



Women in Public Sector IT Strategy Forum

26th, 27th & 28th February 2024

Interim Client Research Report

Total Delegate Group: **105**



This interim report is based on survey findings of the 105 delegates who have confirmed their attendance at the upcoming Women In Public Sector IT Strategy Forum on the 26th, 27th and 28th February 2024, which will rise to over 150 CIOs, digital directors and other senior leaders overseeing the IT transformation across the public sector.

To deepen our insights, we interviewed the highest decision-makers via video and telephone interviews to discuss the trends and issues being tackled in their organisations.



33

Chiefs &
Directors

35

Heads of
Department

37

Senior
Management

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT



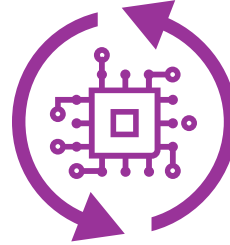
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

As the power of artificial intelligence continues to be recognised, public sector organisations are beginning to harness its capabilities to provide significant changes to public services. AI technologies can streamline operations by automating tasks, freeing up resources for more impactful duties, and improving productivity and cost-effectiveness in service delivery. Additionally, AI-driven data analysis provides valuable insights for evidence-based policymaking, enabling better decision-making and addressing societal challenges more effectively, leading to more efficient, data-driven governance benefiting citizens.



CYBER SECURITY

With the growing threat of cyber-attacks, investing in robust cyber security measures is crucial to public sector organisations. This emphasis stems from the critical need to safeguard government institutions' extensive repositories of sensitive data, encompassing citizens' personal information and national security data. The imperative to protect against cyber threats and breaches is paramount in upholding public trust and preserving national interests. Given the continual advancement of technology and the heightened sophistication of threats, these measures are indispensable in safeguarding against evolving cyber risks such as data breaches and ransomware attacks.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Holding vast potential to enhance service delivery to citizens through digital channels while significantly improving accessibility and efficiency, digital transformation is a key investment priority across the public sector. This transformation optimises operational efficiency by modernising systems, automating tasks, and improving resource allocation, thereby enhancing productivity and cost-effectiveness in delivering public services. Overall, investing in digital transformation empowers public sector organisations to adapt to a changing digital landscape, improving service delivery, operational efficiency, innovation, and transparency for the benefit of citizens.



STAFF RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

Amid increasing concerns around staffing in the public sector, the accessibility of appropriately skilled team members has emerged as a key challenge for organisations. With proficient professionals offering expertise in modern technologies and essential practices crucial for successful transformation endeavours, their adeptness aids in surmounting intricate challenges and deploying innovative solutions effectively, while also assuming a central role in propelling organisational change.

The challenges being prioritised by the Chief Digital Information Officer for Herts and West Essex ICS:

- Delivery of our 10-year digital transformation strategy
- Improving access through primary care transformation
- Utilising artificial intelligence and automation

The key issues being tackled by the Assistant Director of Digital for London Borough Waltham Forest:

- Developing a new digital, data and technology strategy to inform the next 3 - 5 years
- Transforming services to help achieve savings across the organisation
- Improving the customer experience

