Digital Strategy 2021 – 2024

Executive Board Overview
April 2021

https://digital-blog.blackburn.gov.uk/

Developing a Vision for Digital 2021 - 2024

- **Progress and delivery of 2018 - 20 strategy**

  - Digital Customer Portal & Website
  - Microsoft 365 & Teams
  - Mobile devices
  - Data dashboards
  - Adoption of Agile & Design methods (see Blog)

- **Current drivers**

  - Reduced funding
  - Pace of change in technology and behaviours post Covid-19
  - Volatility and increased cyber threat
  - Increased need from residents and service users

- **Vision areas**

  - Borough
  - Customer Experience
  - High Performing Organisation

Digital Strategy 2021 – 2024

Digital is not just about technology, it involves behaviours, people, cultures and *the way* we do things in Blackburn with Darwen (BwD). It is our challenge to effectively engage with, understand, collaborate and better serve our customers and communities in digital first environments. The continued need for increased social distancing and remote working & living have prioritised the need to accelerate the development of a connected, converged society that enables and includes everyone, in every community. We must use digital to create more engagement, inclusion and opportunities into every corner of our Community.

Our definition of Customer is any citizen, supplier, business or partner that interacts with our services.

What we aim to achieve

1 – Our customer experience will be effortless, and digital first. Customers' first thought will be to go to our website with a question in mind, and come away with the answer they need, and wherever possible apply for the service they need online. No phone call or email required, with no confusion as to what happens next. We will focus on increasing digital skills across the borough, better opportunities for our customers through better connectivity, better access, giving increased confidence.

2 – Transformation, accelerated through more agile and customer design skills across the Council. This will rapidly improve processes with good customer journey design, user research and digital tools, allowing staff to focus on high value activities

3 - Through the smarter use of joined-up data we will continuously improve our services and inform decision making.

4 - As more services are accessible online to our customers and our staff use more digital tools, we need modern infrastructure too. This means systems that talk to each other, highly reliable hosting and platforms, the best of technology and modern, cloud-based and integrated technical architecture.

