

A Living Digital Strategy 2019 - 2022

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1. What do we mean by 'digital'?

Digital is not a thing; it is a way of doing things.

Digital, when done well, means fundamentally redesigning the services we deliver; changing the way we work. Former Government Digital Service deputy director Tom Loosemore defined digital in a tweet: “Digital: Applying the culture, practices, processes & technologies of the Internet-era to respond to people’s raised expectations”.

Digital can relate to technology and is often thought of in relation websites and electronic devices. But it is much more than just technology and so includes streamlining processes, reaching the right people with the right tools, being more effective and efficient, reducing costs and saving money.

2. Vision

Our vision is that by 2022 every ECL employee sees digital as part of their job: to improve staff experience, customer outcomes and to develop our market in Essex and beyond.

We want to create a culture of digital curiosity and confidence through the practical application of digital in all roles and for all customers - working with peoples’ existing digital skills and enhancing them wherever possible.

We want to be known as a digital leader and innovator, not because we use the latest technology, but because we instinctively, and purposefully seek out the most appropriate technology to fit with people’s lives, be they staff or customers. It is this practical grounding of our digital strategy which will allow us to take a digital first approach in a human and applied way.

We will know we have succeeded in making this change when technology is as instinctive a part of our business planning and operations as finance and HR; and as much part of the lives of our staff and customers, as care planning and support.

This digital strategy is for us, our staff and our customers.

3. Aims

Our digital strategy will **underpin the delivery of the ECL business priorities as set out in our formal plans** and be seen as a fundamental and essential part of

business operations (efficient operations, empowered workforce, empowered customers) and of our business strategy and development (digital leader, cost effective, compelling service offer).

We will **build a common and shared understanding** of digital, embedded in the culture of ECL - top to bottom - and digital will be inherently understood as part of everyone's job.

Understanding that digital is not new, we've all, often unconsciously had digital dimensions to our work for many years. So, let's embrace that; **optimise and repurpose existing work as digital** because we're actually already doing some of this and we could be doing even more and with confidence.

We want to gain an understanding of how and where we can create a **digital first approach** where there isn't one to support:

- increasing the efficiency of our operations
- as a competitive advantage for business growth, to be seen as a digital leader and innovator (i.e. let's both do this *and* tell people about it!)
- to improve the lives and capabilities of customers

4. **Must dos**

We **must** give direction to our digital work - prioritising a few things to model on and do them well, to build confidence and skills.

We **must** foster accountability from the ECL Board, Senior Leadership Team and Senior Managers - fostering engagement and challenge on how to bring about culture change and build confidence for this journey for the leadership team first and then for all staff.

Our leadership team **must** demonstrate action - both in co-owning this strategy and in mainstreaming it into their own working practices and portfolios. We must overcome our own digital uncertainty and lead our colleagues into more curious and confident behaviours.

5. **Audiences**

Staff trust that our leadership team is thinking ahead, horizon scanning, developing and testing our digital interventions to let them get on with their job. Their expectation is that we'll listen to them, do our research, involve them and

then give them the space and support to train them up to harness digital in the most meaningful way for their roles. Before we get on to this great future, we must get the basics right for our staff and ensure they have the right tools for the job: the fundamentals of tech must be our starting point.

Customers have high expectations of digital products and services. We need to at the very least, keep pace with this. This means, harnessing the power of the devices and technology people are already using in their daily lives, but it also means inspiring them with new innovations to enhance their care and delivery of our services. We support a large number of people who are likely to be digitally excluded and have a responsibility to ensure that within our care and support offer we enable them to integrate with their communities and social networks digitally as well as physically. As well as the people we directly deliver care and support to, we need to think how we can use digital to enhance support and peace of mind for their loved ones. Enfranchising carers on this digital journey will be essential to long term success.

Commissioners want to see innovation and exciting new ways to connect with people and deliver care. They have expectations that trends are capitalised on and that we will keep in step with what citizens want and expect. Commissioners want providers who are planning ahead for opportunities for better care and efficiencies. Commissioners need providers to be expert enough to lead on digital innovation and be proactively bringing new concepts to them. We need to be the imaginative provider that gives direction back to our commissioners and helps develop commercial models that support digital transformation of care delivery.

6. Digital mind set

Every single one of our staff needs the direction and support to not only build their digital knowledge and skills, but to feel reassured and confident that they are adequately 'doing' digital.

