

# Executive

## Better outcomes for citizens: a London Office for Technology and Innovation Item No 4

**Report by:** Guy Ware **Job title:** Director of Finance,  
Performance & Procurement

**Date:** 27 February 2018

**Contact Officer:** Guy Ware

**Telephone:** 020 7934 9675 **Email:** [Guy.ware@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Guy.ware@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

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### Summary:

This report informs Executive of the joint work that has been undertaken by officers of the GLA, London Councils and a number of London boroughs to explore the potential scope for a “London Office of Technology and Innovation” to promote greater collaboration in the development of digital standards, infrastructure and solutions amongst London’s public services.

The GLA’s Chief Digital Officer, Theo Blackwell, will attend to present to report.

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### Recommendation:

The Executive is asked to:

- Consider and comment on the report
  - Note that a fuller report and proposals will be presented to Leaders’ Committee in June.
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# London Office of Technology and Innovation

## Introduction

1. This report informs Executive of the joint work that has been undertaken by officers of the GLA, London Councils and a number of London boroughs to explore the potential scope for a “London Office of Technology and Innovation” to promote greater collaboration in the development of digital standards, infrastructure and solutions amongst London’s public services.

## Context

2. During 2017, officers at the GLA and London Councils jointly commissioned a programme of research and engagement to explore collaborative approaches to meeting the challenges, and exploiting the opportunities, of digital technology. The work considered local, national and international examples of good practice in public service innovation and collaborative governance, and sought to test the demand and appetite amongst boroughs for such arrangements to be developed in London.
3. More than twenty boroughs actively participated in the programme through a range of surveys, workshops, and direct one-to-one interviews with Chief Executives and Chief Information/Technology Officers. The headline finding of this programme has been that, despite undoubted progress over recent years, there is a desire to explore further the opportunities for greater collaboration around good practice in product design and testing, procurement and deployment. This would seek to help boroughs tackle core and common challenges, such as the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and cyber-security threats, as well as create the space and time for interested boroughs to develop and share more intensive and applied innovation in service design.
4. The paper attached at Appendix A presents the GLA Chief Digital Officer’s summary of the work that has been undertaken and the emerging thinking about the approach that could be adopted to promote and facilitate greater digital collaboration to deliver better outcomes for citizens across London

## Recommendations

5. The Executive is asked to
  - Consider and comment on the report

- Note that a fuller report and proposals will be presented to Leaders' Committee in June.

**Financial implications for London Councils**

None

**Legal implications for London Councils**

None

**Equalities implications for London Councils**

None

## APPENDIX A

### Better outcomes for citizens: establishing city-wide digital collaboration through a London Office for Technology and Innovation ('LOTI')

