

Committee(s): Digital Service Committee	Dated: 13 th May 2024
Subject: Digital, Data & Technology Strategy	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	9, 10, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report of: Chamberlain, Caroline Al-Beyerty	For Decision
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Summary

All departments and institutions of the City of London Corporation have a need for a strategy covering Digital, Data and Technology.

This report summarises the activities undertaken to bring together the wider Corporation including its Institutions under a single strategy, and presents a draft Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) strategy for approval.

Recommendations

Members of Digital Services Committee are asked to:

- Approve the Shared Digital, Data and Technology Strategy

Main Report

Background

1. A digital, data and technology (DDaT) strategy is essential for any organisation that wants to remain competitive and relevant in today's rapidly evolving technological landscape. The City of London Corporation recognised the need for a DDaT strategy to accelerate and enable our new Corporate Plan, work better across different parts of the organisation, and meet the expectations of those that we serve.
2. To fulfil the City of London Corporation's vision for London as a world-class city and a global leader in innovation and sustainability, the Corporation needs to harness the potential of digital, data and technology. These are not only tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness, but also enablers of transformation and innovation. By adopting an aspirational digital, data and technology strategy, the Corporation can:

3. Deliver "brilliant basics" by providing reliable, secure and user-friendly services that meet the needs and expectations of its diverse stakeholders;
4. Make faster, more effective data-driven decisions by using data and analytics to inform policy, planning and delivery, and to measure impact and performance;
5. Innovate and collaborate by fostering a culture of experimentation, learning and sharing, and by partnering with other organisations and sectors to co-create solutions to complex challenges;
6. Empower and enable our colleagues by equipping them with the skills, tools and support they need to work effectively, flexibly and creatively in the digital age;
7. Enhance its reputation and influence by showcasing its achievements, sharing its insights and best practices, and leading by example in the use of digital, data and technology for public good.

Current Position

8. All parts of the organisation currently have different approaches to the areas of Digital, Data and Technology.
9. In order to understand views on existing services as well as areas of interest, a number of workshops took place across the wider organisation including our Institutions.
10. Through our engagement efforts working with colleagues at the Corporation and across our Institutions, we have come to agreement on the areas we collectively wish to focus on.

Recommendation

11. Members are asked to endorse the Shared Digital, Data and Technology strategy across the wider City of London Corporation – including City of London Police, Barbican Centre, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and the Schools.

Appendices

City of London Corporation DDaT Strategy 2024 - 2029

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CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION



Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2024 - 2029

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1. Why a Digital, Data and Technology Strategy is important

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile, the historic and financial heart of London. It provides local government services to residents, businesses, workers, students and visitors, as well as supporting the UK-based financial services industry and the cultural and creative sector. The Corporation also manages open spaces, bridges, markets, schools, charities and other assets for the benefit of London and the nation.

The Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy is a key enabler for the City of London Corporation to deliver its new Corporate Plan and fulfil its 'fantastic five years'.

To fulfil the City of London Corporation's vision for London as a world-class city and a global leader in innovation and sustainability, the Corporation needs to harness the potential of digital, data and technology. These are not only tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness, but also enablers of transformation and innovation. By adopting an aspirational digital, data and technology strategy, the Corporation can:

- Deliver "brilliant basics" by providing reliable, secure and user-friendly services that meet the needs and expectations of its diverse stakeholders;
- Make faster, more effective data-driven decisions by using data and analytics to inform policy, planning and delivery, and to measure impact and performance;
- Innovate and collaborate by fostering a culture of experimentation, learning and sharing, and by partnering with other organisations and sectors to co-create solutions to complex challenges;
- Empower and enable our colleagues by equipping them with the skills, tools and support they need to work effectively, flexibly and creatively in the digital age;
- Enhance its reputation and influence by showcasing its achievements, sharing its insights and best practices, and leading by example in the use of digital, data and technology for public good.

2. The increasing reliance on Digital, Data and Technology

Technology is not only a tool, but a driver of change and transformation in the workplace and in personal lives as well. Technology enables us to work smarter, faster and more collaboratively, as well as to access information, services and opportunities that were previously unavailable or inaccessible. All City of London Corporation services and colleagues are reliant upon technology, whether it is accessing a computer to book annual leave, the use of a database to store corporate information, audio visual equipment to support virtual meetings or a customer accessing one of the Corporation's many services online.

