to organize, automate, and synchronize sales, marketing, customer service, and technical support.

**EDM** - An **Electronic Document Management** system (EDMS) is a software system for organizing and storing different kinds of documents.

**IoT** - The **Internet of Things** is a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects, animals or people that are provided with unique identifiers (UIDs) and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction.

**5G - Fifth-Generation** cellular wireless follows previous generations of mobile technology such as 3G and 4G. It provides improved bandwidth, meaning higher download speeds and a faster user experience. It also offers greater capacity, allowing thousands of devices in a small area to be connected at the same time.

**Full Fibre - Full-fibre** broadband uses fibre-optic cables to connect your home to the street cabinet, replacing the old copper connections. Full-fibre connections provide a better service that can deliver much faster speeds – up to one gigabit per second.

**RPA - Robotic Process Automation (RPA)** is the use of software to handle high-volume, repeatable tasks that previously required humans to perform.

**Smart Cities** - A **Smart City** is a designation given to a city that incorporates information and communication technologies to enhance the quality and performance of urban services such as energy, transportation and utilities in order to reduce resource consumption, wastage and overall costs.