COMBINED SPENDING POWER OF GROUP

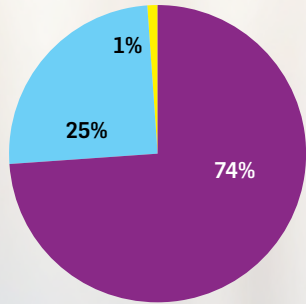
£590 Million+



BUDGET RESPONSIBILITY PER PERSON

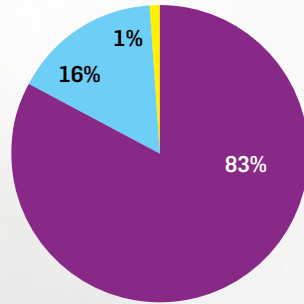
SPEND MAPPING

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



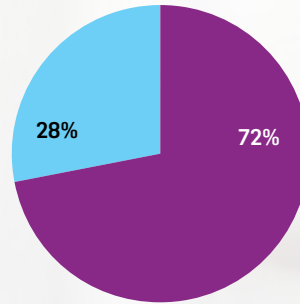
● Increase ● Stay the same
● Decrease

PROCESS AUTOMATION



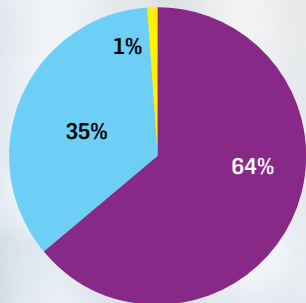
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CLOUD SERVICES



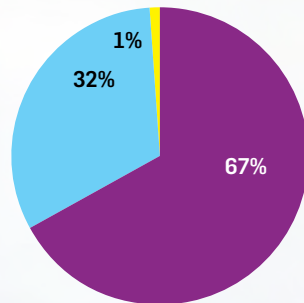
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BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE



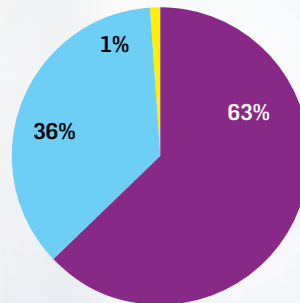
● Increase ● Stay the same
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PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS



● Increase ● Stay the same
● Decrease

CYBER SECURITY

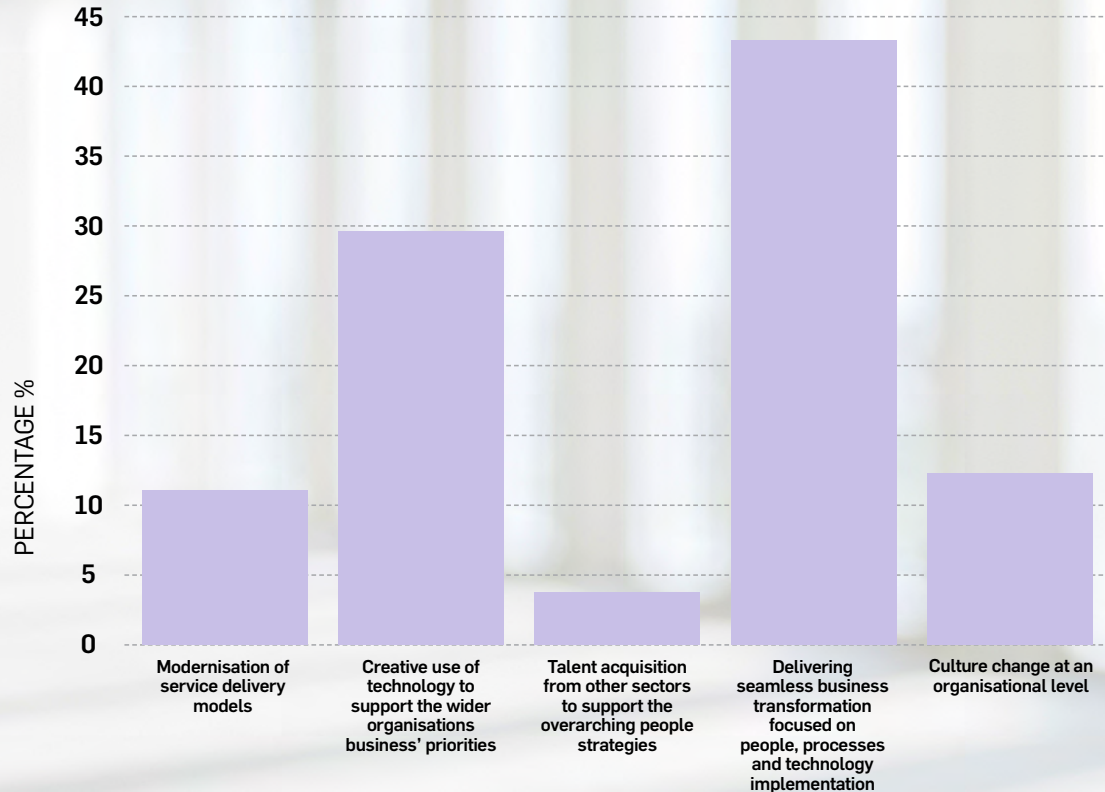


● Increase ● Stay the same
● Decrease

Over the last few years, the public sector has grappled with multiple challenges, including financial constraints affecting service optimisation and infrastructure, heightened healthcare demands, post-Brexit adjustments and the newly recognised cost-of-living crisis. These pressures coincide with the need to address climate change, cybersecurity threats, and housing shortages, necessitating innovative solutions and strategic planning for sustainable management.

With the pressing need for transformation across the public sector, organisations are readily looking to increase spend in new and innovative technologies that can improve efficiencies, reduce costs and enhance services for citizens. Recognising this need, organisations are increasing investment in technologies such as process automation and artificial intelligence. With the ability to transform current ways of working AI and automation can enable data-driven decision making, enhance productivity and optimise resource allocation.

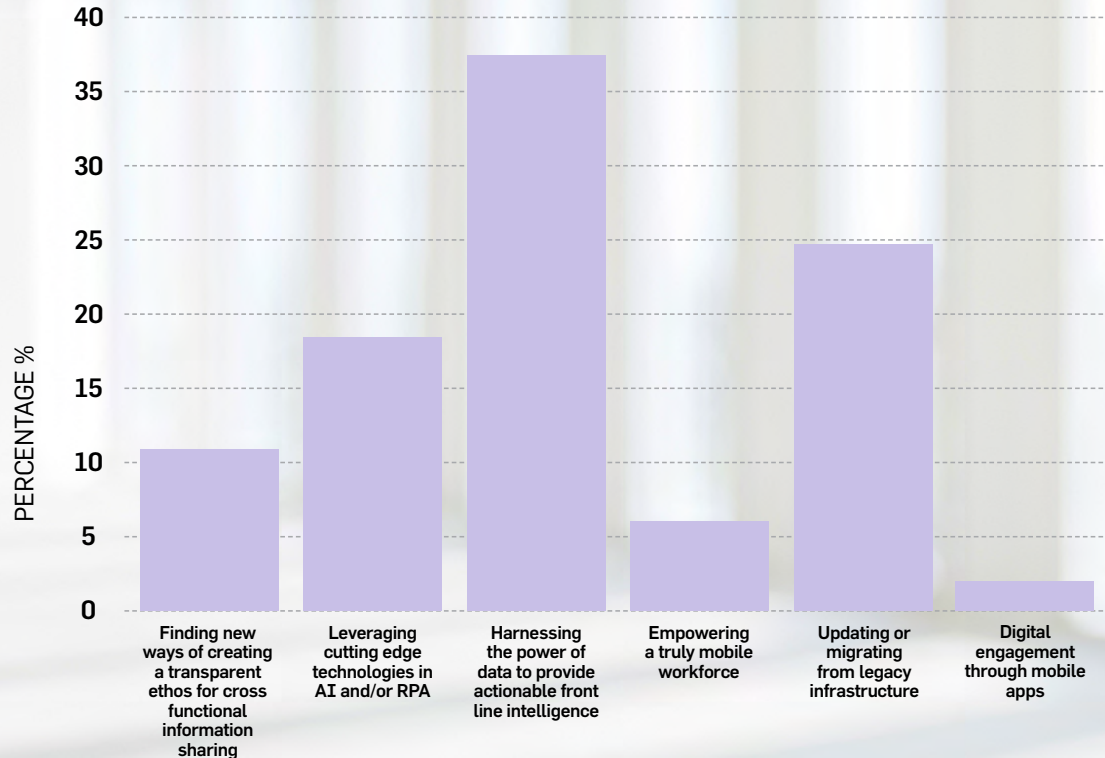
TOP STRATEGIC PRIORITY



Amidst increased uncertainty and scrutiny across the public sector, the foremost strategic priority for attending delegates and their organisations is the delivery of seamless business transformation. This transformation, centred on people, processes, and technology implementation, is pivotal in elevating service delivery, fostering transparency, and adapting to ongoing changes. It stands as an essential driver for optimising costs and effectively managing associated risks. This focused approach not only aligns with the core goal of improving service delivery but also addresses the pressing need for agility and transparency while enabling prudent cost management and risk mitigation within the public sector.

