Public Document Pack

Shropshire Council
Legal and Democratic Services
Guildhall,
Frankwell Quay,
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ

Date: Tuesday, 28 July 2026

Committee:
Cabinet

Date: **Wednesday, 5 August 2026**
Time: **10.30 am**
Venue: **The Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ**

You are requested to attend the above meeting. The Agenda is attached

There will be some access to the meeting room for members of the press and public, but this will be limited. If you wish to attend the meeting please email democracy@shropshire.gov.uk to check that a seat will be available for you.

Please click here to view the livestream of the meeting* on the date and time stated on the agenda

The recording of the event will also be made available shortly after the meeting on the Shropshire Council Youtube Channel Here

Richard Phillips
Service Director – Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Members of Cabinet
Heather Kidd
Alex Wagner
Roger Evans
Andy Hall
Ruth Houghton
James Owen
Rob Wilson
David Vasmer
David Walker
Sarah Marston

Your Committee Officer is:

Ashley Kendrick Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01743 250893
Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk

When attending this meeting, Members are reminded of the three principles of the Jo Cox Foundation and Compassion in Politics Civility Pledge:

1. *Use a civil and constructive tone in debate*
2. *Act with integrity, honesty and compassion*
3. *Behave respectfully towards others, including those I disagree with*

*(Please note that while we strive to live stream meetings, technical issues may occasionally occur. In the event of a technical disruption, the meeting will be paused to try to resolve the issue. Should it not be possible to resume the live stream, the meeting will proceed as scheduled, and a backup recording will be made available after the meeting. Any disruption to the live stream does not affect the legality of the meeting).

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Interests

Members are reminded that they must declare their disclosable pecuniary interests and other registrable or non-registrable interests in any matter being considered at the meeting as set out in Appendix B of the Members' Code of Conduct and consider if they should leave the room prior to the item being considered. Further advice can be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 18)

To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 8 July 2026 and 14 July 2026.

4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 30 July 2026.

5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 12 noon on Thursday 30 July 2026.

6 Scrutiny Items

7 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Report (Pages 19 - 36)

Lead Member: Councillor Andy Hall, Portfolio Holder for Children & Education

Lead Officer: Natasha Moody, Assistant Director for Children's Services Reforms

8 Digital Transformation Roadmap (Pages 37 - 126)

Lead Member: Councillor Alex Wagner, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Transformation & Economic Growth

Lead Officer: David Baker, Head of Service for Automation & Technology

9 Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve that, in accordance with the provisions of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 [3] of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items

10 Exempt Minutes (Pages 127 - 128)

To confirm the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2026.

11 Oswestry SUE Corner Site - Asset Decision (Pages 129 - 138)

Lead Member: Councillor Roger Evans, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Lead Officer: Steve Law, Head of Property & Development

12 Mixed Economy Contract Extension

Lead Member: Councillor David Vasmer, Portfolio Holder for Highways & Waste

Lead Officer: Andy Wilde, Service Director – Infrastructure

REPORT TO FOLLOW DUE TO STAFF ABSENCE

13 Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 9 September 2026.

Shropshire Council

Committee and Date
Cabinet
5 August 2026

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2026
In the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ
10.30 am

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick
Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 250893

Present
Councillors Alex Wagner (Chair), Roger Evans, Andy Hall, Ruth Houghton, James Owen, Rob Wilson, David Vasmer and David Walker

In attendance
Rachel Robinson - Deputy Chief Executive, Richard Phillips – Monitoring Officer, Duncan Whitfield – S151 Officer, Natasha Moody – Assistant Director for Children's Services Reforms, Paul Clarke – Service Director Strategy & Change (remote), Kassandra Polyzoides – Interim Service Director Place Shaping (remote), David Baker – Head of Automation & Technology (remote), Councillor Dawn Husemann – Group Leader Reform UK, Councillor Ed Potter – Deputising for Group Leader Conservatives, Councillor Rosemary Dartnell – Group Leader Labour, Councillor Colin Taylor, Councillor Andy Boddington (remote), Councillor Rosie Radford (remote)

196 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Heather Kidd, Councillor Sarah Marston and Tanya Miles - Chief Executive.

197 **Disclosable Interests**

No declarations were received.

198 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2026 be confirmed as an accurate record.

199 **Public Question Time**

Six public questions had been received:

Carole Warner, Clerk to Welshampton and Lyneal Parish Council, in relation to the effects on Highways ref P/2026/0075 BEFESA, Fenns Bank, Whitchurch, SY13 3PA.

Olly Rose, in relation to the land transfer to Oswestry Town Council for a Pump Track. In response to a supplementary question raising concerns that an alternative site being considered may lack suitable access, the Cabinet Member stated that officers had not advised him of any recent progress with Oswestry Town Council. He reiterated that the council remained committed to working collaboratively with the Town Council and would support the leasing of an appropriate site as soon as a preferred location was identified.

Mike Streetly, in relation to a North West Relief Road review.

Andrew Sceats, in relation to Shirehall. In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder advised that questions relating to Cornovii fell outside his portfolio area and would be addressed by the relevant Cabinet Member.

Kevin Pardy, in relation to highways repairs. In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that neither he nor officers had prioritised repairs based on political representation and that decisions were made solely according to road condition and safety criteria.

John Palmer, in relation to the future of Theatre Severn.

The full questions and responses can be found on the webpage for the meeting - Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 8th July, 2026, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council

200 **Member Question Time**

Four questions had been received.

Councillor Rosie Radford, in relation to the safety of vulnerable residents in their own homes.

Councillor Colin Tayor, in relation to fly tipping. In response to a supplementary question, it was confirmed that enforcement activity would continue to be publicised and that the Portfolio Holder would explore the publication of penalty statistics to increase transparency and deterrence.

Councillor Rosemary Dartnall, in relation to Meole Brace Park & Ride. In response to a supplementary question, the Portfolio Holder stated that the proposed closure was driven entirely by funding pressures and service prioritisation and was not linked to any intention to dispose of the site.

Councillor Andy Boddington, in relation to the retendering of bus contracts.

The full questions and responses can be found on the webpage for the meeting - Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 8th July, 2026, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council

201 **Scrutiny Items**

a **Scrutiny Item - Verbal Update from the Station Gyratory Task and Finish Group**

The Chair of the Station Gyratory Task and Finish Group, presented a progress update on the group's review of the Station Gyratory scheme, which summarised consideration of the interim Road Safety Audit, traffic data, operational impacts, and concerns relating to traffic flow, congestion, the cycleway and floating bus stop arrangement.

The Task and Finish Group reported that most issues identified in the safety audit were minor and capable of being addressed through contractor-led improvements. However, concerns remained regarding congestion, traffic displacement into residential areas, and the operation of the cycleway and bus stop. Members noted the need for further evidence gathering, including traffic modelling, cycle usage data, signal timing analysis and clarification of any potential grant funding implications.

The Group recommended that the Council continue implementing safety audit recommendations, explore alternative configurations for the cycleway and bus stop, and undertake detailed assessment of two options: reinstating two traffic lanes and introducing a shared bus/taxi/cycle lane. The Group also recommended ongoing engagement with emergency services, businesses and other stakeholders.

Cabinet welcomed the work of the Task and Finish Group and recognised the extensive cross-party scrutiny that had been undertaken. The Portfolio Holder for Transport and Regeneration supported the recommendations and emphasised the need to balance traffic flow, bus reliability, public safety and funding considerations. Cabinet agreed that officers should undertake further detailed investigation of the proposed options, including costs, operational impacts and grant funding implications.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet endorsed the following recommendations from the Station Gyratory Task & Finish Group and requested officers undertake detailed investigations into the identified options and report back with a proposed timetable for further work:

- *Continuing delivery of the Road Safety Audit recommendations via the contractor, which are currently progressing.*

- *Exploration of configuration changes to the bus stop and cycleway, with the exploration of alternative designs to address safety and usability concerns.*

- *The Task and Finish Group has specifically recommended:*
    - *Further exploration of Option 3 of the LUF2 Station Gyratory – Project Conclusion Options document which is 'Revert to 2 lanes of traffic'*
    - *With Parallel exploration of Option 2 of the LUF2 Station Gyratory – Project Conclusion Options document which is 'Change Cycleway to shared use (bus/taxi/cycle)' to ensure a robust comparison.*

- *Clarification of the grant conditions and any potential clawback risk through officer engagement with the funder.*

- *Members have highlighted the need for a stronger evidence base to support decision-making, including:*
    - *Teleraam data capture, traffic modelling and signal timing analysis*
    - *Cycle usage data and validation of existing counts*

- *The Task and Finish Group will:*
    - *Continue to operate as a collective advisory group, contributing to the development of recommendations*.

202 **LGA Corporate Peer Challenge: Progress Review**

The Deputy Leader presented the report which assessed progress against recommendations made following the Peer Challenge undertaken in 2025.

Members welcomed the positive findings and acknowledged the contribution of officers and staff in driving improvement across the Council. Reference was made to strengthened financial controls, improved governance arrangements, clearer strategic direction and a more collaborative organisational culture. It was noted that the Council remained at an early stage in its improvement journey and that maintaining momentum would be essential.

During discussion, members highlighted the continuing challenges associated with financial sustainability, organisational capacity and the delivery of transformation programmes. The importance of measurable outcomes, robust scrutiny and reducing reliance on Exceptional Financial Support was emphasised. Cabinet noted that transformation programmes across service areas were progressing and that further reporting on delivery and performance would be brought forward through the Council's improvement framework.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the report of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review undertaken on 12th May 2026.

2. Noted that the CPC recommendations, along with subsequent feedback from the Progress Review, will continue to inform the Council's plans for improvement and financial sustainability

203 **Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2027-2032**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report which provided an updated assessment of the Council's financial position, funding gap projections and the ongoing need for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS).

Members noted that the estimated funding gap had reduced from previous forecasts but remained significant and that detailed budget planning work was continuing.

The report outlined the Council's Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy, which focuses on strengthening organisational capacity, delivering transformation programmes, improving financial management and achieving long-term sustainability. It was noted that the Council would need to continue seeking EFS in the short term while reducing reliance on borrowing over future years.

Members welcomed improvements in financial management and highlighted the importance of robust monitoring, transparency and scrutiny. Questions were raised regarding assumptions within the financial projections, asset disposals, performance monitoring arrangements and the delivery of savings and transformation programmes. Officers advised that quarterly and ongoing financial monitoring would continue and that further reports on asset management and transformation activity would be brought forward.

Cabinet acknowledged the significant financial challenges facing the authority but noted the progress being made in strengthening financial governance and planning for long-term sustainability.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet noted that:

a) Council agreed a balanced budget for 2026-27 on 27th February 2026, which included in principle agreement from government of EFS of approximately £121m. Council noted at the time the need for future EFS for 2025-26, 2026/27 and beyond based on a number of working assumptions.

b) This report presents, on the basis of updated assumptions, the continued need for EFS in 2026-27, 2027/28 and beyond but at a lower level than originally estimated (para 4.1 and 4.2).

c) That the need for EFS, while significantly reduced, remain at unsustainable levels and are still subject to formal approval by MHCLG.

d) Current assumptions are dependent on the Council delivering 2026-27 services within the budget envelope provided in February 2026.

e) Quarterly budget monitoring reports will continue to be received by Cabinet throughout the year including Quarter 1 in September 2026.

f) A further MTFP update will be presented to Cabinet in November 2026 including initial budget proposals for 2027/28

g) The report notes the ongoing pressures on Shropshire Council's financial position and on local government finances more generally, including council tax capping and reductions in real terms government funding.

That Cabinet approved:

a) The Finance Sustainability and Recovery Strategy to form the basis for the financial recovery of the Council over the next five years (Section 5 below and Appendix A)

b) The Budget Planning Arrangements for the preparation of future budgets including Officer, Cabinet and Member engagement and accountability (Section 6 below and Appendix B). c) The Budget Guiding Principles that will determine the approach to setting priorities when setting balance budgets in the future (Section 7 below and Appendix C)

That Cabinet instructed the Section 151 officer:

a) Together with the Chief Executive. Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Finance make representations to MHCLG for further EFS and for further increases in Council Tax above the cap in line with previous applications.

b) With the support of Service Directors, to prepare indicative budget proposals including savings and future commitment, initially for 2027-28 and then for 2028-29 to 2031-32.

204 **Annual Treasury Report 2025/26**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report which detailed treasury management activity undertaken during the financial year and compliance with the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy.

Members noted that treasury management activities had been conducted within approved limits and that the Council had achieved investment income of £2.409 million despite reduced cash balances during the year. The report also highlighted the Council's management of borrowing requirements and the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit position.

Members acknowledged the importance of prudent financial management and ongoing monitoring of the Council's financial position as part of wider efforts to achieve long-term financial sustainability. Members recognised the work of officers in managing treasury activity during a challenging financial period.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the actual 2025/26 prudential and treasury indicators in this report.

2. Noted the annual treasury management report for 2025/26.

3. Noted the inclusion of EFS borrowing in the 2025/26 position

205 **Shropshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund - review of progress and programme evaluation**

The Deputy Leader presented the report on the delivery and outcomes of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme in Shropshire. Members noted that the programme had supported a wide range of projects across the county, including business support, skills development, cultural initiatives, community projects, heritage improvements and employment programmes. The independent evaluation concluded that the programme had been effectively managed and had delivered positive outcomes for residents, businesses and communities.

Cabinet welcomed the achievements of the programme and commended officers and partner organisations for their work in delivering projects and securing benefits for Shropshire. Members highlighted successful investment in town centres, rural communities, skills initiatives and employment support, together with projects that had strengthened local communities and supported economic growth.

Members discussed the benefits delivered through the funding programme, concerns regarding the ending of the fund in September 2026, and the absence of a replacement funding stream for rural authorities. Members expressed concern that rural counties could be disadvantaged by future funding arrangements and emphasised the importance of continued support for economic development, community projects and business growth.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the high-performance of the delivery of Shropshire's UKSPF programme, including the achievement against spend, outcomes and outputs targets.

2. Noted the findings and recommendations from the independent Shropshire UKSPF programme evaluation.

3. Recognised the decline of external funding in Shropshire post UKSPF and the implications leading from this,

4. Agreed to formally write to Government and its departments noting concerns around the loss of funding to rural and non-Combined Authority Regions and the implications that this will have for Shropshire.

5. Supported the effort to promote UKSPF and its legacy as a good news story, whilst also communicating effectively to its residents and businesses that the Council is continuing to lobby Government for fair access to future growth funds.

206 **Bridgnorth Youth club – Asset Decision**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report regarding the former Bridgnorth Youth Centre, which closed in November 2024 and is no longer operating as a youth facility. Members noted that a condition survey had identified the building as being in poor condition, requiring significant investment to bring it back into use, and that no viable alternative use had been identified.

Concerns were raised regarding the loss of community assets and youth facilities. Members were advised that youth services previously delivered from the building had been successfully relocated elsewhere in Bridgnorth and that discussions had taken place with local representatives and the Town Council regarding potential future use of the site. No alternative proposals had been received.

Cabinet noted the Council's financial position and the need to review underused assets to reduce borrowing requirements and support financial sustainability. Members agreed that, in the absence of a viable operational use, disposal of the asset was the most appropriate course of action.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Declared the former Bridgnorth Youth Centre, Innage Lane (in accordance with the red line plan detailed in Appendix A) surplus to requirements and approved its disposal as a non-core asset.

2. Delegated authority to the Head of Property and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to take all necessary steps to progress disposal, including determination of the appropriate disposal strategy and completion of the sale in accordance with the Council’s constitutional and legal requirements.

207 **Shropshire's Children Achieving and Thriving (previously referred to as "Educational Excellence Strategy)**

The Portfolio Holder for Children & Education presented the report which set out the Council’s approach to promoting educational achievement, attendance, inclusion, SEND provision and safeguarding across all education settings. Members noted that, despite the increasing number of academies operating independently of local authority control, the Council retains statutory responsibilities for educational standards, safeguarding and supporting vulnerable children.

Members were advised that the strategy aimed to provide a consistent county-wide framework for monitoring performance, identifying risks at an early stage and strengthening collaboration with schools, academy trusts and other partners. It was noted that the strategy aligns with the Council’s wider ambitions for children and young people and will be delivered within existing resources.

Members sought assurance regarding measurable outcomes, available resources and the Council’s ability to influence academy trusts. The Assistant Director for Children's Services Reforms advised that progress would be monitored through established performance scorecards and scrutiny arrangements, with clear targets linked to national and local priorities. It was also noted that the strategy would strengthen oversight and accountability across the education system while supporting schools to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Members welcomed the strategy’s focus on improving educational attainment, attendance, inclusion and safeguarding, and recognised the importance of ensuring all children are supported to achieve their full potential.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Considered and endorsed the final draft Shropshire Achieving and Thriving in Education Strategy 2026-29 attached as appendix A and recommended its adoption to Council in September.

2. Referred the impact of the strategy for regular review by the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and for this committee to receive regular reports on its implementation.

208 **Cyber Strategy Report**

The Deputy Leader presented the report which set out the Council's approach to managing cyber security risks and improving organisational resilience. Members noted that cyber security is a corporate responsibility and a key strategic risk, with the strategy focused on protecting sensitive information, safeguarding critical services and ensuring the Council can respond effectively to cyber incidents.

The strategy is structured around six priorities: secure-by-design principles, governance and assurance, protection of data and critical services, workforce capability, incident detection and recovery, and partnership working with national cyber organisations. Members were advised that the strategy aligns with recognised national cyber security frameworks and will support a risk-based approach to managing cyber threats.

Questions were raised regarding performance measures, future costs and the monitoring of cyber risks. Officers advised that detailed information regarding the Council's cyber maturity and risk profile could not be disclosed publicly for security reasons, but confirmed that the strategy would be delivered within existing budgets and that any future investment requirements would be subject to separate business cases. Members also noted that a Digital Strategy and associated delivery roadmap would provide further detail on implementation activity.

Cabinet recognised the increasing importance of cyber resilience in protecting Council services and agreed that a strategic approach was essential to support service continuity and public confidence.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the Cyber Strategy 2026-2030 in appendix 1, and the Plan on a Page Cyber Strategy 026-2030 in appendix 2.

2. Delegated authority to the Service Director Enabling and Head of Automation and Technology in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Transformation and Economic Growth to update the strategy annually aligned with any legislation change and best practice.

209 **Digital Strategy Report**

The Deputy Leader presented the report which set out the Council's approach to using digital technology, data, automation and modern ways of working to support service transformation, improve customer experience and contribute to long-term financial sustainability. Members noted that the strategy is focused on service redesign and organisational transformation rather than technology alone.

The strategy includes a commitment to modernising systems, improving the use of data, strengthening digital skills across the workforce and making responsible use of automation and artificial intelligence. Members were advised that digital inclusion is a key principle of the strategy, ensuring that residents who are unable or unwilling to access services digitally continue to have alternative ways of engaging with the Council.

Members highlighted the importance of digital inclusion and ensuring support remains available for vulnerable residents. Questions were raised regarding the measurement of benefits, delivery timescales and financial savings. Officers advised that a detailed Digital Roadmap would be presented separately, setting out delivery plans, priorities and expected outcomes. Members noted that the strategy provides the framework for prioritising digital investment and supporting wider transformation programmes across the Council.

Cabinet welcomed the strategy as a key enabler of organisational transformation and service improvement, recognising its role in helping the Council respond to increasing demand and financial pressures.

A request was made for officers to work with partner organisations to improve digital skills among carers, recognising the important role they play in supporting residents who are unable to use digital technology independently. In response, members noted the positive work already taking place through local libraries and community organisations to develop digital skills and support residents and carers to access services online.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Approved the Digital Strategy 2026-2030 in appendix 1, and the Plan on a Page Digital Strategy 2026-2030 in appendix 2.

2. Delegated authority to the Service Director Enabling and Head of Automation and Technology in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Transformation and Economic Growth to update the strategy annually aligned with any legislation change and best practice.

210 **Town Centre Public Space Protection Order**

The Deputy Leader introduced the report which sought the renewal of the Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for a further three years. Members noted evidence showing significant reductions in incidents of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour, congregation, drug misuse, drug litter and fly-tipping since the introduction of the Order, supported by partnership working between the Council, West Mercia Police, Shrewsbury Town Council, the Business Improvement District and other organisations.

Members welcomed the positive outcomes achieved through the PSPO and the wider work of Team Shrewsbury, the Town Centre Rangers and the town centre police presence. Discussion took place regarding the potential displacement of anti-social behaviour to neighbouring areas and the importance of maintaining public awareness of reporting mechanisms and enforcement activity. Cabinet noted that incident levels had reduced significantly and that monitoring of emerging issues would continue.

Cabinet recognised the PSPO as an effective tool in supporting the management of anti-social behaviour and helping to maintain a safe and welcoming town centre environment for residents, businesses and visitors.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Agreed that the Council extend the Shrewsbury Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (No.1) 2017, as set out in Appendix A (the Order), with an effective commencement date of August 1st 2026.

2. Delegated authority to the Director Legal & Governance (MO) for holding responsibility for functions relevant to the Order (as extended).

3. Delegated authority to the Director Legal & Governance (MO) to publish and cause to be erected notices in accordance with Regulations made under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

211 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with the provisions of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and Paragraph 10.4 [3] of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items.

212 **DWP Funded Connect to Work Programme - Year 1 progress**

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

213 **Date of Next Meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 14 July 2026.

Signed .... (Chairman)

Date: ....

This page is intentionally left blank

Shropshire Council	**Committee and Date** Cabinet 5 August 2026

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2026
In the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HQ
10.30 am

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick
Email: ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 250893

Present
Councillors Heather Kidd, Alex Wagner, Roger Evans, Andy Hall, Ruth Houghton, James Owen, Rob Wilson, David Walker and Sarah Marston

In attendance
Tanya Miles – Chief Executive, Rachel Robinson – Executive Director for Public Health, Duncan Whitfield – S151 Officer, Richard Phillips – Monitoring Officer, Kassandra Polyzoides – Interim Service Director Place Shaping, Chris Buss – Independent Advisor, Councillor Dawn Husemann – Group Leader Reform UK, Councillor Rosemary Dartnall – Group Leader Labour, Councillor Duncan Kerr – Group Leader Green & Progressive Independents, Councillor Susan Coleman – Deputising for Group Leader Conservatives, Councillor Chris Naylor, Councillor Brendan Mallon, Councillor Thomas Clayton, Councillor Charles Shackerley-Bennett, Councillor Brian Evans.

