



# BIRMINGHAM FOUNDRY

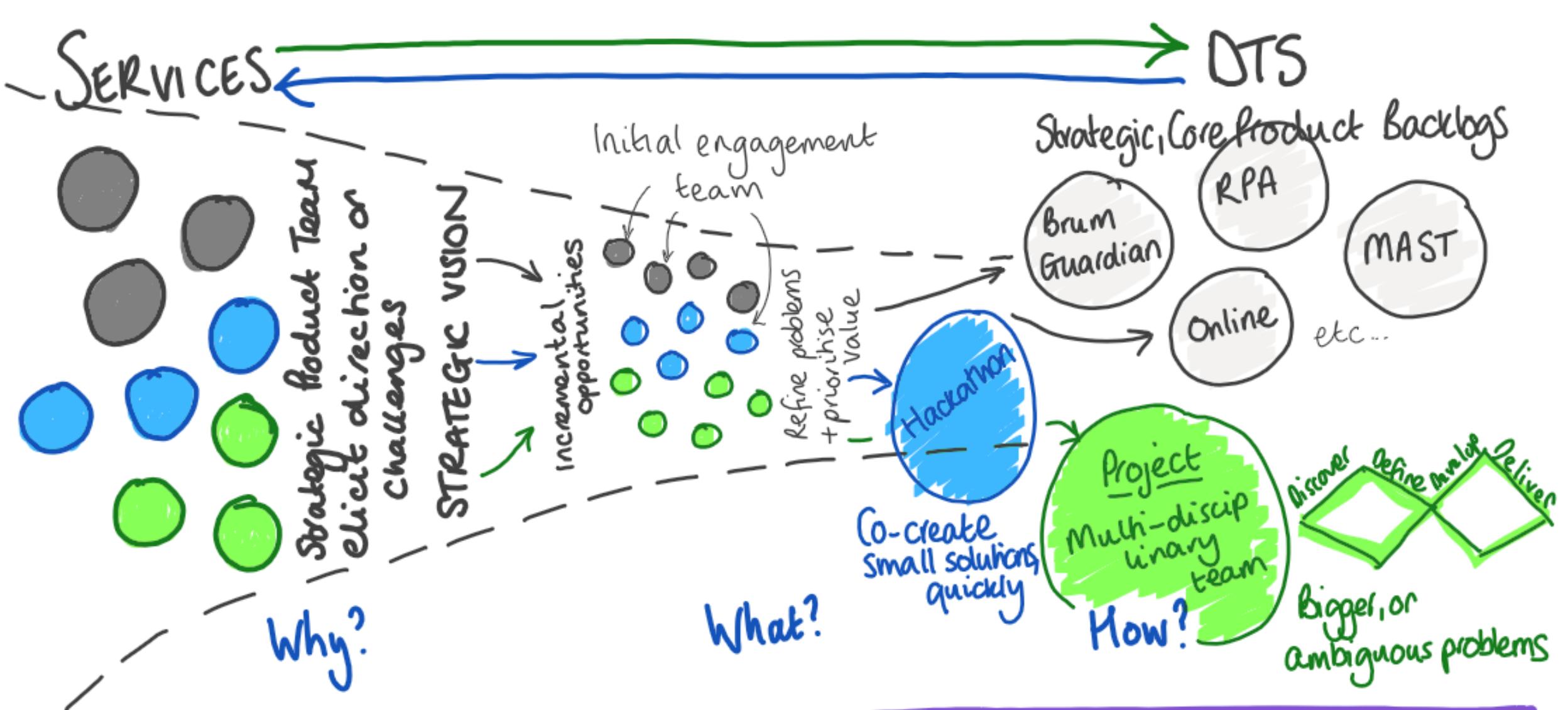
258



 **RESET**

 **RESHAPE**

 **RESTART**



**HR | finance** - releasing benefits in the service

# The traditional approach to Project Management...

Think **big**, start **big**, learn **slow**!



Big programmes of work that focus on outputs & deliverables



Requirements gathered upfront



Fixed scope with deadlines, estimating time, people & resources



Sequential delivery, releasing value at the end of the Project 'big bang' style



High usage of contractors & consultants

# The Foundry is different



Think **big**,  
start **small**,  
learn and  
scale  
quickly!



Identify opportunities to  
improve efficiency and release  
savings



Solve small business problems  
and replace old ways of  
working with better, more  
efficient ways of working



Deliver value at pace –  
releasing Minimal Usable  
Products and iterating on them



Collaborate, involve users,  
services in the driving seat,  
build skills, improve the culture



Generate buy-in, excitement,  
create a culture of  
collaboration and inclusion and  
continually learn and measure  
our impact

 **RESET**

 **RESHAPE**

 **RESTART**

# BIRMINGHAM FOUNDRY

Turning ideas into reality...

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to help Birmingham City Council close its budget gap whilst building digital skills and capabilities, empowering the workforce to be a part of the solution and lead the change



