

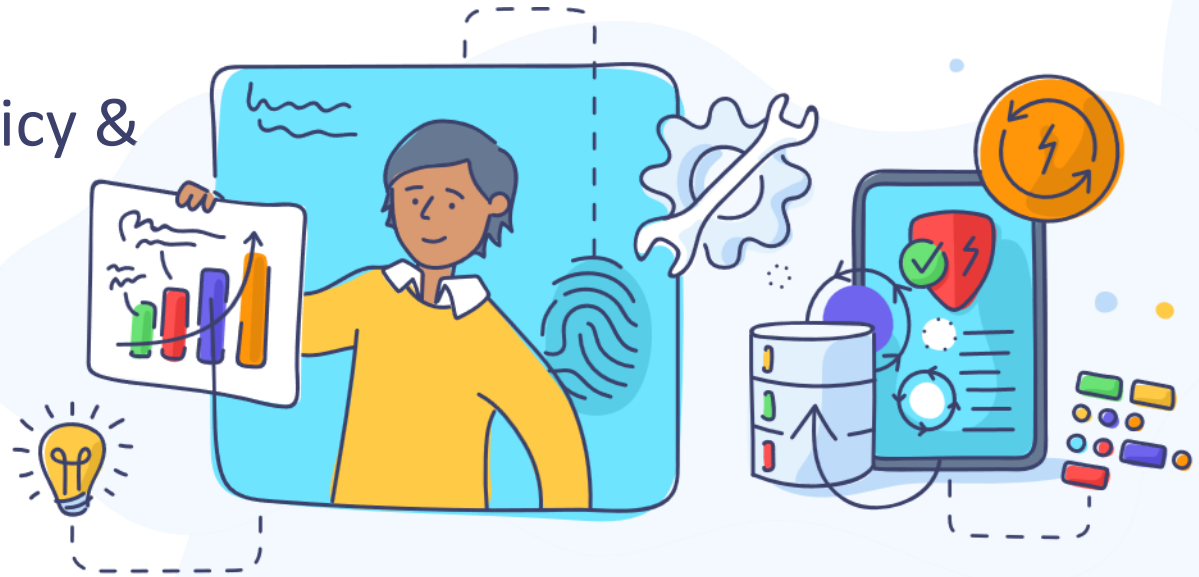
PUBLIC SECTOR DIGITAL TRENDS 2024: A PANTHEON OF POSSIBILITIES

Martin Ferguson, Director of Policy &
Research, Socitm

UKAuthority: Powering Digital Public Services

March 8, 2024

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Purpose and scope

→ Socitm's public sector digital trends story

→ Public sector digital trends 2024

→ Concluding thoughts and questions

Our digital trends story from 2018...

Infographic

Public sector digital trends 2023

External drivers

- Environmental breakdown, climate change and net zero targets
- New models of working and underused office space
- Pay restraints, recruitment and retention pressures, and disrupted labour markets
- Energy costs, inflation and global economic downturn
- Post-Covid legacy costs, rationalisation, and disrupted markets and supply chains
- Changing expectations and demands from citizens
- Social and digital exclusion
- War in Ukraine, Brexit (in the UK) and other unforeseen events

Digital trends

- **Cyber resilience** – collaboration across connected places and communities
- **Data explodes silos** – breaking the 'public policy impasse' over deep-seated local problems
- **Connected places** – using systems thinking to develop new digital services that cross boundaries of related public services in an area becomes a central strategic focus
- **Customer service** – exploiting digital possibilities and connections to address more complex service needs
- **Digital, data and technology skills** – data leadership and management, merging of CIO and CDO roles, and recruitment and retention of skills
- **Digital health** – part of an ecosystem of local public services enabled by significant advances in digital innovation
- **Inclusivity and equality** – an explosion of digital services that risks worsening digital exclusion and inequality
- **Market disruption** – recessionary and inflationary pressures, acquisitions, scaling-back and collapse of IT/digital suppliers
- **Faster development** – new methods, tools and technologies, such as low-code, tackling legacy barriers and outdated policies, practices and governance
- **Digital identity** – easy access for citizens, linking systems and related services, and privacy and security protection
- **Hybrid working** – blended working styles, locations and technologies that support smarter use of physical building assets
- **Green and sustainable** – harnessing digital to combat climate change, accelerate towards net zero and reduce its own carbon footprint

Technology enablers

- **Applied artificial intelligence and automation**
- **Augmented reality and 'digital twins'**
- **Internet of things (IoT) everywhere**
- **Apps multiply and mature**
- **Tackling IT legacy**
- **IT infrastructure pressures**



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Resource hub collection

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Designing out of difficult times - the 2023 trends that will make a difference in your communities

Introduction: breaking new ground with digital

Instead of replicating commercial examples, the distinctive role of 'digital' in the public sector needs to recognise symbiotic relationship between the joining of people, communities and the delivery of public services that enables them to thrive and their part in society...

[Read the introduction](#)

Digital trends

- [Cyber resilience a top priority](#)
- [Data explodes silos](#)
- [Emerging 'Connected Places'](#)
- [Looking afresh at customer services](#)
- [Digital, data and technology skills](#)
- [A renewed focus for digital health](#)
- [Inclusivity and equality – a changing dynamic](#)
- [Market disruption brings new challenges](#)
- [Faster development](#)
- [Digital identity](#)
- [Hybrid working matures](#)
- [Green and sustainable](#)

Technology trends

- [Trends reshaping the use of technology](#)
- [Applied artificial intelligence and automation](#)
- [Augmented reality and digital twins](#)
- [Tackling IT legacy](#)
- [Pressures on technology infrastructure](#)
- [Internet of Things \(IoT\) everywhere](#)
- [Apps multiply and mature](#)

Summary guide

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Guide

Public sector digital trends 2023

Summary

January 2023



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REGION CENTRE FOR INNOVATION

LOLA

Local Government Association



Reviewing past trends

The winners!