214 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Dan Thomas, substituted by Councillor Susan Coleman.

215 **Disclosable Interests**

No declarations were received.

216 **Public Question Time**

Public questions had been received from:

Jonathan Owen in relation to annual cost savings achievable if its operations were consolidated into the Shirehall. In response to a supplementary question regarding the absence of a comparative commercial appraisal of options for Shirehall and whether an independent assessment would be commissioned, Cabinet members and officers advised that the current report and the independent appendix provided relevant analysis of the available options. It was explained that the Council's financial position and oversight from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) limited the scope for further expenditure and that the information sought was not currently available.

David Kilby, Shropshire Playing Fields Association in relation to the Shropshire Unison Sports Club at Shirehall.

Phillip Scoggins in relation to the Council Chamber in Shirehall. Following a supplementary question regarding the report's stated preference for housing-led development and the potential retention and reuse of the existing buildings, Cabinet members and officers advised that no final decision had been made regarding the future use of the site. It was confirmed that the site would be marketed openly and that proposals involving retention, refurbishment, mixed-use development, healthcare uses, supported living and other options would be considered alongside housing. Members noted the requirement to secure best value for the authority and the need to consider the Council's financial circumstances when assessing future proposals.

John Crowe in relation to the sale of Shirehall. In response to a supplementary question concerning how an unrestricted marketing approach could be reconciled with references in the report to preferred future uses, Cabinet members and officers advised that any prospectus would seek to balance market interest, best consideration and wider social value outcomes. It was emphasised that the Council remained open to proposals that could deliver alternative uses or incorporate previous redevelopment ideas, provided they were viable, deliverable and consistent with the Council's statutory and financial obligations.

The full questions and responses can be found on the webpage for the meeting - [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 14th July, 2026, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council]

217 **Member Question Time**

This item was considered as part of the agenda item on The Future of Shirehall.

218 **Scrutiny Items**

There were no scrutiny items.

219 **The Future of Shirehall**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report on the future of Shirehall and outlined the recommendations before Cabinet. It was explained that the Council's financial position had changed significantly since previous decisions had been taken, with the authority now relying on Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) and facing increased scrutiny from Government regarding asset disposals and financial sustainability.

The Section 151 Officer advised that the Council had an estimated £90 million funding gap after mitigation measures and that Government expected redundant assets to be disposed of to reduce reliance on borrowing. He noted that Shirehall was costing in excess of £500,000 per year to maintain while vacant and that substantial investment would be required to bring the building back into use. He therefore recommended that the site be marketed openly, with minimal restrictions, to maximise value and secure a capital receipt.

Cabinet considered an independent review prepared by Chris Buss which examined previous options for the site, including redevelopment, joint ventures and retention. The review concluded that, given the Council's current financial circumstances, disposal of the site through an open marketing process represented the quickest route to reducing costs, generating a capital receipt and meeting Government expectations. It was noted that the proposed approach would not predetermine demolition and would allow the market to bring forward proposals for retention, refurbishment, redevelopment or mixed-use schemes.

In moving the recommendations, the Portfolio Holder for Finance emphasised that the Council was not in a position to invest further funds in the site and that decisions needed to be considered in the context of the authority's financial recovery strategy. The Deputy Leader seconded the recommendations, acknowledging the historic and community significance of Shirehall but stating that the Council could not justify investing significant sums in speculative redevelopment proposals. He highlighted that the recommendations would enable all future options for the site to remain open whilst reducing financial risk to the authority.

As agreed, Members moved to consider the two Members' questions which had been received as part of Member Question Time:

Dawn Husemann in relation to the redevelopment of Shirehall and the net zero target. In response to a supplementary question regarding how potential demolition of Shirehall could be reconciled with the Council's net zero ambitions, Cabinet members and officers stated that the carbon impact of any future scheme could only be assessed once detailed proposals were received through the marketing process. It was also noted that continued vacancy of the building carried its own environmental and financial costs, and that all discretionary spending, including carbon reduction budgets, would be subject to scrutiny as part of the Council's wider financial recovery programme.

Brendan Mallon in relation to the sale of Shirehall and the financial comparison between the 2-track approach. In response to a supplementary question regarding an immediate sale being the most effective option, Cabinet members and officers advised that joint venture arrangements would involve significant cost, risk and lengthy procurement timescales. It was noted that the proposed marketing process would remain open to development and partnership proposals from external parties, with all options assessed against best consideration and the Council's financial recovery requirements. Officers confirmed that alternative options would be considered if the marketing exercise failed to deliver an acceptable outcome.

The full questions and responses can be found on the webpage for the meeting - [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 14th July, 2026, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council]

With permission of the Leader, each Group Leader, together with representation from the Task & Finish Group, were permitted to speak for three minutes.

Group Leaders commented on the future of Shirehall, reflecting a range of views on the building's heritage significance, its potential for regeneration and the Council's financial position. Reference was made to the work of the Task and Finish Group and the independent review, with some members expressing concern that alternative options, including joint ventures and wider redevelopment opportunities, had not been fully explored. Others highlighted the Council's reliance on Exceptional Financial Support, the absence of available capital funding, and the need to reduce financial risk and ongoing revenue costs. Cabinet members reiterated that the proposed approach would not predetermine demolition, would allow all options to come forward through the market, and represented the most realistic course of action in light of the authority's financial circumstances.

With permission of the Leader, elected members were permitted to speak for three minutes.

Members sought reassurance that alternative options, including joint venture arrangements and potential redevelopment opportunities, would continue to be explored alongside the proposed marketing exercise.

In response, officers advised that the marketing process would be open to a wide range of proposals and would help establish the level of market interest in the site. Members also raised issues relating to the history of decisions concerning Shirehall, the Council's financial position, organisational capacity, and the heritage value of the building. Cabinet members and officers reiterated that the Council was unable to fund redevelopment itself and that progressing to market represented the most practical way of reducing financial risk while maintaining flexibility for future proposals.

Cabinet members thanked the members of the public and other elected members for their input into the debate.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet:

1. Noted the Financial Sustainability and Recovery Strategy contained within the MTFP reported to Cabinet on 8 July 2026, and especially the priorities in respect of asset disposals during the period of financial recovery;

2. Noted the current valuations (RBVs) for the Shirehall site set out at paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7 and in Table 1;

3. Agreed to take steps to move urgently and in principle to the marketing for sale and disposal of the site with minimum conditions attached;

4. Delegated authority to the Service Director – Place Shaping, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to take the necessary steps to implement this decision, including preparation of a marketing prospectus for presentation to Cabinet for agreement in the Autumn;

5. Noted that the marketing prospectus will confirm the preference for the site to be utilised for Housing development including both private and affordable, subject to planning consent, whilst achieving the earliest and optimum return to the Council;

6. Noted that the marketing prospectus will refer to the additional preferences identified by Council in December 2025, namely (sic) to pursue the development for mixed use incorporating healthcare, affordable supported living and commercial as well as residential units but these will be guides and not imperatives as part of any proposal;

7. Noted that the marketing prospectus will be published together with evaluation criteria to guide Cabinet in the selection of a preferred developer.

8. Noted that development proposals including sale values will be invited for evaluation by the Director of Place Shaping from any interested party or parties, including joint ventures;

9. Noted that the Council's stated preference, to be set out in the marketing prospectus will be for the selected developer to commit to both obtaining planning consent and demolition or refurbishment of the building as part of the developer's proposal;

10. Noted that a further update report including the draft prospectus for sale will be provided to Cabinet by Officers in the Autumn;

11. Noted that Officers will make all efforts to minimise the current running costs of the Shirehall site while appropriate levels of security and completing the vacation of the building to enable vacant possession of the site;

12. Noted that a separate report on the future options for the Shirehall Overspill car park site will be presented to Cabinet in September 2026; and

13. Noted that any proceeds from the sale will be prioritised to reduce the Council's need for Exceptional Financial Support ('EFS').

220 **Date of Next Meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 5 August 2026.

Signed .... (Chairman)

Date: ....

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7

Committee	Cabinet
Date and Time	5th August 2026 10.30am Public

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Report

Cabinet Member:	Andy Hall Portfolio Holder for Children and Education
Lead Director:	David Shaw, Director of Children's Services
Service Area:	Children and Young People
Report Author	Natasha Moody
Officer contact details	Natasha.moody@shropshire.gov.uk 01743 251466
Electoral Divisions Affected	All
Key Decision?	Not Key Decision
Cabinet Forward Plan	Yes – 3 July 2026
Report considered by	Cabinet – 5 August 2026

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman identified faults in the Council's handling of a SEND case involving a child from an Armed Forces family. The Council accepted the Ombudsman's findings, implemented the agreed remedy for the family, and undertook a comprehensive review of practice within the EHCP Service to ensure that lessons learned have been embedded across the service.

1.2 This report provides Cabinet with an overview of their findings and the action taken to ensure that the experience of families is improved and the faults identified are not repeated.

2 Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to;

2.1 Note the content of the report

3 Background

3.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) received a complaint concerning the Council's handling of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision for a child from an Armed Forces family. The Ombudsman found fault by the Council which resulted in injustice to the child and their family and consequently issued a formal report with a finding of fault and injustice.

3.2 The Ombudsman concluded that the family's military circumstances and mobility were not sufficiently recognised within existing processes and that opportunities were missed to ensure information was transferred and considered appropriately. The Council accepted the Ombudsman's findings and agreed the recommended remedy.

3.3 Following the issues experienced by this family, and prior to the Ombudsman becoming involved, the Council undertook a comprehensive review of practice within the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Service and implemented a range of service improvements designed to address the issues identified and prevent recurrence. These improvements include dedicated training for all EHCP staff on the Armed Forces Covenant and the needs of service children, incorporation of this training into the induction programme for new staff, the introduction of a checklist to identify children from military families at the earliest opportunity and strengthened arrangements for managing children and young people moving into and out of the local authority area.

3.4 The actions taken demonstrate the Council's commitment to learning from complaints, improving the experiences of children and families, and meeting its obligations under the Armed Forces Covenant.

3.5 This report enables Cabinet to formally consider the Ombudsman's findings, note the improvements implemented, and discharge the Council's responsibilities under Section 31(2) of the Local Government Act 1974.

The Ombudsman's Findings

3.6 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigated a complaint relating to the Council's handling of Special Educational Needs provision for a child from an Armed Forces family. The Ombudsman found fault by the Council and concluded that this fault had caused injustice to the child and their family. The Ombudsman therefore issued a formal public report with a finding of "fault and injustice".

3.7 In reaching this conclusion, the Ombudsman found that the Council had not adequately recognised or responded to the specific circumstances associated with the family's military status and mobility. As a result, opportunities were missed to ensure that information was transferred and acted upon in a timely manner, leading to avoidable uncertainty, frustration and distress for the family.

3.8 The Ombudsman further concluded that the Council's systems and practices at the time did not provide sufficient assurance that the needs of Armed Forces families were consistently identified and considered within SEND processes. This reflected weaknesses in operational procedures and staff awareness rather than deliberate action by individual officers.

3.9 The Council accepted the Ombudsman's findings and agreed the recommended remedies. The Ombudsman acknowledged that the Council had worked constructively during the investigation and had already agreed appropriate actions to remedy the injustice and improve future practice

Our Response

3.10 Following the issues experienced by this family, and prior to the Ombudsman becoming involved, immediate action was taken to strengthen awareness, procedures and operational arrangements relating to children and young people from service families. The objective has been not only to address the specific fault identified in this case, but also to ensure that robust systems are in place to prevent recurrence and to support the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.

3.11 A dedicated training programme on the Armed Forces Covenant, and its implications for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), was developed and delivered to all EHCP staff. The training covered the particular challenges experienced by service families, including mobility, transition between local authority areas, deployment-related pressures and the requirement to ensure that service children experience no disadvantage when accessing public services. This training has now been embedded into the induction programme for all new staff to ensure that knowledge and awareness are sustained within the service. Evidence of the training and the agenda through which it was delivered are provided as supporting appendices.

3.12 In addition to workforce development, the service has implemented a number of practical operational improvements. A formal checklist has been introduced to ensure that staff identify at the earliest opportunity whether a child or young person is from a military family so that relevant considerations can be reflected throughout assessment, planning and review processes.

3.13 Arrangements for managing the movement of children and young people into and out of Shropshire have also been strengthened. A dedicated "Movers In and Movers Out" process has been established, supported by a Teams communication channel accessible to all relevant staff. This enables information about relocating families to be shared immediately across the service, reducing reliance on email communication and minimising the risk of important information being missed or delayed. Staff have also been reminded of the need to obtain and record key information, including move dates and destination details, to support continuity of provision and effective case management.

3.14 These actions have been incorporated into standard operational practice and quality assurance arrangements, providing greater resilience within the service and reducing reliance on individual staff knowledge. They demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and provide assurance that learning from this complaint has been fully embedded across the EHCP Service.

3.15 Members can be assured that the Council has responded proactively and appropriately to the Ombudsman's findings. The agreed remedies have been implemented, staff knowledge and awareness have been strengthened, new identification and communication processes have been introduced, and arrangements supporting children and young people from Armed Forces families have been substantially improved. Collectively, these actions support compliance with the Armed Forces Covenant, improve service delivery, and reduce the likelihood of similar fault occurring in the future. The service remains committed to ensuring that children and young people from service families receive timely, effective and equitable access to SEND support and provision.

3.16 Following the report we have since conducted a multi agency audit where a child who had an Education Health and Care Plan within the armed forces was reviewed and the audit demonstrated timely access to services and support.

4 Key risks and Opportunities

4.1 There are key risks that have been considered and management action taken to mitigate these risks.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Failure to embed the learning organisationally resulting in further legal or regulatory challenges.	Ensure the review of the Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan is embedded	Failure of Officers and Members to adhere to Governance arrangements
Failure to embed learning from the Ombudsman's findings could result in similar failings occurring in future cases.	Armed Forces Covenant training delivered to all staff and embedded within induction for new employees. Revised operational procedures implemented and monitored by service managers.	Failure of Officers and Members to adhere to Governance arrangements
Children from Armed Forces families are not identified early enough, resulting in delays or gaps in SEND provision.	Introduction of a service family identification checklist and increased staff awareness of the needs of military families.	Failure of Officers and Members to adhere to Governance arrangements

Delays in transferring information when children move between local authority areas could adversely affect educational outcomes and family experience.	Dedicated "Movers In and Movers Out" process and Teams communication channel established to improve information sharing and case tracking.	Failure of Officers and Members to adhere to Governance arrangements
Failure to comply with he Ombudsman's ecommendations or emonstrate learning ould result in further riticism, adverse publicity nd reputational damage the Council.	Cabinet consideration of the report, implementation of agreed remedies, and ongoing oversight of service improvements.	Failure of Officers and Members to adhere to Governance arrangements
Future complaints and legal challenge arising from inconsistent application of processes.	Standardised procedures, workforce training and strengthened quality assurance arrangements across the EHCP Service.	Failure of Officers and Members to adhere to Governance arrangements

4.2 Whilst the Ombudsman's findings represent a reputational and compliance risk to the Council, the identified weaknesses have been addressed through targeted training, strengthened operational processes and improved oversight arrangements. Consequently, the residual risk is considered low, provided that these measures continue to be embedded and monitored within routine service management arrangements.

5 Legal and HR implications

5.1 The Ombudsman found fault and injustice and the Council is required under Section 31(2) of the Local Government Act 1974 to formally consider the report and confirm the actions taken in response. The Council has accepted the findings, implemented the agreed remedies and introduced service improvements to ensure lessons learned are embedded.

5.2 There are no adverse workforce implications arising from the recommendations. Staff training on the Armed Forces Covenant has been strengthened and incorporated into induction arrangements.

5.3 The actions implemented reduce the risk of future complaints, maladministration findings and reputational damage.

6 Health, Social (including “Child Friendly Shropshire”) and Economic Implications

6.1 The Ombudsman's findings highlighted the importance of recognising and responding to the unique circumstances of children and young people from Armed

Forces families. The actions implemented by the Council directly support the principles of Child Friendly Shropshire by placing the needs, experiences and rights of children at the centre of service delivery.

6.2 The improvements introduced will have a positive impact on children and young people by:

a. Ensuring children from service families are identified at the earliest opportunity so that their individual circumstances can be understood and appropriately considered during SEND assessment, planning and review processes.
b. Improving continuity of support when families move into or out of Shropshire, reducing the risk of delays, disruption to education and uncertainty for children and their families.
c. Increasing staff awareness of the challenges experienced by service children, including frequent mobility, parental deployment and changes in educational settings, enabling more responsive and informed decision-making.
d. Supporting children's right to access education and support services fairly and without disadvantage, in line with the Armed Forces Covenant.
e. Strengthening systems which help ensure children's voices, needs and best interests are consistently considered throughout the EHCP process.
f. These improvements contribute to the Child Friendly Shropshire ambition by helping children feel visible, understood and supported, particularly during periods of transition and change. They promote better outcomes through early identification, timely intervention and improved multi-agency communication. Together, these actions provide greater assurance that children and young people from Armed Forces families will receive equitable access to SEND services and will experience fewer barriers when moving between local authority areas.

7 Equality and Diversity Implications

7.1 The Ombudsman's findings identified that the specific circumstances and needs of an Armed Forces family were not sufficiently recognised within existing processes. As a result, the service has implemented a range of improvements designed to promote equality of access, reduce disadvantage and ensure that children and young people from service families receive appropriate consideration within SEND processes.

7.2 The recommendations are expected to have a positive impact on a protected and recognised community under the Armed Forces Covenant by helping to ensure that children from military families do not experience disadvantage when accessing education and SEND services. The improvements also support wider inclusion objectives by strengthening practice for children who may be vulnerable due to significant life transitions and changes in circumstance.

7.3 Overall, the action taken in response to this ombudsman report are likely to have a positive equality impact. They reinforce the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, promote equitable access to services, and support the delivery of fair and inclusive outcomes for children and young people from service families.

8 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

8.1 The recommendations within this report relate primarily to service improvement, staff training, and operational processes within the EHCP Service. There are no direct adverse impacts on climate change, biodiversity or the environment arising from the recommendations.

9 Appendices

Appendix A – Ombudsman Report

This page is intentionally left blank

Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Investigation into a complaint about Shropshire Council (reference number: 25 006 308)

17 June 2026

The Ombudsman's role

We independently and impartially investigate complaints about councils and other organisations in our jurisdiction. If we decide to investigate, we look at whether organisations have made decisions the right way. Where we find fault has caused injustice, we can recommend actions to put things right, which are proportionate, appropriate and reasonable based on all the facts of the complaint. We can also identify service improvements so similar problems don't happen again. Our service is free.

We cannot force organisations to follow our recommendations, but they almost always do. Some of the things we might ask an organisation to do are:

- apologise
- pay a financial remedy
- improve its procedures so similar problems don't happen again.

We publish reports to raise awareness of significant issues, encourage scrutiny of local services and hold organisations to account.

Section 30 of the 1974 Local Government Act says that a report should not normally name or identify any person. The people involved in this complaint are referred to by a letter or job role.

Key to names used

Mrs X	The complainant
Y	Her child

Report summary

Education and Children's Services - SEN Provision and EHC Plans
We upheld Mrs X's complaint about a delay in transferring her child Y's Education, Health and Care Plan when they moved into Shropshire. The delay meant Y did not receive the educational provision in his Education, Health and Care Plan between February and July 2025 which was an important year for him. Mrs X and Y are an armed forces family and the gap in Y's education made the move and settling into the area more difficult and stressful. Communication was also not in line with our expected standards which caused Mrs X avoidable frustration.

Finding
Fault found causing injustice and recommendations made.

Recommendations
Within three months of the date of this report, we recommend the Council:

- apologise in writing to Mrs X and to Y for the fault and injustice caused. We publish guidance on remedies which sets out our expectations for how organisations should apologise effectively to remedy injustice. The Council should consider this guidance in making the apology we have recommended;
- make a payment of £3,000 to Mrs X to reflect Y's missed special educational provision between February and July 2025; and
- review its Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan and ensure it implements changes to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) procedures so service children with SEND (with or without Education Health and Care Plans) do not have any gaps in their education when they move into Shropshire. The Council should provide us with a written report summarising its review and any changes to the Plan.

The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. (Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)

The Council has accepted these recommendations.

The complaint

1. Mrs X complained the Council failed to:

- secure the content of her child, Y's, Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan when the family moved to the Council's area;
- finalise Y's EHC Plan; and
- communicate with her effectively.

2. She said this caused her avoidable frustration and uncertainty and Y missed out on special educational provision.

Legal and administrative background

The Ombudsman's role and powers

3. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this report, we have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. We refer to this as 'injustice'. If there has been fault which has caused an injustice, we may suggest a remedy. (Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1), as amended)

4. Under our information sharing agreement, we will share this report with the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted).

Relevant law, guidance and council policy

5. A child or young person with special educational needs (SEN) may have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. This document sets out the child's needs and what arrangements should be made to meet them. The EHC Plan is set out in sections. Section F has the child's special educational provision (SEP) and Section I the educational placement.

6. The council has a duty to make sure the child or young person receives the special educational provision set out in section F of an EHC Plan. (Section 42 Children and Families Act 2014)

7. Where a child or young person moves to another council, the 'old' council must transfer the EHC Plan to the 'new' council. The new council must make sure the provision in the EHC Plan begins on the day of the move or within 15 working days of becoming aware of the move if this is later. The new council must review the EHC Plan either within 12 months of it last being reviewed or three months of the date of the transfer, whichever is the later date. (Regulation 15, Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and SEND Code of Practice, paragraphs 9.157 to 9.162)

8. The Armed Forces Covenant (the Covenant) places a legal duty on public bodies to have due regard to Covenant Principles when carrying out housing, education and healthcare functions. The principles say:

- military families should not face any disadvantage compared with others in the provision of public services; and
- special consideration is appropriate in some cases.