The creative use of technology within the public sector to align with broader organisational priorities was highlighted by the group as another top strategic priority. This approach enables adaptation to changing demands, ensuring competitiveness and meeting citizens' expectations for seamless services. Ultimately, prioritising technology drives operational efficiency and empowers the public sector to better serve societal needs.

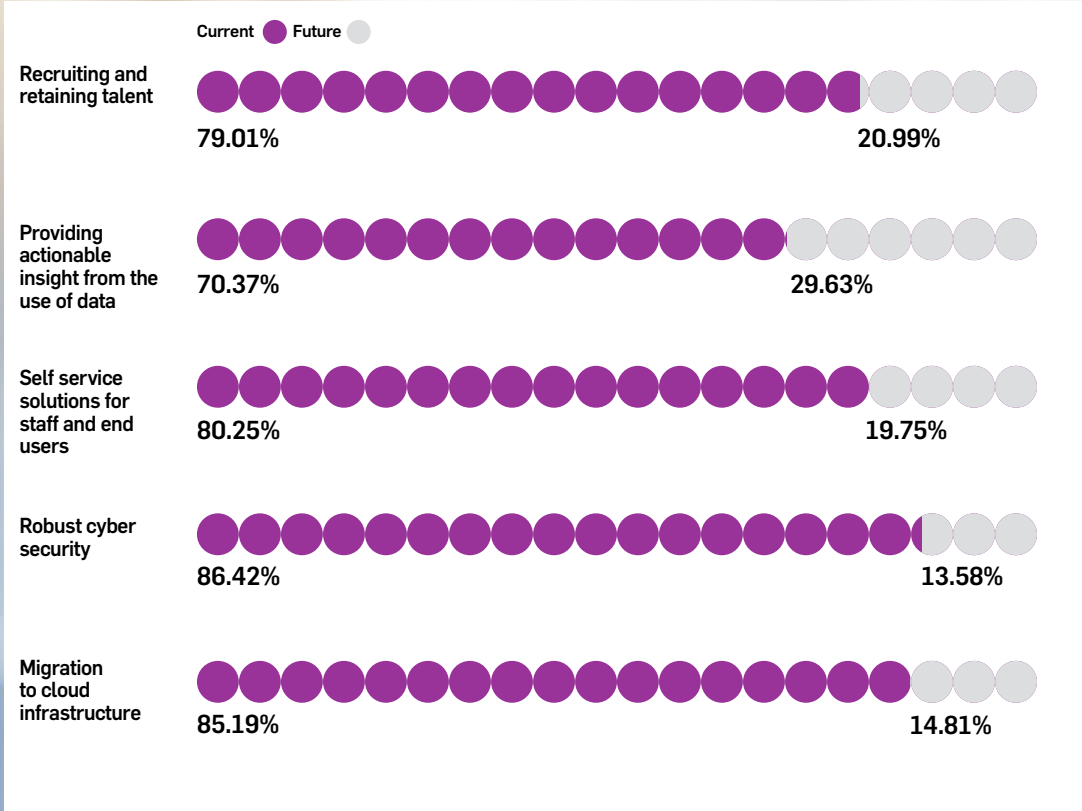
TOP TECHNOLOGY PRIORITY



Public sector leaders have recognised the power of data and its ability to offer frontline intelligence. As the top technology priority among delegates, it enables evidence-based decision-making, allowing policymakers and officials to make informed choices that directly impact citizens and services. Additionally, actionable intelligence derived from data empowers frontline workers with real-time information, enhancing their ability to respond promptly and effectively to various situations and enabling proactive measures to address emerging challenges before they escalate, thus improving service delivery.