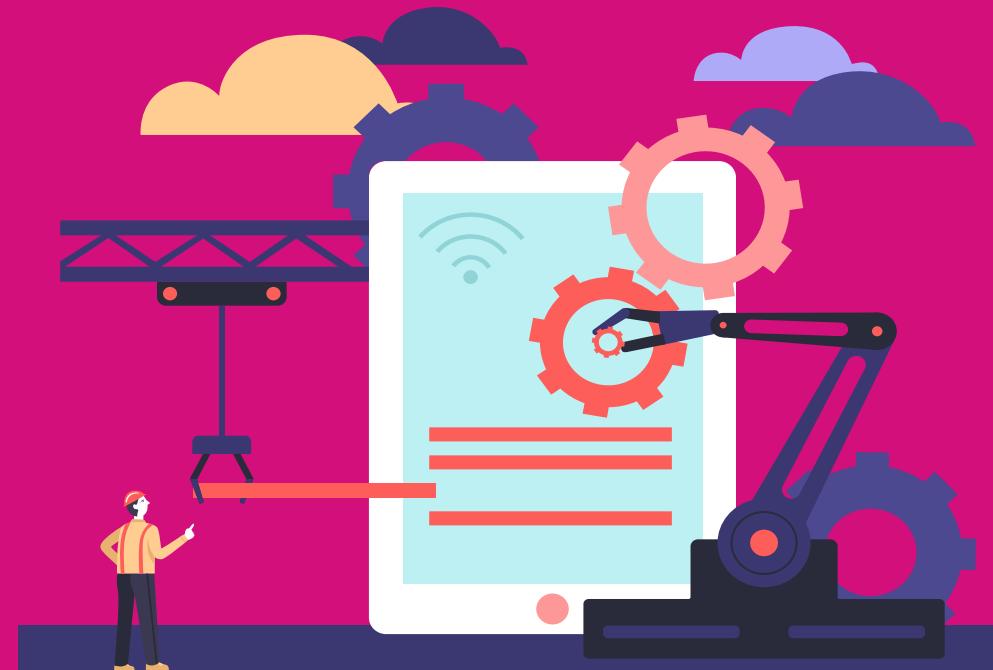
SAVINGS



EFFICIENCY



CULTURE



 **RESET**

 **RESHAPE**

 **RESTART**

# Foundry impact

How the Foundry measures value

Financial	Time saved	Culture change	Customer experience	Reusable capability
<b>Financially sustainable council</b> 	<b>Well run council</b> 	<b>Culture, morale, skills</b> 	<b>Delivering good services</b> 	<b>Solving common problems</b> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Reduce agency staff</li><li>-Reduce spend on software contracts</li><li>-Reduce spend on consultants</li></ul> <hr/> <p>Leveraging new tech, the Foundry enables services to meet savings targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Challenge and stop bad processes</li><li>-Automation</li><li>-Reduce manual tasks</li><li>-Better tools for staff</li></ul> <hr/> <p>Staff can spend time on more valuable or complex work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Collaborate</li><li>-Empower staff</li><li>-Services lead the change</li><li>-Build digital skills</li></ul> <hr/> <p>Nurturing a curious workforce, keen to challenge the status quo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Design for user needs</li><li>-Identify pain points</li><li>-Reduce time to serve</li><li>-Improve confidence in the council</li></ul> <hr/> <p>Improving citizen experience in dealing with council services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Tools &amp; learning that can be re-used</li><li>-Scale solutions</li><li>-Model capability approach to tech</li></ul> <hr/> <p>Reducing waste, maximising our investment in tech</p>

# How does the Foundry work?

A way of working that allows us to collaboratively deliver small chunks of value at pace (within 8 weeks)

Initial Engagement Team



DTS Board



Approved Foundry Pipeline



Iterative delivery of value



MVP & iterative improvements



 **RESET**

 **RESHAPE**

 **RESTART**

# Digital Foundry – 4 pillars

Principles remain we are here to create financial savings, to replace inefficient ways of working and improve the culture. We focus on customer and staff experience as well as value for the organisation.

A

## Digital workplace

- Upskilling BCC staff – digital skills
- Leveraging MS tools and open technologies
- Building skills in design thinking, experimenting, prototyping
- Service Areas join Foundry and deliver together
- Creating 'Centre's of Excellence'

Foundry  
Events

B

## End to end service redesign

Strategically working in partnership with a service area, end to end process or a customer user journey. Deep dives and rapid reviews to redesign and / or identify high value problems to solve to create priority list of initiatives.

C

## Solving common problems

Technical capability developed so far:

- Translation- skate board- product approach to grow it right for user centred way and scale for everyone to use
- Redaction
- Digital mail indexing
- Assessment tool
- Text messages/ emails

D

## Ideas engine – experimenting

Communication and continuing to encourage service areas to come forward with ideas and work collaboratively with / as part of Foundry

- Initial engagements
- Value identified
- Deliver and iterate



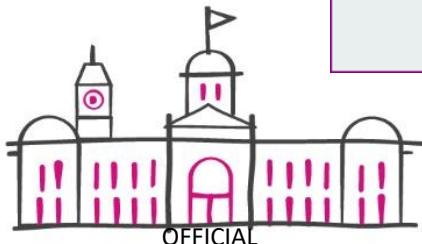
# A

# The Digital Workplace Vision and Mission

## Empowering digital skills for a future-ready team.

Our mission is to empower our workforce with digital skills and confidence and support a culture of continuous learning.

We aim to equip every individual with the tools and knowledge to thrive in a rapidly evolving digital landscape, creating a resilient, future-ready team that drives innovation, productivity, and success.



# A Digital Foundry

## Digital workplace

### DONE / NOW

- 1350+ attendees at Digital Skills Hours
- 350 recording viewings
- Supported Learning & Development team in delivering Management Essentials – focus on digital skills
- Launched Communities of Practice for each technology to enable community-support
- Stats:
  - Over the past 180 days, **20% more people** have been collaborating on 4 or more files.
  - **62% of people collaborate** with online Microsoft 365 files now compared to **55%** in September

### NEXT

- Continue building baseline digital awareness and skills – maximising our investment in Microsoft Licenses
- Attendance at Directorate All Hands Calls
- MD's Webinar in April
- Focus future Digital Skills Hours on behaviours:
  - Making the most of meetings
  - Content collaboration
  - Task management
  - Knowledge sharing
  - Enabling an AI Council
- Intermediate and Advanced Digital Skill development

### FUTURE

Roadmap for Employee Engagement and Experience:

- Communication and communities
- Workplace analytics and feedback
- Learning and knowledge management