Technology empowers us to learn new skills, explore new interests and express our creativity and identity in various ways. However, technology is not static, but constantly evolving and improving. To keep up with the rapid pace of innovation and disruption, we need to invest in technology that is reliable, secure, adaptable and user-friendly. We also need to invest in our own digital literacy and capabilities, so that we can leverage technology effectively and responsibly for our goals and needs. Investing in technology is not only a matter of cost, but also of value and impact. By investing in technology, we can enhance our productivity, efficiency and quality of work, as well as our satisfaction, engagement and well-being. We can also improve our communication, collaboration and innovation with our colleagues, partners and stakeholders, as well as our service delivery and customer experience. Moreover, we can contribute to the social, economic and environmental development of our communities and society, by using technology for public good and social good.

3. Engaging our people to understand their needs

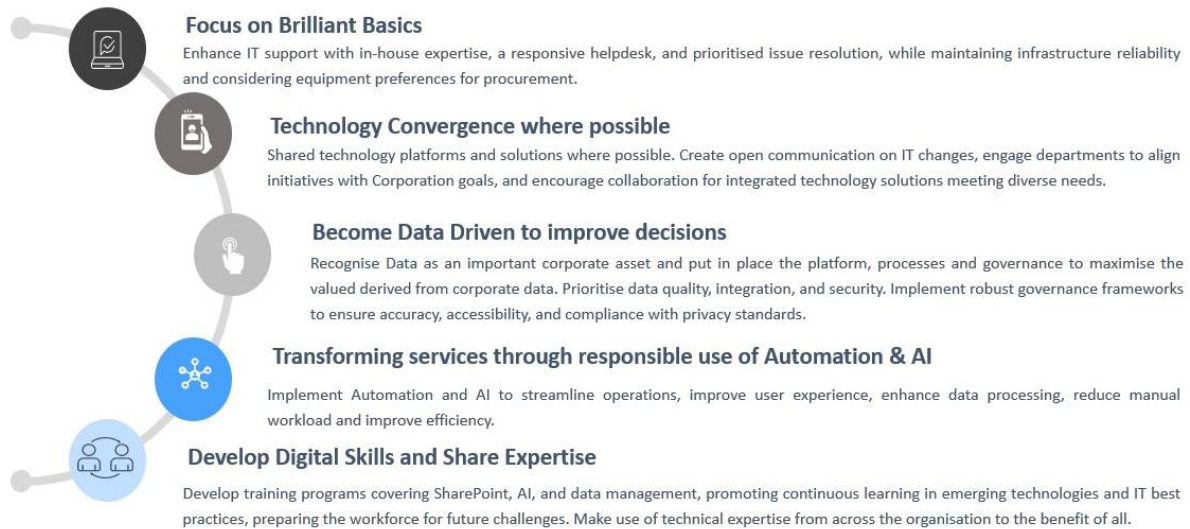
In our ongoing efforts to enhance the organisation's digital capabilities, feedback from our colleagues across the wider City of London Corporation has highlighted several key areas of strength, as well as opportunities for improvement. This dialogue has been instrumental in understanding the intricate balance between technological efficiency and user experience within our workplaces. A summary of the findings is provided in Appendix One.

4. Digital, Data and Technology Strategy

Through this Digital, Data and Technology Strategy we will elevate operational efficiency and satisfaction across our organisation. This plan is rooted in the core belief that by refining our technical support, advancing our data management capabilities, embracing automation and artificial intelligence (AI) responsibly, unifying our

technological platforms, and encouraging continuous learning and skill development among our staff, we can forge a path to a more efficient, responsive, and forward-thinking organisation.

Our 5 Digital, Data and Technology Strategic Outcomes;



Outcome 1 - Focus on Brilliant Basics:

At the heart of our strategy is a stable, secure and well supported core technology platform. The City of London Corporation has made great strides in recent years to modernise technology but to stand still is to move backwards in technology terms, and so we must continue to evolve. This is evident in our network, which has not kept pace with the increasing demands of the organisation and now requires specific focus and investment.

We will transform our unique shared Digital, Information and Technology Service into an exemplar for responsiveness and user-friendliness. This transformation begins with an evaluation of our current support services, focusing on refining device support and addressing the challenges presented by our current device models. Through working closely with our service users we will highlight improvements, both in the technical support we provide and in our technology offering.