Migrating from legacy infrastructure was also flagged by the group as a top priority as the risks posed to security from outdated technology are becoming increasingly recognised. Upgrading to modern infrastructure enhances security measures and protects sensitive public data from potential breaches. Transitioning to updated infrastructure enables the adoption of more agile and efficient technologies, improving service delivery and responsiveness whilst supporting interoperability and integration, allowing different systems to communicate effectively, enhancing collaboration, and streamlining processes within the public sector.

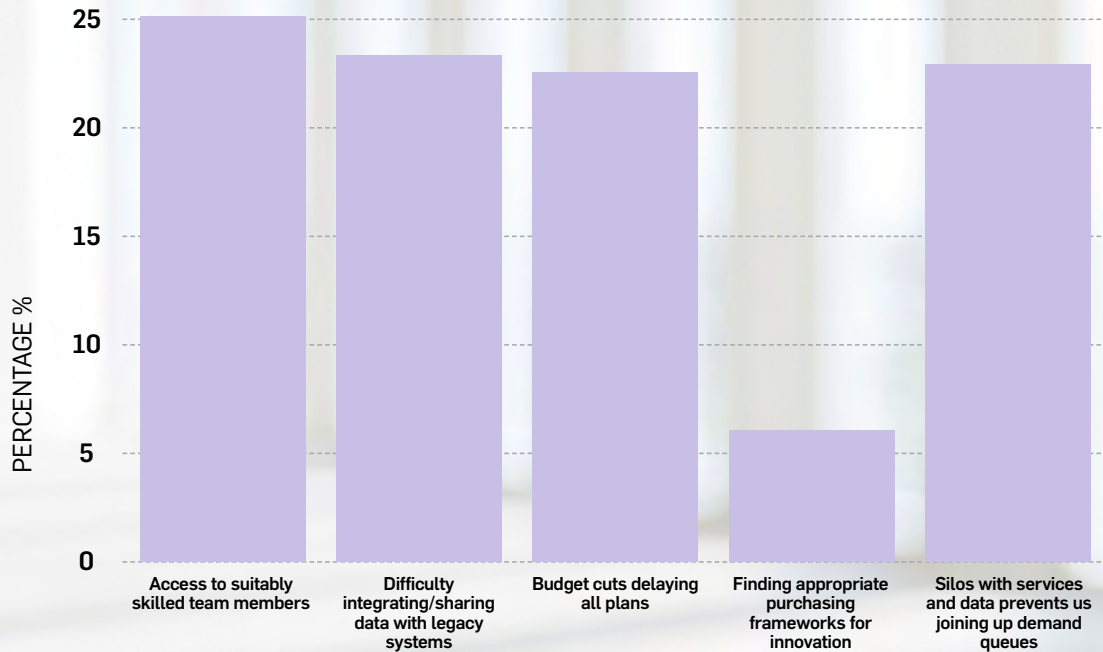
CURRENT OR FUTURE PRIORITIES



Investing in robust cybersecurity measures was flagged by the delegate group as a current priority for their organisation. With government institutions housing vast amounts of sensitive data, including citizens' personal information and national security data, necessitating protection against cyber threats and breaches to maintain public trust and safeguard national interests is imperative. With advancing technology and increasingly sophisticated threats these measures are crucial to defending against evolving cyber threats like data breaches and ransomware attacks.

Migrating to cloud infrastructure is also a current priority across the public sector as it offers scalability and flexibility, allowing government agencies to adjust resources based on demand, optimising operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Additionally cloud infrastructure can improve disaster recovery and business continuity capabilities, ensuring that essential services remain operational even in times of crises or emergencies.