Borough : Vision

Better Digital Access

Connected Place

Digital Skills

- Increased choice of Broadband providers
- Driving better prices
- Faster connection speed
- Tackling Digital Poverty
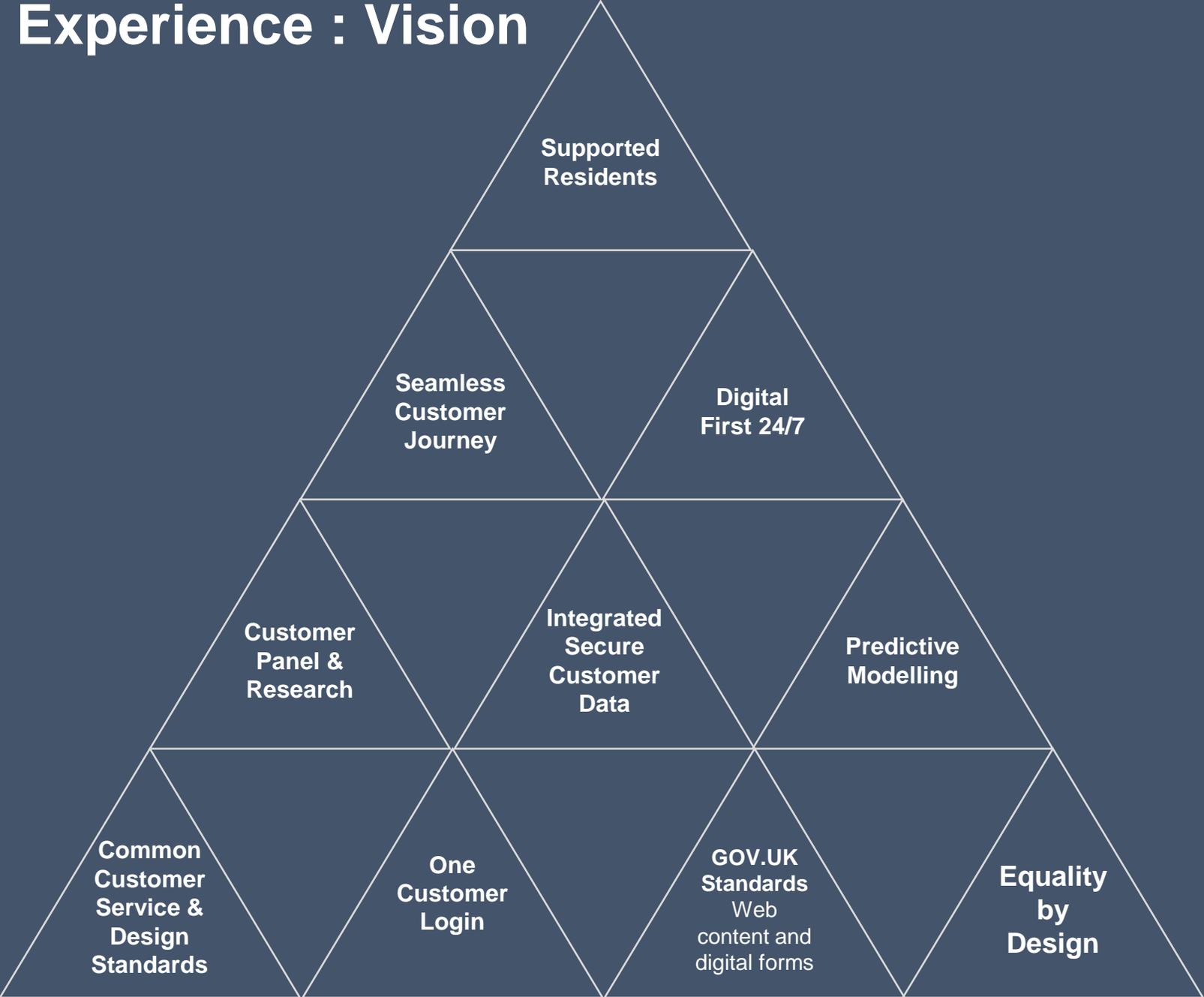- Access to employment & education
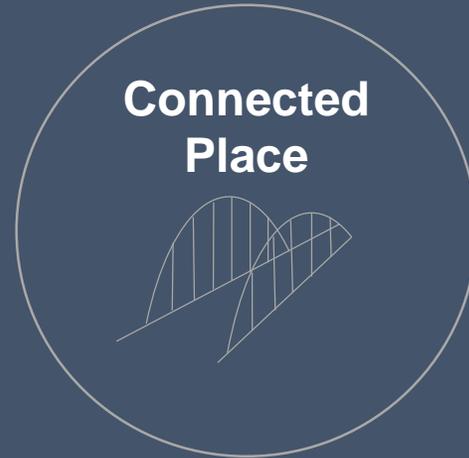
- Infrastructure that future proofs the Borough
- Fast connection for businesses
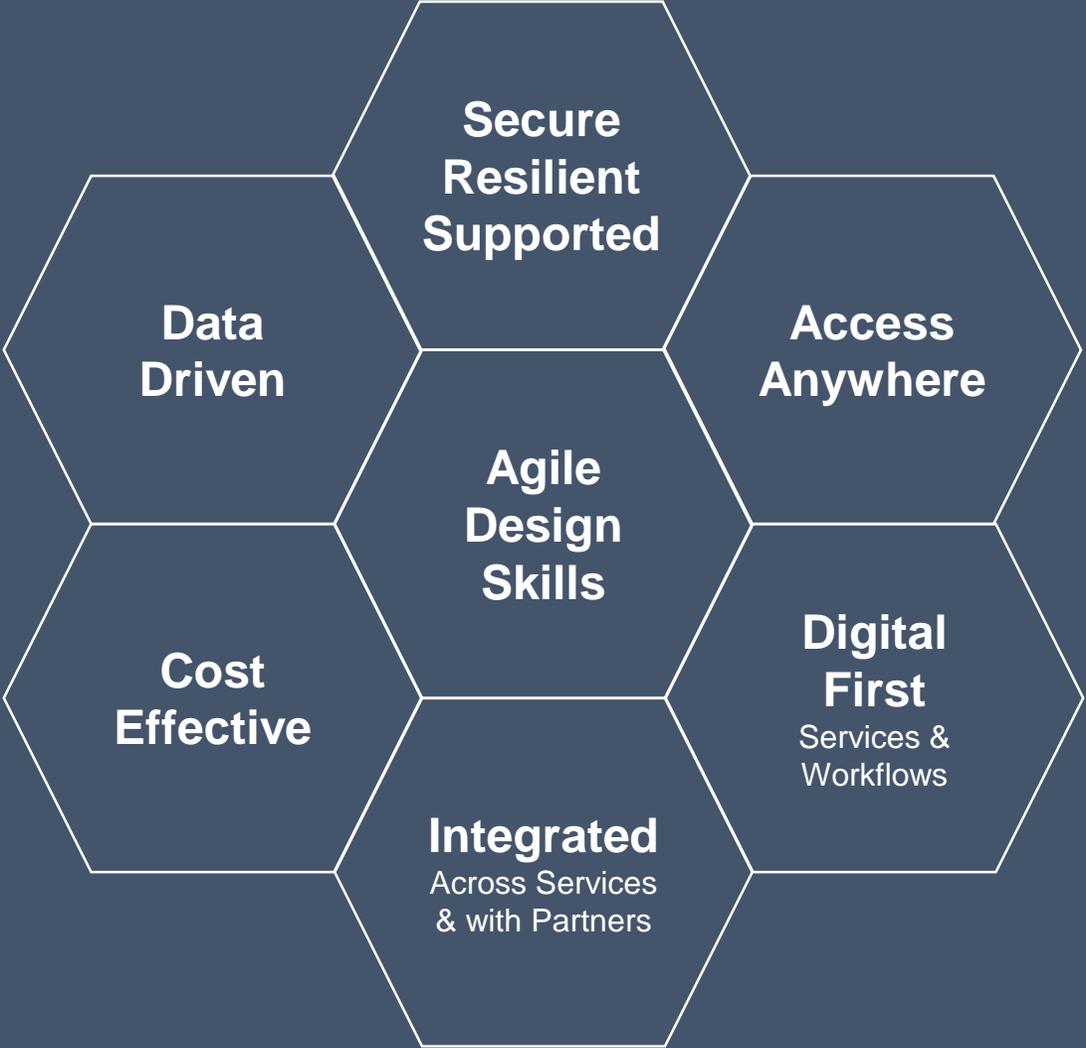- Internet of Things
- Cyber secure
- Climate improving