We will leverage our in-house expertise and are committed to not just addressing technical and equipment issues as they arise but doing so with a proactive approach that ensures regular updates and maintenance.

We will invest in the training and development of our IT support team, enabling them to excel in communication and problem-solving. Furthermore, our equipment upgrade and procurement plans will be executed with precision, ensuring that our technological infrastructure not only meets but exceeds the expectations of our users.

Our Actions

- To deliver a stable, secure and supported technology environment to underpin the delivery of high quality services across the City of London Corporation;
- To continually review and improve our support services to ensure that they are high quality, personalised services, which meet the needs of our service users;
- To refresh our network to enable world class connectivity across all City of London Corporation buildings, with coverage and speeds to support the needs of each site;
- To update our end user devices to ensure that they support a variety of different roles and worker styles across our staff and members;
- To continue our cloud first approach, reducing the complexity of our technology and improving resilience;
- To work with our service users to drive self-service, improve processes and automate non-complex requests, delivering quicker and more responsible technology support;

Performance Measures

- User satisfaction rate: the percentage of users who rate their experience with DITS as satisfactory or above.

- First contact resolution rate: the percentage of IT support requests that are resolved at the first point of contact, without the need for escalation or further intervention.
- Average resolution time: the average time it takes to resolve an IT support request from the moment it is logged to the moment it is closed.
- Service availability: the percentage of time that the core IT services and systems are operational and accessible to the users.
- Incident frequency: the number of IT incidents or disruptions that occur within a given period of time.
- Incident impact: the severity and duration of the impact of IT incidents or disruptions on the users and the organisation
- Successful delivery of the Future Network Programme, refreshing the network capabilities at all City of London Corporation sites.

Outcome 2 – Technology Convergence Where Possible:

Our strategy advocates for a unified technological ecosystem, where open communication and collaboration are the cornerstones of success. By encouraging a culture of collaboration across the whole of the City of London Corporation, we will ensure that our shared technology solutions are optimised to meet the diverse needs of our organisation.

We will promote shared procurement activity to address shared needs. This will undoubtedly lead to more competitive pricing for everyone and deliver significant time savings through economies of scale.

The ERP Programme has the potential to be the frontrunner in demonstrating the benefits of a rationalisation of software through providing a single modular replacement for Oracle, City People and other disparate systems across the City of London Corporation. The Programme offers great opportunities for reduced complexity, a reduction in system interfaces, a shared data model and reduced support costs in the future.

The convergence of technology will :

- save time and cost through aggregating spend and reducing time spent on procurement, contract management, building and maintaining interfaces and system administration;
- bring disparate data sources into a shared solution reducing duplication of data and manual effort to main data quality;
- reduce the complexity of technical support allowing teams to have a greater depth of knowledge around a smaller number of key systems, rather than a breadth of knowledge around a number of systems.

We will champion a target state for the City of London Corporation’s systems and products which is broadly consistent in terms of architecture, engineering and operations. We will encourage the organisation to use fewer systems more effectively, ensuring similar technologies and processes are closely integrated or unified to remove unnecessary duplication and inconsistencies.

Our Actions

- To adopt a shared technology roadmap for the whole of the City of London Corporation, including City of London Police, Barbican Centre, Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Schools.
- To develop a shared catalogue of technical solutions to meet common business needs such as online applications, payments and bookings.
- To adopt cloud based technologies that are accessible, scalable and easily maintainable, which will help us speed up delivery, reduce cost and improve interoperability – whilst providing a more resilient and secure infrastructure
- To successfully deliver a single unified ERP solution to the City of London Corporation;
- To embed shared standards for the way we buy and implement software and hardware to create more unity in our infrastructure;
- To use fewer systems more effectively, ensuring similar systems, platforms and frameworks are brought together to avoid duplication;

- To ensure our staff do not need to become familiar with many similar internal technologies and processes, saving them time and improving their experience.