Media reports of scams, hacking and data losses has led to a perception that digital can be a risky way of doing things which is not comfortable for a company subject to external regulation. We need to encourage a positive mind set in our staff that with the right information governance and security measures digital is a *better* way of doing things; that electronic records are far more secure than paper copies, that assistive technology is much less intrusive than many forms of physical care and that artificial intelligence can be more effective than manual interventions.

There's a need to myth-bust some assumptions about digital: for example, that you have to be highly specialised or a subject matter expert to be doing it - and that it's for young people. Anyone who's been part of the UK workforce for the last few decades has likely been using digital in their roles. Moreover, they have been using it in their personal lives. Part of our development will be creating an understanding that our digital development in our personal lives is highly relevant to our professional lives.

Some of our professional development has to be to understand how we converge our personal and professional mind sets, alongside acquiring new skills.

7. Digital skills

Our staff, customers and commissioners need support across different aspects of digital skills development. We need to find ways for people to use more of the digital skills they have developed in their personal lives.

We will bring people together for formal and informal training as part of our core Learning and Development offer - and of course, through the *actual* use of digital - to help develop their digital skills. This will start from our induction events; the first experience our staff have of working for us. We will, wherever possible, bring a cross-section, or indeed all our stakeholder groups together to learn, share-knowledge and be inspired together in an environment where it is safe to acknowledge barriers, make mistakes and enjoy digital technology.

We will create pathways at work for people with digital skills to progress at ECL: inspire others and lead the way for maximising outcomes for our customers. We should start with those who have an innate passion for technology; these people will be the pioneers for the cultural change we need to achieve. Their curiosity and energy will positively affect others.

We will permission staff to experiment with digital. Digital projects should have time for research and development activities factored in: we must reassure staff that there is no perfect digital solution and that the journey is an iterative one.

We will establish a programme of skills development for staff and customers that is linked to our live digital programme. We will hold ourselves to account on its progress and encourage challenge.

8. Data & insight

Data is much more than reporting Key Performance Indicators. Digital products create new and exciting data sources that can help us uncover insights of the behaviour of our customers. By analysing trends and patterns, we can better target care and support whilst empowering our customers. We will be able to see correlations of activity and outcomes; where and how the support from ECL is impacting on customer's outcomes and increasing their independence.

We can optimise the efficiency of our staff by using data to predict, anticipate and respond. The satisfaction and sense of achievement for staff will increase when they can see tangible evidence about the people they support.

We will be better able to demonstrate value for money for commissioners whilst accelerating the business intelligence process.

9. Enablers

The journey we are embarking on is a process of change. We will approach it in the way that we would approach any transformation programme; the technology is not the focus - changing our business is.

I. Leadership & governance

Leadership of a digital approach needs to flow from the top to the bottom of the organisation to be effective, authentic and embedded. For the board and senior leadership team this means we will need to take responsibility for improving our own skills, confidence and knowledge; to step into a place of discomfort and curiosity - and explore together how technology can help deliver our business strategy. A 'digital conscience' will help inform our decision making. And we will use technology ourselves as part of our daily work in leading ECL.

From this we will identify people throughout the organisation who can provide leadership on this agenda within their own areas to lead this work on the ground. They will be trained, supported, involved in design and delivery, and connected to each other so that they can support each other to lead this change.

Through our existing governance structure at project and organisational levels we will ensure that the board and leadership team are kept informed of progress - and encourage challenge and accountability. We will ensure that those immersed in this work are connected to and benefit from this scrutiny and support.

II. Investment in people

We will ensure that staff and customers involved in this work receive training and support. For those involved in delivering digital change projects they will have the time and resources to be involved above and beyond the day job. And we will ensure that they have the skills to undertake discovery, design, development and implementation. We will also ensure that when we are ready to scale our work we continue to invest in communications and training to include the wider group.

III. Evolving the culture

This is perhaps the hardest element to tackle, but also the most fundamental to success. Culture will only change over time and through lived experience of the change we are trying to create, talking about it - openly - and through leaders at all levels being seen and heard.

IV. Designing digital in to our practice

When mobilising new contracts or developing new services, functions and processes, we will consciously design digital in. We will not replicate existing manual or paper processes because it is easy, we will challenge ourselves to ensure we have taken every opportunity to maximise the use of technology.