- Coordinate public, private and 3rd sector skills offer
- Develop advanced digital skills for children and young people
- Align local employer's vision with local school, college and university education offer around advanced digital skills

BLACKBURN with DARWEN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Customer Experience : Vision

Triangle diagram with the following elements from top to bottom:

- Supported Residents
- Seamless Customer Journey
- Digital First 24/7
- Customer Panel & Research
- Integrated Secure Customer Data
- Predictive Modelling
- Common Customer Service & Design Standards
- One Customer Login
- GOV.UK Standards — Web content and digital forms
- Equality by Design

BLACKBURN with DARWEN BOROUGH COUNCIL

High Performing Organisation : Vision

Digital Strategy 2021 – 2024 Workstreams

Workstreams

Components

WS 1
Digital First for our services

WS 2
Enable Transformation for our staff

WS 3
Data driven organisation

WS 4
Secure & resilient technology

Digital First Services & Workflows

GOV.UK Standard Web content and digital forms

Common Customer Service Standards

Digital First 24/7

Customer Panel & Research

Supported Residents

Agile Design Skills

Access Anywhere

Service Design Methods

Seamless Customer Journey

Data Driven

Predict-ive Modelling

Integrated Customer Data

Secure Resilient Supported

Integrated Across Services & with Partners
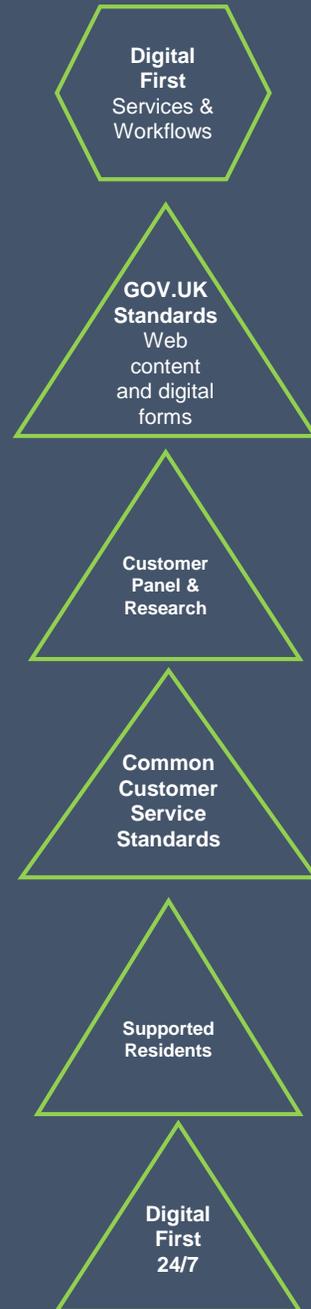
Cost Effective