Performance Measures

- Percentage of alignment with the Shared Technology Roadmap
- The number and percentage of hardware and software solutions that are shared or reused across different departments or functions
- The amount and percentage of cost savings and efficiency gains achieved through reduced procurement activity and rationalised technology solutions
- The level of satisfaction and feedback from staff and stakeholders on the usability, functionality, and reliability of the technology solutions
- The degree of alignment and compatibility of the technology solutions with the organisation's data management and security standards and policies
- The frequency and impact of technology-related issues, incidents, or breaches that affect the organisation's operations or reputation

Outcome 3 - Become Data Driven to improve decisions:

The City of London Corporation starts its data maturity journey with our key corporate data sets spread across multiple solutions and platforms – and utilising multiple different reporting tools to gain intelligence and insight.

Our ambition is to bring these disparate data sets together through a shared data platform and the adoption of a single corporate business intelligence tool. In doing so, we will tackle the significant challenges of master data management, data quality and ensuring that our data assets are stored in secure, scalable and supported technology solutions. We will ensure that our data transformation is built upon firm foundations, which in some cases may mean that we need to review our data architecture and existing working practices.

Our Actions

- To review Data Governance across the organisation including the role and responsibilities of the Information Management Governance Board.
- To deliver a Corporate Data Platform to deliver greater value from the organisation's data and promote wider data sharing;
- To rationalise existing business intelligence and reporting solutions, and promote the adoption of Microsoft PowerBI as the Corporate Reporting Tool.
- To review existing data architectures and flows, and simplify where possible.
- To develop our data capabilities, capacity and skills within the City of London Corporation to better support departments to derive greater value from their data;
- To drive enhanced communication and collaboration around data across the City of London Corporation, to share best practices and identify opportunities for greater data sharing;
- To address areas where key corporate data assets are managed outside of a secure and supported solution;
- To drive data literacy and develop data maturity across the City of London Corporation, in particular around areas of data quality management and effective data governance.

Performance Measures

- The number of key corporate data assets that form part of the Corporate Data Platform
- The number of users of Microsoft PowerBI and rationalisation of other reporting tools
- The proportion of corporate data assets that are stored in a secure and supported solution, and the reduction in the use of spreadsheets and legacy solutions such as Microsoft Access;
- The number of staff who have undertaken data literacy training and assessments, and the enhancement in their data competencies and proficiencies.
- The amount of time and resources conserved by employing data-driven decision making and
- The level of data quality across the organisation, and the implementation of data quality standards and procedures.
- The establishment of an updated information management board, and the adherence to its terms of reference and governance framework.

Outcome 4 - Transform Services through responsible use of Automation & AI:

Digital, Data and Technology has the potential to transform the City of London Corporation's products and services but to do so, we will go further than just digitising existing poor processes or making the same mistakes more quickly. We will fully harness the capabilities of the technology available and challenge existing ways of working to deliver meaningful and lasting improvements to our services – avoiding the creation of a 'digital veneer'.

We will integrate automation and AI into our operations, aiming to streamline processes, amplify efficiency, and enhance the overall user experience. This journey begins with the identification of processes suitable for automation, followed by a deep dive into the potential for AI and automation to revolutionise our workflows. Through initial pilot projects, we will explore the transformative potential of these technologies, ensuring that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to thrive in this new environment. Successful initiatives will be scaled, further embedding efficiency and innovation into the fabric of our operations.

Our Actions

- To review current business processes and identify areas where automation and artificial intelligence can enhance efficiency, quality, and customer satisfaction.
- To work closely with services through a programme of digital projects to challenge existing working practices and deliver significant time savings through better use of technology, including automation and AI where possible.
- To establish a cross-functional team of experts and stakeholders to oversee the design, implementation, and evaluation of automation and artificial intelligence solutions in alignment with best practices and ethical standards.
- To develop a communication plan to inform and engage staff, customers, and partners about the benefits and challenges of automation and artificial intelligence, as well as the expected impacts and outcomes of the transformation.
- To support and upskill colleagues across the organisation in order to make best use of new technologies and tools.

Performance Measures

- The amount of time and resources saved by using automation and artificial intelligence solutions, including the average hours per week that staff spent on manual or repetitive tasks before and after the implementation of the solutions
- The number and percentage of processes that were automated or improved by artificial intelligence solutions
- The number and percentage of staff who successfully completed the training program on SharePoint, automation, data management, and other emerging technologies
- The number and percentage of staff who achieved certification and recognition through digital skills based apprenticeships
- The level of satisfaction and engagement of staff and customers with the automation and artificial intelligence solutions, measured by surveys and feedback mechanisms

Outcome 5 - Develop Digital Skills & Share Expertise:

We are committed to preparing our workforce for the technology challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Our strategy includes a robust training program that focuses on better utilisation of our current technology, as well as developing expertise on emerging technologies. We will promote an environment of continuous learning and development.

