

Annex 2: Digital Programme

Programme Overview

Surrey County Council's Digital Programme started in 2018 and was delivered through the IT & Digital service. The programme formed part of a wider Organisational Transformation programme and the remit was to respond to the everyday needs of residents living in Surrey and the Council's staff in a quicker and more efficient way. The early phase of the programme focused on putting in place several key technologies enabling capabilities.

The Digital Strategy was developed as part of the programme and approved in 2020 and set out the strategic goal of making Surrey a 'digital council' with an ambition of "Living Digital" by 2025 in which 'digital by design' is one of the key principles. The Digital strategy aimed to address our Digital Strategic Priorities for People, Place, Organisation, Data and Insights. The strategic focus includes:

- Supporting Independence
- Tackling Inequalities
- Investing in Digital Infrastructure
- Connecting Communities
- Agile Workforce
- Empowering Staff
- Data and Insights

The digital programme is now responsible for the delivery of parts of the Digital Strategy and for maintaining alignment to the wider Organisational Strategy.

Digital technology capabilities

The digital technology capabilities put in place by the programme included:

- Automation (robotic process automation and chatbots)
- Data Integration
- Enterprise Data Management
- Resident facing portals
- IOT (Internet of Things)
- Data and Insights (data analytics and visualisation tools)

IT & Digital service capabilities established to support the Digital Strategy

To support the Council's digital ambitions the following areas of service capability have been established and developed.

Technical Digital Skills

- Data Science and Artificial Intelligence Engineering – SCC is now supporting the training of staff with an apprenticeship focused on Data Science and Artificial intelligence.
- Data Analytics – skills that enable the delivery and business team to collect data, create dashboards and interpret data across the organisation.
- Automation Business Analyst – Business analysts that are specialized in analysing the opportunities identified.
- RPA Developer – the developer skill that is focused on delivering the automation projects with Robotics Process Automation tools.
- Rapid Application Developer – developers that are using low-code or no-code technology that enable them to deliver the projects rapidly.

Digital delivery approach

The Digital Programme, working closely with frontline services, has applied digital technology to real service challenges and opportunities. Using a traditional approach of Prince2, this process has helped to build use cases to test and demonstrate the value and benefits of digital capabilities. Where value was identified we further developed the use cases to demonstrate the art of the possible and to begin to meet some of the demand not only within the transformation portfolio but also other organisational requirements.

Once the use cases were established, they were delivered using a combination of Agile and Prince2 project principles and methodologies.

A parallel stream of work was established during the early days of the programme and is now embedded; this is called the Digital Design Team.

Digital Design Team

Our Digital Design team was established during the work that we undertook last year with our strategic partner and is now embedded in the way that we approach key business change. The team uses an Agile approach to the delivery change and are collaborative, working closely with the business. The team currently consists of a mix of contractor digital specialists, internal digital specialists, service SMEs and key leadership roles from both IT&D and the service. Two examples of key pieces of work that grew out of our initial “lightning sprints” are:

- Surrey's Help Hub – an online tool to support residents' access Early Help for children
- Joiners, Movers, Leavers – an internal process review that has revolutionised our staff recruitment process

These “projects” have used an agile approach to discovery, design and delivery.