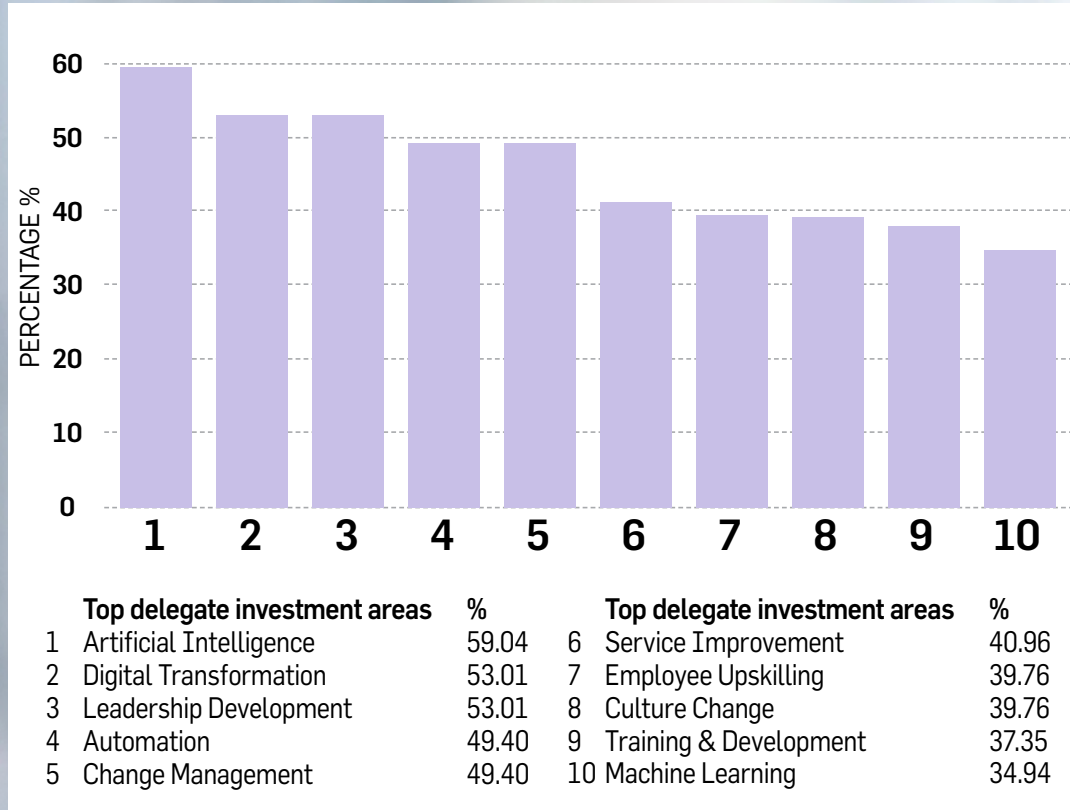
BIGGEST BARRIERS TO DELIVERING TRANSFORMATION



With the growing concern around staffing across the public sector, access to suitably skilled team members has been recognised as the top barrier to delivering service transformation. Skilled professionals bring expertise in modern technologies, methodologies, and best practices necessary for successful transformation initiatives. Their knowledge helps in navigating complex challenges and implementing innovative solutions effectively as well as playing a pivotal role in driving change within their organisation.

The impact of budget cuts has also been highlighted by the group as a barrier to transformation. In light of these challenges, it is crucial for organisations to invest in becoming as efficient and cost effective as possible in order to drive down costs and boost productivity. One way this is being tackled is by replacing outdated processes and systems with more innovative and collaborative solutions.

DELEGATE INVESTMENT AREAS



Digital transformation has emerged as the primary investment priority for over half of the delegate group. This strategic focus holds immense potential to improve service delivery to citizens by harnessing digital channels and enhancing accessibility and efficiency while streamlining bureaucratic processes. Furthermore, digital transformation plays a pivotal role in optimising operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. It achieves this by modernising outdated systems and leveraging technology to streamline workflows, facilitating agile decision-making and optimising resource allocation.

Leadership development is also a key investment priority for organisations as it ensures that public sector leaders possess the necessary skills to navigate changes and implement technological advancements effectively while adapting to shifting demographics and evolving public expectations.



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Deep understanding and clever tech connecting smart people in smooth interactions. Goodbye static conferences, hello evolution.

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