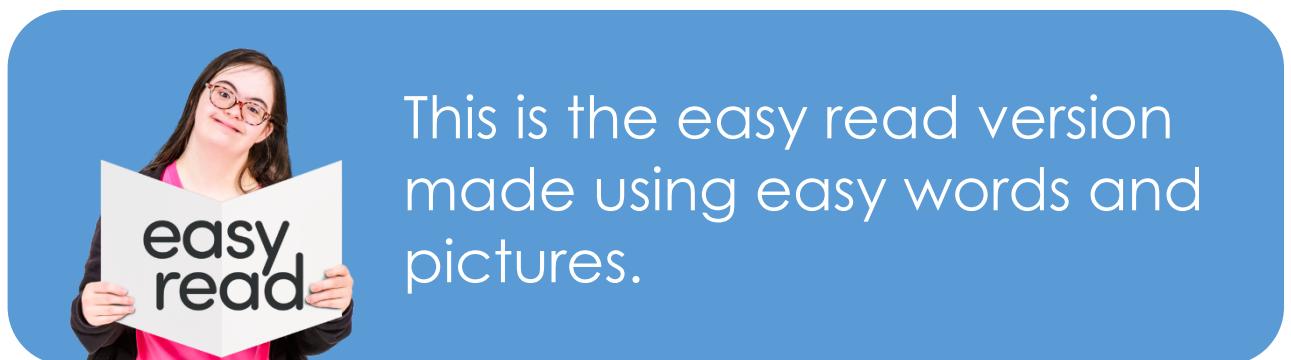


# Sefton Council.

# Draft Digital Strategy.

## 2024 – 2027.



This is the easy read version  
made using easy words and  
pictures.

## Introduction.



Since 2021, Sefton's Digital Strategy has helped bring new technology to people and businesses in Sefton.

The updated plan for 2024 - 2027 looks at what we have done so far and sets new goals.

We want Sefton to be a digital place where everyone can use new technology.

We need strong digital infrastructure to achieve our climate goals and boost business growth.

Digital infrastructure it is the mix of computers, programs, networks, and buildings that help organisations run its online services.



As a Digital Council, we are improving our online services and making it easier for people to use them.

We also want to work better with other groups to provide services that meet community needs.

Inclusion is important. We want everyone to have access to digital skills, devices, and data.



Managing our information well helps us plan and provide services that people need.

Turning data into useful information helps us redesign services to meet everyone's needs in Sefton.

# What have we delivered since 2021?

## Theme 1- Connected Council.



- All council staff now have laptops and mobile phones. They can work from home, office or in our communities.

- We have reduced our office space by 29%. We are looking for more ways to save space.

- We are using new tools to help us understand data better. This helps us make good decisions, especially for Children's Services.

- We moved our data to cloud storage. This makes our systems work better and keeps them safe.

- We have a new training programme for our staff. This helps them use digital tools better.

- We have set up Gov-Roam in our offices. This is a system that helps Health and Social Care staff work together.

- We have a new phone system. It helps staff work from anywhere.

- We are very careful about Cyber Security. We have had checks to make sure our data is safe.

- These changes help us work better and keep your information safe.



## Theme 2 - Empowered Residents.



- Sefton has made its website easier to use. It now follows rules to help everyone, including people with disabilities. These rules are called the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines.



- A new system is now available. It helps people in Sefton do things online by themselves.

- Sefton has a plan to help people use the internet. This plan started in 2022. Sefton wants everyone to have the skills to use the internet and technology.

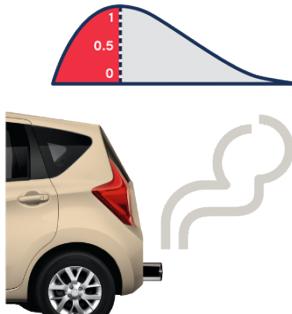
- Libraries in Sefton have new computers. Some places also lend tablets and offer internet data.

- Sefton has a plan to use technology in care. Many new projects are starting.



- A group has been made to teach digital skills. This group includes schools, colleges, and the council.

- Sefton is working with nearby areas to start to use the Internet of Things. This uses sensors and information sharing to make the information about our area smarter.



- One project in Sefton is to use sensors to check air quality. This helps keep the air clean.

- The new website and systems make it easier for people to get help and services.



## Theme 3 - Business Growth.



- Sefton has worked with Liverpool City Region colleagues (LCR Connect) to build a fast internet network.
- They want to make mobile networks better, including 5G, in Sefton.
- Free public Wi-Fi is now available in Bootle Strand.
- Sefton has made a Digital Infrastructure Board to manage important digital projects.
- Sefton has also started a Networking Group called Sefton Huddle for Digital, Creative, and Tech industries.