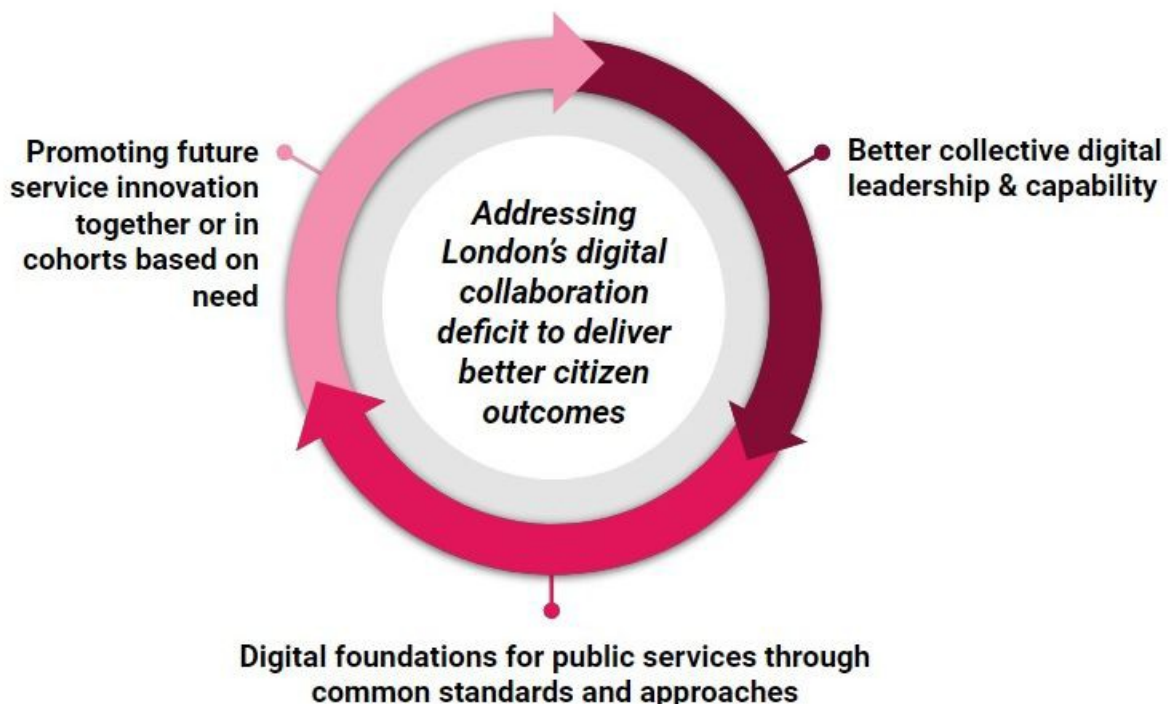
#### Proposal

To improve the capacity of London's public services to deliver outcomes for citizens it is proposed that London Councils and GLA together continue to work together on a new London Office for Technology and Innovation collaboration. This will be developed over the coming months and a proposition will be brought back to Leaders' Committee.

#### 1.0 Introduction

This paper the London Councils Executive sets out the background, case for and proposal for a city-wide digital collaboration vehicle, provisionally called the 'London Office for Technology & Innovation' (or 'LOTI'), using the current [Digital Office for Scotland](#) model as a basis for future work.

The purpose of a LOTI would be to address the digital collaboration deficit in London's public services by enhancing collective digital leadership; establish where appropriate, common digital foundations and assist, where needed, future service innovation for Londoners.



## 1.1 Background

Over the past 18 months London Councils and the GLA have explored how councils can work better together to enhance their capability for digital innovation to deliver better citizen-centric services, minimise duplication of effort and drive efficiency. The research involved a London Councils/GLA commissioned scoping study by Arup, Futuregov and Stance conducted across London boroughs in Q3/4 2017. In addition, papers to London chief executives, most recently in January 2018, have helped inform this work.

London's public services have responded with digital strategies, pan-London London Ventures and innovation by boroughs and the work of the GLA's new Chief Digital Officer and team, preparing for a new Smart London Plan in June 2018, and requirements proposed by new and draft GLA statutory strategies. These are also set in the wider context of technology policy developments at a national level and progress by new Metro-Mayors outside of London.

Learning from smart city initiatives domestically and globally shows that for a smart city to be adopted by people and therefore impactful, it cannot be 'top-down'; a more collaborative approach is required. A LOTI provides an important function in a much wider movement to design and focus outcomes and services around the needs of the citizen.

## 1.2 The problem

London is a global hub for technological innovation, spanning over 40 clusters and major institutions. Over the last decade councils have revolutionised the use of technology to serve citizens more effectively, bringing many transactions online and beginning to embed new applications to solve more complex urban challenges. However, London's complexity is such that a 'collaboration deficit' exists which manifests itself in a number of observable ways:

1. **Fragmentation** – London's public services – City Hall, 33 boroughs, the NHS and functional bodies – and regulated utilities currently present a very confusing picture for public service innovators seeking to learn from each other and scale what works, and for the GovTech and general technology market to understand and navigate. National and international approaches for investment, piloting of best practice – for example in smart city innovation – are currently distributed in a non-strategic manner, leading to lost opportunities for public services. London does not make the most of its advantages as a home to major research institutions and the technology sector.