9. We published guidance about the Covenant to raise awareness among council staff. We said they needed to ensure they considered covenant commitments appropriately when military families approached them for services or support. (Armed Forces Covenant, Guidance for Practitioners, November 2019)

10. Children whose parents are in the military services may face unique difficulties because of the nature of their parents' jobs. The difficulties include frequent moves at short notice. Guidance says transitions should be well managed to avoid service children with SEN experiencing delays in having their assessed needs met. (SEND Code of Practice, paragraph 10.54)

11. Guidance also says councils must:

- arrange the SEP in the EHC Plan from the date of the transfer of the EHC Plan; and
- work with each other, particularly those which have bases within their area so that SEP can be made as soon as a child arrives in the new authority. (SEND Code of Practice, paragraph 10.57)

12. The Council's Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan 2025-29 acknowledges issues remain about SEN and additional support, in respect of how to get the required package in place at short notice. It goes on to say it will "consider the covenant when developing, delivering and reviewing policies and decisions which may impact the Armed Forces community".

13. Our Principles of Good Administrative Practice set out our expectations of councils. We say they should 'get it right' including by operating an effective complaints procedure and offering a fair and appropriate remedy when upholding a complaint. We also expect councils to be citizen focused. This includes responding flexibly, dealing with people helpfully, promptly and sensitively and taking account of their individual circumstances.

14. The Council put in place a communication protocol for contact between parents and the EHC team in October 2025. This was not in place during the events of this complaint. The protocol asks parents to email their named case officer or send an email to a general team email address if there is no named officer. The Council will try to respond within five working days, but due to demands on the service, it would likely be eight working days. If there was no response, parents could forward their email to a named manager, adding 'escalation' to the subject line of the email address.

How we considered this complaint

15. We produced this report following the examination of relevant files and documents and interviews with the complainant.

16. We gave the complainant and the Council a confidential draft of this report and invited their comments. The comments received were taken into account before the report was finalised.

What we found

Background

17. Y has SEN and an EHC Plan which was maintained by a different local authority (Council A). Y and his family moved to Shropshire at the start of February 2025 when he was in Year 10. They are a military family and were due to move to Shropshire in the new year.

2024

18. Council A held an annual review of Y's EHC Plan in September 2024.

19. The Council told us it received contact from Council A about Y at the start of December 2024. Mrs X told us she was in contact with the Council at the same time to inform it Y had an EHC Plan.

2025

20. Council A issued the amended final EHC Plan for Y in January 2025. Section I did not have a named placement, just a type (mainstream). Provision in Section F included:

- social skills programme
- adult support to maintain engagement
- support with note taking and access to alternative means of recording
- reminders to drink and go to the toilet
- access to a safe place during break and lunch.

21. Council A emailed the Council's EHC team in January 2025 saying:

- Mrs X had been in contact with a couple of schools in Shropshire;
- Y needed a school place; and
- it had just issued an amended final EHC Plan following Y's annual review.

22. The Council's internal records show Y's case was added to its EHC Plan database and a case worker assigned to Y in the last week of January.

23. Mrs X told us Y had access to online provision arranged by Council A between January and the start of April 2025. Mrs X said online education was not suitable for Y as he found it hard to engage. The family moved to Shropshire at the start of February 2025.

24. Council A asked the Council for updates on Y's educational placement in February and March 2025. Mrs X also said she tried to contact the EHC team by phone and email about consultations with schools. Council A told the Council Y was having online schooling but this would be ending due to his move. It asked the Council to confirm it had taken responsibility for Y's EHC Plan. In the middle of March, Council A told the Council it was ending Y's online provision.

25. In April Mrs X complained to the Council setting out her numerous attempts to get Y's EHC Plan transferred and his provision put in place. There followed an exchange of emails between a Council manager and Mrs X in which:

- the manager apologised, explained the team had been restructured in December 2024 and staffing was at 50%. The manager said the team was made up of agency staff and the worker who had been allocated to Y had left unexpectedly. The manager went on to say Y had a new case officer who would secure a placement for him; and
- Mrs X put forward her preferred settings, including School B (a specialist hub in a mainstream secondary school). Mrs X also said Y was not having any education as Council A had ended online schooling at the start of April without letting her know. She had concerns about his academic progress as he had been out of a school setting for most of Year 9 and almost all of Year 10.

26. The Council's stage one complaint response in May said:

- it had delayed transferring Y's EHC Plan and starting school consultations; and

- the case officer had been informed about what needed to happen to progress Y's case and would giveMrs X:
  - details about interim tuition
  - updates on school consultations
  - the date the Council would issue Y's draft EHC Plan.

27. Mrs X asked the Council for a stage two complaint response in June. Hearing nothing, she complained to us. We accepted the complaint for investigation.

28. Mrs X told us she visited schools and arranged for a placement at School B in its resource base. The Council's records show it had consulted with School B which had initially said no, but later accepted Y. The Council's funding panel agreed funding for Y to attend School B's alternative resource provision and Y started there in September.

29. The Council issued a second stage complaint response at the start of October. It upheld the complaint and said:

- the service had progressed consultations but communication with Mrs X about this was inconsistent and no interim education was arranged leaving Y without education;
- a placement at School B was confirmed in the middle of July and Y had settled in well;
- it should have done more to find interim provision while waiting for a school place after Council A's online provision ended; and
- a draft EHC Plan with Mrs X's comments had been submitted for quality checks and the Council aimed to issue a final Plan shortly.

30. The Council issued Y's draft EHC Plan in October. Mrs X provided her comments on this. It issued a final amended EHC Plan naming School B in November 2025.

Information from the Council

31. The Council told us:

- it restructured the EHC team at the start of 2025, moving from mainly agency staff to a permanent workforce. Many agency staff resigned unexpectedly with only a week's notice. This put pressure on the existing permanent workforce at the time when Y and his family moved into Shropshire;
- a permanent team has been in place since May 2025;
- it held a training session for the EHC Team in February 2026 about responsibilities under the Armed Forces Covenant;
- its database flagged the children of services personnel and there was a facility for the administrator to message the case officer directly about armed forces children;
- it accepted it should have organised interim provision for Y; and
- since September 2025 children who had recently moved into the area were receiving interim provision while the Council consulted with potential placements.

Conclusions

32. We are issuing this report to highlight the special difficulties faced by children and young people whose families are in the armed forces.

33. The Council was made aware of Y's move in December 2024, two months before it took place. It appears there may have been some delay by Council A in transferring the relevant paperwork, however the Council had ample time to prepare for the move and ensure Y's educational provision was in place without a gap. The transfer should have been smooth and seamless for Y. Instead, it was poorly managed with ineffective liaison with the outgoing council. This was not in line with paragraphs 10.54 and 10.57 of the SEND Code of Practice. As explained in paragraph seven, the legislation aims to ensure there are no gaps in educational provision for children in military families. There are around six military bases in Shropshire and so the need to follow the principles set out in the Covenant is crucial because more local families are going to be disproportionately affected. The children of military personnel are specifically referenced in the SEND Code of Practice to recognise the additional disadvantages they may face.

34. The Council should have secured the provision in Section F of Y's EHC Plan from the date of transfer. The failure to do so was not in line with the duty in Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and was fault. The Council did not secure a school placement until July 2025 with Y not starting until September and the Council did not put in place interim provision in the meantime. The delay was fault causing Y a loss of special educational provision. We note Y had access to some online provision commissioned by Council A, but this was not the specialist provision in Section F of his EHC Plan.

35. Council A completed a review of Y's EHC Plan in September 2024. So, the Council had to complete a further review within a year. On the basis that the Council issued a draft Plan in October 2025 and a final amended EHC Plan in November, it would appear the Council was just outside the statutory deadline which was fault but did not cause significant injustice.

36. Communication with Mrs X was woefully inadequate and this was fault causing avoidable frustration, which the Council has accepted in its complaint responses.

37. We accepted the complaint for investigation at the end of June 2025 because the Council had provided one complaint response. It did not provide a final response until October 2025 which was an unacceptable delay, not in line with our Principles of Good Administrative Practice and was fault causing avoidable frustration.

38. Neither of the Council's complaint responses offered an adequate remedy for the loss of educational provision and they did not consider the Armed Forces Covenant. The Covenant recognises children in Y's position are often at a disadvantage when compared with their non-military peers as they may face regular short notice moves which are likely to interrupt their schooling and academic progress. This was fault causing avoidable distress and uncertainty.

Recommendations

39. As we have set out in the previous section, Y had a loss of special educational provision, for which the Council is accountable. Although he had access to a limited amount of online provision arranged by Council A between January and April 2025, we have accepted Mrs X's evidence that this was inadequate and not accessible. Y was in Year 10 which is when the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) phase starts and so was a key year for him academically. Taking this into account, we have recommended a payment at the higher end of our guidelines for missed provision.

40. The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. (Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)

41. In addition to the requirements set out above, the Council has agreed, within three months of the date of this report, to take the following action to remedy the injustice identified:

- apologise in writing to Mrs X and to Y for the fault and injustice caused. We publish guidance on remedies which sets out our expectations for how organisations should apologise effectively to remedy injustice. The Council should consider this guidance in making the apology we have recommended;
- make a payment of £3,000 to Mrs X to reflect Y’s missed special educational provision between February and July 2025; and
- review its Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan and ensure it implements changes to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) procedures so service children with SEND (with or without Education Health and Care Plans) do not have any gaps in their education when they move into Shropshire. The Council should provide us with a written report summarising its review and any changes to the Plan.

42. We have not recommended a communication protocol for the EHC team because the Council recently introduced one. And it has recently delivered training on the Armed Forces Covenant to key staff. We expect this will minimise the risk of poor communication and the recurrence of other fault we have identified.

Decision

43. We find fault causing injustice. We have made recommendations in paragraphs 40 to 41 to remedy the injustice.

This page is intentionally left blank

Shropshire Council

Cabinet

5 August 2026

Digital Roadmap Report

Cabinet Member:	Councillor Alex Wagner	
Lead Director:	Sam Williams – Service Director	
Service Area:	Enabling Services	
Report Author	David Baker – Head of Service for Automation and Technology	
Officer contact details	01743 254118 – David.Baker@shropshire.gov.uk	
Electoral Divisions Affected	N/A	
Key Decision?	Not Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	N/A	
Report considered by	Cabinet – 5 August 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. Shropshire Council has approved a Digital Strategy which sets the strategic direction for how the Council will use digital, data, automation and technology to improve outcomes, redesign services and support long-term financial sustainability.

1.2. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 translates that strategy into a practical programme of delivery, setting out the specific capabilities, priorities, sequencing and outcomes required to achieve transformation across the Council.

1.3. The roadmap provides a single, prioritised programme for digital transformation, bringing together customer access, service redesign, data and insight, automation and artificial intelligence, workforce productivity, system modernisation and organisational improvement into a coherent delivery plan. It consolidates digital, transformation and service improvement activity into a corporately governed roadmap aligned to the Council's priorities, delivery capacity and financial position.

1.4. The roadmap establishes a phased delivery approach through to 2030, providing clarity on investment requirements, governance arrangements, dependencies, benefits realisation and the capacity required to deliver change. It demonstrates how transformation activity will be prioritised, governed and delivered through a single corporate programme focused on customer experience, demand reduction, workforce productivity, service improvement and financial sustainability.

1.5. It also provides assurance that digital transformation will remain inclusive, maintaining the Council's commitment to a 'digital by choice, human when it matters' approach, ensuring that residents who cannot or do not wish to use digital channels continue to receive appropriate support and access to services.

1.6. The report seeks Cabinet approval of the Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 as the Council's strategic programme for digital transformation and organisational improvement, supporting delivery of the Corporate Plan, Improvement Plan and Financial Sustainability Programme.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1. Approve the Digital Roadmap 2026–2030, attached at Appendix A. Appendix B (plan on a page) provides details for each workstream the key activities during each phase of the roadmap and benefits over the life of the programme. This supports delivery of the Corporate Plan, Improvement Plan, Digital Strategy and Financial Sustainability Programme.

2.2. Endorse the phased delivery approach set out within the roadmap, comprising:

Phase 1 – Mobilise, Prioritise and Decide (2026/27)
Phase 2 – Foundations and Early Value (2027/28)
Phase 3 – Scale and Transform (2028/29)
Phase 4 – Optimise and Sustain (2029/30)

2.3. Note that the roadmap establishes the strategic direction, delivery priorities and initial funding envelope for digital transformation and that future investment decisions relating to major system replacements, platform licensing, implementation activity and associated procurements will be subject to separate business cases, governance approvals and procurement processes where required.

2.4. Delegate authority to the Service Director for Enabling Services and the Head of Service – Automation and Technology, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Economic Growth, to make amendments to the roadmap, delivery sequencing and associated delivery plans, provided such changes do not materially alter the strategic objectives, scope or overall direction approved by Cabinet.

3. Background

3.1. Shropshire Council is operating in a period of sustained financial pressure, increasing service demand and rising expectations from residents for accessible, responsive and modern public services. The Corporate Peer Challenge, Improvement Plan and Financial Sustainability Programme have identified the need to improve organisational efficiency, strengthen governance, modernise service delivery and ensure that limited resources are focused on activities that deliver the greatest value and impact.

3.2. In July 2026, Cabinet approved the Digital Strategy 2026–2030, establishing the Council's strategic direction for digital transformation and setting out how digital, data, automation and technology will support service improvement, organisational resilience and long-term financial sustainability. The strategy recognised that technology alone will not transform services and that meaningful improvement requires coordinated service redesign, cultural change, workforce development, better use of data and disciplined programme delivery.

3.3. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 has subsequently been developed as the delivery plan for that strategy. It moves the Council from strategic intent into implementation, providing a practical and prioritised programme of activity that identifies what will be delivered, when it will be delivered, how it will be governed and how success will be measured. The roadmap provides the mechanism through which the Council will translate its digital ambitions into measurable outcomes for residents, staff, services and communities.

3.4. The need for a structured roadmap is driven by a combination of service pressures, ageing technology, growing cyber and information risks, increasing customer expectations and the Council's requirement to deliver transformation at scale whilst maintaining essential services. Across the organisation there is currently greater demand for change than available delivery capacity can support. Without a clear corporate approach, there is a risk of fragmented investment, duplication of effort, inconsistent customer experiences and failure to realise the full benefits of transformation activity.

3.5. To address this, the Council undertook a comprehensive review of digital, transformation and service improvement requirements from across the organisation. These included initiatives arising from service transformation programmes, customer access initiatives, the Digital Blueprint, the PwC customer programme, system lifecycle reviews, national policy requirements, technology roadmaps and service-led improvement proposals. More than 150 digital, automation and transformation initiatives were reviewed and assessed through a structured prioritisation process to determine what should be delivered, in what order and within what timescales.

3.6. The approach, approved through Leadership Board and the Digital Transformation Board, used a transparent prioritisation methodology designed to ensure that investment decisions are outcome-focused, explainable, evidence-led and aligned to the Council's strategic priorities. Each initiative was assessed against six prioritisation lenses: statutory and legal risk, financial impact, demand reduction potential, deliverability, dependency risk, and political or reputational sensitivity. The methodology was specifically designed to ensure that activity is prioritised based upon organisational value, risk, affordability and deliverability rather than the volume of requests received.

3.7. The prioritisation framework recognised that there is currently more demand for transformation than the Council has capacity to deliver. Consequently, the roadmap focuses on doing fewer things well, sequencing activity according to risk, dependencies, organisational readiness and available capacity. This provides assurance that the roadmap represents a realistic and deliverable programme of change rather than a collection of disconnected projects, technology investments or service requests.

3.8. A summary of the prioritisation approach is provided at Appendix C, which demonstrates how digital, transformation and service improvement demand from across the Council was consolidated, assessed and prioritised before being incorporated into a single corporate roadmap.

3.9. The outcome is a corporately governed roadmap that brings together customer access, service redesign, data and insight, automation and artificial intelligence, workforce productivity, system modernisation and organisational improvement into a coherent delivery programme. The roadmap adopts a platform-led approach designed to improve customer experience, reduce avoidable demand, increase organisational productivity and support long-term financial sustainability.

3.10. The roadmap is structured across four delivery phases running to 2030. Phase 1 focuses on mobilisation, prioritisation, governance, baselining and key platform decisions. Phase 2 delivers foundational customer, data and integration capabilities together with early service improvements. Phase 3 scales transformation activity across services, embedding redesigned operating models and broader adoption of automation and digital capabilities. Phase 4 focuses on optimisation, continuous improvement, prevention and benefits realisation, establishing a more sustainable, intelligence-led operating model.

3.11. The roadmap is underpinned by the principle of “digital by choice, human when it matters”. Whilst greater use of digital services, self-service, automation and data-driven services will play an important role in improving efficiency and customer experience, the Council remains committed to ensuring that residents who are unable or unwilling to use digital channels continue to have access to appropriate support and alternative service routes. Digital inclusion, accessibility and assisted digital support will therefore remain integral elements of delivery.

3.12. Delivery of the roadmap will be supported through a structured governance framework, benefits realisation approach and phased investment model. It is intended to provide the delivery mechanism through which the Council can improve customer experience, reduce avoidable demand, increase workforce productivity, modernise critical technology platforms and support long-term financial sustainability whilst maintaining appropriate governance, cyber resilience and service continuity.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

4.1. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 provides the Council's delivery plan for digital transformation, translating the ambitions set out within the approved Digital Strategy into a phased, prioritised and deliverable programme of implementation. It establishes a single corporately governed programme bringing together customer access, service redesign, automation and artificial intelligence, workforce productivity, data and insight, cyber resilience and system modernisation into a coherent programme of delivery.

4.2. The roadmap sets out a structured four-year programme through to 2030, focused on establishing the foundations required for transformation, delivering early improvements for residents and staff, scaling successful approaches across services and embedding a sustainable, intelligence-led and preventative operating model. Delivery will be supported through clear governance arrangements, phased investment, structured prioritisation and a formal benefits realisation framework.

4.3. This programme supports delivery capability, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS), integration capability, platform services and the specialist resources required to deliver the roadmap. Investment decisions, including core systems replacement and other significant system modernisation activity, will remain subject to separate business cases, options appraisal, governance approvals and procurement processes where required.

4.4. The roadmap is expected to generate recurring benefits through improved customer access, reduced avoidable contact, automation, workforce productivity, service redesign, system rationalisation, debt recovery and income optimisation. Benefits will be tracked through a structured benefits realisation framework with baselines established during Phase 1 and monitored throughout delivery.

4.5. The roadmap should be viewed as establishing the capability, governance, platforms and delivery capacity required to realise future transformation opportunities, rather than as a programme focused solely on technology investment. It provides the enabling foundations through which the Council can redesign services, reduce avoidable demand, improve productivity and deliver sustainable organisational change.

4.6. For residents and service users, the roadmap will deliver clearer access routes to services, stronger self-service capabilities, improved visibility of requests and case progress, better communication and reduced need to provide the same information multiple times. For staff, it will provide modern digital tools, improved access to information, greater automation of routine activity and increased capacity to focus on higher-value work. For services, it will provide improved workflow, better use of data and stronger capability to redesign services around prevention, outcomes and demand reduction.

4.7. The roadmap remains aligned to the Council's principle of "digital by choice, human when it matters". Whilst digital services and self-service capabilities will be expanded, assisted digital support, inclusive service design and alternative access routes will remain central to delivery, ensuring that residents who are unable or unwilling to use digital channels continue to receive appropriate support and access to Council services.

4.8. Approval of the roadmap will establish a clear, prioritised and deliverable programme for digital transformation, providing the governance, capability, investment framework and strategic direction required to improve customer outcomes, modernise service delivery, support organisational improvement and contribute to the Council's long-term financial sustainability.

5. Alternative Options

5.1. A number of alternative options have been considered in developing the Digital Roadmap 2026–2030:

- **Option 1 – Do nothing / continue with the current approach**
- The Council could choose not to approve the roadmap and continue with existing approaches to digital investment and service transformation. While this would avoid the need for coordinated delivery in the short term, it would not address increasing demand, fragmented service delivery, duplicated investment or long-term financial sustainability challenges. This option is not recommended.

- **Option 2 – Individual Service-Led Transformation Activity**
- Services could continue to pursue separate transformation initiatives without a single corporate roadmap. While this may provide short-term flexibility, it is likely to increase duplication, reduce value for money and create inconsistent customer experiences. This option would also make benefits realisation and organisational prioritisation more difficult. This option is not recommended.

- **Option 3 – Adopt the Digital Roadmap 2026-2030 (recommended option)**
- This option provides a single, prioritised and corporately governed delivery plan. It aligns digital investment to organisational priorities, improves control and transparency, and establishes a clear route from strategy to implementation. It is the recommended option.

5.2. Overall, the recommended option is to adopt the Digital Roadmap 2026–2030, as it provides a coherent and scalable approach to transformation, aligned to the Council's priorities, financial position and statutory responsibilities.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

6.1. Key Opportunities:

- **Demand reduction, prevention and improved service efficiency.**
  The programme supports the Council's ambition to move towards more preventative, intelligence-led and demand-managed services. Through improved customer journeys, automation, self-service capability, better use of data and service redesign, the roadmap provides opportunities to reduce avoidable demand, repeat contact and administrative burden across multiple services.

- **Improved financial sustainability.**
  The Digital Roadmap provides a structured and prioritised approach to transformation, supporting the Council's Financial Sustainability Programme

through a combination of customer access improvements, automation, service redesign, workforce productivity, data-driven decision-making and demand reduction.

- **Better customer experience and service accessibility.**
  The roadmap will establish clearer and more consistent routes into Council services through improved digital channels, customer self-service, enhanced communication and greater visibility of requests and case progress. Residents will benefit from simpler access arrangements whilst maintaining alternative routes for those unable or unwilling to use digital services.

- **Increased workforce productivity and organisational capacity.**
  Automation, artificial intelligence, integrated workflows and modern digital tools will help reduce routine administrative activity and improve access to information, enabling staff to focus more time on professional judgement, customer support and higher-value activities. The roadmap therefore provides opportunities to increase organisational capacity without a corresponding increase in staffing levels.

- **Improved governance, resilience and decision-making**
  The roadmap provides an opportunity to modernise critical technology platforms, improve data quality and management information, strengthen cyber resilience and establish greater corporate oversight of digital investment. This supports improved decision-making, reduced operational risk and greater organisational resilience.

