

## Press release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Local public services to reap greater benefits thanks to digital innovation

- *New techUK report makes the case for improved digital innovation adoption across the UK's councils*
- *Digital innovation can empower councils in the UK to better tackle social issues affecting citizens, supported by cross-industry collaboration*
- *techUK will launch new Innovators Network to break down barriers and provide a neutral forum for councils*

**LONDON, 23 May 2022:** Today, technology trade association techUK, in collaboration with its Local Public Services Committee, has published a new report making the case for enhanced digital innovation adoption across the UK's local public services to improve citizens' lives. The report, '*Local Public Services Innovation: Creating a catalyst for change*', lists five key recommendations on how councils can adopt digital innovation.

The report sheds light on how local public services have been transforming digitally due to the COVID-19 pandemic, shifting to mass remote working and adopting more agile ways of working to spin up new services with partners across the community. However, there is untapped innovation within local government and recent challenges, such as supply chain disruptions, public finance cuts, and the rising demand and expectations of citizens, mean that ongoing digital innovation is necessary to ensure the swift delivery of local public services.

The report urges councils to put cross-industry collaboration at the core of their approaches and to rethink how they utilise procurement and market engagement to enable better innovation.

techUK recognises that councils often struggle to be fully empowered when it comes to maximising the benefit and value they can derive from tech. As such, the report lists five recommendations for local public services to transform digitally faster and better:

- **Signposting what good early market engagement looks like:** bureaucracy can stifle innovation and the procurement rules often make it difficult to allow for engagement with industry. techUK urges council leaders to signpost the [Digital, Data and Technology \(DDaT\) Playbook](#) to their procurement and digital teams for them to adopt and implement. Building on this, techUK invites local public services partners

to partner with us on what good early market engagement looks like at the local government level.

- **Creating an innovation-friendly ecosystem:** local government officials need to be empowered to make a change by experimenting with different digital tools that better suit their needs. CEOs should create a culture of innovation where there is the option to experiment and a no-blame culture.
- **Building a central repository of innovation funding:** to help local public services understand what funding is available and how to access it we encourage, the Local Digital Collaboration Unit at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities should curate a repository of all the innovation funding pots that exist to enable local authorities to experiment and take the risk to pilot new digital innovation.
- **Establishing a regional Chief Digital Officer forum:** to help improve collaboration locally, between industry and public services, there should be Chief Digital Officer forums in the UK's nations and regions.
- **Joining techUK's Innovators Network:** techUK will be launching an Innovators Network to break down those barriers and offer a neutral forum for peers to connect with a diverse group of perspectives from across the supplier base and local government, to solve common challenges, demystify emerging technologies and showcase the art of the possible. The Innovators Network for councils will enable and empower councils to connect with innovators to access the latest technologies in a neutral forum to help solve some of the most pressing challenges they face.

**Georgina Maratheftis, Associate Director for Local Public Services, techUK, said:**

"In this paper, techUK sets out how local public services can grasp the innovation opportunity and maximise the benefits they derive from digital technologies and their suppliers. To innovate we need to collaborate across both public sector and the supplier base. We look forward to working with local public service partners to make the case for innovation a reality through our series of market engagement opportunities and newly launched Innovators Network."

**Faith la Grange, techUK's Local Public Services Committee Chair & Director, Government, Microsoft, said:**

"techUK's paper aims to explore how we can drive real innovation that ultimately improves outcomes for places and citizens. It is only by working together that we can make a real impact, which is why the newly founded techUK Innovators Network is an exciting step forward in this collaborative process. We look forward to working with partners across the public sector ecosystem to drive innovation and transform our local public services for the better."

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to Editors**

This paper has been produced with techUK's Local Public Services Committee. Composed of 24 techUK members, nine SME representatives and 15 from larger companies, the Local



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Public Services Committee works with local government and industry to champion and showcase innovation and work in collaboration to deliver a thrive ecosystem and enable meaningful transformation for people and places.

The report is published as part of techUK's [Local Public Services Innovation campaign week](#).

The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

techUK's [Local Public Services programme](#)

## About techUK

techUK is the technology trade association that brings together people, companies and organisations to realise the positive outcomes of what digital technology can achieve.

With over 850 members (the majority of which are SMEs) across the UK, techUK creates a network for innovation and collaboration across business, government and stakeholders to provide a better future for people, society, the economy and the planet.

By providing expertise and insight, we support members, partners and stakeholders as they prepare the UK for what comes next in a constantly changing world.