One Customer Login

Digital Strategy Work Stream 1 - Digital First for our Services

Expected outcomes:

- Our customers are satisfied with our online services and would recommend a friend to use them
- 90% of interactions with residents are via our online channels
- All customer facing forms are via the Digital Customer Portal.
- Enhanced digital assisted services through partnership with 3rd sector and the library to support those requiring assistance and supporting our customers growing their digital skills, in turn providing greater opportunities
- All digital services will look and feel consistent as one BwD service to the customer
- Services are accessible digitally 24/7

What we will do:

- Deliver customer excellence by working with our customer panel to design our services through insight, iterative design, testing and customer endorsement
- Continue to invest in our Digital Customer Portal to span across all council services
- Work with our partners to ensure Equality by design for the services we provide, ensuring that those who cannot access digital are not disadvantaged in any way.
- Introduce more digital customer channels such as expanded use of webchat
- Ensure our web content is dynamic, up to date, accessible and easy to navigate
- Use data to drive improvements to our website and digital services
- Ensure our Digital Customer Portal replaces smaller independent applications where the functionality allows, reducing complexity and costs of our systems
- Focus on integrating line of business systems to the Digital Customer Portal enabling single sign on and a seamless experience for the Customer
- Implement a future proofed telephony and contact centre communication system
- Reduce the administration burden of our customer services team to allow them to support the digitally excluded
- We will design our processes as digital first with the front of house gateways in mind, e.g website, Notify etc
- Develop familiar repeatable functionality across all our digital services using Government Digital Service (GDS) standards

Digital First Services & Workflows

GOV.UK Standards Web content and digital forms

Customer Panel & Research

Common Customer Service Standards

Supported Residents

Digital First 24/7

Digital Strategy Work Stream 2 – Enable Transformation for our Staff

Expected outcomes:

- Our leadership demonstrates digital and design thinking, fostering a culture across the organisation
- Our workforce understands and demonstrates agile and service design methods, enabling transformation and cost effective services
- Staff are digitally confident to support customers from a digital perspective
- Our processes are transparent and efficient to our customers
- Our staff are enabled to work effectively on the highest value activities
- All of our staff can access technology and digital tools from anywhere, anytime, reducing the need on our office estate and enabling flexibility

What we will do:

- Embed digital leadership in our core leadership attributes
- Continue to roll out our Agile training and awareness to the workforce
- Develop a Service Design skills course and roll out to identified roles who are redesigning processes
- Create a team of specialist service designers working across the Council to increase the speed of transformation with common design standards and methods
- Continue creation of self led online training of digital tools for staff and councillors that is continually updated and promoted and we will ensure digital skills are evaluated at staff entry stage
- Our processes will be mapped focusing on value add activities, removing historical steps with no value
- We will remove clunky internal processes to increase the effectiveness of the inner workings of the Council
- We will design with our staff, utilising excellent internal engagement and communication tools to reach all staff
- We will continue to replace internal applications to support our transition to Cloud and improving our internal processes
- Encouraging active disruption to current processes and an agile approach to new models of delivery

Agile Design Skills

Access Anywhere

Service Design Methods

Seamless Customer Journey

Digital Strategy Work Stream 3 – Data Driven Organisation

Expected outcomes:

- Improved insights from data so our services are enabled to make more informed decisions, more predictability and effective management of services leading to improved outcomes for our residents
- Increased interventions as a result of deeper insights that improve and reduce demand on services
- Continued collaboration with sharing data for the public good delivering better outcomes for our borough across our partners
- We will have master data for our most common data sets to remove duplication with increased confidence in the data we hold
- Elected Members are confident in accessing and utilising data as part of their roles to support and inform decision making

What we will do:

- Continue to put in place the necessary resources and technology to allow for easy appropriate data sharing across the borough
- Use innovative technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence to enable the council to better predict future demand
- Collaborate with data specialists from across the Council to contribute and access our growing set of shared data stores and tools
- Grow the skills to increase our use of data, using the digital tools and interpretation of data
- Only procure applications that allow data to be extracted via open API's (interfaces) and work with existing solutions to do the same
- Improve access to quality, timely insights for our Elected Members through co-design and Member development
- Continue our data and integration programme work across partnerships including the NHS Integrated Care System.