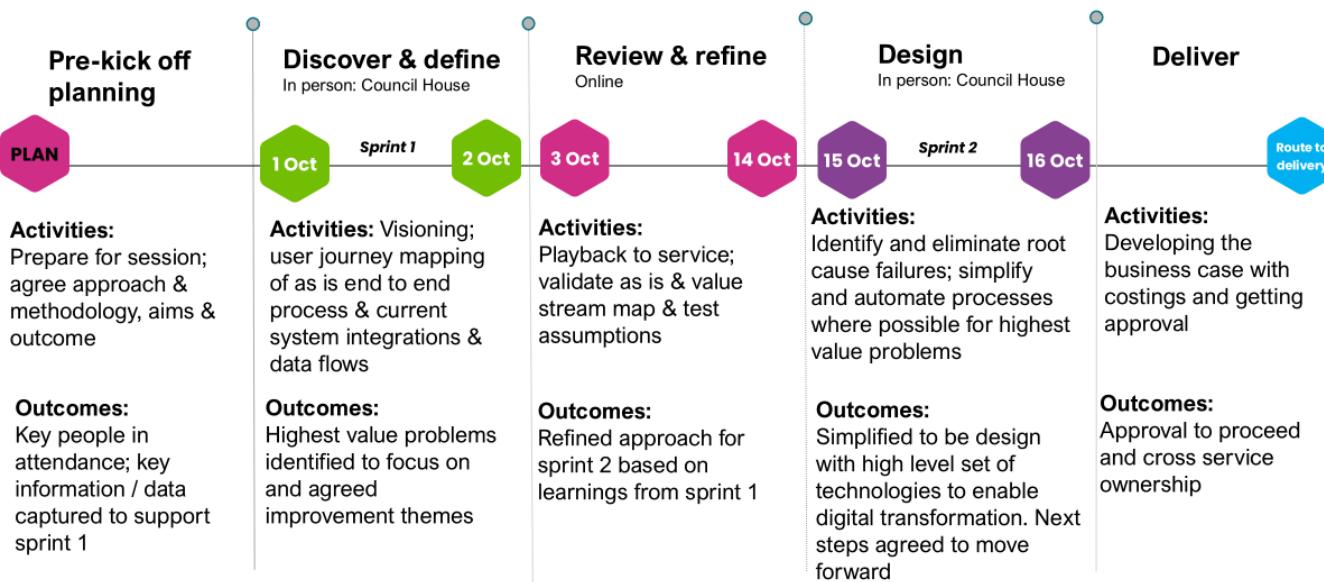


**B**

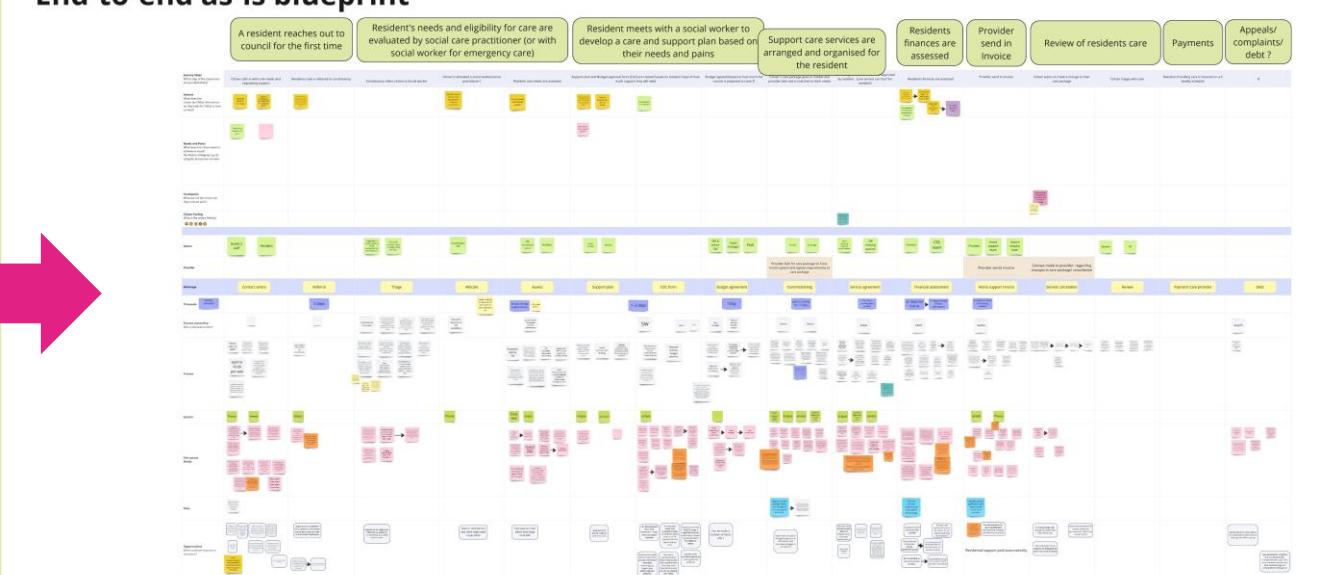
# Care support pathway

## Approach: a view across the 4 days

Review of the end-to-end process for agreeing, sourcing, and paying for packages of care.



