

Digital Principles

April 2018

Introduction

This document details our digital vision and ambitions and sets out the principles for digital delivery we will use throughout the life of our 2018-21 Corporate Strategy for all developments.

The arguments for going digital are compelling – not just for economic reasons but because the expectations of those who use our service are changing. Time is now a key factor for people when interacting with an organisation. They expect to be able to access and use a service where and when they need it and for it to be quick, efficient and responsive.

And for the Bodies in our Jurisdiction, their business processes and ways of working are now intrinsically linked to a digital approach. We must evolve to keep pace with new technological advances and we need to ensure our services remain accessible to all, while securing efficiencies over the longer term.

These Digital Principles will be incorporated into the 2018-21 Corporate Strategy and will underpin its delivery. Doing this means any digital service or technology investment is linked to delivering our business priorities and strategic objectives and ultimately support the mission of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Our digital vision

“As an organisation with a digital mindset we will use technology in our operations to remedy injustice for individuals and improve local services for many.”

What does digital mean?

We will use technology to increase access routes for information and transactions that will enable service users to intuitively and easily achieve what they want – be that seeking information or lodging their complaint.

Ideally increasing numbers will move away from traditional methods of making their complaint, going online as their first choice when choosing to interact with us. But we will be sure to keep our service accessible to all – we will ensure there are non-digital channels for those who need them.

The findings from our complaints are key to supporting wider change and improvement in local public and adult social care services

One in every four new enquiries is done on our existing online form

though. So we will continue to harness digital technology to improve openness and transparency and share our casework findings for others to use and learn from.

Our website is a go-to source of information ...in 2016/17 it had 1.25 million page views, in 364,000 sessions from 245,000

USERS (includes multiple browsers and devices used by a 'person')

Going digital is less about IT technologies and hardware and more about developing a mindset and culture internally and externally that embraces digital as the norm. This includes our approach to using digital tools as part of any operational service design and choosing to use digital as a legitimate way of communicating with complainants, Bodies in our Jurisdiction and ourselves.

Informed by insight

We used insight from our staff and service users (both complaints and Bodies in Jurisdiction) to understand what digital means to them, how they use it and what they want from an online complaint service.

Staff – what a digital future should do

- *Enhance accessibility*
- *Improve information exchange*
- *Be futureproof*
- *Allow us to share more data*
- *Make business processes more efficient*
- *Provide speed/ease vs paper*
- *Keep data secure*
- *Help us be a modern employer*
- *Help users find what they need about us, when they need it*
- *Help people use our service*
- *Allow us to get all the right complaint information we need*
- *Give efficient user service*
- *Improve data accuracy*
- *Be based on needs of users*
- *Make things easier for all*

Complainants –
their digital use
and needs from
an online
complaint service

Over 80%

want an online service to:

- track complaint progress
- track the Body in Jurisdiction complies with our recommendations
- send communication about their complaint

50%

expect to create an account to use an online complaint service

23%

welcome help videos on how to complain

74%

would complain using an online service

90%

already use the intranet

60%

contact their council online

57%

already use live chat

72%

use online banking

Bodies in
Jurisdiction –
their needs from
an online
complaint service

Over 90%

want an online service to:

- list all complaints about their organisation
- notify when something is waiting
- enable them to view all case documents

92%

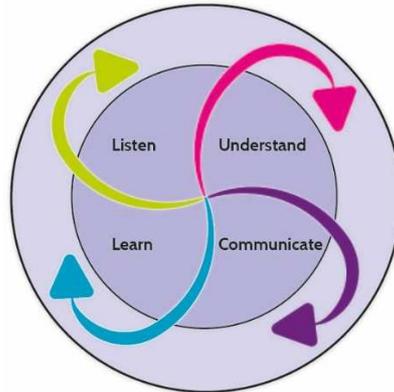
would use an online service

97%

would upload remedy compliance

Digital supporting our Strategic Objectives

Our mission - *'to remedy injustice and help improve local services'* – is underpinned by our values



We will use these same values to inform and embed our approach to digital services and technology to support the delivery of this mission and our four **Strategic Objectives**.

Strategic objective 1:

Our service is easy to find and easy to use

Strategic objective 2:

We remedy injustice through impartial, fair and rigorous investigations

Strategic objective 3:

We use what we learn from complaints to help improve local services

Strategic objective 4:

We are accountable to the public and use our resources efficiently

We already have a considerable digital footprint including web-based information, our complaint management system, social media engagement, intranet-based staff guidance and back-office systems and processes.

Creating a digital mindset among our staff will be crucial if we are to embrace and explore digital ideas as the norm. By creating an organisation-wide set of digital principles we will ensure we embed this new way of thinking and working.

Our five principles will guide the way we work and deliver our annual business plan priorities and year-round projects.

Our five digital principles

Principle 1: “Creating a digital mindset across the organisation to develop new, and evolve existing, systems and initiatives”

- Look for the places technology can help us improve accessibility and communication for those who use our service
- Explore digital opportunities or solutions when procuring new goods or services
- Build digital into annual Business Plan projects
- Challenge ourselves not to say, “we’ve always done it like this”
- Provide access to an online service and help people if they need it
- Make effective use of social media
- Improve collaboration by connecting staff, users and partner organisations

Principle 2: “Well-designed digital services that are reliable, secure and easy to use”

- Ensure digital services perform consistently according to specification
- Design services that provide customer service levels as good as other channels, which meet user needs and involve them
- Listen, learn and improve based on user feedback
- Keep abreast of cyber security developments
- Make data safety and security a priority to inspire user confidence
- Keep things clear, simple and accessible

Principle 3: “Supporting transparency and accountability”

- Make full use of digital to share our data, remedies, decisions, reports, guidance and performance data
- Enable real-time tracking of complaint ‘journey’ progress
- Share data with partner organisations

Principle 4: “Supporting flexible working”

- Explore better use of technologies to collaborate and communicate
- Improve the way we communicate with each other through video and instant messaging
- Give people the skills to make the most of digital tools and services

Principle 5: “Being futureproof”

- Buy tools already in the marketplace, don’t build, avoid bespoke
- Talk to others and collaborate or co-procure.
- Review and learn so digital processes and technology support the way we work
- Use standards that allow compatibility between systems and software