- A survey about digital skills will be sent to all businesses, with information about help that is available.
- In June 2023, Sefton's Economic Forum talked about Digital innovation.
- The Invest Sefton team gave workshops on digital sales, marketing, and cyber safety.
- Sefton's Economic Strategy was approved on 3rd November 2022. Digital is important for Social Inclusion and Access for all in Sefton.



## 5 Future Themes.



Over the last two years, we have looked at how digital can help Sefton. We talked to people in different areas to find out what is important. We now have 5 main themes for Sefton.



**1<sup>st</sup>** We want to make Sefton a Digital Place. This means using technology to make life better for everyone. We will work on making sure everyone can use digital tools.



**2<sup>nd</sup>** We need strong Digital Foundations. This means having good internet and technology that works well. We will make sure our digital systems are strong and reliable.



**3<sup>rd</sup>** We want to improve the Customer Journey. This means making it easier for people to get help and services online. We will make sure our online services are easy to use.



**4<sup>th</sup>** We will develop our Data and Intelligence. This means using information to make better decisions. We will collect and use data to help improve services.



**5<sup>th</sup>** We will support the Workforce of the Future. This means helping workers learn new digital skills. We will make sure our staff are ready for the future.

# Developing Sefton as a digital place.



Sefton Council wants to make Sefton a digital place. They want everyone to use the technology that is available. This includes people and businesses.

They believe digital tools can help everyone. They want to make sure no one is left out.

Sefton Council will work hard to make this happen. They want everyone to have the same chances.

## Digital Inclusion and Digital Skills.



- We want to help people in Sefton use the internet and feel safe online. We will work with others to make this happen.
- In the past year, we have updated computers in libraries. We plan to add more things like tablets and virtual meeting spaces.
- We will keep giving free Wi-Fi in public places. We will also train Digital Champions to help people get online.
- We want to know who is using the internet and where. This will help us understand why some people are not online.
- We want to help young people get ready for future jobs. We will teach them the skills they need for work.
- We will help people looking for jobs to learn digital skills. This will help them find work.





- We will make sure Sefton's online services are good for everyone. We want all residents to use them easily.
- We will work with Good Things Foundation to provide tablets and internet data. This will help more people get online.
- We will create a databank and device bank service. This will give people the tools they need to use the internet.
- We want Sefton to be a place where everyone can use the internet. We will support people to learn and feel safe online.

## Digital Democracy.



Digital Democracy means using computers and the internet to help people join meetings from home. This can help more people take part and see what is happening.

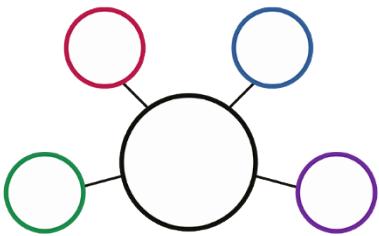
We want to make it easier for everyone to join in and know what is going on. This way, more people can have their say.



We will teach elected members how to stay safe online. This will help them feel sure when talking to people using computers.

By learning about Cyber Security, elected members can talk to residents safely and easily. This will make it better for everyone to share ideas and information.

## Business Growth.



The team in Sefton wants to help the local economy grow. They want to connect Sefton to Liverpool and other places. They believe fast internet is very important for all businesses in Sefton.

They will help build a strong internet network in the Liverpool City Region. This will help local businesses and people in Sefton. They want everyone to benefit from this new internet.



They will support the Creative, Digital, and Technology Sector. They will expand the Sefton Huddle group. This group helps businesses get advice and support from each other.

They will offer events and workshops about digital skills. These will be held in different places in Sefton. Sometimes, experts from other groups will help with these events.



They will ask businesses what digital skills they need. They will use this information to help businesses find local and national opportunities. This will help businesses use digital tools better.

They will create a Digital Incubator Space in Southport. This is a space that will help people in the digital sector work together. It will be a place for new and existing talent.



They will help develop Bootle Strand into a community space. It will have free Wi-Fi and digital learning resources.

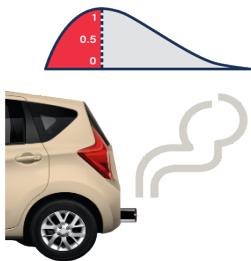
The Sefton@work team will help people use these resources.

## Smart Cities.



Sefton is working together with other areas to use smart technology in the area.

Over the next few years, they will:



- Learn from using Air Quality sensors. These sensors can help manage traffic and reduce pollution in key areas.



- Include Guidance about Cyber Resilience for Smart Cities in local rules. This will help keep the city area safe from cyber threats.