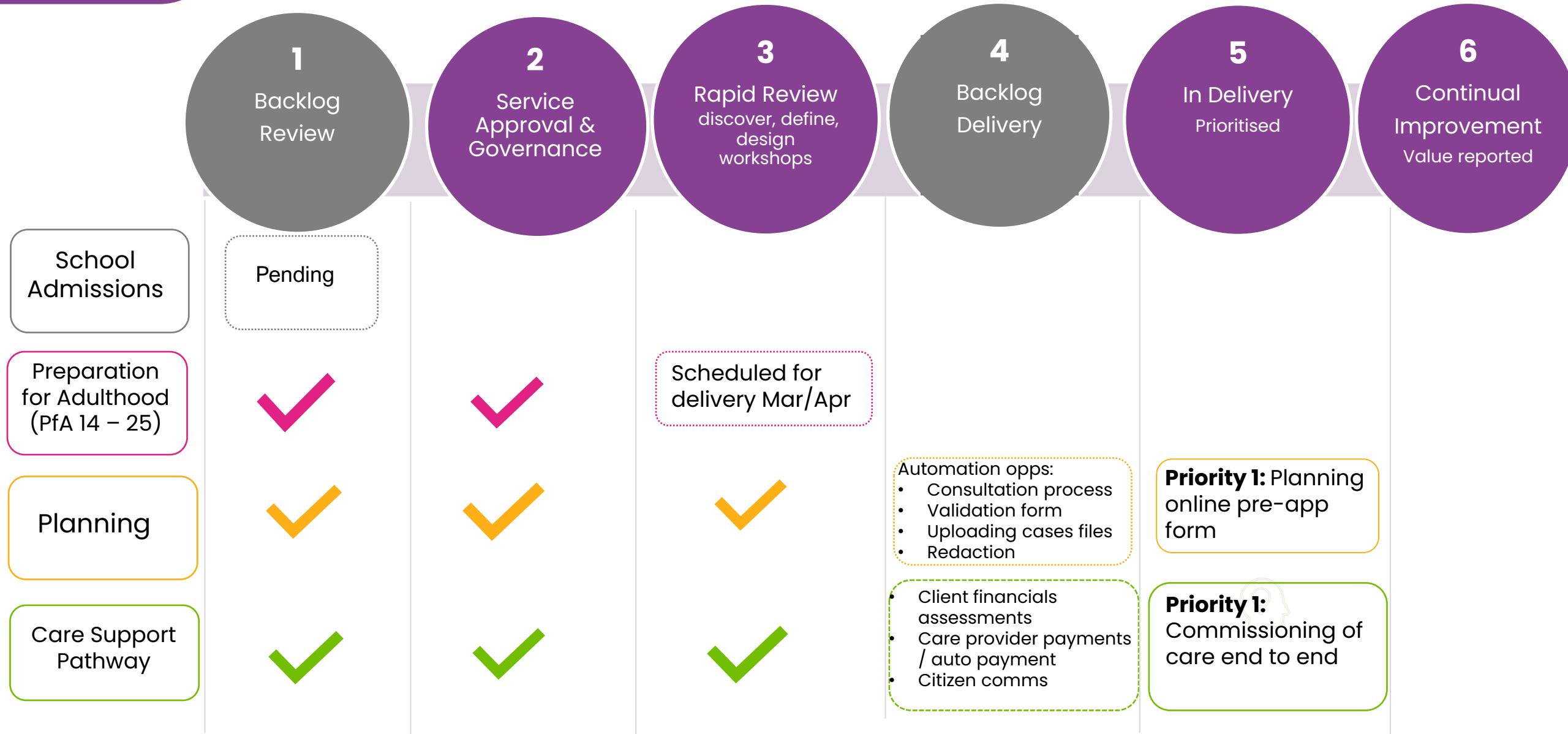
### End-to-end as-is blueprint



**B**

# Digital Foundry

## End to end service redesign





Stable (long-lived) multi-disciplinary  
Team owns the products and  
solutions



Creating a pipeline of Mailboxes for  
Comms Mining including reusing  
existing capabilities



Customers and users become  
part of the team



Priorities are dynamic based on  
value and benefits profile



Pro-active collaboration with  
Service Teams inform our priorities



User-research and service-design  
identify opportunities to build the  
Roadmap and Backlog with services



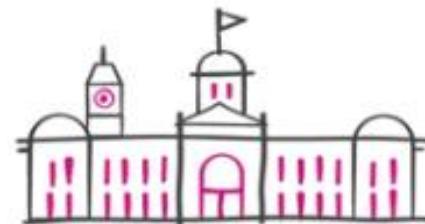
Team fosters stable and effective  
relationships and ways of working



All active work is visible and highly  
transparent (logged in Optifolio)



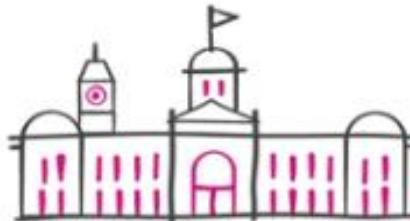
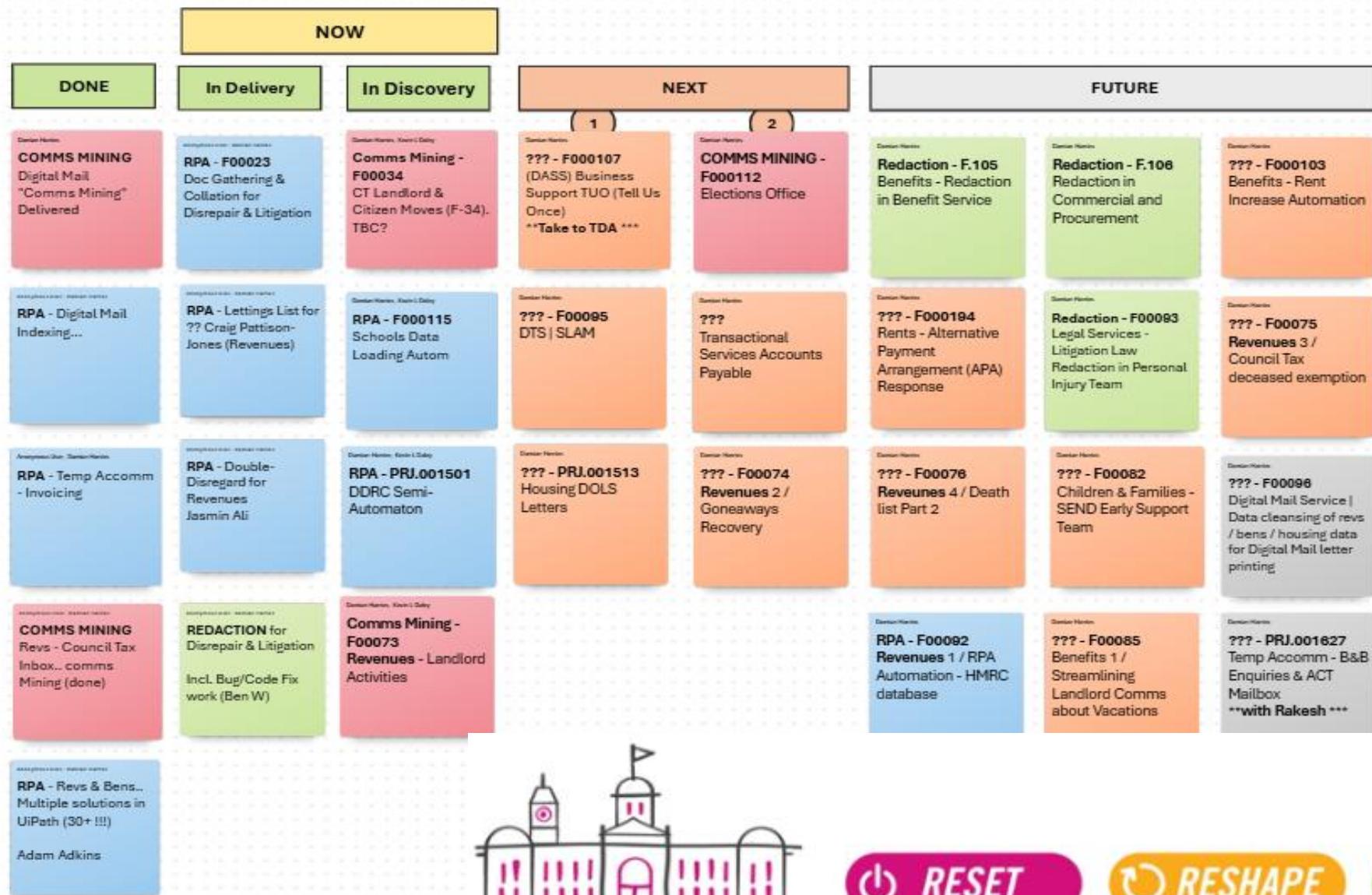
2 Week Development cycles enable  
the Team to focus on a clear Goals