Data Driven

Predictive Modelling

Integrated Customer Data
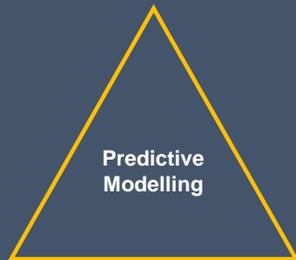
Digital Strategy Work Stream 4 – Secure and Resilient technology

Expected outcomes:

- We will have a clear architectural vision and roadmap aligned to our organisational priorities
- Our estate is resilient and secure
- We have a cost-efficient and resilient technology estate, proactively managed and regularly reviewed to ensure cost effectiveness
- We have connectivity that works for both residents and staff wherever they are on our estate
- We have full control over the data in all of our back office systems, and are able to extract and analyse that data to improve services
- Our staff are not physically constrained in any way as to where or how they access systems and data

What we will do:

- Internationally recognised accreditation of our systems and security
- Adoption of a Cloud first strategy
- Continue to consolidate and modernise our Core Infrastructure therefore minimising and then eliminating costly legacy architecture
- Fully map and understand our applications, and infrastructure to prioritise cloud technologies and their strategic value
- Migrate critical services to the Cloud
- Consolidate and rationalise independent applications
- Integrate systems where there is value
- Maximise the capability of applications by working collaboratively with suppliers

Secure Resilient Supported

Integrated Across Services & with Partners

Cost Effective

One Customer Login

Design Principles - *We will test everything we do against 6 points*

1. **Customer Centered Design** — We are steered by the research and experiences of our customer panel. Services are accessible, effective, simple and elegant. Delivered when and how the people we serve need them. Our methods are transparent, our work is done in the open. We will ensure Equality by Design in all of the services we provide.

2. **Secure by Design** — Our services and systems are secure and compliant with international standards. The information we collect is safeguarded, secure and used appropriately, resulting in high levels of trust by the people we serve.

3. **Cost and Quality Effective** — Our design decisions deliver evidenced financial returns and quality outcomes across Council services that contribute to our long-term budget sustainability. The people we serve are confident in our use of resources.

4. **Digital First & Inclusive** — If a process or service can be digitised, it will be. Delivering the highest proportion of people from traditional to digital channels. Coordinated digital inclusion activity mitigates against widening the digital gap and inequalities.

5. **Data Drives Insight Drives Wisdom** — Data is captured, stored, integrated and leveraged to deliver better outcomes for the people we serve and an effective, transparent organisation.

6. **Open, Flexible, Cloud First** — Infrastructure, systems and software use open technical standards, are interoperable, scalable and in the Cloud. This infrastructure and our contractual arrangements are dynamic and flexible to the high pace of technological change.

Strategic Investment Projection

The projected investment required to achieve our vision is listed against the 4 overarching work streams. Values are estimates, informed by preliminary planning and discovery work. Detailed business cases with costings will be developed for approval within each work stream throughout the duration of the strategy. Some schemes are already progressing using existing or previously allocated funding. We will fund schemes through cost savings, digital revenue reserves, capital bids and external funding bids.

Work Stream 1 Digital First for our services	Focuses on service design for our Customers with a Digital First focus	Value Required £3.5m Capital £0.5m Revenue	Types of project Further DCP development, Web, Unified Communications, Consolidated Applications, Digital Confidence
Work Stream 2 Enable Transformation for our staff	Focuses on the internal processes within the Council design and maximum automation	Value Required £1.5m Capital £2m Revenue	Types of project Microsoft 365, HR & payroll, Rapid review of existing applications
Work Stream 3 Data driven organisation	Focuses on the build of Power Bi skills and data warehouse	Value Required £0.3m Capital £0.7m Revenue	Types of project Power Bi, Integrations to allow master data, artificial intelligence and machine learning
Work Stream 4 Secure & resilient technology	Focuses on moving our estate to the Cloud and maintaining the necessary investment of infrastructure	Value Required £2m Capital £1m Revenue	Types of project Cloud journey work, Rolling infrastructure programme

Measures of Success

1. 90% Digital access across Customer Service Processes

2. Increase speed of customers service processing times – Measuring process times for Digital versus original

3. Reduction in complaints re digital services due to improved service availability

4. 90% customers are satisfied with online council services

5. Increased digital confidence for our staff and our customers – Training delivered to 100% of staff identified

6. Staff who are confident in maximising technology to achieve outcomes for customers - improved customer feedback, channel shift

7. Extended Leadership team are all confident users of Power BI and can evidence data insight approaches throughout their services