6.2. The roadmap presents significant opportunities to improve customer experience, increase workforce productivity, strengthen organisational resilience, modernise critical systems, improve data-led decision-making and support long-term financial sustainability.

6.3. The risks associated with delivery of the Digital Roadmap are cross-cutting and align to multiple risks within the Council's Strategic Risk Register. They contribute to:

- The risk of inability to contain overall expenditure within available resources, through dependency on digital transformation, automation, demand reduction and service redesign to improve productivity and reduce cost-to-serve.

- The risk of critical skills shortages impacting recruitment, retention and organisational capacity, reflecting the need to build digital capability, workforce productivity and organisational readiness across the Council.

- The risk of failure to protect systems and data from cyber-attack or service disruption, given the increasing reliance on digital systems and technology-enabled service delivery.

- The risk of failure to adhere to governance arrangements, including programme governance, data governance, information management, architecture standards and investment controls.

- Wider risks relating to service access, inequality and demand management, particularly where services remain fragmented, difficult to access or reliant on reactive operating models rather than preventative approaches.

6.4. Delivery of the roadmap therefore represents a key mitigating response to these corporate risks and provides a structured mechanism through which the Council can realise transformation opportunities in a controlled, prioritised and governed manner.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Failure to deliver planned transformation and benefits	Delivery through a single, prioritised digital portfolio with strong governance, benefits realisation and performance monitoring arrangements.	Inability to contain overall committed expenditure within available resources
Insufficient adoption of new systems and ways of working	Structured change, communication, engagement, training and adoption approach supported by service ownership and leadership accountability.	Critical skills shortage impacting on retention, recruitment and succession planning Inability to deliver organisational objectives / economic and service delivery outcomes
Cyber security incident or system failure	Secure-by-design approach aligned to the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF), Cyber Strategy 2026–2030 and enhanced resilience capabilities.	Failure to protect from and manage the impact of a cyber-attack on ICT systems
Data quality, information governance or decision-making failures	Implementation of Data Quality Strategy, strengthened governance arrangements, Architecture Review processes and benefits assurance frameworks.	Failure of officers and members to adhere to governance arrangements (including data governance and decision-making controls
Digital exclusion impacting residents and service users	Inclusive design, assisted digital support and retention of alternative non-digital access routes through a “digital by choice, human when it matters” approach.	Impact of increased waiting lists / service access pressures (linked to capacity and equitable access to services)
Dependence on legacy systems and technical debt	Planned system modernisation, platform rationalisation, improved integration and replacement of unsupported technologies where justified through business cases.	Failure to protect from and manage the impact of a cyber-attack on ICT systems Inability to deliver organisational objectives / economic and service delivery outcomes

Fragmented delivery, duplication of effort or uncontrolled investment	Corporate prioritisation, Leadership Board oversight, Digital Transformation Board governance and Digital Design Authority controls.	Failure of officers and members to adhere to governance arrangements (organisational alignment and decision-making)
Insufficient delivery capacity or competing organisational priorities	Phased delivery model, prioritisation framework, roadmap sequencing and ongoing portfolio management aligned to available capacity.	Inability to deliver organisational objectives and planned transformation outcomes

7. Council Priorities

7.1. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 supports delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan, Improvement Plan and Financial Sustainability Programme. It provides the mechanism through which the ambitions set out in the Digital Strategy will be delivered and translated into measurable outcomes for residents, communities, services and staff.

7.2. The roadmap is a key enabler of the Council's priority ambitions, with particular alignment to:

- **A financially sustainable council, with clear priorities and a workforce that is supported to excel**
- This is the primary objective underpinning the roadmap. Through improved customer access, automation, service redesign, workforce productivity, data-led decision-making and demand reduction, the roadmap will support the Council's long-term financial sustainability and organisational improvement objectives. It provides a structured and prioritised approach to transformation, ensuring that investment is focused on activities which deliver measurable organisational value and support the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan.

- **Connected communities**
- The roadmap supports greater accessibility to Council services through improved digital channels, assisted digital support, enhanced customer communications and more consistent customer experiences. By simplifying access routes and improving service visibility, it will help residents engage with Council services more effectively regardless of where they live within the county.

- **Safe, inclusive places with homes that meet people's needs**
- The roadmap supports improved service integration, data sharing, customer access and early intervention across a range of services including housing, safeguarding, social care and community services. Digital improvements will help services identify need earlier, improve coordination and support more effective delivery of statutory responsibilities.

- **Everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and to thrive at every stage of life**

- The roadmap underpins the transformation ambitions within Adult Social Care and Children's Services by supporting earlier intervention, prevention, triage, improved service access and better use of data. Over time, these capabilities will help services move towards more preventative and outcome-focused operating models that support improved resident wellbeing and reduce avoidable demand.

  - **An environment that supports wellbeing**
- The roadmap will contribute to more sustainable service delivery through increased use of digital services, reduced reliance on paper-based processes, improved automation and more efficient ways of working. Whilst environmental benefits are not the primary driver of the programme, digital enablement provides opportunities to reduce waste, travel and unnecessary administration.

  - **A fair, thriving economy that benefits everyone**
- The roadmap supports improved engagement with residents, businesses and partners through modern digital services, improved access to information and more responsive service delivery. It also strengthens the Council's ability to support economic growth through improved organisational efficiency, greater resilience and more effective use of resources.

7.3. The roadmap also directly supports delivery of the Council's Improvement Plan by providing a single, prioritised and governed programme for digital transformation and organisational improvement. Through structured prioritisation, benefits realisation and stronger governance arrangements, it responds to recommendations relating to organisational effectiveness, service improvement, governance, customer experience and financial sustainability.

7.4. Overall, the Digital Roadmap provides the delivery framework through which digital, data, automation and service redesign will contribute to the Council's strategic priorities, helping create a more efficient, resilient, customer-focused and financially sustainable organisation by 2030.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. Shropshire Council continues to operate in a challenging financial environment and remains focused on delivering its Financial Sustainability Programme, Medium-Term Financial Plan and wider Improvement Plan commitments. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 has been developed as a key enabling programme to support organisational transformation, improve productivity, reduce avoidable demand and contribute to the Council's long-term financial sustainability objectives.

8.2. Delivery of the roadmap supports programme delivery capability, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS), integration capability, platform services and the specialist resources required to deliver the roadmap

8.3. The roadmap is expected to generate recurring annual benefits through a combination of customer access improvements, channel shift, reduced avoidable contact, automation, workforce productivity improvements, service redesign, system rationalisation, debt recovery and income optimisation.

8.4. Benefits will be managed through a structured benefits realisation framework, with baselines established during Phase 1 and monitored throughout delivery. Benefit categories will include cashable savings, productivity gains, income generation, demand prevention and cost avoidance. Benefit ownership will remain with services, and performance will be tracked through the Council's established governance arrangements.

8.5. The roadmap should be viewed as an investment in the capability, governance, delivery capacity and enabling platforms required to realise future transformation opportunities, rather than as a standalone technology investment. Successful delivery is expected to contribute materially to improved organisational productivity, reduced demand, service modernisation and the Council's long-term financial sustainability objectives.

8.6. Approval of the Digital Roadmap does not constitute approval of future procurement activity, system replacement programmes, implementation expenditure or associated capital and revenue investment. The roadmap establishes the strategic direction, delivery framework and initial programme funding required to support digital transformation. Any future investment decisions relating to major system modernisation, replacement, platform licensing, implementation partners, integration requirements, software procurement or other significant expenditure will remain subject to separate business case development, options appraisal, affordability assessment, governance approval and procurement processes in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and decision-making arrangements

9. Legal and HR implications

9.1. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 does not in itself create new legal obligations or amend the Council's statutory responsibilities, rather it sets the framework through which the Council can ensure that it meets its statutory responsibilities.

9.2. Delivery of individual initiatives arising from the roadmap will be subject to appropriate legal review and governance, including compliance with procurement legislation, subsidy control requirements, data protection legislation, information governance requirements, public law obligations, accessibility requirements, cyber security standards and any service-specific statutory responsibilities.

9.3. The roadmap includes future procurement, contract management, platform selection and system modernisation activity. Legal and Information Governance support will therefore be required throughout delivery to ensure the Council meets its legal obligations and complies with Council's Contract Procedure Rules, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation.

9.4. From a workforce perspective, successful delivery of the roadmap depends upon organisational readiness, workforce development and the adoption of new ways of working. The programme includes a significant focus on digital skills, leadership capability, change management and workforce productivity, recognising that transformation benefits will only be realised where changes in technology are accompanied by changes in behaviours, processes and service delivery models.

9.5. HR support will be required throughout the programme to support workforce planning, organisational change, skills development, recruitment activity, role design, change management and the development of future digital capability across the Council. The roadmap also recognises the need to ensure staff are appropriately supported to adopt new technologies, automation tools and data-led ways of working.

9.6. Any future workforce implications resulting from individual projects, organisational change activity or service redesign initiatives will be considered separately and managed in accordance with the Council's HR policies, procedures and consultation requirements.

9.7. Overall, the legal and workforce implications associated with the roadmap are considered manageable, provided that appropriate governance, legal oversight, information governance controls, workforce engagement and change management arrangements are maintained throughout delivery.

10. Electoral Division Implications

10.1. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 is a council-wide programme of transformation and does not have direct implications for any specific electoral division.

10.2. The roadmap is intended to support consistent, accessible and joined-up services across all areas of Shropshire, including rural and geographically dispersed communities. Through improvements in customer access, service delivery, digital inclusion, workforce productivity and organisational efficiency, the benefits of the programme are expected to be realised across the county rather than within individual electoral divisions.

10.3. The roadmap includes a commitment to maintaining a "digital by choice, human when it matters" approach to service delivery, ensuring that residents across all communities continue to have access to appropriate support and alternative service channels where required.

10.4. In line with the Local Member Protocol, consideration has been given to whether specific local member consultation is required. Given the strategic, corporate and county-wide nature of the proposals, consultation with individual local members is not considered necessary at this stage. Any future service changes, implementation activity or transformation initiatives arising from the roadmap that have specific local impacts will be subject to appropriate engagement, consultation and governance arrangements.

11. Health, Social (including "Child Friendly Shropshire") and Economic Implications

11.1. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 supports the Council's Health in All Policies approach by providing the practical delivery framework through which improved access to services, earlier intervention, prevention and more joined-up service delivery will be achieved across health, social care and wider council services.

11.2. A key objective of the roadmap is to support the transition from reactive, crisis-led service models towards earlier intervention, prevention and demand management. Through improved customer access, digital front door capabilities, data and insight, automation and service redesign, the programme will support earlier identification of need and more timely intervention, particularly within Adult Social Care, Children's Services and safeguarding-related services.

11.3. The roadmap directly supports the Council's transformation ambitions for Adult Social Care through improved triage, prevention, community-based support, technology-enabled care, automation and better use of data. These capabilities are intended to help residents remain independent for longer, improve outcomes and support the long-term sustainability of care services.

11.4. The roadmap also supports the ongoing transformation of Children's Services through improved access routes, integrated workflows, stronger information sharing, enhanced performance management and the development of capabilities such as a digital front door and a more joined-up view of services supporting children, young people and families. These improvements are intended to support earlier help, improved safeguarding and better outcomes for children and families.

11.5. The roadmap supports improved integration with partners across health, care, education, community and voluntary sector organisations. By improving data sharing, coordination and digital capability, the programme will help enable more joined-up, place-based services and support wider system objectives relating to health, wellbeing and prevention.

11.6. From an access and inclusion perspective, the roadmap is intended to have a positive impact by improving the availability, consistency and usability of Council services. There is a recognised risk that increased digitisation could adversely affect those who are digitally excluded or who have complex needs. This is mitigated through the Council's commitment to 'digital by choice, human when it matters', accessible design principles, assisted digital support and the continued provision of non-digital access routes where appropriate.

11.7. The benefits of the roadmap are expected to be realised across all communities in Shropshire, including rural and geographically dispersed communities. Improved digital access, assisted digital support and clearer access routes to services provide opportunities to improve accessibility and reduce inequalities, whilst recognising that connectivity and access challenges may continue to vary across different parts of the county.

11.8. In relation to Care Leavers, the roadmap provides opportunities to improve communication, access to information and access to services through more consistent and integrated digital channels. As individual initiatives are developed, services will remain responsible for ensuring that appropriate support arrangements are in place to meet the specific needs of young people leaving care.

11.9. The roadmap supports the Council's ambition to become a Child Friendly Shropshire by promoting service design that is inclusive, accessible and centred around the needs of children, young people and families. The programme includes specific activities supporting Children's Services transformation, earlier intervention, improved access to information and stronger safeguarding capability.

11.10. No specific adverse impacts on health, wellbeing or social outcomes have been identified at this stage. Any potential impacts relating to digital exclusion, data use, automation or service redesign will be assessed and managed through appropriate governance, impact assessment processes and service-level business cases as delivery progresses.

11.11. From an economic perspective, the roadmap supports a more sustainable, efficient and resilient Council capable of responding to future demand and financial pressures. Improved digital services, stronger data and insight, increased productivity and more efficient use of resources will support wider economic outcomes by creating a more responsive Council, improving engagement with residents and businesses and helping to protect frontline services through improved organisational efficiency.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1. An initial stocktake Equality, Social inclusion and Health impact Assessment (ESHIA) has been carried out, with further ESHIAs to be carried out during the implementation of the Digital Roadmap where warranted and proportionate to do so.

12.2. At this stage, the equality impacts are assessed as likely to be neutral to low positive across all nine of the Protected Characteristic groupings set out in the Equality Act 2010, with potential for this to rise to low to medium positive for the groupings of Age and of Disability.

12.3. For the local additional groupings for which we seek to take 'due regard' in our decision-making processes, our considerations are for the circumstances in which individuals and households may find themselves, at different times in their lives and in what may be a range of differing locations across our rural and sparsely populated county.

12.4. The impacts are likely to be neutral to low positive for the grouping of Veterans and Serving Members of the Armed Forces and their Families, for whom we give 'due regard' under the Armed Forces Act 2021, and for the grouping of Young People Leaving Care.

12.5. There is also potential for the equality impacts to be low to medium positive for our local groupings of Carers, and of Social Inclusion.

12.6. For all the above, this is in recognition of the specified priorities within the Digital Strategy in relation to digital inclusion and fair access, and connected and preventative services, with a focus upon "no wrong door" in accessing the services we provide or the services that others provide on our behalf.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1. The Digital Roadmap 2026–2030 supports the Council's environmental sustainability objectives through the delivery of more efficient, digitally enabled and data-driven services. By improving access to online services, increasing automation and reducing reliance on paper-based processes, the roadmap provides opportunities to reduce waste, streamline service delivery and improve organisational efficiency.

13.2. The roadmap supports wider opportunities to reduce unnecessary travel by enabling greater use of digital interaction, self-service, automation and remote access to services where appropriate. Improved customer access arrangements, digital channels and workforce productivity tools may contribute to reduced travel by residents, staff and partners whilst maintaining service accessibility.

13.3. Through the modernisation of technology platforms and infrastructure, the roadmap also provides opportunities to improve the efficiency, resilience and sustainability of the Council's digital estate. This includes increased use of cloud-based services, platform consolidation, system rationalisation and improved use of shared digital capabilities, helping to reduce duplication and improve the efficient use of technology resources.

13.4. The roadmap is primarily a transformation and service improvement programme rather than a direct environmental programme. Consequently, any environmental benefits are expected to be indirect and achieved through changes to service delivery, operating models and technology adoption rather than through specific climate change or biodiversity initiatives.

13.5. No direct impacts on biodiversity have been identified as a consequence of approval of the roadmap. Any future projects, infrastructure changes, property-related activity or service redesign initiatives arising from the roadmap will be subject to appropriate environmental assessment and governance processes where required.

13.6. The roadmap includes a commitment to the responsible, secure and sustainable use of technology. Future technology procurement and implementation activity will continue to consider environmental impacts, supplier sustainability commitments, whole-life costs and opportunities to support the Council's wider climate and environmental objectives where appropriate.

13.7. At this stage, no significant adverse climate change, biodiversity or environmental impacts have been identified. The overall effect of the roadmap is expected to be neutral to low positive through the delivery of more efficient, digitally enabled and sustainable ways of working across the organisation.

14. Background Papers

- Digital Strategy 2026
- Cyber Strategy 2026

15. Appendices

Appendix A – Digital Roadmap 2026-2030
Appendix B – Digital Roadmap Plan on a Page
Appendix C – From Demand to Delivery

Shropshire Council

DIGITAL ROADMAP
2026 – 2030

CUSTOMER FOCUSED
Putting residents, businesses and communities first

DATA DRIVEN
Using insight and intelligence to make better decisions

WORKFORCE ENABLED
Empowering staff with the tools, skills and support to thrive

PLATFORM LED
Building on shared platforms, standards and integration

SECURE & TRUSTED
Protecting data, managing risk and building resilience

Transforming services. Empowering people. Improving outcomes.

Contents

1. Executive Summary

Shropshire Council is facing sustained pressure from rising demand, increasing service complexity and continued financial constraint. Across both Adults and Children's services, the current operating model is largely reactive, fragmented and heavily reliant on intervention at the point of escalation. This drives unnecessary demand, increases cost-to-serve and limits the Council's ability to improve outcomes for residents.

At the same time, the Council is becoming increasingly dependent on digital systems and data to deliver critical services. Without a coordinated, prioritised approach to digital transformation, there is a significant risk that investment becomes fragmented, duplicated and unable to deliver the scale of change required. This position is not sustainable.

This roadmap sets out a clear and deliverable plan to 2030. It translates the ambitions of the Digital Strategy and Cyber Strategy into a practical sequence of action, aligned to service transformation, workforce development, financial sustainability and organisational improvement. It provides the framework for how the Council will use digital, data, automation and artificial intelligence to improve outcomes, manage demand and modernise service delivery.

1.1 Our approach

The Council will deliver digital transformation through a disciplined, platform-led operating model rather than a collection of disconnected projects.

The target architecture is built around a series of integrated layers that create a joined-up customer experience while enabling services to operate through shared corporate capabilities.

The model is based on:

- Multiple entry points providing access through digital, telephone, assisted digital, partner and face-to-face channels
- A channel and experience integration layer connecting customer interactions, routing demand and supporting consistent service experiences
- A corporate CRM platform managing customer interactions, cases, workflows and service coordination
- An enterprise integration layer connecting systems, data and processes through standardised APIs and integration services
- Specialist line-of-business systems supporting statutory and operational services
- Shared data, automation and intelligence capabilities enabling insight, prediction, reporting and continuous improvement

Together these capabilities create a single joined-up customer view, multiple access routes and an integrated digital foundation that reduces duplication, improves visibility, increases resilience and enables transformation at scale.

The approach reflects a simple principle:

Services should remain tailored to statutory and operational requirements, but be delivered through shared platforms, common standards, integrated data and consistent customer experiences.

1.2 Culture, Skills and Ways of Working

Successful digital transformation is not solely dependent on technology. It requires changes in culture, leadership, skills and ways of working across the organisation.

While this roadmap sets out the digital platforms and capabilities required, benefits will only be realised where services embrace new approaches, use data to inform decisions, adopt standardised processes and continuously improve how services are designed and delivered.

Delivery will therefore be aligned with the Council's People Plan and workforce development ambitions, ensuring that staff have the skills, confidence and support required to operate effectively within a more digital, data-enabled and outcomes-focused organisation.

Leaders will play a critical role in championing change, encouraging innovation and ensuring that digital transformation becomes part of everyday service improvement rather than a separate technology initiative.

By 2030, the Council's ambition is to operate as a digitally enabled organisation where data informs decisions, routine administrative activity is increasingly automated, services are designed around resident needs and staff are empowered to focus on high-value activities that improve outcomes for residents and communities.

1.3 What will change

This roadmap supports a fundamental shift in how services are designed and delivered:

From crisis-led to preventative services

- Adults services move from Care Act-led assessment at crisis to prevention, triage and reablement pathways
- Children's services move to earlier help, multi-agency working and integrated pathways
- Data and insight support earlier identification of need and more effective intervention

From fragmented access to joined-up customer experiences

- Residents access services through clear and consistent routes
- Information is captured once and reused across services where appropriate
- Customers experience more seamless journeys regardless of channel or service boundary

From limited visibility to empowered customers

- Residents can track requests, cases and service interactions through consistent digital channels
- Proactive updates improve transparency and customer confidence
- Improved visibility reduces avoidable contact, complaints and information requests

From isolated systems to integrated platforms

- Services continue to use specialist systems where required, but operate within a common architecture
- Systems share information through standardised integration and data services
- Existing capability is optimised before new technology is introduced

From reactive delivery to intelligence-led transformation

- Better reporting, performance management and demand insight support prioritisation and decision-making
- Resources are focused on areas where impact will be greatest
- Investment decisions are increasingly informed by evidence and measurable outcomes

From manual administration to digitally enabled work

- Automation removes routine and repeatable activities
- AI assists with triage, drafting, summarisation and decision support
- Staff spend more time on professional judgement, resident engagement and value-adding activities

1.4 Delivery approach

The roadmap is structured into four phases to ensure delivery is realistic, sequenced and manageable:

- **Stabilise and Decide** – address immediate risks, establish baselines, confirm platform decisions and align governance
- **Foundations and Early Value** – deliver core customer-facing capabilities, integration foundations and demonstrate early improvements
- **Scale and Transform** – expand platform adoption across services and embed redesigned service models

- **Optimise and Prevent** – use data, automation and insight to reduce long-term demand and continuously improve outcomes

Alongside technology delivery, the Council will implement workforce, culture and change activities to ensure services are ready to adopt new capabilities and realise benefits.

This phased approach reflects the Council's current capacity, existing commitments and the need to balance transformation activity with ongoing service delivery.

1.5 Key dependencies and risks

Delivery of this roadmap depends on several critical factors:

- A clear decision on the future CRM platform and associated customer management approach
- Alignment between service transformation, digital delivery and workforce development
- Strong links to the Council's People Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan
- Effective management of existing commitments, including infrastructure, cyber security and ERP activity
- Maintaining governance discipline and avoiding fragmented digital investment

Successful delivery will also require targeted investment in platforms, integration capability, workforce capacity, change management and organisational development.