# Digital Foundry

## Solving common problems Intelligent Automation team

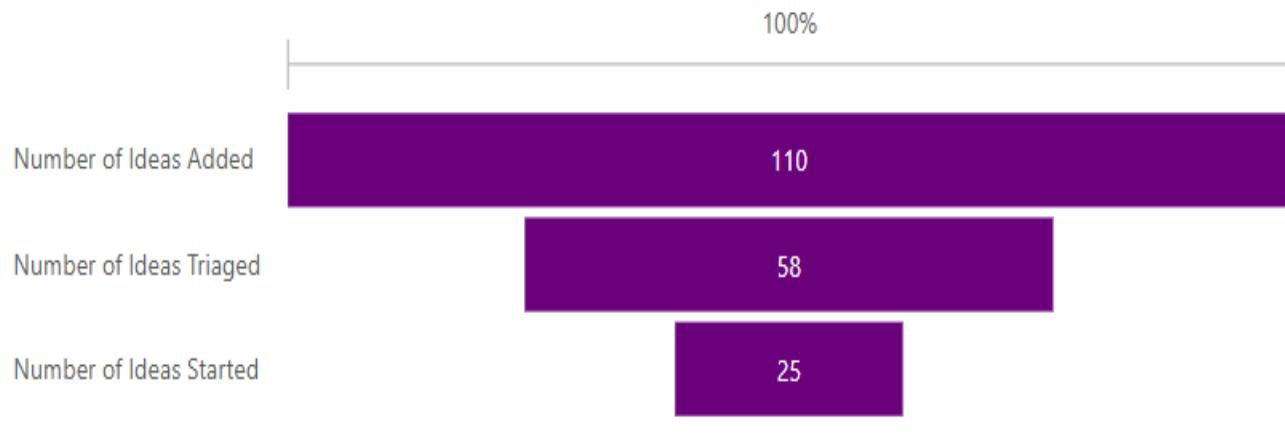
C



# Digital Foundry Ideas engine - experimenting

D

How many ideas have been captured, routed, and completed?

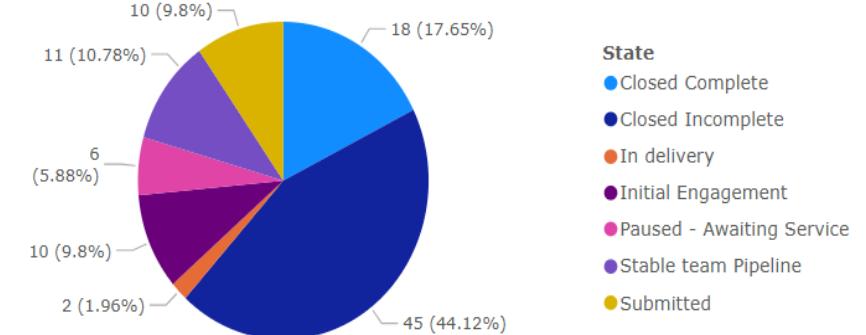


Rank	Priority Score	Title	State	Directorate
1		Council Tax (general enquiries inbox) communications mining	Initial Engagement	Finance & Governance
2		Auto upload of funeral documents into BACAS	Submitted	City Operations
3		SLAM	Submitted	Council-wide
4		Introductory Tenancies Process (FoundryBUILD)	Initial Engagement	City Housing
5		SharePoint for Early Year's Data & Information Team	Submitted	Children & Families (DCS)
6		ON HOLD Staying Independent at Home	Initial Engagement	Adult Social Care (DASS)
7		SEND Early Support Team (On hold)	Submitted	Children & Families (DCS)
8		Automating Identity and Access Management in LOB Systems (FoundryBUILD)	Initial Engagement	COO
9		School Data Loading Automation	Initial Engagement	Children & Families (DCS)
10		SEND Home Bridging Team (HBT) Team (ON hold)	Submitted	Children & Families (DCS)
11		Replacement digital citizen engagement platform	Submitted	Strategy, Equalities & Part...
12		Revenues / Landlord Activities	Initial Engagement	Finance & Governance
13		Tell Us Once (FoundryBUILD)	Initial Engagement	Adult Social Care (DASS)
14		Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) Response	Submitted	Finance & Governance
15		Rapid Review: School Admissions	Submitted	Children & Families (DCS)
16		Rapid Review: Transitions	Submitted	Children & Families (DCS)

## Total Ideas per Directorate

Directorate	Count of Directorate
Finance & Governance	20
Children & Families (DCS)	16
Adult Social Care (DASS)	14
City Housing	14
Strategy, Equalities & Partnerships	13
City Operations	12
COO	10
Council-wide	5
People Services	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>

## Number of Initiatives in Each State



# Foundry Events

Events that demonstrates new ways of working, delivers solutions, and showcases emerging tech.