Digital + Data

Cyber

Collaborative networks

Nuanced legacy IT

Changing workstyles

Blended service channels

The losers!

New supply models

Scaling-up good practices

Adoption of emerging technologies

Digital trend	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Commentary
	Change in trend priority						
'Smart' and Connected Places - a focus on the wider possibilities of digital practices in public services, creating positive impact across connected services							<p>In 2019 the focus was still on 'smart cities' driven by the interests of large conurbations and large IT suppliers. During the past five years, this has changed into a conversation about 'connected places', heightened during Covid, including rural and urban relational services which blend digital solutions across public service boundaries.</p>

Public sector digital and technology trends 2024



Digital trends

Community resilience



- Protecting communities from new threats
- Cross-boundary action on supply chains, infrastructure and services
- Sharing intelligence and collaborative action on vulnerabilities

Local and national leadership



- Combining governance in key areas of connected places
- Building shared digital and technology capability
- Collaborative projects that reflect local needs

IT for public good



- Safety and ethics in data use
- Combatting economic, environmental and social problems
- Mitigating the negative impacts of technology

Reimagining services

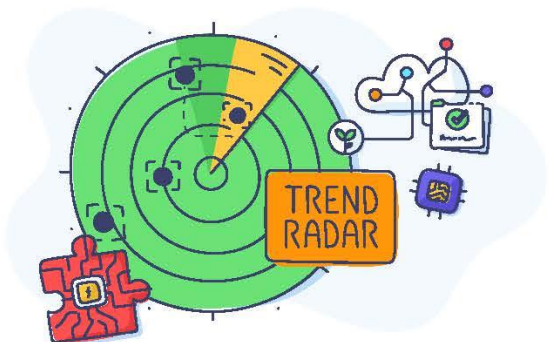


- Design based on whole system models
- Solving complex issues in connected places
- Virtual systems, virtual services

Skills and capacity



- Building digital and IT capacity and capability
- Imaginative and innovative ways to address recruitment and retention
- Focusing on specialist skills in-house to support digital ambitions



Technology trends

AI applications

- Building foundations of policy and compliance
- Early experimentation with controls
- Applications in data organisation and customer service

Cyber protection

- Keeping pace with changing external threats
- Observability of risk across distributed systems
- Workforce awareness and accountability

Harnessing data

- Data, quality, standards and matching
- Data analytics and distributed data models
- Data governance, skills and sharing

Infrastructure and cloud

- Reviewing capacity and vulnerabilities
- Investment, reconfiguration and upgrades
- Updated relationship with 'cloud'

Spatial technologies

- Tracking and connecting resources
- VR, AR and XR in design and planning
- Using 'digital twins' to design virtual services



Digital trend #1

Community resilience



- Protecting communities from new threats
- Cross-boundary action on supply chains, infrastructure and services
- Sharing intelligence and collaborative action on vulnerabilities



Digital trend #2



IT for public good



- Safety and ethics in data use
- Combatting economic, environmental and social problems
- Mitigating the negative impacts of technology





Digital trend #3



Local and national leadership



- Combining governance in key areas of connected places
- Building shared digital and technology capability
- Collaborative projects that reflect local needs



Digital trend #4



Reimagining services



- Design based on whole system models
- Solving complex issues in connected places
- Virtual systems, virtual services



Digital trend #5



Skills and capacity



- Building digital and IT capacity
- and capability
- Imaginative and innovative ways to address recruitment and retention
- Focusing on specialist skills in-house to support digital ambitions



Technology trends

Infrastructure and cloud

- Reviewing capacity and vulnerabilities
- Investment, reconfiguration and upgrades
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Spatial technologies

- Tracking and connecting resources
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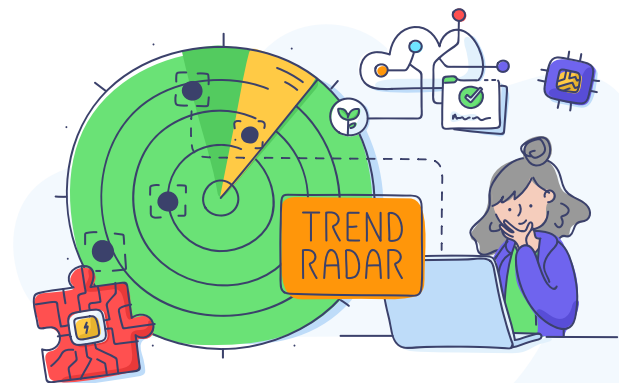
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Concluding thoughts and questions...

“In the perfect storm facing public services, will the ‘pantheon’ of technologies win through – where, for example, AI takes control of public services - or will we harness digital – cultures, data and technologies - for public good, reimagine services, construct new models of local leadership, seek innovative and collaborative approaches to building skills and capacity ... all to address the deep-seated problems facing people, communities and economies in local places?”

What’s your reaction to this digital trends prognosis?

How can you make use of these findings?

What are the implications for leadership, capacity and skills, infrastructure...?





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