- Look at new technology to make communities safer. They will also review their current CCTV systems.



- Keep looking for new chances to use smart technology that fits Sefton's goals. This will help improve the area and benefit everyone living in Sefton.



- Work with regional partners to find the best ways to use smart technology. This teamwork is important for success.



## Building Strong Digital Foundations and Connectivity.

We want to make sure Sefton has good digital services. This will help us use our money well and make the most of what we already have.

### Better Connections.

We will use the super-fast fibre network in Liverpool City Region. This will help people, businesses, and public buildings connect better.

### Working Together.

We will work with Liverpool City Region to use new wireless technology. This includes supporting the Smart Cities programme including 5G networks.

### New Services.

We will look at using services like Gov Wi-Fi. This will help us work better together.

### Wi-Fi Upgrades.

We will keep improving the Council's Wi-Fi. This will make sure all Council buildings have good coverage and public access.

### Corporate Connectivity.

We will look at new ways to connect our offices. One option is SDWAN (Software Defined Wide Area Network), which can help us connect better.



## Smart Cities and Better Future



All these steps will help Sefton become a smart city. This means better services and connections for everyone. With strong digital foundations, Sefton will be ready for the future. This will help everyone live and work better.

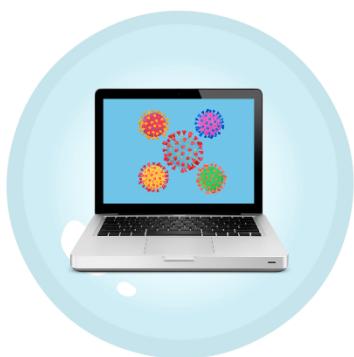
## Cyber Security.



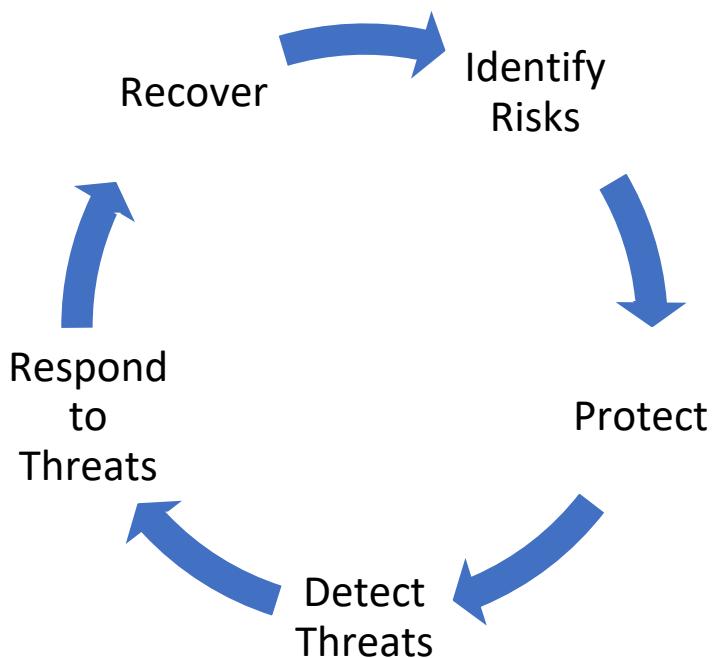
Cyber security means keeping online services safe. We want people to trust that their information is protected.

We promise to:

- Work with important groups like the National Cyber Security Centre. This helps us stay updated on new threats.
- Work with local partnerships to keep up to date with new cyber threats.



We use this way of working to check for cyber threats:



## Governance.



We promise to be clear about how we use and share your personal data.

We will make sure we have strong information sharing agreements with our partners.

There will be clear and easy to understand information about the way information is used, shared and available.

## Climate Emergency.



In 2019, Sefton Council said there is a Climate Emergency. They planned to help the environment in a document called the Climate Emergency Strategy.

This Digital Strategy helps with the Climate Emergency actions.



We want to buy equipment that does not harm the environment. We will include rules about carbon reduction in all our buying rules.

We will look for new ways to reduce carbon to reach net zero. This means we want to balance the carbon we use with the carbon we save.



We will find ways to track and report their carbon footprint. This helps them see how much they improve.

We want to use cloud services first. This means using online software and storage instead of physical equipment.



## Technical Design.

We want our systems to be strong, able to grow, and good for the future. We will use cloud technology to help with this.

All our services and systems will be safe from the start. We will follow our Zero Trust rules.

We will use Government Digital Standards. This means our systems can talk to each other securely when needed.

Our computer systems will work on any device or internet browser. This means you can use them on any computer or phone.