2. **Inconsistent foundations** - differences across public services hamper the ability to respond to current and new challenges, whether regulatory or civic. For a variety of reasons – cultural, technology legacy, professional – public services use, manage and share data in different ways, often hampering innovation and more effective investment decisions at a time of limited budgets. Adopting new data laws ('GDPR') and the need for cyber-security are London-wide questions for public services which would benefit from consistent responses. Meeting city-wide challenges such as poor air quality, congestion and homelessness will require the promotion, adoption and even development of common standards, without which innovation and citizen-centred design approaches will be limited.
3. **Leadership and capability:** The breadth of change means that capacity within local government to understand, develop and implement new digital approaches is stretched. Addressing this requires leadership across the organisation.

The status quo means public services are less than the sum of their parts, impacting our best efforts to be a smart city and deliver outcomes for citizens. This is not a new observation unique to this research but it absolutely needs to be recognised in order to address citizens' needs in the light of the explosion in the use of data and new digital technologies. There are two main aspects to this:

- Technology preparedness - new business models need to be understood, explored and anticipated;
- Data and digital technology afford public service new opportunities to 'build once and share often', to minimise duplication of effort and drive efficiency and quality of service.

## **1.4 Existing initiatives**

The experience of London Councils investment in city-wide London Ventures programmes contains much practical learning for a future LOTI. London Ventures focuses on identifying potential innovative solutions to public service challenges, and facilitating their adoption by London boroughs. By contrast, the primary role of a LOTI would be to establish common capabilities and standards to enable future innovation. Shared IT services are being progressed across a number of participating boroughs, but are not seen as desirable or practical at a pan-London scale. Existing formal and informal professional networks are perceived as lacking capacity to advance innovation at scale and there is a strong ask from officers for a body to focus on doing rather than convening.

## **1.5 Scoping exercise**

The scoping exercise of London boroughs and public services identified a demand for greater collaboration in leadership and capacity; design and testing; procurement and deployment. This was expressed both in terms of supporting boroughs to:

- Meet core or common challenges faced by all but not dealt with collectively
- Provide space for intensive and applied innovation together or in groups

The most advanced collaborative model in operation is in Scotland, where thirty councils have voluntarily joined forces to drive digital transformation in local services by establishing a partnership – the Digital Office for Scotland – to improve how services work and how councils serve residents. The group of 30 councils are funding the Digital Office - including a Chief Digital Officer and Chief Technology Officer - for the next three years and the new team will be shared by all the participating councils. This model combines a central function conducting projects of general application with discreet use-case development work involving smaller, focused cohorts of councils. We are exploring ways to adapt this model for London over the next three years starting with some foundational work available to all, leading to use-case development by councils committing extra resources.

## **2.0 LOTI programme of work**

Discussion with chief executives, some members and London Councils officers, as well as with the GLA, suggest considering the adoption of two phases: a start-up, leading to the development of a further offer on innovation use-cases.

### **2.1 Start-up (Year 1)**

The initial work being considered has five areas:



01	Establish LOTI ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision, MOU between GLA-boroughs</li> <li>• Establish board</li> <li>• Development of additional innovation offer for years 2&amp;3</li> </ul>
02	Improve visibility of innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll-out 'Pipeline' product <a href="https://pipeline.localgov.digital/">https://pipeline.localgov.digital/</a></li> <li>• Show-and-tell</li> </ul>
03	Promote London-wide peer-to-peer networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly tea-camps for practitioners</li> <li>• Annual London Unconference 2019+</li> </ul>
04	Better consistent connectivity measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardised wayleave</li> <li>• Identification of assets for Full Fibre</li> </ul>
05	Common approaches to data standards & security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GDPR compliance</li> <li>• Cyber-security standards</li> </ul>

The first area is operational: developing potential ways of working including structure, steering group, and MOU outlining roles, responsibilities and expected investment (funding and in-kind, e.g. officer time) between London Councils, individual boroughs and the GLA and agree a future work programme leading to a further offer (see below).