V. Baseline & measurement

We will establish a core set of outcome measures to track our progress in delivering the strategy. These will track our core objectives (productivity, culture change...) and will include:

Customers:

- confidence and engagement

- take-up and usage of technology (including specialist areas such as Positive Behaviour Support)
- quality of life / independence
- personalisation
- acquisition and retention

Commissioners:

- new contracts

Brand and reputation:

- regional and national profile

Staff:

- utilisation across all services (reducing travel and admin time)
- confidence and engagement
- take-up and usage of technology
- recruitment and retention

Operations:

- improved processes / time saved
- logistics efficiency

We will ensure that we establish metrics and outcomes for key projects supporting delivery of the strategy aligned with these overarching markers of our progress.

VI. Demonstrating evolution

Whilst tracking outcomes is important, this will not be a linear journey. We will need to ensure that we take the time to learn from our successes and from things that go less well and share this insight with others.

We will also need to ensure that we capture and tell the real-life stories of change - stories and case studies that bring to life the positive impact of technology for customers, carers and staff. These will be important in bringing people on the journey with us. But they will also support culture change and brand building.

10. Living our Digital Approach

We will make digital real and accessible for our stakeholders. This means that for our leadership team we must understand how it is relevant to our customer’s lives, whilst understanding the imperative from commissioners around value for money. We will make it convenient and reassuring for parents, children, friends and carers of our customers. We will strive to optimise it across the ECL business:

Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be recognised as a digital leader • ECL as <i>the</i> care provider in Essex which has digital at the forefront
Productivity trumps brand (and productivity trumps cash)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment pressures are our biggest pressures - how can digital contribute to this issue? • harnessing digital to make what we we’ve got work harder • using technology to free up staff time to deliver care and services
Optimising the core ECL digital infrastructure that must be addressed to be competitive and ambitious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing our staff with the right technology to optimise their performance at work • implementing an Enterprise Resource Platform that integrates our corporate systems to maximise productivity and business growth

11. Our Phase 1 Digital Programme

We have already begun this journey of transformation through work we have undertaken in recent years:

- Work and Wellbeing digital work stream; piloting Online Journals for Adults with Learning Disabilities and StoriiCare for Older People
- Local Government Association funded Video Communication Pilot using Speakset and Breeze
- Alcove in Reablement in partnership with Essex County Council

- Modernising our online presence and introducing new capabilities such as ecommerce and session bookings

We now have an opportunity to be bolder about prioritising areas of our business and services for more comprehensive digital transformation:

- Essex Equipment services: an opportunity for an end to end digital approach, repositioning ECL in the Community Equipment Services market
- Work and Wellbeing services: creating a modern and innovative service which enables the progression of our customers and the achievement of outcomes
- Reablement: using assistive technology to be at the forefront of modernising care delivery; driving utilisation up through transformation of our working practice
- Workforce productivity: implementing an ERP to integrate corporate and operational data and equipping our staff with the digital tools to alleviate the administrative burden
- Customer services: improving our relationship with our customers through digital care plans, notifications and the individual having more control over their appointments and care events.

It will not be possible to deliver all of the above at the same time; the change load on the organisation would undermine the delivery and resources would not be sufficient to successfully execute the change. The Senior Leadership Team will need to guide prioritisation with consideration to:

- impact on customers
- impact on staff
- productivity and efficiency
- brand
- culture change / reach

12. Delivery partners

If we want to move quickly we need to recognise our own starting point - our strengths, our gaps and our competing priorities, and how purposeful partnerships could help us move faster and with more confidence.

We can achieve pace and learning from others. We have been involved in the Digital Boomers movement in Essex since its inception and have built relationships

and curating concepts and products with a range of other passionate innovators in this field.

We have already found that capability and capacity for new product developments can be limited in this sector. Through our pilot projects we have worked with innovators and entrepreneurs who we could partner with on this journey.

Our Essex commissioner/shareholder is undertaking its own digital transformation programme and as its strategic partner we should be recognised as the go-to delivery partner for adult social care; involved in the strategic development of ECC's transformation plans, co-designing service solutions and delivery of new practice and products. We need to ask ourselves the following questions about how we can develop this relationship to the benefit of not only our digital strategy but the overall growth and success of the company:

- can we be a more active partner and beneficiary from this work?
- what is the nature of our partnering relationship with Essex?
- how can we work more closely together to collaborate on co-designing and co-producing future visions and digital delivery models in Essex?