- Encourage **collaboration** between different areas of BCC
- Foster **open communication** and break down silos
- Provide an opportunity for **practical experience** in agile methodologies
- **Solve real BCC problems** at pace
- Cultivate a **culture** of learning and growth
- Promote the **Foundry as a concept** and a different way of working
- Build better **relationships** with suppliers and partners
- Invite **external perspectives** and support **early careers**



# FoundryLIVE: June 24

Igniting Innovation, Collaboration, and Transformation

**2 days**  
**3 partners**  
**6 hack teams**  
**6 prototypes**  
**12 lightning talks**  
**130+ attendees**

1. Intranet proof of concept
2. Housing invoicing automation
3. Digital mail indexing
4. Equality Impact assessments
5. Adults access database replacement
6. Major events platform

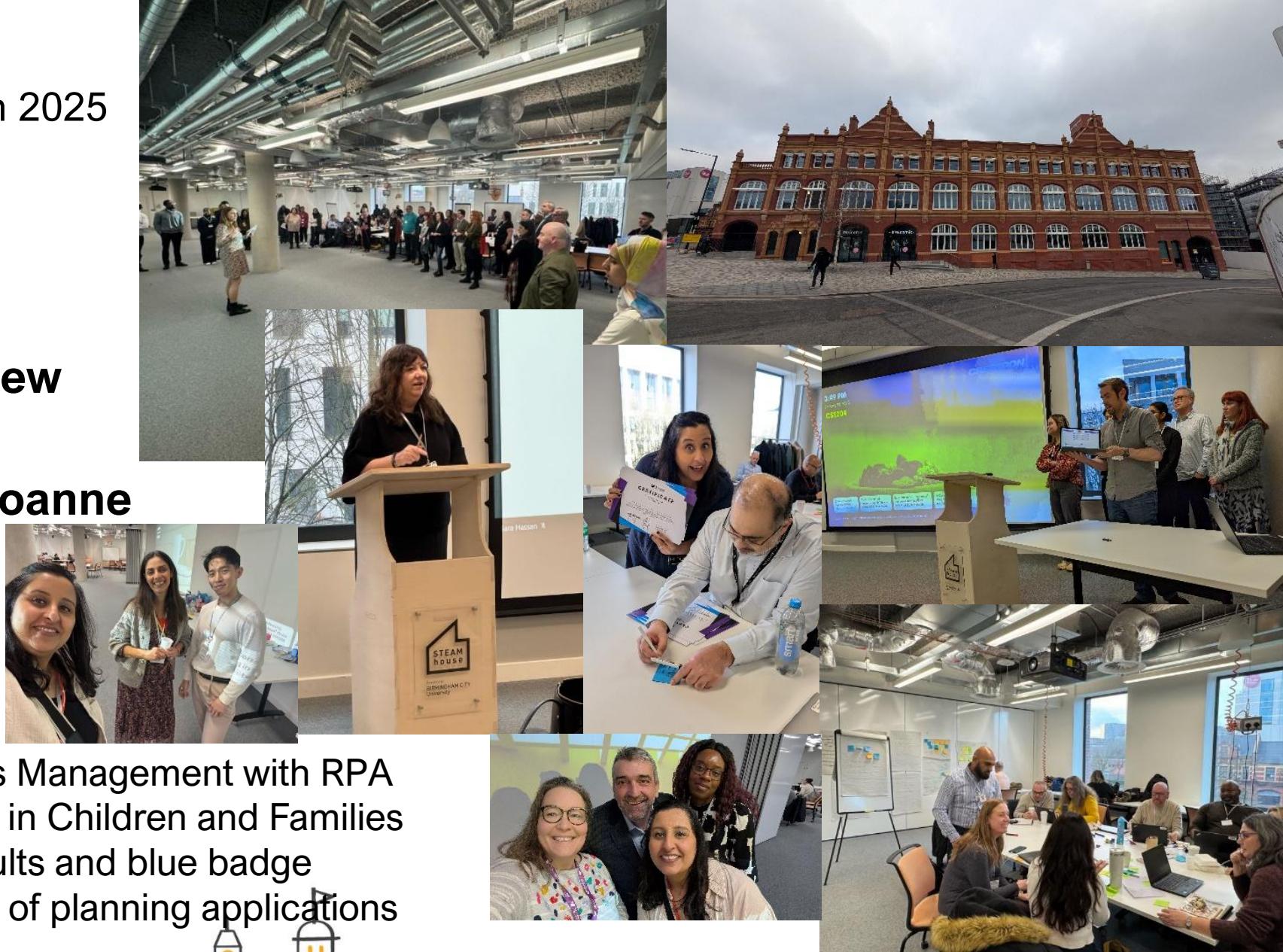


# FoundryBUILD: Jan 2025

**3 days**  
**4 partners**  
**2 explore zones**  
**4 hack teams & 1 rapid review**  
**6 prototypes**  
**120+ attendees including Joanne Roney!**

## Working prototypes created:

1. Introductory tenancies API
2. Introductory tenancies RPA
3. Automated Identity and Access Management with RPA
4. Single view of attendance data in Children and Families
5. Tell us once automation for adults and blue badge
6. Automated validation checking of planning applications