Failure to address these dependencies will:

- Limit the pace and scale of transformation
- Increase the risk of fragmented or duplicated investment
- Reduce the Council's ability to realise demand reduction and financial benefits
- Prevent the cultural and behavioural changes required to sustain transformation

1.6 Outcomes

Successful delivery of this roadmap will result in:

- Reduced demand and lower cost-to-serve through earlier intervention, prevention and automation
- Improved and more consistent resident experience across all channels
- Greater transparency through customer tracking, progress updates and self-service capability
- Better intelligence, reporting and demand insight supporting decision-making and service redesign
- More effective service delivery enabled by shared data, integration and process automation

- Increased workforce productivity and capacity through the removal of manual administration
- A more digitally confident and capable workforce
- A modern, secure, resilient and lower-risk digital estate aligned to national standards
- A sustainable operating model capable of responding to future demand pressures and financial constraints

2. Why This Roadmap Is Required Now

Shropshire Council cannot deliver its Digital Strategy ambitions, manage rising demand or achieve long-term financial sustainability without a clear, prioritised and disciplined approach to digital transformation. The current position across services, systems, workforce capacity and organisational capability means that change is no longer optional; it is essential.

At the same time, advances in digital platforms, integration, automation, artificial intelligence and data capabilities create opportunities to redesign services fundamentally, improve productivity, strengthen customer experience and deliver better outcomes at lower cost. This roadmap is therefore not simply a response to challenge; it is the pathway to a more sustainable, resilient and modern operating model.

This section sets out the factors that make transformation necessary now and explains why a coordinated, corporate approach is required.

2.1 Demand, Service Pressure and Financial Sustainability

Demand for Council services continues to increase in both scale and complexity, particularly within Adults and Children's services, where pressure on resources and budgets is greatest.

In Adults, demographic change, increasing complexity of need and rising care costs are creating sustained pressure on services. The current model frequently intervenes at the point of crisis, resulting in higher-cost support and long-term dependency rather than earlier, preventative intervention.

In Children's Services, transformation is required to support earlier help, integrated delivery and improved outcomes for children and families. Existing processes and pathways can result in fragmented experiences, duplication of effort and unnecessary escalation into higher-cost services.

Taken together, these pressures are financially unsustainable. Without a shift towards prevention, triage, automation and earlier intervention, demand is likely to continue increasing while resources remain constrained.

Digital, data and automation are critical enablers of this shift. They provide the mechanisms through which services can redesign pathways, increase productivity, improve decision-making and scale preventative approaches.

2.2 Current Operating Model Limitations

The Council's current operating model has evolved over many years and reflects different service requirements, legislative changes and technology investments. Whilst individual systems and services continue to deliver important outcomes, the overall environment is characterised by fragmentation across customer access, information management and service delivery.

Residents often need to navigate multiple entry points, provide the same information repeatedly and interact with different parts of the organisation to resolve a single issue. Information is frequently held across multiple systems, limiting visibility and coordination between services. Processes are often manual, duplicated or reactive, increasing avoidable demand and administrative effort.

Customer expectations have also changed significantly. Residents increasingly expect the same level of convenience, transparency and responsiveness that they experience elsewhere. They expect to engage through multiple channels, receive proactive updates, track progress and avoid repeatedly providing the same information. Existing arrangements do not consistently meet these expectations.

These limitations contribute directly to:

- Avoidable contact and failure demand
- Delays in service response and resolution
- Increased administrative burden on staff
- Poorer experiences for residents, partners and businesses
- Reduced organisational efficiency and productivity

Both Adults and Children's transformation programmes reinforce the need to move towards joined-up pathways, consistent customer experiences and integrated service delivery. Without a coordinated roadmap, there is a significant risk that services attempt to address these challenges independently, creating further fragmentation and duplication.

2.3 Increasing Digital Dependency, Data Challenges and Risk

The Council is increasingly dependent on technology, digital services and data to deliver critical public services, including social care, safeguarding, finance, customer services and regulatory functions.

At the same time:

- The technology estate continues to grow in complexity
- Integration between systems remains inconsistent
- Legacy platforms create operational and support challenges
- Data is often fragmented across multiple applications and processes
- Reporting and insight capabilities vary across services

While the Council holds significant volumes of operational and service data, it is not always possible to obtain a complete, joined-up view of customer demand, service performance or organisational outcomes. This limits the ability to target interventions effectively, predict future pressures and make fully informed decisions.

The future operating model described in this roadmap depends upon better integration, stronger data foundations and improved intelligence capabilities. To move towards prevention and proactive intervention, the Council must improve how information is connected, analysed and used throughout the organisation.

The Cyber Strategy is clear that digital transformation must also be secure, resilient and governed effectively. As dependency on digital systems increases, cyber resilience, data protection and operational continuity become increasingly important.

Without this, the Council faces:

- Increased risk of service disruption
- Exposure to cyber threats and data loss
- Reduced confidence in data and decision-making
- Constraints on its ability to transform safely and at scale

Digital transformation and cyber resilience are therefore inseparable. The objective is not simply to modernise services, but to do so in a way that reduces risk and improves organisational resilience.

2.4 Delivery Capacity, Priorities and Baseline Understanding

The Council is already delivering a significant portfolio of ICT, cyber, infrastructure and transformation activity, including infrastructure modernisation, cyber security improvements, AI and customer access initiatives.

This creates a clear constraint:

There is currently more demand for change than available capacity can deliver.

At the same time:

- Key platform decisions remain outstanding
- Services are progressing transformation activity at different rates
- There is a risk of investment decisions being made outside a common architecture and governance framework

In addition, whilst significant insight exists across services, further work is required in some areas to establish consistent baselines for customer demand, service costs, process performance and benefits realisation. Establishing these baselines will support evidence-based investment decisions and provide a robust foundation for measuring success.

Without a clear, corporately owned roadmap:

- Priorities will compete rather than align
- Capacity will become increasingly stretched
- Transformation programmes may diverge from a common direction
- Benefits will be harder to realise and demonstrate

The roadmap provides the mechanism through which capacity, investment and delivery can be prioritised against agreed organisational outcomes.

2.5 Workforce Readiness and Organisational Change

Technology alone will not deliver transformation.

Successful delivery of this roadmap depends on leadership, culture, skills and organisational readiness as much as it depends on systems and platforms.

As services increasingly use data, automation and artificial intelligence, staff will require new skills, confidence and support to work in different ways. Leaders and managers will need to make greater use of data and insight to inform decision-making. Services will need to embrace collaboration, continuous improvement and greater standardisation where appropriate.

Transformation benefits will only be realised where changes in technology are accompanied by changes in behaviours, processes and ways of working.

The roadmap will therefore be delivered alongside workforce development, organisational change and adoption activity aligned to the Council's People Plan. This will help ensure staff have the skills and confidence required to adopt new technologies, embrace innovation and maximise the value of digital investment.

Creating a digitally enabled organisation is not simply about implementing new systems; it is about enabling people to work differently and deliver better outcomes for residents.

2.6 Risk of Fragmented Investment and Missed Opportunity

Without a disciplined and coordinated approach, there is a significant risk of:

- Duplicated or overlapping digital solutions
- Investment in point solutions that do not scale or integrate
- Inconsistent customer experiences across services
- Increased support and maintenance costs
- Further fragmentation of information and processes

This risk has already been recognised within wider transformation activity and reinforces the need for coordinated governance, prioritisation and architectural oversight.

At a time of financial constraint, fragmented investment is not simply inefficient; it is unaffordable.

The Council must move from localised, service-led digital decision making to strategic, corporately governed investment in shared platforms, data and capabilities.

2.7 Summary: Why Action Is Required Now

The case for action is clear and immediate:

- Demand continues to rise faster than current operating models can sustain
- Services need to shift towards prevention, earlier intervention and self-service
- Customer expectations are increasing
- Digital dependency, cyber risk and operational complexity continue to grow
- Data and intelligence capabilities need to improve to support better decisions
- Capacity constraints require prioritisation and disciplined delivery
- Workforce skills, culture and ways of working must evolve alongside technology
- The risk of fragmented investment remains significant without corporate oversight

Equally, the opportunities are substantial. Advances in digital platforms, integration, automation, artificial intelligence and data provide the Council with the opportunity to redesign services fundamentally, improve customer experience, increase productivity and create a more sustainable operating model for the future.

Taken together, these factors mean that the Council cannot deliver its strategic objectives, manage demand or maintain financial sustainability without a clear, prioritised and corporately governed transformation roadmap.

This roadmap provides the mechanism to move from strategy to delivery, ensuring that transformation is coherent, affordable, measurable and achievable whilst creating the foundations for a more integrated, resilient and digitally enabled Council by 2030.

3. Service Outcomes

This roadmap is driven by the outcomes the Council needs to achieve, not by technology itself. Digital, data, automation and artificial intelligence are enablers of service transformation and must directly support how services are redesigned, how staff work and how customers experience services.

The outcomes set out below establish a clear line of sight between customer needs, service transformation, workforce development and organisational priorities. Together they define the future state that this roadmap will deliver by 2030.

3.1 Customer Outcomes

The primary objective of digital transformation is to improve how residents, businesses, partners and professionals interact with the Council.

The future state is built around simpler access, greater transparency and more joined-up services, ensuring customers can engage through the channel that best meets their needs while receiving a consistent experience.

Target Outcomes

Simpler access to services

- Multiple access channels operating within a single, joined-up customer experience
- Reduced complexity when accessing Council services
- Easier navigation to the right support at the right time

Greater visibility and transparency

- Customers can track requests, cases and service interactions
- Proactive updates reduce uncertainty and avoidable contact
- Improved confidence in service delivery

Joined-up experiences

- Information is provided once and reused where appropriate
- Reduced need for customers to repeat information
- Improved coordination across services and teams

Digital by choice, human when it matters

- Improved self-service and assisted digital support
- Appropriate non-digital routes remain available
- Vulnerable customers continue to receive personalised support where required

Implication for Digital

To deliver these outcomes, the Council requires integrated customer access channels, a common customer record, modern case management capability, effective workflow orchestration and consistent access to information across services.

3.2 Adults (Care & Wellbeing) – Prevention, Independence and Sustainability

Adults services are seeking a fundamental shift away from a crisis-led, assessment-driven model towards a preventative, community-based and digitally enabled approach.

Target Outcomes

Earlier intervention and prevention

- Residents are supported earlier through advice, guidance and community-based services
- Demand is managed before escalation into statutory services
- More people are supported to remain independent for longer

A redesigned front door

- The front door provides triage, navigation and self-assessment rather than automatically progressing to formal assessment
- Residents are directed to the most appropriate support pathway at the earliest opportunity
- Access is simpler, clearer and more consistent

Increased independence and reduced long-term dependency

- Short-term, goal-focused interventions are prioritised
- Community-based support is utilised wherever appropriate
- Technology-enabled care becomes part of everyday service delivery

Stronger community and multi-agency delivery

- Services operate more effectively alongside health, voluntary sector and community partners
- Local and place-based working supports early intervention and prevention

Improved financial sustainability

- Earlier intervention reduces demand for high-cost services
- Resources are targeted where they deliver the greatest impact

- Better intelligence supports commissioning and capacity planning

Implication for Digital

Digital capability must enable:

- Self-service and assisted digital support at scale
- Effective triage and routing at the point of contact
- Integration with community and partner services
- Better data capture, analytics and demand forecasting
- Improved visibility of customer journeys and outcomes
- Automation of routine activities to increase practitioner capacity

3.3 Children's Services – Early Help, Integration and System Redesign

Children's Services are delivering a whole-system transformation programme, moving away from siloed delivery towards family-centred, preventative and integrated services.

Target Outcomes

Earlier help and prevention

- Children and families receive support at the earliest opportunity
- Demand entering statutory services is reduced through stronger early intervention

Joined-up, multi-agency working

- Services operate as a coordinated system across partners
- Roles, pathways and decision-making are clearer and more consistent

Improved experience for children and families

- Fewer hand-offs between services
- Less repetition of information
- Simpler and more coherent access to support

A one-system approach to delivery

- Services are aligned around common pathways and objectives
- Workflows and processes are supported by integrated digital capabilities
- Information is shared more effectively where appropriate

Stronger assurance, performance and safeguarding

- Improved visibility of activity, performance and outcomes

- Better inspection readiness and governance
- Enhanced ability to identify risk, vulnerability and need earlier

Core Digital Enablers Required

The transformation programme requires:

- A digital front door for children, young people and families
- A Single View of the Child
- Integrated workflows and data sharing
- Stronger performance, reporting and intelligence capabilities

Implication for Digital

Digital capability must become a core enabler of Children's transformation, supporting integrated working, improved information sharing and better decision-making across services and partners.

3.4 Workforce Outcomes

Successful digital transformation must improve the working environment for staff as well as outcomes for residents.

The future operating model aims to reduce administrative burden, improve access to information and provide staff with the tools, data and confidence required to work effectively in a modern organisation.

Target Outcomes

Reduced administration and manual processing

- Less time spent on repetitive and transactional tasks
- Greater use of automation and workflow
- Reduced duplication of effort

Better access to information

- Staff can access the information they need more easily
- Improved visibility across services and customer interactions
- Better decision-making supported by data and insight

Increased productivity and capacity

- Automation and AI support routine activities
- Practitioners spend more time on professional judgement and customer interaction
- Resources are focused on higher-value activity

Improved digital confidence and capability

- Staff are equipped with the skills required to work effectively in a digital environment
- Continuous learning and improvement become part of everyday practice
- Innovation is encouraged within an appropriate governance framework

Improved collaboration

- Better information sharing across teams and services
- Improved coordination around customer needs
- Reduced organisational silos

Implication for Digital

Technology investment must be accompanied by workforce development, organisational change and adoption activity to ensure benefits are realised and sustained.

3.5 Corporate Outcomes – Consistency, Productivity and Control

Alongside service transformation, the Council requires a modern operating model that improves efficiency, strengthens governance and supports better decision-making across the organisation.

Connected Customer Experience

- A single view of customer interactions across channels and services
- Consistent access routes and service standards
- Greater transparency and visibility for customers

Higher Workforce Productivity

- Reduced administrative burden across services
- Greater automation of routine activities
- More effective use of professional expertise and capacity

Better Data and Decision-Making

- Improved reporting and management information
- Greater visibility of demand, performance and outcomes
- Evidence-based prioritisation and investment decisions

Smarter, More Preventative Services

- Earlier identification of emerging demand
- Improved targeting of intervention and support

- Greater use of predictive insight and analytics

Stronger Organisational Control

- Reduced duplication of systems and processes
- Better governance of digital and technology investment
- Greater consistency, resilience and compliance

3.6 Bringing This Together

Across Customer Services, Adults, Children's Services and corporate functions, there is a consistent direction of travel:

- Shift from crisis response to prevention and early intervention
- Design services around customer journeys rather than organisational boundaries
- Use digital, data, automation and artificial intelligence to improve outcomes and manage demand
- Improve workforce productivity while enhancing customer experience
- Strengthen organisational decision-making through better information and insight

While the needs of each service area differ, the underlying requirements are consistent:

- Simple and accessible services
- Joined-up information and customer experiences
- Integrated platforms and processes
- Skilled and empowered staff
- Better use of data and intelligence
- Strong governance and organisational control

3.7 Summary

The outcomes in this roadmap are not technology-led. They are customer-led, service-led and financially driven.

By 2030, the Council will provide:

- Simpler access to services
- Greater visibility and transparency for customers
- Better tools and information for staff
- Stronger insight for managers and leaders
- More integrated delivery across services and partners

Digital, data, automation and artificial intelligence will enable a shift from reactive service delivery towards a preventative, intelligence-led operating model that improves outcomes, reduces demand and supports long-term financial sustainability. This outcomes framework provides the foundation for the target operating model set out in the following section.

4. Target Operating Model (How We Deliver Change)

This roadmap will be delivered through a customer-centred operating model that combines service transformation, workforce enablement, data-driven decision making and shared digital platforms.

The target operating model is designed to create a single joined-up customer view, multiple access routes and integrated services, while enabling staff to work more effectively through better information, automation and modern digital tools.

The objective is not simply to implement technology. It is to create a more preventative, intelligence-led and sustainable operating model that improves outcomes, reduces demand and supports long-term financial sustainability.

Services will remain accountable for outcomes, but will be enabled through shared digital capabilities, integrated data, common standards and corporate governance.

This section sets out the principles, platform model and architectural approach that will underpin delivery.

4.1 Core Design Principles

The following principles will govern all digital, data and technology decisions. These principles apply across all programmes, projects and service areas.

Service-led, not technology-led

Transformation is driven by customer, service and organisational outcomes rather than system replacement.

Platforms, not projects

Capability will be delivered through shared and reusable platforms rather than isolated solutions.

Multiple entry points, one customer experience

Services may maintain appropriate access routes, but customers should experience a consistent and joined-up journey regardless of channel.

Optimise before we buy

Existing systems and capabilities will be fully utilised and improved before introducing new technology.

Data-informed and outcome-focused

Investment decisions, prioritisation and delivery will be guided by evidence, customer insight, service outcomes and measurable benefits.

Secure and resilient by design

Cyber security, privacy, resilience and compliance are embedded from the outset rather than added later.

Corporate ownership, not service isolation

Digital investment, prioritisation and sequencing are governed corporately to reduce duplication and maximise organisational value.

Configure, don't customise

Solutions will be implemented using standard functionality wherever possible. Bespoke development and customisation will only be undertaken where there is a clear business need and long-term value.

4.2 Target Platform Model

The target architecture is built around a series of integrated layers that collectively deliver a joined-up customer experience, connected services and improved organisational capability.

Rather than operating as isolated systems, each layer performs a distinct role within a single digital ecosystem. (*Target Architecture Diagram - Page 69*)

Layer 1 – Customers

Residents, businesses, partners and professionals sit at the centre of the operating model.

The Council's ambition is to provide:

- A joined-up experience across services
- Greater visibility of requests, cases and interactions
- Improved transparency and communication
- Better access to information and support
- Improved outcomes through more personalised and proactive services

The operating model is designed around customer needs rather than organisational structures.

Layer 2 – Access and Engagement Channels

Customers should be able to access services through the channel that best meets their needs.

This layer includes:

- Digital Front Door
- Contact Centre
- Email and correspondence
- Assisted digital channels
- Partner and third-party portals
- Face-to-face access points

Together these channels provide multiple entry points into Council services while maintaining a consistent and connected customer experience.

Customers should increasingly be able to:

- Report, apply, pay and track online
- Receive proactive updates and notifications
- Transition between channels without repeating information
- Access support through appropriate assisted and non-digital routes where needed

This supports the principle of digital by choice, human when it matters.

Layer 3 – Channel and Experience Integration

A dedicated integration layer will connect all customer-facing channels and services.

Its purpose is to create a consistent and seamless experience regardless of how customers engage with the Council.

This layer provides:

- Authentication and identity management
- Customer interaction capture
- Routing and orchestration
- Channel management and monitoring
- Demand visibility and performance insight

This capability enables the Council to manage customer demand more effectively, improve routing and triage, and ensure consistent experiences across all channels.

Layer 4 – CRM Platform (Customer and Case Management)

The CRM platform provides the corporate coordination layer of the target architecture.

Its purpose is not to replace specialist systems, but to provide a common capability for managing customer interactions, workflows and service coordination.

Core capabilities include:

- Single customer record
- Customer interaction history
- Case management
- Workflow and triage
- Status tracking
- Performance reporting

This layer enables:

- Reduced duplication
- Improved visibility across services
- Better coordination of customer requests
- Consistent management of cases and workflows

A clear decision on the CRM platform remains a critical dependency for the roadmap.

Layer 5 – Enterprise Integration and Data Platform

The enterprise integration platform forms the digital backbone of the organisation.

Its purpose is to connect CRM, business systems, data platforms and services through standardised integration capabilities.

Core capabilities include:

- API management
- Data transformation and mapping
- Event processing and messaging
- Synchronisation and master data management
- Monitoring, audit and logging
- Data quality and governance

This approach reduces point-to-point integrations, improves resilience and enables information to flow consistently across the organisation.

The integration platform also provides the foundation for future innovation, automation, analytics and artificial intelligence capabilities.

Layer 6 – Line of Business Systems

Specialist systems remain critical for delivering statutory and operational responsibilities.

This includes systems supporting:

- Adults Social Care
- Children's Services
- Finance and Corporate Services
- Registrars
- Highways
- Planning, Housing and Assets
- Other specialist service functions

The roadmap does not assume wholesale replacement of these systems.

Instead, the focus is on:

- Maximising value from existing investment
- Improving integration and interoperability
- Removing duplication
- Aligning platforms to common standards
- Minimising bespoke customisation

These systems will operate as part of a connected enterprise architecture rather than as isolated technology silos.

Layer 7 – Workforce Enablement

Digital transformation is ultimately delivered through people.

The final layer of the operating model focuses on enabling staff, practitioners, managers and leaders with the tools, information and capabilities required to deliver services effectively.

This includes:

- Improved access to information
- Better reporting and decision support
- Workflow automation
- AI-assisted productivity tools
- Integrated customer and case information
- Modern collaboration capabilities

The goal is to reduce administrative burden and enable staff to focus more time on professional judgement, customer interaction and value-adding activities.

4.3 Data, Insight and Intelligence

Data is a strategic asset and a core enabler of the target operating model.

The Council's ambition is to move from fragmented information and retrospective reporting towards integrated insight that supports operational, tactical and strategic decision making.

Key outcomes include:

- A joined-up customer view
- Improved management information
- Better visibility of demand and performance
- Enhanced benefits tracking
- Population and service insight
- Demand forecasting and trend analysis
- Stronger evidence-based decision making

These capabilities will support service redesign, prioritisation and earlier intervention across the organisation.

Over time, the Council will establish the foundations for:

- Single View of the Customer
- Single View of the Child
- Predictive analytics
- Preventative service models
- Organisational performance management

4.4 Automation and Artificial Intelligence

Automation and artificial intelligence will be embedded across all layers of the operating model rather than deployed as standalone initiatives.