8. Total cost of ownership of infrastructure and applications is understood and costs managed within the agreed budget

9. Critical systems will be available 99.9% of the time

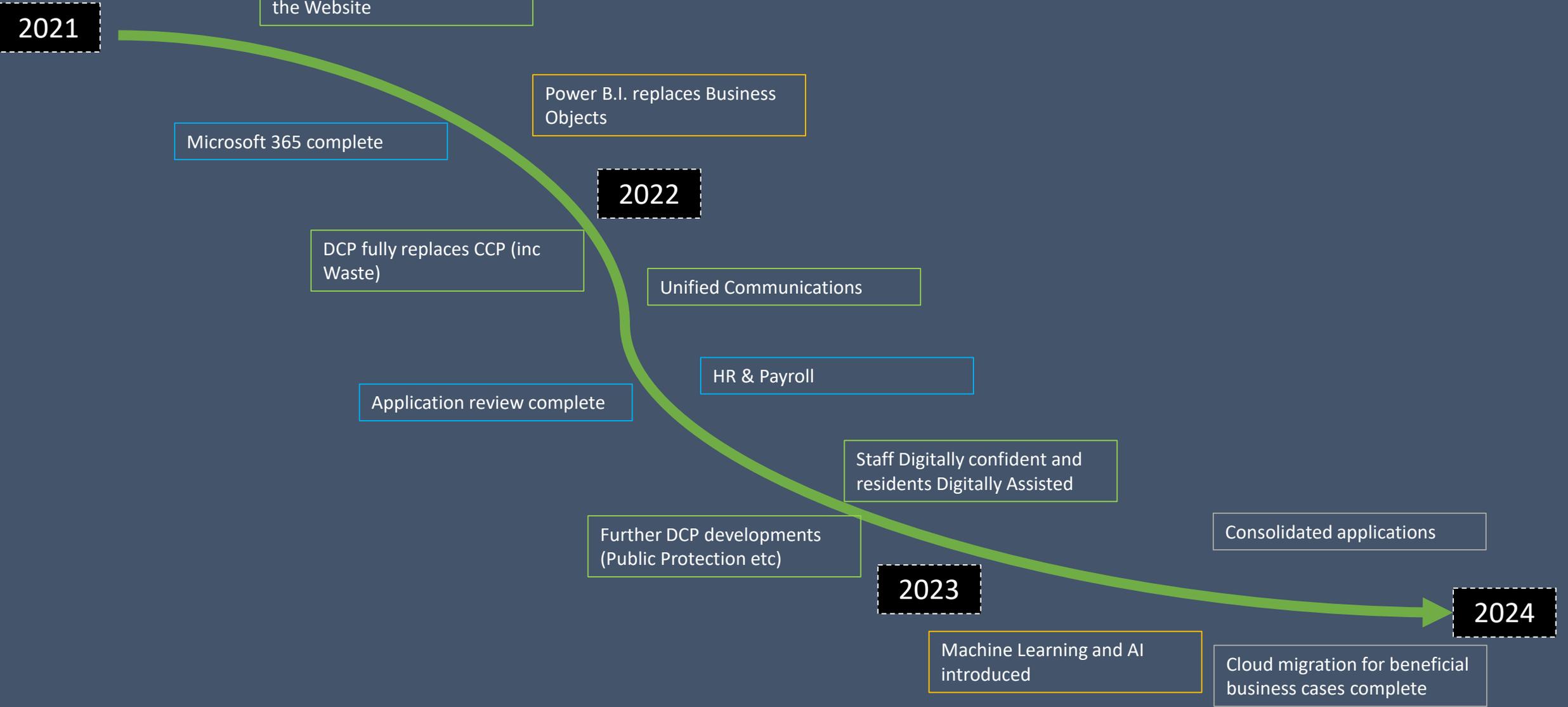10. Reduction in the total number of applications supported by 20%

Work Stream 1
Digital First for our services

Work Stream 2
Enable Transformation for our staff

Work Stream 3
Data driven organisation

Work Stream 4
Secure & resilient technology

Engagement to date

Creation and Input

- Digital & Customer Services DMT

- Technical Input

- Design Authority

- Customer Services DMT

- Exec Members

- Trade Union

- Digital skills group inc Adults and the Libraries

Consultation and Amends

- Full Digital Team

- Trade Unions

- Directorate DMT's

- Scrutiny Committee

- Management Board

- Finance

Wider Engagement

- Via a series of videos, website launch and publications, our engagement when launched will include;

- Resources Directorate
- Team Talk
- Cascade from Design Authority in to the Directorates
- Our Blog will publish the case studies, the Exec Introduction and several follow on stories
- Public webinars and events
- Partnership presentations