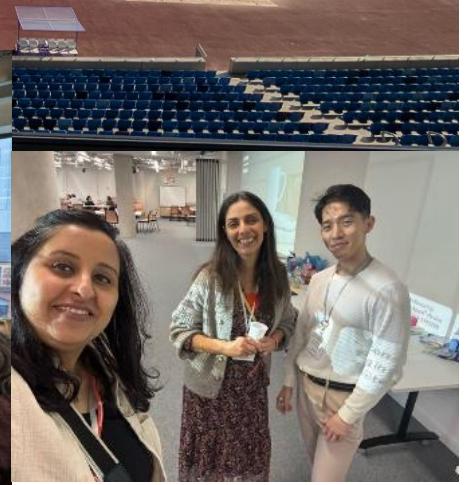
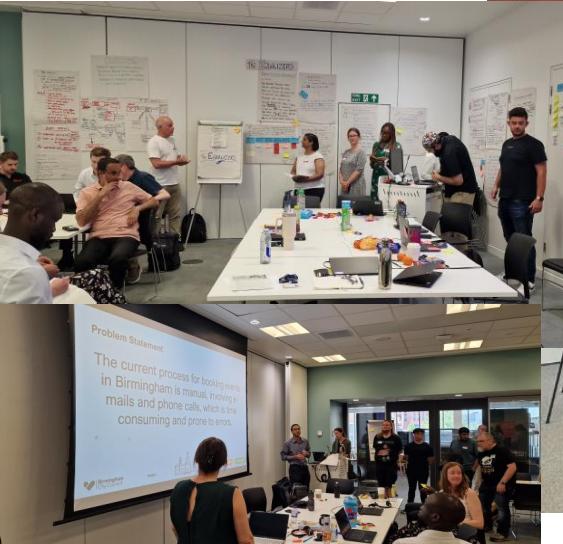


# FoundryLIVE25: Empowering Birmingham's Digital Future

**Alexander Stadium**

**Tuesday 24 – Thursday 26 June 2025**

- Two-day hackathon (24-25 June)
- Learning sessions (24-25 June)
- One-day inspire sessions (26 June)



# Examples of Foundry delivery



## Automated Translations



49.6% of residents are of other ethnicities.  
Approx. 57K residents say they can't speak English at all



In 2022/23 we translated approximately 2592 A4 pages at a cost of £349,992



Foundry developed a translation solution in SharePoint in 6 weeks, learning from Haringey



Solution translates non-complex, non-legal documents in 5 minutes compared to 2-3 days.



Cost reduction from between £50 to £135 per document to £0.20 to £1.20.

## Automated redaction



The D&L team manages the council's response to letters of claim for failure to maintain property



Team received approx. 250 section 11 claims each month and not meeting statutory response times



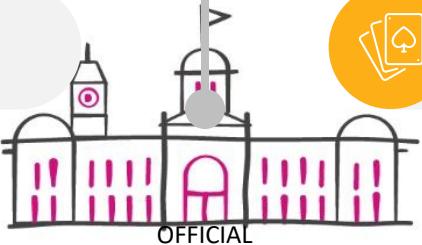
Between June to October 2024, they had 379 cases where proceedings have been started against the Council costing £330,000



IA has improved response times. Redaction 95% accurate – helped team clear backlog



Reduction in fines liability to BCC of £60K per month (average £80K per month to £20K)



# Foundry Value Summary 24/25

## Savings / Cost avoidance      £308,500

### Online calculator

Switched off incumbent, replaced with internally built solution - £20K per annum saving

### SharePoint Intranet

£117k annually (saving £45k, cost avoidance £72k) on external contract

### Digital mail indexing

Approximately £89.5k per annum agency saving

### Redaction – D&L

Forecast £75k cost-avoidance for 2024/2025 (£60k per month estimated for 25/26)

### Automation of text and email – OT

£7k saving from not sending letters - print and post costs

## Time / efficiency savings

### Temp accom invoice checks

Standardizing the invoice format and naming conventions reduced errors by 65% and saved staff time

### Equality Impact Assessments

Improved time taken to complete an EIA from 15 to 10 hours. (Saving approx. 236 hours of senior officer time per month)

### Digital mail indexing

Efficiency gains resulted in less than a minute to process emails compared to 1.8 minutes

### Redaction D&L

The AI redaction tool achieved a 95% accuracy rate, resulting in a time saving of about 10 minutes for 3 documents

### Automation of text & email

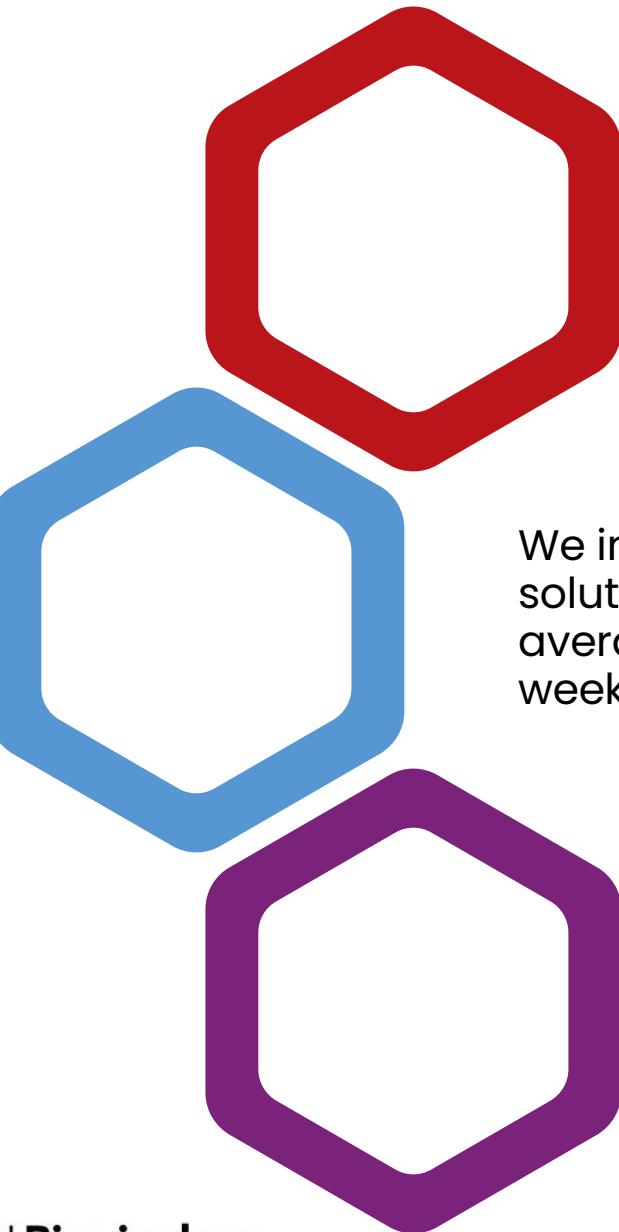
(2 x GR3) 3.75 hrs per week each = £8,038 pa  
(5 x GR5) 1.5 hrs per month each = £3.010 pa

### Corporate performance

Replacing Excel S/S with Power Platform solutions saved approx. £1k cost per week for 1.4 FTE saving people time (~£60k per year)

### Early education headcount

First use saved 2 weeks of people time



The Foundry has delivered 14 solutions in collaboration with services so far. We have stopped 4 initiatives that were not delivering intended value.