The second area of work is adoption and promotion of Pipeline, a product developed by the LocalGovDigital Makers community and currently in Beta where users can cite and comment on products they are using (e.g. prototype [Using Amazon Alexa skill for waste collection and recycling](#)). The LOTI proposal is to run this product for the benefit of practitioners nationwide.


LocalGov Digital
LocalGovCamp
LocalGov Makers

Pipeline
Home
Categories
All projects
Login
Register

ALPHA This is a prototype, your feedback will help us improve this service.

## Using Amazon Alexa skill for waste collection and recycling ALPHA

Estimated Dates	Project Owner	Last Modified
01 January 2018 to 31 March 2018	Oxford City Council	22 January 2018 <a href="#">View History</a>

The LOTI could also work with the GLA, London Councils and boroughs to promote peer-to-peer networks, including taking on the running of the “Unconference” initiated by the GLA for this year, as well as monthly “teacamps”.

The fourth area of work is to assist the GLA Connectivity team with the adoption of standardised leases across London to improve connectivity. Finally we propose ongoing work to share best practice on GDPR compliance and cyber-security standards, liaising with London and national bodies in partnership with the CDO.

## **2.2 Maturity and future work on innovation use-cases**

Years 2 and 3 could continue this foundational work developing into a central research function on digital maturity and to assist with resource pooling around digital strategy development and approaches for agreed areas (e.g. cyber-security, data/GDPR, cloud services and connectivity).

It would also meet the need expressed by a significant cohort of boroughs for more intensive and applied innovation use-cases. The following areas were identified as needs and potential workstreams by more than two boroughs during the scoping:

### ***Workforce skills***

It is important to consider the development of a pan-London digital leadership offer in conjunction with GDS Digital Academy and other central government initiatives. Trying to ensure that there is an effective pan-London way to enable placements on Academy courses, assist with course design and develop new products for the market would be valuable.

### ***Common standards***

Establishing common standards would help London boroughs to present clear requirements to the market in areas like ‘Internet of Things’ technology, ensure best value for local authorities and joined-up approaches that avoid narrow proprietary solutions and stranded technology. These standards would operate on top of the existing Local Government Service Standard and data standards which promote standardisation and efficiency of service delivery and good service design.

### ***Supporting transition to cloud***

London’s councils are continuing to develop their strategic approach for digital change at both a local and city-wide level, presenting an opportunity to explore collectively how this could help councils develop their strategic plans.

### ***Procurement***

There is an issue about how to open-up commissioning approaches to bring in greater innovation and opportunities for SMEs. Traditionally, local authorities have operated within a very limited supplier market, with a small number of specialist providers securing the majority of IT contracts. Progress is being made with changing this, but there is still much to be done. It is proposed to engage with technology suppliers to reflect on current commissioning approaches for IT and digital services to identify areas for future focus. This could include broader work with Crown Commercial Services to establish collective procurement arrangements for joint commissioning of digital services, hosting, applications and developmental work around drone readiness and start-up agreements.

### ***5G Preparation***

There is a multi-borough involvement in the DCMS 5G citizen testbed - led by Digital Greenwich. The bid to the 5G Fund includes provision for two members of staff to engage Boroughs who want to play their part in the provision of resilient 5G core services and the development of business models for new urban services (e.g. mobility).

### ***Blockchain exploration***

A multi-borough research project to establish, pilot and evaluate key applications for distributed ledger technologies as they relate to areas of local government service delivery, smart urban services, and the relationships involved (from commercial to democratic) is being explored.



## **2.4 Staffing, governance and resource implications**

Should a formal proposition be finalized, it is proposed the work programme would be staffed by personnel experienced in local

government digital transformation working via secondment or recruitment on temporary contracts.

A LOTI Director, supported by a Community Manager, would have responsibility for developing the programme of work with a Steering Board developed with representatives from London Councils and the GLA. Other responsibilities would include peer-to-peer communications, as well as running the Pipeline product nationally. A proposition would be likely to include some core contribution from the GLA and London Councils supplemented over time by contributions from boroughs participating in agreed innovative projects.

Projects would be evaluated by GLA Economics for their effectiveness and outcomes delivered at organisation, community and economic level.