The objective is to improve customer experience, increase productivity and support better decision-making.

Priority areas include:

Customer experience

- Automated status updates and notifications
- Improved triage and routing
- Faster response and resolution

Workforce productivity

- Workflow automation
- Drafting and summarisation
- Reduced manual data processing
- Improved access to information

Operational effectiveness

- Demand identification and forecasting
- Performance monitoring
- Capacity planning
- Service optimisation

Decision support

- AI-assisted analysis and recommendations
- Identification of emerging risks and trends
- Improved insight for operational and strategic decisions

Automation and AI will be implemented in accordance with the Council's governance, security, ethical and data management frameworks.

The aim is not to replace professional judgement, but to free skilled staff to focus on complex work, customer interaction and improved outcomes.

4.5 Cyber Security, Privacy and Resilience by Design

Cyber security and resilience are fundamental components of the operating model.

All platforms and services will be designed and operated in accordance with secure-by-design principles.

This includes:

- Alignment to the Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Privacy by design
- Secure identity and access management
- Resilient infrastructure and recovery capability
- Monitoring, detection and response
- Data protection and compliance controls

This ensures that digital transformation reduces organisational risk while increasing operational resilience.

4.6 What This Means in Practice

The target operating model represents a fundamental shift in how the Council delivers services and manages digital investment.

Services will no longer develop isolated solutions or operate independently of the wider digital ecosystem.

Instead:

- Customer access will be delivered through joined-up channels
- Services will be connected through shared platforms and integration capabilities
- Data will support better operational and strategic decisions
- Automation and AI will reduce manual effort and improve productivity
- Investment will be prioritised against corporate outcomes and organisational value
- Workforce development and adoption will be embedded within transformation activity

Where services identify new requirements, they will be assessed against existing capabilities, aligned to the target architecture and prioritised through corporate governance processes.

4.7 Summary

The target operating model moves the Council from fragmented systems and service-specific delivery towards an integrated, customer-centred and intelligence-led organisation.

Services remain accountable for outcomes, but are enabled through shared platforms, integrated data, common standards and modern digital capabilities.

By 2030, the Council will operate through a connected digital ecosystem that improves customer experience, enables workforce productivity, strengthens decision-making and supports a preventative approach to public service delivery.

This operating model provides the foundation for the roadmap and delivery plan set out in the following section.

5. The Roadmap: What We Will Deliver to 2030

This roadmap sets out a phased and deliverable approach to digital transformation across the Council to 2030. It translates the target operating model into a realistic sequence of delivery, reflecting current service pressures, existing commitments, organisational capacity, financial constraints and the need to realise measurable benefits.

Delivery of each phase will progressively implement the target architecture, moving the Council from fragmented systems, inconsistent processes and reactive service models towards an integrated, customer-centred, workforce-enabled and data-led operating model.

The roadmap is intentionally phased to:

- Deliver early and visible improvements for residents, staff and services
- Establish the core platforms, integration and data foundations required for transformation
- Support service redesign across priority areas
- Improve workforce productivity and digital confidence
- Avoid over-commitment and unrealistic delivery expectations
- Ensure investment is sequenced, controlled and aligned to organisational value

This approach ensures delivery remains achievable and prioritised, rather than attempting to deliver all change simultaneously. (*Digital Roadmap Diagram - Page 68*)

5.1 Delivery Phasing Overview

Transformation will be delivered across four phases.

Phase	Focus	Outcome
Phase 1: Stabilise and Decide	Address immediate risks, establish baselines, confirm platform decisions and prepare the organisation for delivery	Clear direction, reduced risk, agreed priorities and delivery-ready foundations
Phase 2: Foundations and Early Value	Implement core customer, platform, integration, data and workforce capabilities	Visible improvements in access, demand management, productivity and customer experience
Phase 3: Scale and Transform	Extend platform use, embed redesigned service models and scale integration, automation and insight	Services operating in more joined-up, preventative and digitally enabled ways

Phase 4: Optimise and Prevent	Use data, automation, AI and continuous improvement to reduce demand and improve outcomes	A sustainable, intelligence-led operating model focused on prevention, productivity and long-term value

Each phase builds on the previous one. Progression will depend on clear decision-making, prioritisation, investment, service readiness and the Council's capacity to absorb and embed change.

5.2 Phase 1: Stabilise and Decide

The first phase establishes the conditions for successful transformation while delivering targeted early improvements in access, demand management, risk reduction and organisational readiness.

This phase focuses on confirming key platform decisions, establishing evidence-based baselines, initiating procurement, strengthening governance and preparing services and staff for future delivery.

Key Delivery Areas

5.2.1. Critical Platform Decisions and Procurement

The Council will confirm and progress the core platform decisions required to enable transformation.

This includes:

- Confirming the future CRM approach
- Confirming the direction for the contact centre platform
- Procuring CRM and CCaaS capability
- Procuring APIs and integration capability required to support the target architecture
- Completing option appraisal, market engagement, procurement and contract award
- Developing mobilisation plans for implementation in Phase 2

This will ensure that the Council has clear direction on the core platforms required to support customer access, case management, workflow, demand visibility and service coordination.

Procurement activity will be supported by the approved business case through the Business Transformation and Change Panel, ensuring that delivery can proceed in line with agreed funding and governance.

5.2.2. Customer and Service Baseline

A robust baseline is essential to demonstrate whether transformation is delivering the intended benefits.

Phase 1 will therefore establish the evidence base for future delivery, including:

- Current customer demand across priority channels and services
- Cost-to-serve across high-demand and high-cost processes
- Volumes of avoidable contact and repeat contact
- Current processing times, backlogs and failure demand
- Existing customer journeys and pain points
- Current reporting, data and performance limitations
- Baseline measures for benefits realisation

This will provide a clear starting point against which future improvements can be measured and will support evidence-based prioritisation throughout the roadmap.

5.2.3. Immediate Risk Management and System Stabilisation

The Council will address key lifecycle, resilience and operational risks across critical systems, particularly where these support statutory or high-risk services.

This includes:

- Stabilising priority systems
- Addressing known lifecycle and resilience issues
- Reducing operational and cyber risk ahead of wider transformation
- Ensuring existing platforms remain safe and supportable during transition

This activity is essential to ensure that transformation is built on stable foundations rather than adding further complexity to an already pressured environment.

5.2.4. Digital Front Door: Initial Deployment

Phase 1 will begin improving how residents access and interact with Council services.

This includes:

- Introducing priority service access through clearer digital routes
- Implementing initial triage and routing capability
- Improving consistency across “report, apply, pay, refer and track” journeys
- Identifying opportunities for customer status updates and proactive communication
- Testing approaches for improved customer visibility and self-service

This represents the first step towards a more joined-up customer experience and supports the shift towards earlier intervention and reduced avoidable demand.

5.2.5. Channel and Experience Integration Foundations

Phase 1 will establish the foundations for the first integration hub, focused on connecting customer-facing channels to the CRM and wider customer management capability.

This includes:

- Defining the channel and experience integration approach
- Establishing standards for routing, orchestration and customer interaction capture
- Confirming authentication and identity requirements
- Defining how customer contact will be captured, managed and monitored across channels
- Preparing for integration between entry points, CRM and customer communication channels

This ensures that new access routes do not become additional silos but operate as part of a joined-up customer experience.

5.2.6. Targeted Automation and AI Pilots

Automation and AI will be tested in controlled, practical and high-impact areas.

Initial pilots will focus on:

- High-volume and high-cost processes
- Routine administrative activity
- Assisted drafting and summarisation
- Triage and routing support
- Customer status updates and proactive notifications
- Insight to identify demand patterns and improvement opportunities

These pilots will be designed with clear measures of success, governance controls and a view to scaling where value is demonstrated.

The objective is not experimentation for its own sake. It is to identify where automation and AI can reduce demand, improve productivity and free skilled staff to focus on higher-value work.

5.2.7. Workforce and Change Readiness

Digital transformation will only succeed if staff, managers and leaders are ready and able to adopt new ways of working.

Phase 1 will therefore include:

- Digital skills and confidence assessment
- Change readiness assessment across priority services
- Leadership engagement on the target operating model
- Development of workforce and adoption plans aligned to the People Plan
- Identification of training, communications and support requirements
- Early engagement with managers, practitioners and frontline teams

This will ensure that transformation is delivered with services, not simply to services.

5.2.8. Architecture and Governance Alignment

Phase 1 will confirm the operating controls required to keep transformation aligned and deliverable.

This includes:

- Confirming the target architecture and platform model
- Establishing architectural standards and design principles
- Embedding the role of the Digital Design Authority
- Aligning the roadmap to Digital Transformation Board prioritisation and sequencing
- Confirming how new demand enters the corporate pipeline
- Defining the benefits measurement and reporting approach

This will ensure that future delivery is controlled, prioritised and aligned to organisational outcomes.

5.2.9 Phase 1 Outcomes

By the end of Phase 1, the Council will have:

Clear direction and momentum

- Key CRM and CCaaS decisions made
- Procurement completed and mobilisation planning underway
- Integration and API requirements defined
- Platform direction aligned to governance and funding

Reduced immediate risk

- Priority system risks identified and addressed
- Key lifecycle and resilience issues stabilised
- Stronger foundations for future delivery

Improved understanding of demand and cost

- Baselines established for customer demand, service demand and cost-to-serve
- High-volume and high-cost processes identified
- Benefits framework and measures agreed

Early improvements in access and demand handling

- Priority services available through clearer digital routes
- Initial triage and routing capability in place
- Early customer visibility and tracking opportunities identified

Early efficiency gains through automation

- Targeted automation and AI pilots delivered
- Reduced manual handling in selected processes
- Initial productivity improvements evidenced

Workforce and organisational readiness

- Digital skills and change readiness assessed
- Workforce development activity aligned to the People Plan
- Services engaged in future delivery and adoption planning

Delivery-ready foundations

- Governance, architecture and prioritisation embedded
- Platforms ready for implementation in Phase 2
- Roadmap delivery aligned to capacity, funding and service priorities

5.3 Phase 2: Foundations and Early Value

The second phase delivers the core building blocks of the target operating model and demonstrates early value for residents, staff and services.

The focus of this phase is to move from decision-making and mobilisation into implementation, ensuring that the Council begins to realise tangible improvements in access, demand management, productivity and service coordination.

Key Delivery Areas

5.3.1. Expanded Customer Access and Front Door Capability

The Council will expand digital front door capability across priority service journeys.

This includes:

- Improved online access to priority services
- Consistent "report, apply, pay, refer and track" journeys
- Improved self-service capability
- Assisted digital support for residents who need help
- Proactive customer updates and status visibility where appropriate
- Better routing to the right service or pathway at the first point of contact

This will improve customer experience while reducing avoidable contact and repeat enquiries.

5.3.2. Contact Centre Transformation

The Council will implement the contact centre platform and use it to improve demand visibility, channel management and customer routing.

This includes:

- Implementation of CCaaS capability
- Improved handling of voice, chat, messaging and digital contact
- Better visibility of demand across channels
- Improved routing based on need, urgency and service pathway
- Stronger performance reporting and management information

This will support a more consistent, measurable and managed approach to customer demand.

5.3.3. CRM Implementation and Customer Coordination

The CRM platform will begin to operate as the corporate coordination layer for managing customer interactions, cases and workflows.

This includes:

- Initial customer and case management capability
- Customer interaction history
- Workflow and triage
- Case tracking and status visibility
- Integration with priority access channels
- Reporting on customer demand and service performance

CRM implementation will focus on priority services where the benefits of improved coordination, visibility and workflow are greatest.

5.3.4. Integration and Data Foundations

Phase 2 will establish the first core integration and data foundations required to support the target architecture.

This includes:

- Implementing initial API and integration capability
- Connecting priority channels, CRM and selected line-of-business systems
- Improving data capture and reporting
- Establishing initial data quality and governance controls
- Supporting the development of single-view capabilities over time

This will reduce reliance on manual workarounds and support more consistent information flows across services.

5.3.5. Workforce Enablement and Adoption

Phase 2 will begin to embed new tools, skills and ways of working across priority services.

This includes:

- Digital skills development
- Training and adoption support for new platforms
- Support for managers and leaders to use data and insight
- Rollout of productivity and automation tools
- Change support for redesigned customer and service journeys

This phase is critical to ensuring that new technology is adopted effectively and delivers practical benefits in service delivery.

5.3.6. Early Automation and Productivity Improvements

Automation will be expanded beyond initial pilots into selected priority processes.

This includes:

- Automation of high-volume, repeatable tasks
- Reduction in manual data entry and duplication
- Workflow automation within CRM and service processes
- Use of AI-assisted tools for drafting, summarisation and information retrieval
- Improved staff productivity and reduced administrative burden

Automation activity will be prioritised where there is clear evidence of demand reduction, productivity improvement or service benefit.

5.3.7 Phase 2 Outcome

By the end of Phase 2, the Council will have visible improvements in access, customer experience, demand visibility and workforce productivity.

Residents will begin to experience clearer access routes, improved communication and better visibility of progress. Staff will begin to benefit from improved tools, reduced manual effort and better access to information. Services will have stronger foundations for redesign, integration and demand management.

5.4 Phase 3: Scale and Transform

The third phase focuses on scaling digital capability across services and embedding redesigned operating models.

By this stage, the Council will have established its core platforms, initial integrations, customer access improvements and data foundations. Phase 3 extends these capabilities across a wider range of services and uses them to support deeper transformation.

Key Delivery Areas

5.4.1. Expansion of Platform Usage

The CRM, CCaaS and digital front door capabilities will be extended across priority services.

This includes:

- Wider use of CRM for customer and case coordination
- Expansion of digital and assisted access routes
- Increased use of workflow, routing and triage
- Greater consistency of customer journeys across services
- Improved visibility of customer interactions across channels

The aim is to move from isolated service improvements to a more consistent corporate customer experience.

5.4.2. Enterprise Integration at Scale

The second integration hub will mature during this phase, connecting CRM, line-of-business systems and data platforms more consistently.

This includes:

- Wider use of API-first integration patterns
- Improved data flows between specialist systems
- Event-based integration where appropriate

- Improved synchronisation and master data management
- Stronger monitoring, audit and logging
- Reduced reliance on manual rekeying and point-to-point integration

This will allow services to continue using specialist systems while operating within a joined-up enterprise architecture.

5.4.3. Service Transformation at Scale

Priority service models will be redesigned and embedded using the capabilities established in earlier phases.

This includes:

- Adults pathways supported by prevention, triage, reablement and community-based support
- Children's transformation supported by digital front door, single-view capabilities and integrated workflows
- Improved coordination across corporate services
- Greater alignment between customer access, service processes and statutory responsibilities
- Reduction in duplication, hand-offs and avoidable contact

This phase is where the roadmap moves beyond platform implementation and into meaningful operating model change.

5.4.4. Single-View and Data-Led Capabilities

The Council will develop stronger single-view and intelligence capabilities to support service delivery and decision-making.

This includes:

- Improved customer interaction visibility
- Foundations for single view of the customer
- Foundations for single view of the child
- Better performance dashboards and management information
- Improved demand forecasting and trend analysis
- Stronger benefits tracking and outcome reporting

These capabilities will support earlier intervention, more effective prioritisation and improved organisational assurance.

5.4.5. Automation and AI Embedded Across Services

Automation and AI will be scaled across multiple services and workflows.

This includes:

- Automated routine transactions
- AI-assisted drafting, summarisation and decision support
- Customer updates and notifications
- Demand analysis and forecasting
- Workflow optimisation
- Reduction in administrative burden

The emphasis will remain on supporting staff, improving consistency and enabling better use of skilled workforce capacity.

5.4.6. Workforce Productivity and Culture Change

Phase 3 will embed digital ways of working more widely across the organisation.

This includes:

- Increased digital confidence across services
- Improved use of data by managers and leaders
- Greater adoption of standardised processes
- Service-led continuous improvement
- Stronger collaboration between ICT, services, data, change and organisational development teams

At this point, digital transformation should increasingly become part of everyday service improvement rather than a separate programme of activity.

5.4.7 Phase 3 Outcome

By the end of Phase 3, services will be operating in more redesigned, integrated and digitally enabled ways.

The Council will have stronger customer coordination, more mature integration between systems, improved data and insight, wider automation and a workforce increasingly supported by modern tools and digital ways of working.

5.5 Phase 4: Optimise and Prevent

The final phase focuses on optimisation, prevention and continuous improvement.

By this stage, the Council will have established the core digital, integration, data and workforce foundations required to operate in a more preventative and intelligence-led way.

The focus will shift from implementation to optimisation and sustained value.

Key Delivery Areas

5.5.1. Predictive and Preventative Services

The Council will make greater use of data and insight to identify demand, risk and need earlier.

This includes:

- Demand forecasting
- Early identification of emerging pressures
- Population and service insight
- Improved targeting of intervention and support
- Greater focus on prevention and long-term demand reduction

This supports the Council's ambition to move away from crisis-led intervention towards earlier, more proportionate and preventative support.

5.5.2. Intelligent and Optimised Services

Services will use data, automation and AI to continuously improve performance and outcomes.

This includes:

- Ongoing optimisation of workflows and processes
- AI-assisted analysis and decision support
- Automated routine transactions
- Improved performance management
- Continuous refinement of customer journeys
- Benefits realisation embedded into service management

The aim is to create a learning organisation where improvement is continuous and evidence led.

5.5.3. Empowered Customers

Customers will have greater control, visibility and confidence when interacting with the Council.

This includes:

- Improved tracking of requests, cases and service interactions
- More proactive updates and notifications
- Increased self-service where appropriate
- Reduced avoidable contact and repeat enquiries

- Clearer, more consistent experiences across channels

Digital services will continue to operate on the principle of digital by choice, human when it matters.

5.5.4. Enabled Workforce

Staff will be supported by mature digital tools, automation and insight.

This includes:

- Reduced routine administration
- Improved access to information
- Stronger digital confidence and capability
- More time focused on professional judgement, complex issues and customer outcomes
- Better tools for managers and leaders to understand performance, demand and capacity

The workforce benefit is central to the roadmap: transformation should make work better, not simply move existing pressures into new systems.

5.5.5. Mature Data, Integration and Governance

The Council will continue to mature its data, integration and governance capabilities.

This includes:

- Improved data quality and governance
- Expanded single-view capabilities
- Mature integration between priority systems
- Stronger audit, monitoring and assurance
- Continued alignment to cyber, privacy and compliance standards
- Ongoing rationalisation of duplication and technical debt

This ensures the digital estate remains sustainable, secure and capable of supporting future change.

5.5.6 Phase 4 Outcome

By the end of Phase 4, the Council will be operating through a more sustainable, preventative and data-enabled model.

Services will be increasingly informed by evidence, supported by automation and designed around customer need. Staff will have better tools and information, while leaders will have stronger insight to support decision-making, prioritisation and financial sustainability.

5.6 Transformation Outcomes by 2030

By 2030, successful delivery of the roadmap will result in measurable improvements for residents, staff, services and the organisation.

For residents, businesses, partners and professionals

- Simpler and more consistent access to services
- Improved ability to report, apply, pay, refer and track
- Greater visibility of progress and status
- Reduced need to repeat information
- Faster and more coordinated responses
- Continued access to human and assisted support where needed

For staff

- Reduced administrative burden
- Better access to information and insight
- More effective tools for managing work
- Greater digital confidence and capability
- Increased capacity to focus on complex and value-adding activity
- Improved collaboration across teams and services

For services

- Reduced avoidable demand and repeat contact
- Better triage, routing and prioritisation
- Improved coordination across pathways
- Greater use of automation and workflow
- Better performance information and demand insight
- Stronger ability to redesign services around prevention and outcomes

For the organisation

- Lower cost-to-serve across priority services
- Improved productivity and workforce capacity
- Stronger control of digital investment
- Reduced duplication and technical debt
- Improved cyber resilience and operational risk management
- Better evidence for financial planning, prioritisation and benefits realisation
- A more modern, integrated and sustainable operating model

5.7 Key Delivery Principles

The roadmap will be delivered in line with the following principles.

Prioritise high-impact services first

Delivery will focus first on areas with the greatest demand, financial pressure, statutory risk and resident impact.

Sequence delivery based on dependency and capacity

Transformation will be phased to avoid overloading services, ICT teams and enabling functions.

Optimise existing capability before new investment

Existing systems, contracts and platforms will be assessed and improved before new solutions are introduced.

Adopt before adapt

Standard platform capability will be used wherever possible. Customisation and bespoke development will only be undertaken where there is a clear statutory, operational or financial justification.

Deliver iteratively, not through large-scale “big bang” change

Delivery will focus on incremental, measurable improvement, with lessons applied as the roadmap progresses.

Align all delivery to the target architecture

New requirements must align to the agreed platform model, integration approach, data standards and governance framework.

Embed change and adoption from the start

Technology delivery must be accompanied by workforce engagement, training, communications and service redesign.

Measure benefits consistently

Benefits will be defined, baselined, tracked and evidenced throughout delivery.

Govern corporately, not locally

Prioritisation and sequencing will be managed through corporate governance to ensure activity delivers whole-organisation value rather than isolated service benefit.

5.8 Summary

This roadmap provides a deliverable path from strategy to implementation, balancing ambition with realism.

It ensures that:

- Transformation is phased, prioritised and achievable
- Early benefits are delivered while long-term capability is built
- Investment is focused on areas of greatest impact
- Customer experience, workforce productivity, data insight and service outcomes are improved together
- The Council moves towards a preventative, integrated and sustainable operating model

The roadmap does not simply implement technology. It establishes the conditions for a more modern, resilient, efficient and digitally enabled Council by 2030.

6. Dependencies, Constraints and Trade-offs

The delivery of this roadmap is dependent on a number of critical decisions, resources and constraints. These must be explicitly recognised and actively managed to ensure that transformation remains deliverable and aligned to organisational priorities.

This section sets out the key dependencies, the constraints within which delivery must operate, and the trade-offs that will be required.

6.1 Critical Dependencies

Successful delivery of the roadmap relies on the following:

Core platform decisions and procurement

- A clear decision on the CRM platform, which underpins corporate coordination and case management
- Procurement and mobilisation of both CRM and CCaaS platforms within Phase 1
- Timely contract award and implementation readiness to avoid delays to Phase 2 delivery

These are foundational dependencies; delays will directly impact the overall roadmap.