We will upskill our workforce, reinforced by providing certification opportunities and hands-on experiences - ensuring that our team is not only prepared for the future but also actively shaping it.

We recognise the unique skills and deep technical expertise that exists in parts of the organisation and endeavour to utilise this knowledge for the benefit of the wider organisation. Whether this is the Cyber Security expertise within the City of London Police or the experience of booking management systems and audio visual provision that exists within the Barbican Centre, there are opportunities for shared learning that would greatly benefit the wider organisation.

Our Actions

- To maintain a proactive and meaningful dialogue with IT Teams across the City of London Corporation to share knowledge and expertise and identify opportunities for collaboration and shared initiatives
- Review Digital training needs with departments to ascertain existing and future training needs around Digital skills.
- Identify, utilise and promote areas of digital expertise within the organisation for the wider benefit of the organisation
- Develop a Digital Skills Academy that provides a range of online and offline courses, resources, and certifications for staff members to enhance their digital skills and knowledge. The academy can also collaborate with external providers and experts to offer specialised and industry-relevant training.
- Implement monthly “Tech Talks” open to the wider organisation.

Performance Measures

- The number of collaborative initiatives or projects spanning one or more departments and institutions
- The number and percentage of staff members who access the Digital Skills Academy content and participate in training
- The feedback and satisfaction of staff members, organisation leaders, and the public with the digital solutions and services developed or improved by the staff members.
- The improvement and innovation in service delivery, efficiency, and effectiveness as a result of the enhanced digital skills and expertise of the staff members.

5. Conclusion

The Digital, Data and Technology Strategy is a key enabler for the City of London Corporation to deliver its new Corporate Plan and fulfil its’ promise of a ‘fantastic five years’. The DDaT Strategy will enable the organisation to become more agile, responsive, and resilient in the face of changing needs and expectations of the public and stakeholders. It aims to foster a culture of learning and innovation, and to equip the staff members with the digital skills and expertise they need to deliver better services and outcomes.

One of the main components of the strategy is the focus on delivering ‘brilliant basics’ and developing the digital solutions and services that the organisation offers to the public and other stakeholders. The strategy aims to ensure that the digital solutions and services are user-friendly, accessible, secure, and reliable, and that they meet the needs and expectations of the users. The strategy also encourages the use of data and analytics to inform decision making and service design, and to measure the impact and effectiveness of the digital solutions and services.

The City of London Corporation is committed to implementing the strategy in a timely and effective manner, and to engaging with the staff members, the public, and other stakeholders throughout the process. The organisation believes that by embracing the digital transformation, it can achieve its strategic goals and deliver better outcomes for all.

Appendix One – Colleague Engagement

In our ongoing efforts to enhance the organisation's digital capabilities, feedback from our colleagues across the wider City of London Corporation has highlighted several key areas of strength, as well as opportunities for improvement. This dialogue has been instrumental in understanding the intricate balance between technological efficiency and user experience within our workplaces. A summary of the findings is provided in Appendix One.

User Experience and Training

Our colleagues have expressed appreciation for straightforward, accessible, and flexible technology that supports their daily operations. The value of intuitive design and functionality that accommodates remote access is clear, reflecting a positive aspect of our digital environment that supports and promotes productivity.

However, challenges have been identified in navigating certain platforms and legacy technology, which can sometimes lead to frustration. These issues, alongside a noticeable gap in training resources, point to a need for better educational tools and support. Enhancing our training materials and sessions will ensure all our service users are equipped to utilise our digital tools effectively.

Technical Reliability and Connectivity

The reliability of technology and the seamless connectivity across various devices and locations is of utmost importance. These aspects are crucial for maintaining an uninterrupted workflow and facilitating efficient communication across the organisation.

There have been significant concerns over Wi-Fi stability, device performance, system responsiveness, and the performance of key applications. These issues highlight the necessity for ongoing improvements to our IT infrastructure to ensure a stable and reliable digital environment.