We intended to deliver solutions in 6-8 weeks. The average time to deliver is 11 weeks.

We have iterated on the Foundry approach and have introduced the '4 pillars of Foundry'



# Foundry's first 12 months

# Foundry Feedback

We are inviting services to provide feedback about their experience of working with the Foundry. These are some example responses.



**How likely are you to recommend the Foundry to colleagues?**

**90 NPS**

## **What is the reason you would recommend?**

The team were extremely helpful and not only helped us to deliver a successful product, but also upskilled the team in the process which has been invaluable

## **What aspects worked well?**

Liked working with online collaboration tools, liked the openness and receptiveness of the team to ideas, very collaborative

## **What aspects didn't work so well?**

Making changes – there is no option on ICT portal to make simple amendments. A call with team member meant I avoided completing a whole new form.

## **What did you enjoy the most?**

Knowledge sharing, collaboration, learning from others, knowing the Foundry's aspirations, working together through the hiccups and "unknowns"



# What have we learned?



Simplicity is the magic of Foundry



Senior sponsors and advocates who are positive, supportive, challenging and inspirational



Things take longer and you make more mistakes when you're learning



Prioritise psychological safety and creating safe spaces to innovate

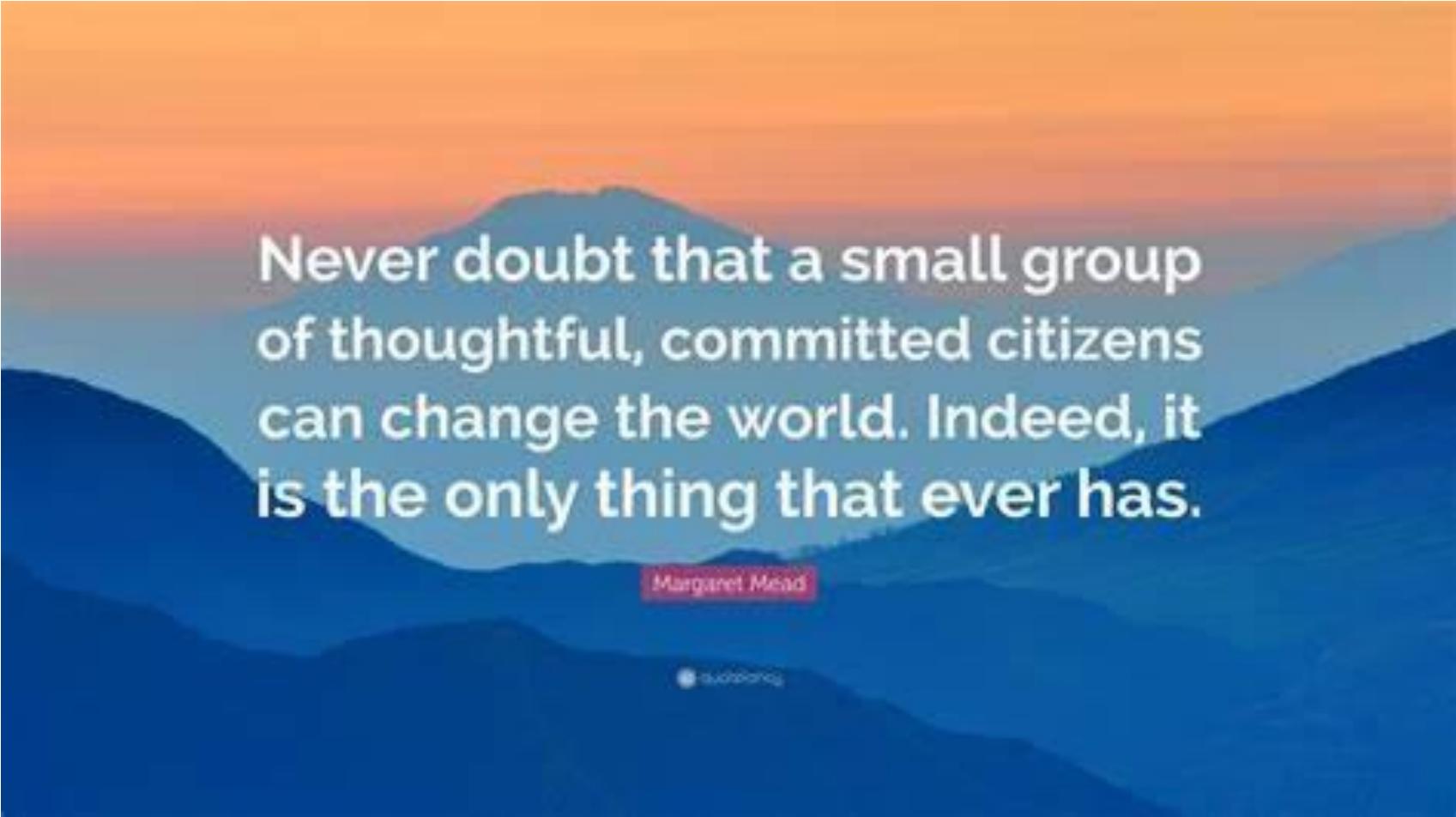


Call it out when it's not working! Stay true, honest and unbiased.



Methodology? Being Agile vs doing Agile





Never doubt that a small group  
of thoughtful, committed citizens  
can change the world. Indeed, it  
is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

• [audioboom](#)





@BhamCityCouncil



@birminghamcitycouncil



@birminghamcitycouncil



[birmingham.gov.uk](http://birmingham.gov.uk)