Funding and investment

Transformation at this scale cannot be delivered within existing budgets alone and will require targeted, prioritised investment.

The initial funding requirement for Phase 1 (including CRM, CCaaS and additional delivery capacity) is being progressed through a separate business case to the Business Transformation and Change Panel, in line with the Council's governance processes.

This roadmap establishes the strategic direction and sequencing of investment. Detailed costings and funding approvals will continue to be developed through individual business cases, including for integration capability, API licensing and further platform development as requirements become clear.

This ensures that investment decisions are phased, controlled and aligned to delivery maturity, rather than committed in advance of defined need.

Capacity and capability

Delivery of this roadmap will require additional capacity and specialist capability across ICT and services.

The current level of resourcing is not sufficient to deliver both business-as-usual activity and the scale of transformation set out in this roadmap. Without additional capacity, delivery will be slower, more fragmented and less likely to achieve the intended outcomes.

The most critical capability areas required are:

- **Integration Engineers**
  To design and deliver integration between platforms and systems, enabling joined-up services and data flows
- **Service Designers/Business Analysts**
  To redesign end-to-end service journeys, ensuring transformation reduces demand rather than digitising existing processes
- **Developers**
  To configure, implement and optimise core platforms (CRM, CCaaS, Digital Front Door)
- **Automation and Power Platform Specialists**
  To deliver workflow automation and low-code solutions that reduce manual effort and improve productivity
- **Project and Programme Management**
  To coordinate delivery across multiple platforms, services and dependencies, ensuring sequencing and governance are maintained

These roles may be delivered through a combination of internal recruitment, upskilling, apprenticeships and targeted external support, but a core level of internal capability will be required to ensure:

- Sustainable delivery over the life of the roadmap
- Reduced reliance on external suppliers
- Retention of knowledge and control of critical systems

Without this investment in capacity and capability, the pace and scale of transformation will be significantly constrained.

Service alignment and commitment

- Active engagement from Adults, Children’s and corporate services
- Alignment of service transformation programmes with the digital roadmap
- Willingness to adopt shared platforms and standardised approaches

Transformation will only succeed where it is jointly owned and delivered with services.

Governance and prioritisation discipline

- Strong Digital Transformation Board oversight, operating under delegated authority from Leadership Board
- Consistent application of Digital Design Authority standards
- A single, prioritised pipeline of work

Without this, delivery will become fragmented and benefits will not be realised at scale.

6.2 Key Constraints

Delivery must take place within a number of recognised constraints.

These include:

- Finite ICT, service and corporate capacity
- Existing infrastructure, cyber and BAU commitments
- Legacy technology and contractual limitations
- Procurement and regulatory requirements
- Financial constraints and affordability considerations
- Availability of specialist skills and expertise
- The organisation's ability to absorb and sustain change

In addition, customer expectations continue to evolve.

Residents increasingly expect:

- Online access to services
- Clear communication and transparency
- Status tracking and visibility
- Faster responses and resolution

Transformation must therefore balance long-term delivery objectives with increasing expectations from residents, businesses and partners.

These constraints mean that not all transformation activity can be delivered simultaneously and that prioritisation remains essential.

6.3 Trade-offs and Delivery Choices

To remain realistic and deliverable, the roadmap requires a number of explicit trade-offs.

Prioritisation Over Parallel Delivery

- High-impact areas will be prioritised first

- Lower-priority activity will be sequenced into later phases
- Capacity will be focused on areas of greatest organisational value

Standardisation Over Local Optimisation

- Shared platforms and common approaches will be adopted wherever possible
- Service-specific solutions will only be implemented where there is a clear and justified requirement

Optimisation Over Replacement

- Existing investment will be maximised before systems are replaced
- Replacement will only occur where a clear strategic or operational case exists

Phased Delivery Over Big-Bang Transformation

- Capabilities will be delivered incrementally
- Early value will be balanced with long-term capability building
- Risk will be managed through staged implementation

Controlled Innovation Over Unmanaged Experimentation

- Automation and AI will be deployed in high-value, governed use cases
- Innovation will be encouraged within an agreed governance framework
- Security, ethics and compliance will remain paramount

Adoption Over Deployment

- Technology implementation alone does not create value
- Services must have time and capacity to adopt, embed and realise change
- Delivery pace may be governed by organisational readiness rather than technical readiness

Corporate Direction Over Service Divergence

- Services retain ownership of outcomes
- Technology, data and architecture decisions must align to corporate standards
- Investment decisions must support whole-Council outcomes rather than isolated service benefit

6.4 Risks if Dependencies Are Not Met

If these dependencies are not addressed, the Council faces:

- Delays to platform implementation and service transformation
- Continued fragmentation of systems and customer experiences
- Reduced ability to manage demand and cost
- Increased operational and cyber risk
- Poor adoption of new capabilities
- Reduced workforce confidence and engagement
- Failure to realise productivity improvements
- Reduced customer satisfaction and trust
- Inability to establish more preventative service models
- Failure to realise the benefits identified within the Digital Strategy and this roadmap

These risks reinforce the need for sustained leadership, investment, governance and organisational commitment throughout delivery.

6.5 Summary

This roadmap is deliverable, but only where the Council maintains clear priorities, strong governance and sustained organisational commitment.

Successful delivery requires:

- Technology investment to be matched by organisational change
- Workforce capability to develop alongside digital capability
- Services to adopt common platforms and standards
- Leadership to maintain prioritisation discipline
- Data and information to be treated as strategic assets
- Transformation to be delivered corporately rather than in isolation

The greatest risk is not the complexity of the technology. It is the failure to align people, processes, culture, data and delivery around a common vision for transformation.

By recognising and actively managing these dependencies, constraints and trade-offs, the Council can deliver a realistic, controlled and sustainable transformation programme that achieves the outcomes set out in this roadmap.

7. Risks and Mitigation

Delivery of this roadmap carries a number of strategic, organisational, operational and technology-related risks.

The greatest risks to successful delivery are not purely technical. They relate to leadership commitment, organisational readiness, workforce adoption, governance discipline, data quality and the Council's ability to sustain transformation over multiple years.

These risks are recognised and will be actively managed through the Council's governance framework, including Leadership Board, the Digital Transformation Board and Digital Design Authority.

The table below summarises the principal risks and proposed mitigations.

7.1 Strategic Transformation Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Description	Impact	Mitigation
Insufficient leadership commitment and prioritisation	Competing organisational priorities reduce focus on transformation and delay key decisions.	Delayed delivery, fragmented investment, reduced benefits realisation and loss of momentum.	Strong Leadership Board sponsorship, delegated oversight through the Digital Transformation Board, clear accountability and regular reporting on progress, risks and benefits.
Failure to adopt new ways of working	New technology is implemented but services do not change behaviours, processes or operating models.	Reduced adoption, limited productivity gains and failure to realise intended benefits.	Workforce development, organisational change activity, leadership engagement, adoption planning and alignment to the People Plan.
Service misalignment or lack of ownership	Services do not fully align to shared platforms, standards or transformation priorities.	Continued fragmentation, reduced benefits and duplication of investment.	Early service involvement, co-design, clear ownership of outcomes and strong corporate governance.
Insufficient organisational capacity and capability	The Council lacks sufficient delivery, technical, change and transformation capability.	Slower delivery, increased reliance on suppliers and reduced transformation impact.	Targeted investment in specialist capability, workforce planning, portfolio management and blended internal/external delivery models.

Funding constraints	Funding is insufficient to support platforms, integration, workforce capability and delivery requirements.	Delays, reduced scope or inability to deliver planned outcomes.	Phased investment, robust business cases, benefits-led prioritisation and ongoing financial governance.

7.2 Data, Information and Technology Risks

Risk	Description	Impact	Mitigation
Poor data quality and governance	Inaccurate, incomplete or inconsistent data limits the effectiveness of reporting, automation, AI and decision-making.	Reduced confidence in information, poor decisions and lower value from digital investment.	Data ownership, governance frameworks, data standards, stewardship responsibilities and continuous improvement of data quality.
Legacy system constraints	Existing systems limit integration, process redesign or service transformation opportunities.	Increased complexity, higher costs and slower delivery.	Optimisation-first approach, structured integration strategy and targeted replacement where justified.
Delay to core platform procurement and implementation	Delays in procurement or mobilisation of CRM, CCaaS or integration capability affect overall sequencing.	Delays to roadmap delivery and associated benefits.	Defined decision timelines, prioritised procurement, clear ownership and escalation routes.
Cyber security and resilience risk	Increased digital dependency creates greater exposure to cyber threats, service disruption or data loss.	Operational disruption, reputational damage and regulatory risk.	Cyber security embedded by design, alignment to CAF, strengthened monitoring, resilience planning and incident response capability.
Uncontrolled or inappropriate use of AI and automation	AI is deployed without sufficient governance, oversight, quality assurance or transparency.	Data, compliance, reputational and decision-quality risks.	Ethical AI governance, human oversight, prioritised use cases, security controls and robust assurance processes.

7.3 Customer and Service Risks

Risk	Description	Impact	Mitigation
Failure to improve customer experience	Technology investment does not deliver simpler journeys, better visibility or improved service experience.	Continued avoidable demand, reduced satisfaction and lower confidence in transformation activity.	Service design, customer research, journey mapping, performance monitoring and regular customer feedback.
Failure to reduce demand and cost-to-serve	Transformation activity is delivered but does not materially reduce demand or improve efficiency.	Reduced return on investment and ongoing financial pressure.	Benefits-led prioritisation, demand analysis, automation, service redesign and preventative approaches.
Customer expectations exceed delivery pace	Residents expect faster improvements than can realistically be delivered within available resources.	Reduced confidence, increased complaints and reputational risk.	Clear communications, phased delivery and transparent reporting on progress and outcomes.
Over-commitment and delivery overload	Attempting to deliver too many initiatives simultaneously exceeds organisational capacity.	Delayed projects, reduced quality and lower adoption.	Strict prioritisation, phased delivery, portfolio management and active capacity planning.

7.4 Benefits Realisation Risks

Risk	Description	Impact	Mitigation
Benefits are not realised or evidenced	Transformation activity is delivered, but anticipated benefits cannot be demonstrated or sustained.	Reduced confidence, future funding challenges and reduced organisational support.	Establish baselines, define benefit profiles, assign ownership, embed benefits tracking and regularly review outcomes through governance structures.
Poor adoption of new capabilities	Staff and services underutilise platforms, automation or digital tools.	Lower productivity gains and reduced value from investment.	Training, communications, change support, leadership engagement and continuous improvement activity.
Workforce capability does not keep pace with transformation	Skills, confidence and organisational capability develop more slowly than planned.	Reduced effectiveness of new technologies and slower adoption.	Workforce development plans, digital skills investment, mentoring and ongoing learning support.

7.5 Risk Management Approach

Risk management will be embedded throughout delivery of the roadmap.

This includes:

- Regular review through the Digital Transformation Board
- Escalation of strategic risks through Leadership Board and portfolio governance
- Ongoing monitoring of programme, operational and technology risks
- Alignment with corporate risk management processes
- Routine review of dependencies, assumptions and emerging risks
- Monitoring of mitigation effectiveness and delivery confidence

Risks will be reviewed throughout each phase of the roadmap and adjusted as delivery maturity increases and circumstances change.

7.6 Summary

The primary risk is not implementing technology. The primary risk is failing to sustain organisational transformation.

Successful delivery depends on maintaining:

- Strong leadership commitment
- Workforce engagement and adoption
- Corporate prioritisation and governance discipline
- Investment in capability and organisational change
- Effective use of data and information
- Alignment between services, technology and organisational outcomes

Where these conditions are maintained, the risks identified within this roadmap remain manageable and proportionate to the benefits that transformation can deliver.

This risk framework provides the basis for managing uncertainty while maintaining delivery confidence and ensuring that transformation remains focused on delivering measurable outcomes for residents, staff, services and the wider organisation.

8. Governance and Delivery Model

Delivery of this roadmap requires clear, consistent and corporate governance, supported by a delivery model that brings together services, digital, data, organisational change and workforce development.

This is not a technology programme. It is a long-term organisational transformation programme enabled through digital, data, automation and service redesign.

Governance must therefore ensure alignment between:

- Customer outcomes
- Service transformation
- Workforce transformation
- Financial sustainability
- Digital delivery
- Data and technology investment

The governance model is designed to ensure that technology investment translates into measurable organisational outcomes and that transformation remains aligned to corporate priorities throughout delivery.

8.1 Governance Framework

Digital transformation will be delivered through a single integrated governance model that aligns organisational priorities, service transformation, workforce development and digital delivery.

The framework provides:

- Strategic direction and oversight
- Prioritisation and sequencing
- Design and architecture control
- Benefits realisation and performance management
- Risk and dependency management
- Assurance and accountability

8.1.1 Strategic Oversight and Assurance

Improvement Board

The Improvement Board provides external challenge, scrutiny and assurance.

Its role is to:

- Review progress against transformation objectives
- Provide independent assurance
- Challenge delivery performance
- Ensure alignment to the Council's wider improvement ambitions

Leadership Board

Leadership Board retains ultimate accountability for organisational transformation and major investment decisions.

Its responsibilities include:

- Setting strategic direction
- Approving major investment decisions
- Managing strategic risks and dependencies
- Ensuring alignment with corporate priorities, the Improvement Plan and the Medium-Term Financial Plan
- Sponsoring organisational transformation

Leadership Board has delegated authority to the Digital Transformation Board (DTB) for the prioritisation, sequencing and oversight of digital transformation activity.

8.1.2 Portfolio and Programme Governance

Support and Enabled Workforce Portfolio Board

The Portfolio Board provides executive oversight of delivery activity within the portfolio.

Responsibilities include:

- Portfolio performance
- Programme coordination
- Dependency management
- Benefits monitoring
- Risk escalation
- Resource and capacity planning

The Board ensures transformation remains aligned to organisational priorities and portfolio outcomes.

Digital Transformation Board (DTB)

The Digital Transformation Board is the primary decision-making body for digital transformation prioritisation, sequencing and governance.

Operating under delegated authority from Leadership Board, DTB is responsible for:

- Setting priorities and delivery sequencing
- Owning the corporate digital pipeline
- Managing capacity and competing demand
- Aligning investment to strategic outcomes
- Approving roadmap delivery priorities
- Monitoring programme performance
- Managing transformation risks and dependencies
- Providing delivery assurance

8.1.3 Benefits and Outcomes Governance

DTB is also responsible for ensuring transformation remains focused on outcomes rather than activity.

This includes:

- Approving benefit profiles and success measures
- Monitoring benefits realisation
- Reviewing customer, workforce and organisational outcomes
- Challenging underperforming initiatives
- Ensuring investment continues to deliver value

8.1.4 Organisational Change and Adoption Governance

DTB will oversee the organisational dependencies required to support successful delivery, including:

- Workforce readiness
- Adoption planning
- Change management activity
- Stakeholder engagement
- Communications and awareness
- Alignment to the People Plan
- Organisational development dependencies

This ensures that the governance framework focuses on adoption and behavioural change as well as technology delivery.

8.1.5 Architecture, Data and Design Governance

Digital Design Authority (DDA)

The Digital Design Authority provides enterprise design, architecture and technology oversight.

The DDA is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the target operating model and ensuring that all initiatives align to agreed standards and principles.

Responsibilities include:

- Owning and maintaining the target architecture
- Maintaining the platform model
- Defining integration standards
- Defining data standards and governance requirements
- Approving solution designs and technical approaches
- Promoting reuse of corporate capabilities
- Ensuring consistency of customer experience
- Enforcing interoperability, security and design standards
- Preventing duplication and unnecessary customisation
- Providing architecture assurance

No digital solution should proceed without alignment to the agreed architecture, platform principles and governance framework.

8.1.6 Service and ICT Leadership

Enabling Services Leadership Team (ESLT)

ESLT provides strategic leadership and coordination across enabling services.

Responsibilities include:

- Aligning delivery to corporate objectives
- Managing cross-cutting risks and dependencies
- Supporting organisational change activity
- Ensuring workforce and service readiness

Automation and Technology Board

The Automation and Technology Board provides operational leadership and governance for technology and digital services.

Responsibilities include:

- ICT service performance
- Technology delivery
- Workforce and resource planning
- Operational risks and issues
- Architectural implementation
- Technical oversight and coordination

The Board ensures that technology delivery remains aligned to the roadmap and wider organisational priorities.

8.2 Delivery Model

The roadmap will be delivered through a blended, service-led operating model combining central digital capability, service ownership and organisational change support.

Transformation is delivered through services, enabled by digital capability, not delivered to services.

8.2.1. Corporate Digital, Data and Technology Function

The Corporate Digital, Data and Technology function will:

- Deliver core platforms including CRM, CCaaS and Digital Front Door capabilities
- Provide architecture, integration, cyber security and data expertise
- Enable automation and AI deployment at scale
- Maintain standards, controls and assurance
- Operate and continuously improve shared platforms

This capability provides the digital backbone required to support transformation across the organisation.

8.2.2. Services

Services will:

- Own service outcomes
- Own benefits realisation
- Define business requirements and priorities
- Lead operational and behavioural change
- Support adoption of new capabilities
- Redesign services and customer journeys
- Work collaboratively with digital and transformation teams

Services remain accountable for outcomes and benefits.

Digital transformation succeeds only when service transformation succeeds.

8.2.3. Integrated Delivery Teams

Delivery will be undertaken through multidisciplinary teams bringing together:

- Service expertise
- Digital and technical specialists

- Data and insight capability
- Automation and AI specialists
- Architecture and integration expertise
- Project and programme management capability

This ensures solutions are:

- Grounded in service need
- Technically robust
- Scalable and reusable
- Focused on measurable outcomes

8.2.4. Change, Adoption and Workforce Development

Successful transformation requires dedicated organisational change support.

This capability will provide:

- Communications and engagement
- Stakeholder management
- Training and learning support
- Change management
- Adoption planning
- Benefits realisation support
- Workforce development activity

This ensures that technology implementation results in sustained organisational change.

8.3 Prioritisation and Pipeline Management

All transformation demand will be managed through a single corporately governed pipeline.

The Digital Transformation Board will be responsible for prioritisation and sequencing across the organisation.

This ensures that:

- Activity aligns to corporate priorities
- Resources are directed towards highest-value activity
- Capacity constraints are managed transparently
- Dependencies are understood and sequenced appropriately
- Duplicate initiatives are avoided

Not all demand can be delivered simultaneously.

Prioritisation is therefore essential.

8.3.1 Prioritisation Criteria

Requests for investment and delivery will be assessed against agreed criteria, including:

- Contribution to customer outcomes
- Demand reduction potential
- Financial impact and affordability
- Workforce productivity improvements
- Statutory and regulatory risk
- Strategic alignment
- Delivery feasibility and readiness
- Benefits realisation potential

This provides a transparent and consistent basis for decision-making.

8.4 Role of External Partners

External suppliers and delivery partners will be used selectively to:

- Provide specialist expertise
- Accelerate delivery
- Support platform implementation
- Augment internal capacity where required

However:

- Core capability and organisational knowledge will be retained internally
- Transformation will not become dependent on external suppliers
- All externally delivered activity must align to corporate governance, architecture and standards

The long-term objective is to build sustainable internal capability while using external support strategically where it provides value.

8.5 Assurance and Reporting

Transformation activity will be subject to regular monitoring, reporting and assurance.

Reporting will include:

Delivery Performance

- Roadmap milestones and progress
- Programme status
- Risks and issues

- Dependency management

Benefits and Outcomes

- Benefits realisation
- Customer outcomes
- Workforce outcomes
- Demand reduction performance
- Productivity improvements

Financial Assurance

- Investment performance
- Budget management
- Financial benefits and efficiencies

Governance and Compliance

- Architecture compliance
- Risk management
- Cyber and data governance
- Delivery assurance activity

This ensures that Leadership Board, Members, DTB and the Improvement Board maintain clear visibility of progress, delivery confidence and realised value.

8.6 Summary

This governance and delivery model ensures that transformation remains aligned to organisational priorities, customer outcomes and financial sustainability.

It provides:

- Clear accountability and delegated decision-making
- Strong architecture, data and design governance
- Explicit governance of benefits, adoption and organisational change
- Alignment between services, workforce transformation and digital delivery
- Transparent prioritisation and investment control
- Robust assurance and reporting arrangements

The model is designed to ensure that technology investment translates into meaningful and sustained organisational change, enabling the Council to deliver improved outcomes for residents, services and staff while maintaining appropriate control, accountability and value for money.

9. Benefits and Success Measures

This roadmap is designed to deliver measurable improvements in customer experience, workforce productivity, service delivery, organisational resilience and financial sustainability.

It is not a technology programme. It is a benefits-led transformation programme where investment in digital, data, automation and service redesign is expected to deliver clear and measurable outcomes for residents, staff, services and the wider organisation.

Success will not be measured by the volume of technology delivered. It will be measured by the extent to which the Council creates simpler services, improves outcomes, reduces unnecessary demand and becomes more sustainable, resilient and capable of meeting future challenges.

9.1 Benefits Framework

All activity within the roadmap will contribute to a common set of transformation benefits.

These benefits are grouped into four domains which reflect the outcomes the Council is seeking to achieve.

9.1.1 Customer Benefits

The roadmap will improve how residents, businesses, partners and professionals interact with the Council.

Expected Benefits

- Simpler and more consistent access to services
- Reduced need to repeat information
- Improved customer visibility and transparency
- Ability to track requests, cases and service interactions where appropriate
- Improved communication and proactive updates
- Reduced avoidable contact and failure demand
- Improved customer confidence and satisfaction

These benefits support the Council's ambition to provide more accessible, joined-up and customer-focused services.

9.1.2 Workforce Benefits

Digital transformation must improve the experience of staff as well as customers.

Expected Benefits

- Reduced administrative burden
- Increased automation of routine and repeatable activities
- Improved access to information and insight
- Greater workforce productivity and capacity
- Better tools for managing cases, workflows and customer interactions
- Increased digital confidence and capability
- Improved collaboration across teams and services
- More time focused on professional judgement, customer interaction and value-adding work

These benefits support the Council's People Plan and help ensure that staff are equipped to operate effectively within a modern, digitally enabled organisation.