Communication and Support

Responsive and helpful IT support has been a highlight for many within the organisation. The availability of knowledgeable staff who can address and resolve issues promptly is a critical component of our Digital, Information and Technology Service.

Yet, there is room for improvement in terms of communication and support processes. Gaps in communication and a lack of transparency regarding IT updates and strategies have been noted. Streamlining support processes and enhancing communication about IT developments will be key to addressing these concerns.

Security and Data Management

The importance of robust IT security and effective data management is well-recognised. Protecting the organisation's digital assets and ensuring the integrity and accessibility of data are priorities for both DITS staff and service users.

Challenges related to security vulnerabilities and data management, such as accessing and sharing data efficiently, have been brought to light. Addressing these issues will involve strengthening our security protocols and improving data management practices to facilitate better data accessibility and integration.

Adaptability and Future Planning

There is a shared enthusiasm for adopting new technologies and preparing for future IT developments. Initiatives that aim to modernise our IT services and infrastructure are welcomed, as they contribute to the organisation's long-term success.

Concerns have been raised, however, about the balance between pursuing new technological trends and addressing fundamental IT needs. A more co-ordinated approach to technology adoption, focusing on both innovation and the core requirements of our service users, is essential.

Collaboration and Integration

The value of tools that enhance collaboration and document management is evident. Applications that facilitate efficient communication and information sharing are crucial for the day-to-day operations of our teams.

Integration between different systems and platforms has been a point of frustration, with challenges in accessing and sharing information smoothly. Improving the integration of our IT systems will ensure a more cohesive and efficient digital workspace for all employees.

Moving Forward

The feedback from our team underscores the complex relationship between service users and IT services, highlighting areas where our digital environment excels and where there is room for improvement. Addressing these insights requires a focused approach that prioritises user needs, technical reliability, and strategic planning for IT development. By committing to these areas, we can enhance our digital infrastructure to better support the organisation's goals and the daily activities of all team members.

Summary

The feedback from our team members about our digital tools and support services has offered valuable insights into what's working well and areas where we can improve. Here's a comprehensive look, devoid of technical jargon, at what our colleagues appreciate and the challenges they face.

What is Working Well

- Our team members have shown great appreciation for the digital tools that facilitate teamwork and document management, making it easier for everyone to communicate and stay organised. The effort to create a unified system where all resources and information are easily accessible has been well-received, indicating a strong preference for a more interconnected digital workspace.
- The in-house customer service and IT support have received high praise for their quick responses and the personal touch they bring to resolving issues. Having the ability to reach out to IT staff directly, whether through on-site desks or in-person interactions, has been highlighted as a particularly valuable resource for guidance and assistance.
- Looking ahead, there's a clear acknowledgment of the importance of staying adaptable and planning for the future. Initiatives aimed at integrating new technologies and platforms show our commitment to not just keeping pace with digital advancements but also ensuring our infrastructure and services are resilient and flexible.

Areas for Improvement

- Despite the positives, there are several challenges our team faces, primarily related to technical issues and connectivity. Unreliable Wi-Fi, device problems, difficulties with syncing devices, and the instability of some digital tools have been sources of frustration. These technical glitches disrupt the smooth operation of our work and highlight the need for a more robust and reliable digital infrastructure.
- User experience and training also stand out as significant concerns. Navigating some of our digital platforms can be cumbersome, and there's a feeling that the available training doesn't fully meet the needs of our staff. This has led to gaps in knowledge and skills, emphasizing the need for more comprehensive and accessible learning resources.
- Communication from the IT department and the overall support process have room for improvement. Delays in receiving help, lack of transparency about changes and strategies, and inconsistencies in the availability of equipment are areas where improvements are necessary to build a more responsive and inclusive digital environment.
- Lastly, security and data management have been flagged as areas needing attention. Concerns about data accessibility, storage capabilities, and the security of our digital assets call for a reassessment of our practices to ensure that our data is both safe and effectively managed.

Moving Forward

The feedback from our team provides a clear direction for enhancing our digital environment. By addressing the technical and connectivity issues, improving the user experience and training opportunities, streamlining communication and support, and bolstering our security and data management practices, we can create a more efficient, secure, and collaborative workspace. This continuous improvement effort will not only address current

challenges but also lay the groundwork for a future-proof digital infrastructure that supports our organisation's goals and the daily activities of our team members.