We will make sure we get the best value for money. We will use government buying rules to help with this.

Our goal is to have systems that are strong, safe, and easy to use. We will follow the best rules and use the best tools.



## Supply chain management.

We will make sure that all suppliers of digital services to the council follow cyber security standards during the contracts. To make sure this happens we will:

- We will teach our teams who buy services about cyber safety in supply chains.
- We will follow national rules for managing supply chains.
- We will set basic safety rules for suppliers.
- We will check suppliers often to find and fix any problems.

This will help keep everyone safe and secure.





## Supporting an Enhanced Customer Journey.

Sefton Council wants to help all people use their services easily. They will do this in multiple ways that work for people. To do this we will:



We will make the information services on Council websites easy to read and understand. It will meet all accessibility rules.

We will let people do things online any time of the day or night. This means 24 hours a day.



We will also look at new technology like AI. Artificial Intelligence is used to help answer questions or give advice. This will help make things better for people online, in person, and on the phone.

The Council will make sure new services are made with the customer in mind. This will help people get what they need easily.



## Data and Intelligence.

Data is very important for the council. It helps us plan and improve services for people in Sefton.

We want to help our staff use data better. We will give them tools, skills, and training.

This will help us deliver better services and meet our goals in the Corporate Strategy.



We are already making changes. We have a new way to store data and use Microsoft Power BI (Business Intelligence) to analyse data.

This technology helps us keep up with service reporting and national requirements.



We are also using Power BI dashboards for Children's Services to manage performance. Next, we will bring our BI and performance resources together in one place.

We want to create a culture that values data science and data quality. We will share more data with other organisations.

We will build on our information governance and ethical standards for using data.

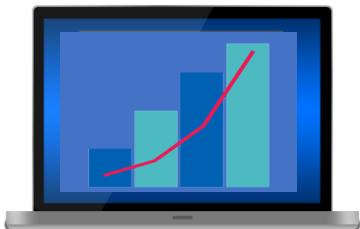
### **To do this we will:**



- We will use good data to make better choices and improve our services for everyone.
- We will bring our team together to get better at understanding and using data.
- We will make data available to everyone who needs it to work better together.
- We will use new technology to make our work easier and smarter with data.
- We will make reports and dashboards that are easy to use and understand.
- We will use the best data sets to avoid having the same data in many places.
- We will make sure our data is always correct, complete, and useful.
- We will take care of our data from start to finish, including when we no longer need it.
- We will use data in a fair way, respect privacy, and keep data safe.
- We will buy systems that let us link data for better insights.



- We will give open access to data when it is right to do so, helping our communities.
- We will make sure our data is used in a way that helps everyone.
- We will always look for ways to improve how we use data to serve our residents better.



## Supporting the Workforce of the Future.



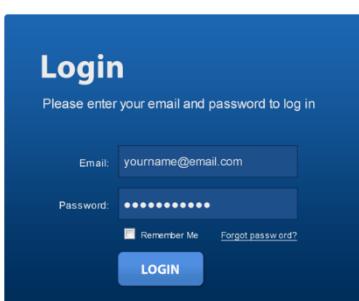
The staff in Sefton are very important to us. We want to help them do their best and help the people in Sefton.

### To do this we will:

- We will give our staff the right tools and systems to work well.
- We will support flexible working so staff can have a good balance between work and home life.
- We will offer training in new and existing digital technologies to help staff learn and grow.
- We will build a network of ICT Champions to help staff use digital tools better.
- We will look into new technologies like robots and AI to make work easier and reduce extra tasks.
- We will use digital tools to help Adults, Children, and Families live safe and independent lives.



- We will improve IT systems to help children and their families get better services.
- We will provide ICT solutions to support services for children with special needs.
- We will review and redesign the system that helps children move to adult services.
- We will create online portals for children's services to help parents get more information.
- We will improve financial systems to help with services.
- We will make sure all systems meet the Council's legal duties as they change.
- We will work with Health and Community care to deliver digital services, including a Shared Care Record.
- We will support the Adult Social Care strategy and use technology to help care.
- We will review and redesign Case Management Systems to support Early Intervention Services.
- We will improve financial systems to help citizens manage their money online.
- We will develop online services for Adult Social Care, including a self-assessment tool.





## More Information about Sefton's Digital Strategy.

This is the easy read version of the Digital Strategy.

There is a more detailed and technical version for those who would like to see it.

It is available on Sefton Council's website.



[IT and Digital \(sefton.gov.uk\)](http://sefton.gov.uk)



If you want to get in touch about the digital strategy or need an alternative format please contact:

0345 140 0845



Or email: [contact@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:contact@sefton.gov.uk)