

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Digital Services Committee – For information	Dated: 27/11/2025
Subject: Digital, AI, Automation and Data Lighthouse Update	Public report: For information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Providing Excellent Services
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?	N/A
Report of:	Caroline Al-Beyerty, The Chamberlain
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Summary

This report provides an overview of the Digital Solutions Team, which sits within the Digital, Information and Technology Service (DITS). The report highlights the key projects delivered this year, live projects, and the future roadmap of work for the year ahead. The Digital Solutions Team support the City of London Corporation (COL), City of London Police (COLP) and London Councils (LC).

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2024 states that the City of London Corporation will integrate automation and AI into its operations, aiming to streamline processes, amplify efficiency, and enhance the overall user experience. Strategic Outcome four of the strategy is to transform services through responsible use of automation and AI, and the Digital Solutions is a key enabler for that outcome.

Current Position

2. The Digital Solutions Team provide support for several key technologies including the Microsoft 365 tools, Dynamics 365, Granicus (used for public online services) and Copilot (Microsoft's Generative Artificial Intelligence offering). Since 1st January 2025, the team have collectively responded to 919 service requests across the City Corporation and London Councils.
3. In addition to providing support, the team delivers a significant pipeline of projects to deliver new and improved digital services across the City Corporation, City of London Police and London Councils. The team routinely tracks the benefits of these projects in terms of income generated, cashable savings and efficiency savings such as reduction of staff time.
4. In the last 12 month the Digital Solutions Team have delivered benefits to the City Corporation which includes over £34,700 (1,443 hours) of staff time saved, and income generation of over £1,621,300. The feedback from many services shows that the introduction of online platforms has made the process of working with the Corporation easier for many customers, directly increasing the income generated by those services, namely The London Archive (TLA) and the swimming ponds.
5. The most significant project for the team at present is the Data Lighthouse Project, which is seeking to implement Dynamics Customer Insights as the corporate customer relationship management (CRM) tool for digital marketing and online events management. The project will unify customer data from across the City Corporation into a single platform and by consolidating information, it will enable more targeted and meaningful marketing to residents, businesses, and visitors. At the heart of this initiative is the creation of Unified Customer Records - a clean, compliant, and GDPR-aligned dataset that provides a holistic view of each customer. This will empower teams to tailor communications using AI-driven insights, ensuring relevance and impact.
6. A minimum viable product (MVP) of the Data Lighthouse is due to be delivered in early 2026 with two initial service areas using the platform (Innovation and Growth and City Belonging). There will then be further phases of the project to bring additional departments and services onto the platform.
7. The M365/Power Platform Specialists are responsible for first line support of all Microsoft 365 applications included in the E5 licences. Some of the major projects delivered by the M365/Power Platform specialists in the past 12 months include:
 - HR Policy Bot (a Copilot Agent to answer questions around HR Policy)
 - Health and Safety Bot (a Copilot Agent to answer questions on Health and Safety)
 - A ticketing solution to manage the Annual Staff Christmas Lunch
 - London Councils Purchase Order System app (to manage requests for Purchase Orders)
 - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for Domestic Violence
 - Forklift Truck Permits (an application to apply for and manage forklift truck operator permits at New Spitalfields Market)
 - COLP Security Events Tracker

- Social Media workflows for approval of external communications
8. The Business Applications Analysts within the team are responsible for the City Corporation's Report, Pay, Apply service on the main City Corporation website. This utilises a product called Granicus and is used for everything from paying Business Rates to Adopting an Animal at Golder's Hill Zoo.
 9. Major projects delivered by the Business Applications team in the last 12 months include:
 - a. The Mansion House Collection E-Commerce Site.
 - b. The London Archives Digital Programme: A programme of 7 projects (6 of which have been delivered) which has saved nearly 700 hours of staff time (equivalent to £16,849) and generated £25,700 income so far for the City Corporation. The Digital Programme includes:
 - i. Archival box ordering (117 hours/£2,816.19) saved, £1,360 income generated)
 - ii. School room bookings (420 hours/£10,109.40 saved)
 - iii. Paid Document Research Service form (£4,260 income generated)
 - iv. Microfilm & Parish register form (73 hours saved £1,757.11), £211 income generated
 - v. Access to Restricted Records & Confidential undertaking form (17 hours/£409.19 saved)
 - vi. Shopify solution to sell TLA merchandise (£14,900 income generated)
 - c. Hampsted Heath Pre Wedding Photo Shoot form (116 hours/£2,792.12 saved) £45,000 income generated.
 - d. Hampstead Heath Dog Walking (£10,000 income generated)
 - e. Hampstead Heath Swimming Season Ticket (£607,000 income generated)
 - f. Road Closure Indemnities Payment (£913,588 income generated)
 10. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Week was hosted at the City Corporation from 15th September to 19th September 2025 in partnership with Microsoft and Phoenix. Over 500 colleagues attended events over the week, with further follow up events to come. The Events included an AI Panel, an Agent Event, a COL Case studies presentation and a session on Copilot Chat art of the possible.
 11. The City Corporation currently has 371 Copilot licences (approx. 10% of the organisation). Since the introduction the organisation has consistently seen an estimated a return on investment of around 300%. In the last 4 weeks alone, there have been 27,043 actions taken using Copilot (4,676 intelligent recap of meetings, 403 emails drafted, 268 email coaching actions, 784 documents edited or formatted using Copilot) and an estimated 1,376 Copilot assisted hours saved which equates to an approx. staff time saving of £33,120.32.

Proposals

12. The Digital Solutions Team continue to be key enabler for the City Corporation in delivering the strategic outcomes of the Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2024. There remains a significant pipeline of projects for the use of automation

and AI which are progressed based on priority and the level of benefit being delivered.

13. Significant pipeline projects for the Digital Solutions team include:

- Data Lighthouse Project – delivery of minimal viable product and future phases to onboard further services.
- Lord Mayor's Diary replacement
- Freedom Applications automation
- Shrieval Lunches invite automations
- The London Archives Digital Programme final project, Guildhall library room bookings (expected to save 66.6 hours, £1760 staff time).
- DITS AI bot to assist with simple helpdesk questions

Key Data

The Digital Solutions team consists of 12 permanent staff and 1 apprentice role. These roles cover a multitude of disciplines including Microsoft Dynamics, M365 and Power Platforms, and Business Applications Analysts (Granicus). The Digital Solutions team report to the Head of Digital Solutions, Ashlee Barnard. The Head of Digital Solutions reports to the Assistant Director – Digital and Data, Sam Collins.

In the last 12 month the Digital Solutions Team have delivered benefits to the City Corporation which includes over £34,700 (1,443 hours) of staff time saved, and income generation of over £1,621,300.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – The Digital Solutions team ensure that all initiatives and projects support the Digital, Data and Technology strategy and support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-29 by 'Providing Excellent Services'.

Financial implications – none.

Resource implications – The Digital Solutions team comprises of 13 FTE covering support and development of various technologies including Microsoft application specialists, and Business Application Analysts.

Legal implications – none.

Risk implications – none.

Equalities implications – none.

Climate implications – none.

Security implications – none.

Conclusion

14. The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the Digital Solutions team, including summaries of projects delivered, business as usual activities and the pipeline of work.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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