9.1.3 Service Benefits

The roadmap supports service redesign and the shift towards prevention, earlier intervention and improved operational effectiveness.

Expected Benefits

- Reduced avoidable demand and repeat contact
- Faster response and resolution times
- Improved triage, routing and prioritisation
- Better coordination across services and partners
- Improved visibility of service performance
- Greater consistency of service delivery
- Improved ability to redesign services around prevention and outcomes
- Increased use of automation to improve efficiency and capacity

These benefits enable services to meet increasing demand while maintaining quality and effectiveness.

9.1.4 Organisational Benefits

The roadmap will strengthen the Council's ability to manage performance, investment, risk and future demand.

Expected Benefits

- Lower overall cost-to-serve across priority services
- Improved use of data, reporting and performance information
- Better decision-making supported by insight and evidence
- Improved forecasting and understanding of demand
- Reduced duplication of systems and processes
- Improved governance of digital and technology investment
- Greater cyber resilience and operational resilience

- Increased organisational digital maturity
- Stronger culture of continuous improvement

These benefits support long-term financial sustainability and organisational resilience.

9.2 Success Measures

Success will be monitored through a balanced set of customer, workforce, service and organisational measures.

The objective is to demonstrate outcomes rather than simply report activity.

Customer Measures

Examples include:

- Customer satisfaction
- Reduction in repeat contact
- Reduction in avoidable contact
- Increased digital uptake
- Improved use of self-service channels
- Customer visibility and tracking adoption
- Resolution at first point of contact
- Customer journey completion rates

These measures will help assess whether the roadmap is improving the customer experience.

Workforce Measures

Examples include:

- Reduction in manual processing activity
- Workforce productivity improvements
- Adoption of digital and automation tools
- Digital confidence and capability measures
- Time released through automation
- Reduction in administrative effort
- Staff satisfaction with digital tools and processes

These measures will demonstrate whether transformation is improving how staff work.

Service Measures

Examples include:

- Reduction in processing times

- Reduction in service backlogs
- Reduction in failure demand
- Improved workflow efficiency
- Increased automation of routine processes
- Earlier intervention outcomes
- Demand reduction in targeted service areas

These measures assess whether transformation is improving service effectiveness and efficiency.

Organisational Measures

Examples include:

- Cost-to-serve reduction
- Delivery of approved benefits
- Reduction in technology-related risks
- Cyber maturity improvement
- Reduction in duplicated systems or processes
- Improvement in reporting and management information capability
- Delivery of roadmap milestones and planned outcomes

These measures demonstrate whether the Council is achieving wider organisational objectives.

9.3 Benefits Realisation Approach

Benefits realisation will be embedded throughout delivery of the roadmap.

Benefits are not something that happen after implementation; they are an integral part of planning, investment, delivery and operational management.

For every major initiative:

- Expected benefits will be defined at the outset
- Baseline measures will be established
- Benefits will be quantified wherever possible
- Benefit owners will be identified within services
- Delivery plans will include benefit realisation activities
- Progress will be monitored through governance arrangements

Benefits remain owned by services, supported by digital and transformation teams.

This ensures that accountability for outcomes sits with those responsible for delivering service improvement.

Governance of Benefits

The Digital Transformation Board will:

- Approve benefit profiles
- Review benefits performance
- Monitor delivery against expected outcomes
- Challenge underperforming initiatives
- Ensure investment remains aligned to organisational priorities

Benefits will be reported alongside delivery progress, risks and financial performance.

This ensures that transformation remains focused on outcomes rather than activity.

9.4 Financial Sustainability and Value for Money

The roadmap directly supports the Council's financial sustainability objectives.

Benefits will be realised through a combination of:

- Demand reduction
- Earlier intervention and prevention
- Increased workforce productivity
- Improved automation and self-service
- Reduced duplication and inefficiency
- Better use of existing technology investment
- Avoidance of future technology and operational costs

The objective is not solely to generate savings.

The roadmap is designed to create a more sustainable operating model by improving productivity, reducing avoidable demand, increasing organisational capacity and enabling services to respond more effectively to future pressures.

Investment will continue to be managed through approved governance arrangements and business cases, ensuring that expenditure remains proportionate, justified and aligned to demonstrable outcomes.

9.5 Benefits by Phase

Benefits will be realised progressively throughout delivery of the roadmap.

Phase 1 – Stabilise and Decide

- Baselines established

- Governance strengthened
- Early access improvements delivered
- Initial demand visibility achieved
- Early automation and productivity gains identified

Phase 2 – Foundations and Early Value

- Improved customer access and communication
- Better demand visibility and reporting
- Initial customer tracking capability
- Increased workforce productivity
- Early automation benefits realised

Phase 3 – Scale and Transform

- Measurable reductions in demand and processing effort
- Improved service integration and coordination
- Expanded automation and workflow efficiency
- Improved customer experience and workforce productivity
- Data-driven service management and reporting

Phase 4 – Optimise and Prevent

- Predictive and preventative service models operating at scale
- Mature automation and AI capability
- Improved demand forecasting and insight
- Sustained productivity improvements
- Long-term reduction in demand and cost-to-serve

This phased approach ensures that value is realised throughout the roadmap rather than deferred to the end of delivery.

9.6 What Success Looks Like in 2030

Successful delivery of this roadmap will result in:

For Residents

- Simpler access to services
- Greater transparency and visibility
- Faster and more joined-up service experiences
- Reduced need to repeat information

For Staff

- Better digital tools and information
- Less time spent on administration
- Increased productivity and capacity
- Greater confidence in using digital, data and automation

For Services

- Reduced demand and improved efficiency
- Better use of information and insight
- More preventative and outcome-focused delivery models
- Improved coordination across teams and partners

For the Organisation

- Lower cost-to-serve
- Improved financial sustainability
- Stronger digital maturity
- Reduced operational and cyber risk
- Better evidence for decision-making
- A modern, integrated and resilient operating model

9.7 Summary

This roadmap is designed to deliver real and measurable improvements for residents, staff, services and the organisation.

Success will not be measured by the number of systems implemented, integrations completed or technologies deployed.

Success will be measured by whether residents experience simpler services, staff gain more time for value-adding activity, services become more efficient and preventative, and the Council becomes more financially sustainable, resilient and capable of meeting future demand.

By focusing on outcomes rather than activity, this roadmap provides a clear framework for ensuring that digital transformation delivers lasting organisational value and improved outcomes for the communities the Council serves.

Shropshire Council

DIGITAL ROADMAP 2026–2030

Creating a Connected, Preventative and Data-Enabled Council

Transforming services. Empowering people. Improving outcomes.

OUR CONNECTED OPERATING MODEL		PHASE 1: STABILISE & DECIDE 2026–27	PHASE 2: FOUNDATIONS & EARLY VALUE 2027–28	PHASE 3: SCALE & TRANSFORM 2028–29	PHASE 4: OPTIMISE & PREVENT 2029–30
CUSTOMERS & PARTNERS	At the centre of everything we do	• Baseline customer journeys • Initial access improvements • Communication & engagement plan	• Expanded digital access • Case tracking (initial) • Proactive updates pilot	• Joined-up journeys across services • End-to-end visibility • Reduced repeat contact	• End-to-end digital visibility • Proactive, personalised engagement • High satisfaction & trust
MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS	Digital, phone, email, assisted, partner and face-to-face	• Prioritise channels • Triage & routing foundations • Integration Hub 1 started	• Digital Front Door enhanced • CCaaS platform live • Consistent channel experience	• Channel & experience integration at scale • Seamless cross-channel journeys	• Fully optimised channel mix • AI-assisted routing & support • Continuous improvement
CRM PLATFORM	One customer view, coordination and case management	• CRM decision & procurement • Requirements & design • Governance & benefits defined	• CRM platform live (initial services) • Case management & workflow • Customer tracking capability	• CRM operating as corporate coordination layer • Cross-service case management	• Predictive insight in CRM • AI-assisted case management • Continuous optimisation
INTEGRATION PLATFORM	Connecting systems, services and processes	• Integration strategy • API & standards defined • Core integration design	• Initial API platform live • Priority system integrations • Data flows established	• Enterprise integration at scale • API-first approach • Data consistency & quality	• Event-driven integration • Real-time data flow • Advanced orchestration
BUSINESS SYSTEMS	Supporting statutory and operational delivery	• System review & risk assessment • Optimise existing investment • Stabilisation activity	• Key system integrations • Process improvements • Reduce duplication	• Wider system alignment & reuse • Integrated operations • Reduced technical debt	• Modern, rationalised estate • Continuous optimisation • Lower support cost
ENABLED WORKFORCE	Skilled, empowered and data-enabled staff	• Skills & readiness assessment • Change readiness • Workforce & adoption plan	• Training & digital skills • New tools & productivity • Adoption support	• Digital ways of working embedded • Increased productivity • Collaboration tools in use	• High digital confidence • Administration largely automated • Staff focused on outcomes
DATA & INSIGHT	Reporting, forecasting and better decisions	• Data assessment & baselines • Governance & ownership • Reporting foundations	• Core reporting live • Demand visibility • Data quality improvement	• Single view foundations • Demand forecasting • Performance dashboards	• Predictive analytics • Real-time insight • Data-driven decision making
AUTOMATION & AI	Productivity, prevention and continuous improvement	• High-impact opportunities • AI & automation pilots • Governance & ethical framework	• Automate priority processes • AI tools for staff • Productivity gains realised	• Automation across services • AI-assisted decision support • Efficiency at scale	• AI embedded in workflows • Preventative, predictive models • Continuous improvement

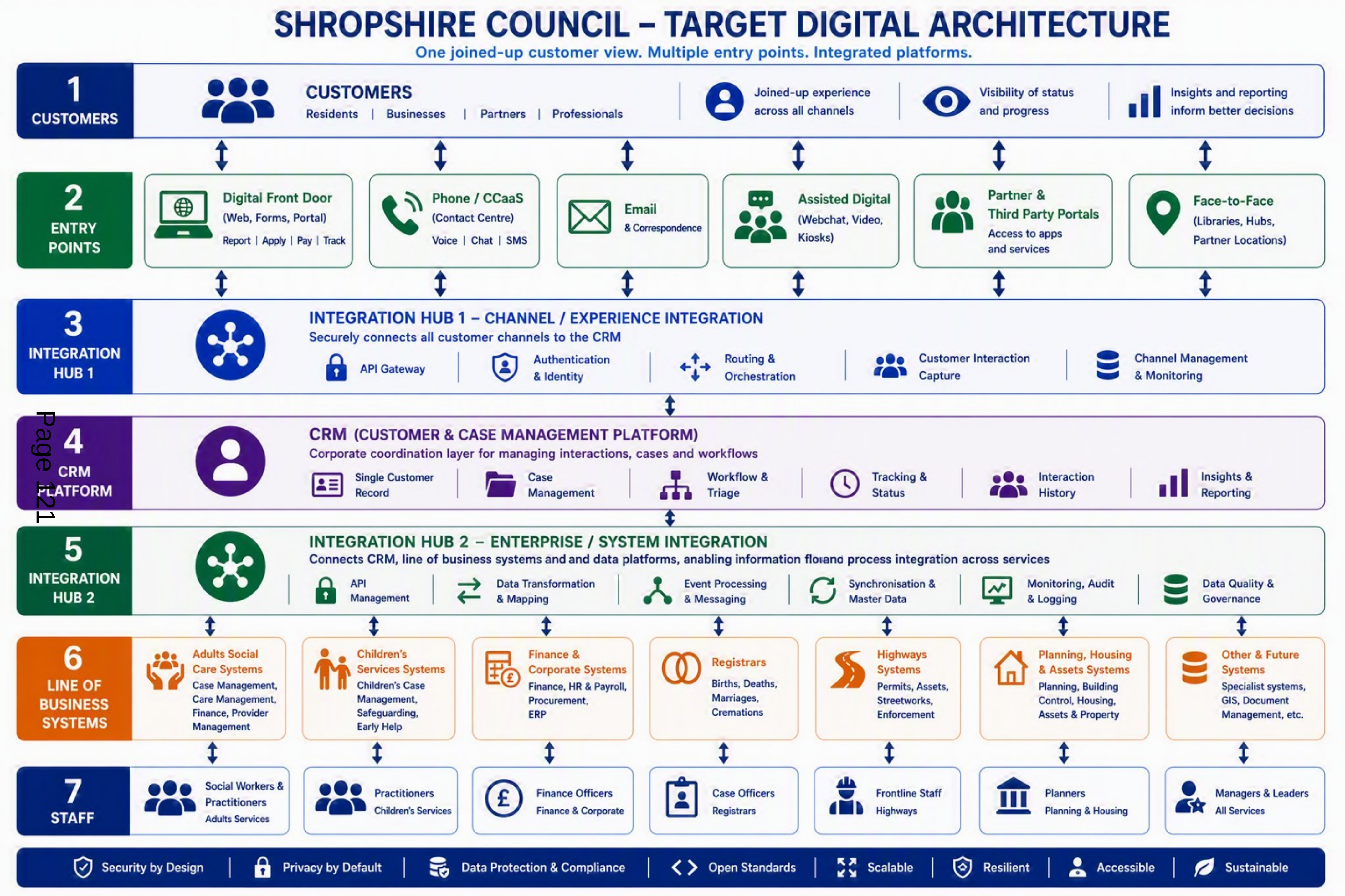
BY 2030 WE WILL ACHIEVE

- Simpler and more joined-up services
- Greater visibility and transparency for customers
- Reduced demand and lower cost-to-serve
- Improved workforce productivity and experience
- Better decisions through data and insight
- Stronger prevention and earlier intervention
- Secure, resilient and future-ready digital foundations

OUR ENABLERS (ACROSS ALL PHASES)

- Cyber secure and resilient by design
- People powered – skills, change and adoption
- Ethical and responsible use of data and AI
- Partnerships and community-led approach
- Value for money and sustainable investment
- Data as a strategic asset

Working together to build a digitally enabled Council that improves outcomes for all


SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL – TARGET DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE
One joined-up customer view. Multiple entry points. Integrated platforms.
1 CUSTOMERS
CUSTOMERS
Residents | Businesses | Partners | Professionals
Joined-up experience across all channels
Visibility of status and progress
Insights and reporting inform better decisions
2 ENTRY POINTS
Digital Front Door (Web, Forms, Portal)
Report | Apply | Pay | Track
Phone / CCaaS (Contact Centre)
Voice | Chat | SMS
Email & Correspondence
Assisted Digital (Webchat, Video, Kiosks)
Partner & Third Party Portals
Access to apps and services
Face-to-Face (Libraries, Hubs, Partner Locations)
3 INTEGRATION HUB 1
INTEGRATION HUB 1 – CHANNEL / EXPERIENCE INTEGRATION
Securely connects all customer channels to the CRM
API Gateway
Authentication & Identity
Routing & Orchestration
Customer Interaction Capture
Channel Management & Monitoring
4 CRM PLATFORM
CRM (CUSTOMER & CASE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM)
Corporate coordination layer for managing interactions, cases and workflows
Single Customer Record
Case Management
Workflow & Triage
Tracking & Status
Interaction History
Insights & Reporting
5 INTEGRATION HUB 2
INTEGRATION HUB 2 – ENTERPRISE / SYSTEM INTEGRATION
Connects CRM, line of business systems and and data platforms, anabling information floand process integration across services
API Management
Data Transformation & Mapping
Event Processing & Messaging
Synchronisation & Master Data
Monitoring, Audit & Logging
Data Quality & Governance
6 LINE OF BUSINESS SYSTEMS
Adults Social Care Systems
Case Management, Care Management, Finance, Provider Management
Children's Services Systems
Children's Case Management, Safeguarding, Early Help
Finance & Corporate Systems
Finance, HR & Payroll, Procurement, ERP
Registrars
Births, Deaths, Marriages, Cremations
Highways Systems
Permits, Assets, Streetworks, Enforcement
Planning, Housing & Assets Systems
Planning, Building Control, Housing, Assets & Property
Other & Future Systems
Specialist systems, GIS, Document Management, etc.
7 STAFF
Social Workers & Practitioners
Adults Services
Practitioners
Children's Services
Finance Officers
Finance & Corporate
Case Officers
Registrars
Frontline Staff
Highways
Planners
Planning & Housing
Managers & Leaders
All Services
Security by Design | Privacy by Default | Data Protection & Compliance | Open Standards | Scalable | Resilient | Accessible | Sustainable

This page is intentionally left blank

Shropshire Council

DIGITAL ROADMAP 2026–2030

Creating a Connected, Preventative and Data-Enabled Council

Transforming services. Empowering people. Improving outcomes.

OUR CONNECTED OPERATING MODEL		PHASE 1: STABILISE & DECIDE 2026–27	PHASE 2: FOUNDATIONS & EARLY VALUE 2027–28	PHASE 3: SCALE & TRANSFORM 2028–29	PHASE 4: OPTIMISE & PREVENT 2029–30
CUSTOMERS & PARTNERS	At the centre of everything we do	• Baseline customer journeys • Initial access improvements • Communication & engagement plan	• Expanded digital access • Case tracking (initial) • Proactive updates pilot	• Joined-up journeys across services • End-to-end visibility • Reduced repeat contact	• End-to-end digital visibility • Proactive, personalised engagement • High satisfaction & trust
MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS	Digital, phone, email, assisted, partner and face-to-face	• Prioritise channels • Triage & routing foundations • Integration Hub 1 started	• Digital Front Door enhanced • CCaaS platform live • Consistent channel experience	• Channel & experience integration at scale • Seamless cross-channel journeys	• Fully optimised channel mix • AI-assisted routing & support • Continuous improvement
CRM PLATFORM	One customer view, coordination and case management	• CRM decision & procurement • Requirements & design • Governance & benefits defined	• CRM platform live (initial services) • Case management & workflow • Customer tracking capability	• CRM operating as corporate coordination layer • Cross-service case management	• Predictive insight in CRM • AI-assisted case management • Continuous optimisation
INTEGRATION PLATFORM	Connecting systems, services and processes	• Integration strategy • API & standards defined • Core integration design	• Initial API platform live • Priority system integrations • Data flows established	• Enterprise integration at scale • API-first approach • Data consistency & quality	• Event-driven integration • Real-time data flow • Advanced orchestration
BUSINESS SYSTEMS	Supporting statutory and operational delivery	• System review & risk assessment • Optimise existing investment • Stabilisation activity	• Key system integrations • Process improvements • Reduce duplication	• Wider system alignment & reuse • Integrated operations • Reduced technical debt	• Modern, rationalised estate • Continuous optimisation • Lower support cost
ENABLED WORKFORCE	Skilled, empowered and data-enabled staff	• Skills & readiness assessment • Change readiness • Workforce & adoption plan	• Training & digital skills • New tools & productivity • Adoption support	• Digital ways of working embedded • Increased productivity • Collaboration tools in use	• High digital confidence • Administration largely automated • Staff focused on outcomes
DATA & INSIGHT	Reporting, forecasting and better decisions	• Data assessment & baselines • Governance & ownership • Reporting foundations	• Core reporting live • Demand visibility • Data quality improvement	• Single view foundations • Demand forecasting • Performance dashboards	• Predictive analytics • Real-time insight • Data-driven decision making
AUTOMATION & AI	Productivity, prevention and continuous improvement	• High-impact opportunities • AI & automation pilots • Governance & ethical framework	• Automate priority processes • AI tools for staff • Productivity gains realised	• Automation across services • AI-assisted decision support • Efficiency at scale	• AI embedded in workflows • Preventative, predictive models • Continuous improvement

BY 2030 WE WILL ACHIEVE

- Simpler and more joined-up services
- Greater visibility and transparency for customers
- Reduced demand and lower cost-to-serve
- Improved workforce productivity and experience
- Better decisions through data and insight
- Stronger prevention and earlier intervention
- Secure, resilient and future-ready digital foundations

OUR ENABLERS (ACROSS ALL PHASES)

- Cyber secure and resilient by design
- People powered – skills, change and adoption
- Ethical and responsible use of data and AI
- Partnerships and community-led approach
- Value for money and sustainable investment
- Data as a strategic asset

Working together to build a digitally enabled Council that improves outcomes for all

This page is intentionally left blank

FROM DEMAND TO DELIVERY

How the Digital Roadmap was Developed

Turning 100+ digital requests into a single, prioritised roadmap for transformation by 2030

1 GATHER DEMAND

Reviewed 100+ Digital Requests

Sources included:

- Adults Transformation
- Children's Transformation
- Digital Blueprint
- Customer Programme
- National Local Government Priorities
- ICT & Service Improvement Requests

2 PRIORITISE

Applied Common Scoring Criteria

- Customer Impact
- Demand Reduction
- Financial Sustainability
- Statutory Requirements
- Strategic Alignment
- Delivery Feasibility
- Risk Reduction

3 IDENTIFY THEMES

Found Significant Overlap

Many requests required the same capabilities:

- Customer Access
- CRM
- Workflow Automation
- Data & Reporting
- Integration
- Self Service
- Customer Tracking
- AI & Automation

4 CONSOLIDATE

Grouped Requests into Shared Corporate Capabilities

Instead of delivering dozens of separate projects:

- Digital Front Door
- Contact Centre
- CRM Platform
- Enterprise Integration
- Data & Insight
- Automation & AI
- Workforce Enablement

5 PRODUCE THE DIGITAL ROADMAP

One Prioritised Corporate Roadmap

Delivering:

- Better customer experience
- Reduced duplication
- Lower cost to serve
- Improved productivity
- Better insight and decision making
- Prevention and demand reduction

KEY MESSAGE

The roadmap is **not** a collection of individual projects. It is a **prioritised, platform-led transformation programme** that consolidates overlapping service requirements into **shared corporate capabilities**, maximising value for money and enabling transformation at scale across the Council.

THE RESULT

- Focused on highest value priorities
- Designed for residents and our workforce
- Lower cost and reduced duplication
- Scalable and sustainable outcomes
- Stronger control, resilience and risk management

Shropshire Council

One plan. Shared capabilities. Better outcomes for Shropshire.

Transforming to 2030

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank