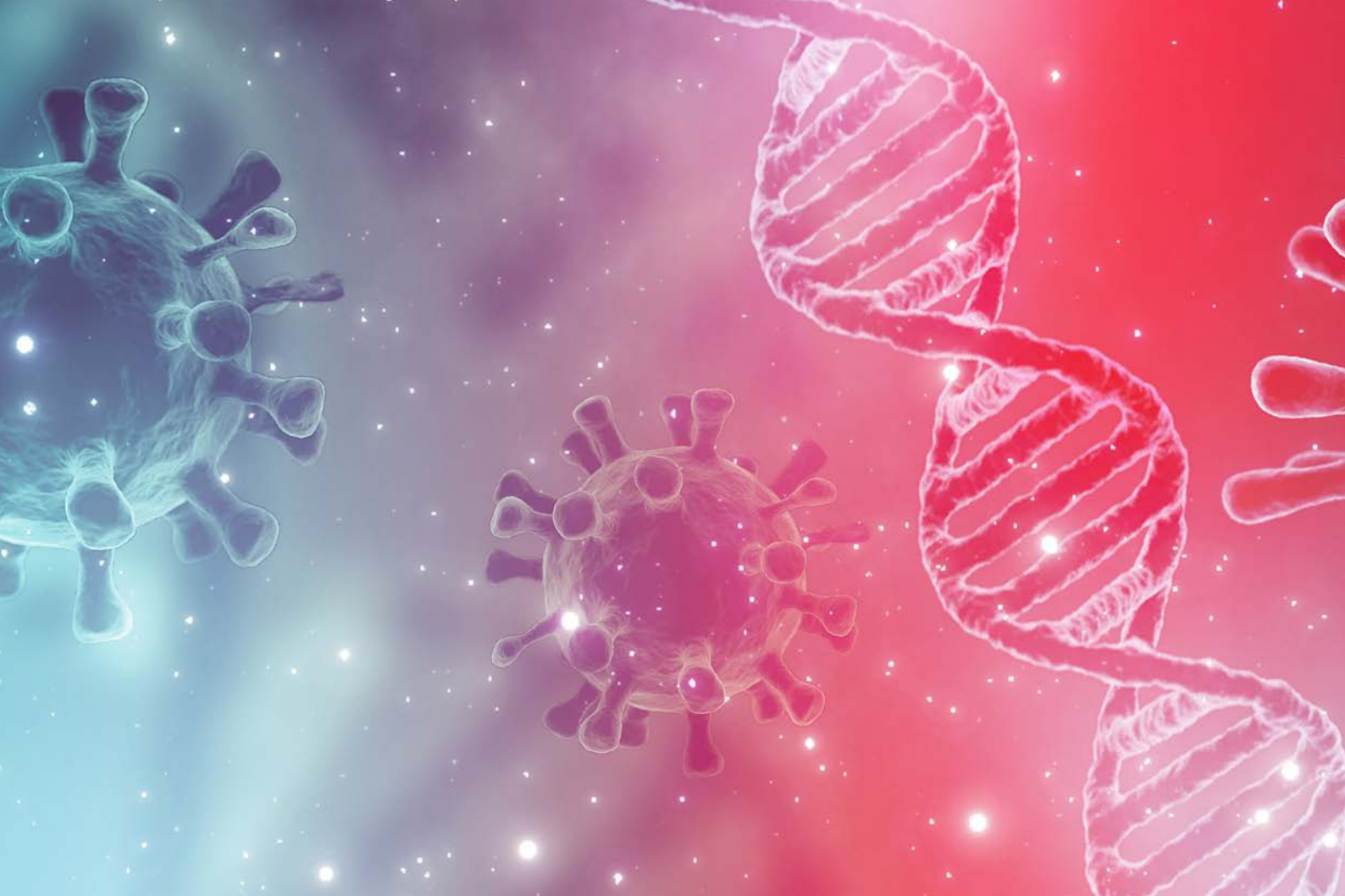# HORNBILL

The definitive guide to Service Challenges in 2021 for the UK Public Sector

Briefing Paper

The Public Sector is set to drive the UK out of 2020's maelstrom. Support, Automation and ease of Transformation will define the new normal

Contents

Introduction

There is little doubt that 2020 will live long in our memories and will be recorded as a defining moment in all our lives. Whether we like it or not, we are living through a key moment in history. Historically significant events are always a huge catalyst for change, and we are witnessing this now, as the impact of the pandemic rewrites the DNA of business, the public sector, and how we live our lives.

Change is the new constant. For the foreseeable future, this IS the new normal.

By any measure, 2020 is not a normal year. Both the scale and speed of the change required has rewritten the rule books, firmly turning previous management practices and ecosystems on their heads. As we shift our minds towards 2021, what will be the impact for the public sector? And more specifically, can IT step up to the challenge of steering their organisations through the era of hyper-transformation?

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There are known knowns. There are things we
know that we know. There are known unknowns.
That is to say, there are things that we now
know we don't know. But there are also unknown
unknowns. There are things we do not know we
don't know."

US Secretary of State for Defense, Donald Rumsfeld

How will public sector IT cope in 2021?

With the maelstrom of this year's events and the myriad of possible future impacts, we have borrowed from a line of thought from another chaotic and unfortunate time in recent history.

Lessons from chaotic times

At a news briefing in February 2002, US Secretary of State for Defense, Donald Rumsfeld produced the (now) infamous soundbite featured on the previous page to describe policy decision during the Iraq war:

Although people initially thought that Rumsfeld's statement was nonsense, his quote has been widely cited by academics and leading analyst groups to highlight the massive challenges that countries and economies face in responding to COVID-19.

Since the first Downing Street coronavirus briefing, the government's response was said to be led by the science. In the early stage of the crisis, government policy was guided by the Imperial College report **Impact of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) to reduce COVID-19 mortality and healthcare demand.** The experts made assumptions about person-to-person transmission, how

infection rates might be impacted by different settings, disease incubation times, alongside a host of other 'educated best guesses' based on earlier studies of the virus in other countries. Policy response to coronavirus may have been led by the science, but as more known unknowns are uncovered the modelling must be reshaped.

In the early stage of the pandemic, the UK government was accused of pursuing a herd immunity policy. As COVID-19 exploded across Europe, UK borders remained open, allowing infections to be imported. No government wants to appear at the top of the charts for COVID infection and death rates. Yet, on Sept 8th, 2020, the **BBC featured an article** which says -"Among the G7, the UK is currently the hardest-hit country."

As the experts themselves freely admit, the ability to predict anything with accuracy is hampered by the 'known unknowns' and can be thrown completely off-track by the 'unknown unknowns'.

They simply don't know what they don't know about this novel coronavirus, but their expertise, and what they learn along the way, is all we have for survival.

The UK is the one of most disrupted economies

From an economic standpoint, the UK has also been hit harder. Amongst its peers, the UK is second only to Spain, which in Q2 2020 had a 22.7% fall in GDP.

GDP % change on quarter Q2 2020

USA	9.1%
Germany	9.7%
Eurozone	12.1%
France	13.8%
UK	20.4%
Spain	22.7%
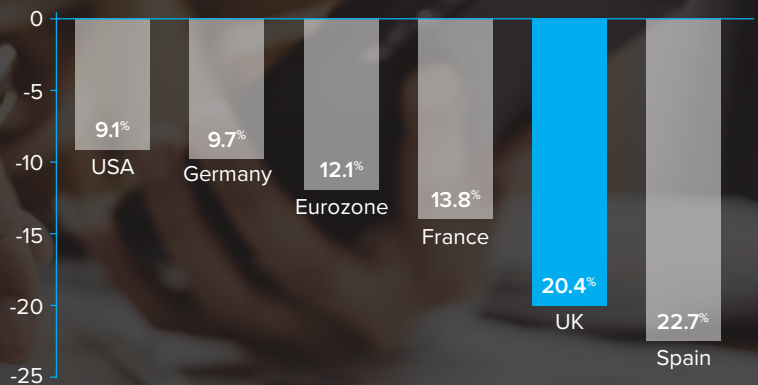
S: The House of Commons Library Report **GDP – International Comparisons: Key Economic Indicators**

Debt is not bad

Unlike our personal credit cards, faced with the current economic impact of the virus, debt is not bad. With the right focus it is a growth catalyst.

In the aftermath of World War II, UK net debt ran at around 230% of GDP. However, a sustained period of economic growth, near full employment and rising incomes increased tax revenues. At the same time, higher rates of inflation reduced the debt to GDP ratio. Despite historic net debt, the UK government still managed to increase spending to establish the welfare state and the NHS. In short, major public spending created true innovation, which provided the electric paddles needed to resuscitate the heart of the UK economy.

The same investment and stimulus is happening now, right in front of our eyes. UK public sector borrowing in the four months from April – July 2020 is estimated to have been over £150Bn (£128bn more than the same period last year) and forecasts estimate borrowing to increase to around £350Bn. This massive investment is aimed at limiting the rise in unemployment, subsidising jobs, and encouraging people to spend within the hardest hit sectors.

In July 2020, the UK economy expanded for the third month in a row (albeit from a low base) with pubs, restaurants and hairdressers opening and contributing to growth. However, July's 6.6% growth was lower than the 8.7% increase in June, sparking fears that recovery may not be sustained.

The July figures show that the UK has only recovered half of the lost output caused by the coronavirus, with GDP 11.7% lower that it was in February.

With infections now increasing, the UK government has announced tighter measures, aimed at reversing the trend. As we approach the winter months, keeping the public safe, and the economy going will be a tough and delicate balancing act, full of 'known unknowns'.

Coronavirus aside, the other great 'known unknown' that is bearing down upon the UK economy is Brexit. The government admits that its new UK Internal Market Bill, which rewrites part of the EU withdrawal bill, breaks international law. Is this negotiation posturing, or are we heading for a no deal crash out?

Economic recovery projections from government bodies and leading analyst groups assume a smooth transition, with a deal in place. It appears that few are brave enough to predict the economic impact of COVID and a crash out Brexit combined.

Implications for the Public Sector in 2021

McKinsey's fascinating research on how to kick start national economies highlights that even during lockdown, certain sectors such as healthcare, public transport, utilities, public administration and defense, and procurement of strategic goods and services must be 'always on'.

As UK lockdown measures relaxed during the summer months and the economy reopened, government support through the furlough scheme has not been enough to offset UK job losses. The **latest report from the Office for National Statistics** shows that redundancies in the UK have risen at their sharpest rate since 2009, with 695,000 people less on payrolls compared with March. This pushes the unemployment rate up to 4.1 per cent, and economists project it to increase significantly in the coming months.

The best possible outcome for economic recovery is a V-shaped return to pre-COVID GDP output. To facilitate such a recovery, the UK government will need to extend measures to invest in the public sector, support business activity and boost consumer spending. Just as it did in the aftermath of WWII, the government must prioritise investment in infrastructure, public services, and job protection to stimulate growth and fuel a sustainable economic recovery.

Make no mistake, public sector investment is fundamental to kickstart the UK economy. It will be funded by debt and efficiency. This is the new reality.

Austerity is (not) over

A decade of austerity has greatly impacted public sector bodies. The Institute for Fiscal Studies report **'The Outlook for the 2019 Spending Review',** highlighted that on a like-for-like basis, UK Public Sector departmental spending was more than £40 billion lower in 2018–19 than in 2009–10.

In September 2019, when the UK government announced an end to austerity, the threat of a global pandemic was a 'known unknown'. Although long-predicted, previous virus outbreaks with pandemic potential had been contained. The reality of COVID-19 has forced the government to borrow and spend at unprecedented levels. Although the government has indicated that it is prepared to go even further, at the first signs of sustainable economic recovery, spending will have to be tapered off.

While it continues, public sector organisations have a critical window to rethink broken business models, become entrepreneurial, and adopt a more commercial outlook to service provision and revenue generation, but they must act with urgency. In short, COVID is the era of digital transformation and at a scale previously unseen.

Expectations of Public Sector were already high, but Coronavirus has raised the bar

Prior to the crisis, demand for frictionless service experiences was already accelerating. **Research** by Accenture highlights that 85% of citizens expect the same or a higher standard of quality from government services than they do from commercial organisations. Citizens are consumers, who are exposed daily to personalized service experiences, immediate access to services, and automation that makes them easy to consume. Now that COVID-19 has amply demonstrated the critical importance of technology, and what IT groups can achieve when organisational bureaucracy is removed, the technology expectation bar has been set even higher.

The Digital Façade

Whilst local government and the wider public sector has made progress with digitising customer-facing services, their back-office operations remain largely analogue. Work is managed in departmental silos, using disparate, legacy systems.

Customer-facing services are supported by back-office operations and tackling one without addressing the other is akin to painting the façade of a house, while continuing to allow the plumbing, electrics, and fixtures to corrode and decay. Putting digital front ends onto legacy systems is not the answer.

In a pre-COVID world, the ongoing cost, inefficiency, and waste associated with siloed processes, manual tasks and repetitive activities was often ignored for fear of disrupting the status quo. That old world (and the legacy technologies that supported it) is already dead. Doing nothing now, is a spectacularly bad idea.

Businesses need strong digital strategies, supported by technology and practices that are sufficiently flexible, secure, and resilient to cope with the new normal. However, when it comes to technology, cost has always been a limiting factor.

The Public Sector CIO must be front and centre

Executives now have a leading role to play, and IT governance will feature prominently on Board agendas. To enable this, CEO's will need to work more closely with CIO's and CFO's to reshape both business and IT strategies.

There are two clear reasons why CIO's must be front and centre in the organisation's new direction. Firstly, if the CIO is involved in the shaping of the business strategy, the IT function is 2.5 times more likely to be rated as very effective by the organisation.

Why? The logic is straightforward. If IT activity and focus are directly aligned to the direction of the business, and the CIO is fully engaged in shaping that direction, the Board will proactively invest in the right technologies. Secondly, when the CIO is involved in shaping the shaping the business strategy, digital initiatives are 1.8 times more likely to deliver a significant impact.

As IT groups reviewed their business continuity plans in preparation for C-19, they will have identified many shortcomings in their current technology stacks. As the crisis hit, and theory became practice, it exposed further weaknesses, which forces IT teams to reassess their software applications, telephony, data networks, devices, security, and support channels. CIO's must take a lead role in this IT transformation and secure the investment for technology modernisation.

In any economic crisis, the focus of organisations naturally turns to cost containment, which means fewer people handling increased volumes of work. This will create a new landscape for IT projects, where demonstrating business value, proving operational efficiency and economic impact will be paramount. As we enter a new era of self-service and automation, pre-COVID management practices and approaches to securing IT investment are significantly out-of-step with the times. Our **briefing paper – Securing IT Investment for the path out of COVID** – outlines the challenge and presents 5 key tactics to help navigate the new landscape.

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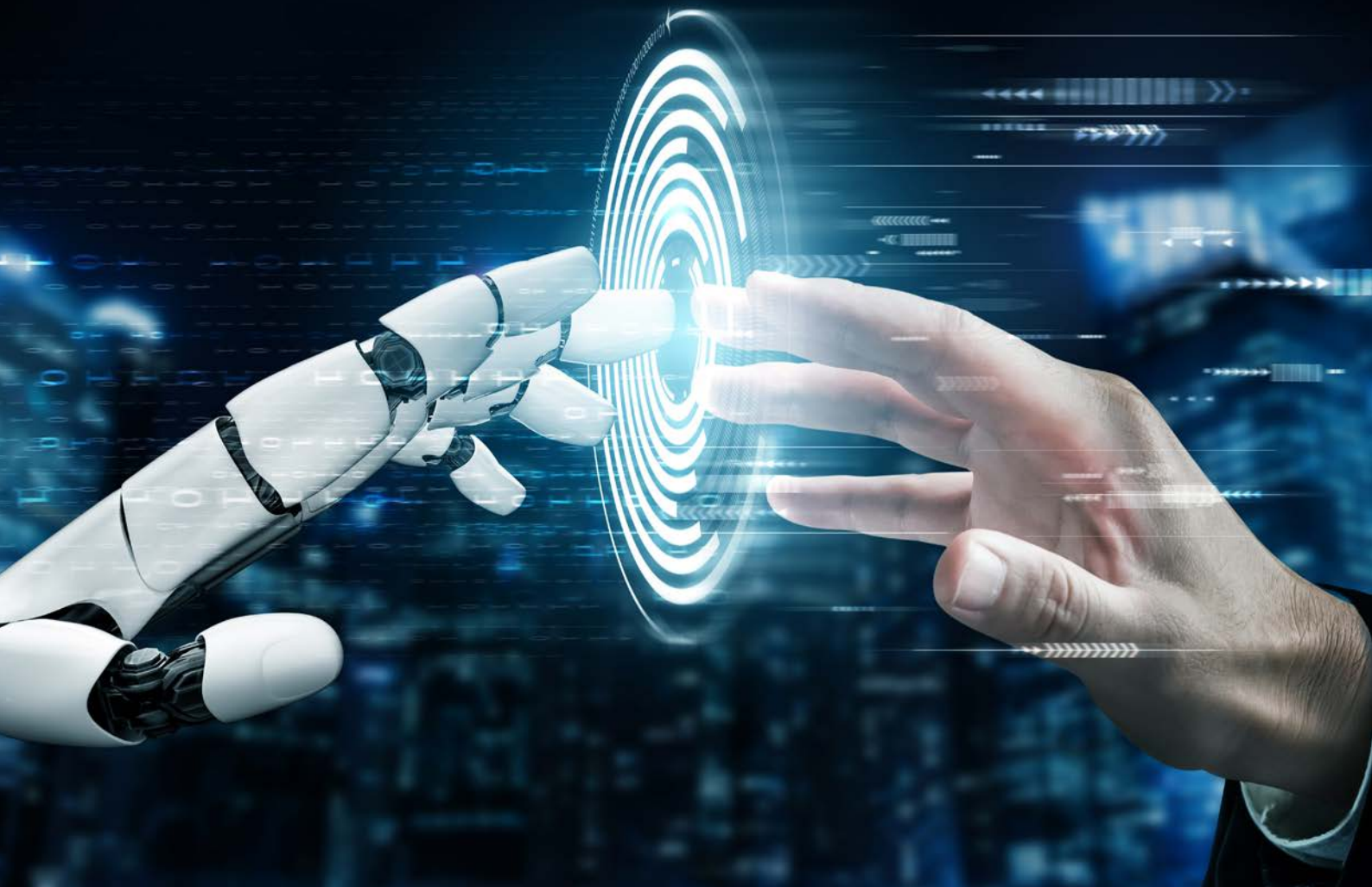
Next Generation government, needs next generation technology

The **Local Digital Declaration,** a document produced by UK Government bodies, outlines their ambition to "co-create the conditions for the next generation of local public services, where technology is an enabler rather than a barrier to service improvements, and services are a delight for citizens and officials to use."

To achieve this ambition, the document outlines 5 principles. The first principle explains that service design must prioritise the needs of the user, over organisational and technological silos. The second principle highlights the need for the public sector to 'fix its plumbing' by breaking dependencies on inflexible and expensive technologies that do not join up effectively. And the fifth principle explains the need to embed a culture that values, incentivizes, and expects digital ways of working from every member of the workforce.

The document, first published in July 2018, outlined the pressing need for technology modernisation across the public sector. In March 2020, as the bow wave of the virus hit, the number of organisations consuming content on Digital Transformation increased by 800%. As the crisis

continues, that pressing need has now become a matter of survival. Public sector organisations must therefore find new ways to innovate, disrupt and use technology to extract every ounce of efficiency from existing resources and deliver services more effectively.

Now is a good time to start addressing legacy technology issues. However, you must act quickly, and consider how your requirements have been, and will continue to be, impacted by the crisis.

Change is the new normal, a constant that is embedded in the new workplace, where organisations must realign to conditions every day. The old practices of relying on consultants, implementation partners and technical gurus are far too slow and expensive. Self-sufficiency and the ability to rapidly configure technology to modify processes and workflows is now paramount across all functions. Solutions that are not able to provide this must be replaced. Otherwise, IT will become the limiting factor of the very change it is supposed to not only facilitate, but lead.

Service Management and Automation – Critical technology investments

Leading analyst groups may be struggling to predict the impact of the crisis on economies and businesses, but they all agree that investment in technology is critical to the path out of COVID-19.

According to ZDNET's special Feature on the Pandemic, COVID-19 will drive rapid technology adoption to generate efficiency gains. As it is adopted, new IT strategies and tools will be needed, which will spur significant investment in critical support systems. McKinsey & Co's expert resources on COVID-19 advise that investment in Service Management and Automation technology is required to ensure that organisations can meet the increased levels and frequency of support requests.

Before the crisis, the enterprise Software as a Service (SaaS) market was already growing fast, with revenues outstripping the Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS) markets combined. While the market already felt mature, SaaS revenue only accounted for around 20% of the overall enterprise software market. Now, as more and more organisations move their software into the cloud, the SaaS market is set to explode.

UK Government cloud-first policy

The UK government laid out its **cloud-first policy in 2013,** which offered the following guidance to public sector IT organisations: "When procuring new or existing services, public sector organisations should consider and fully evaluate potential cloud solutions first before considering any other option. This approach is mandatory for central government and strongly recommended to the wider public sector."

During the last decade, cloud-computing was still in the early stages of development, and vendors that delivered SaaS solutions offered a differentiator. Today, the SaaS vendor landscape has changed dramatically: Industry stalwarts have been acquired and new vendors have entered the market, offering next generation SaaS tools that are significantly easier to deploy, configure and maintain. These second-generation solutions deliver the true benefits of SaaS: Speed of implementation, ease of use, low/no code configuration, continual innovation and business agility.

The argument for investing in cloud-based service management and support systems was already compelling. With the government leading the charge for technology modernisation, why is the wider public sector lagging behind the market?

The Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology Inquiry has been gathering evidence on digital transformation across the UK Public Sector since March 2019. There is no doubt about the challenge the sector faces. Large bodies such as Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) are still operating 30-year-old systems.

An article by GovTechLeaders.com suggests that a whopping 64% of public sector IT spend is consumed by legacy technology. Because software licenses are bought and paid for, some regard these end-of-life legacy systems as free. However, maintaining these systems consumes between 60-80% of IT budgets. Despite that level of investment, the systemic weaknesses of these legacy technologies were exposed when people were forced to work from home. Free has come at a huge cost!

A decade of austerity had decimated budgets. Faced with complex and stringent procurement processes, public sector organisations tend to stick with the same tools for several years. As a result, the sector has not yet caught up with the capabilities of next-generation SaaS solutions and the significant benefits they offer in terms of cost-containment, self-sufficiency, and business agility. The government's cloud-first policy has already paved the way, and the sector must act now, with urgency

G-Cloud – the faster route to business benefits, reduced costs and time to value

In a bid to deliver faster business benefits, reduce costs and the dependency on larger IT vendors that have had a stranglehold on contacts, the UK Government introduced G-Cloud (RM1557) in 2012. The framework, now in its 12th iteration G-Cloud 12 (RM1557.12), allows compliant suppliers to make their cloud-based solutions available through a front-end Catalogue called the **Digital Marketplace,** managed by **Crown Commercial Service (CCS),** with the aim of improving the government's commercial and procurement activities.

Up to December 31st, 2018, **£4.075bn worth of sales** were processed through the framework, with 45% of that spend being awarded to SMEs. Most of the business through G-Cloud (81%) has come from central government, with only 19% coming from the wider public sector.

In the wake of the crisis, much more needs to be done to address the slower uptake of G-Cloud in local government and the wider sector, which faces the same pressures as central government to transform, reduce costs and meet growing demand for services.

Technology should be making life at work better

Before this crisis, the boundaries between our personal lives and our work lives had already blurred. Now, as information workers rely upon workplace technologies to remain productive at home, the line of demarcation has been completely obscured. All of us are service consumers. We expect more from technology, we demand frictionless service experiences and are less tolerant or poor service.

Research by the Help Desk Institute (HDI) in 2019 showed that in 2019, 61% of support organisations saw an increase in the number of service requests handled in the previous year, and they had become more complex.

With the seismic shift to remote working, employees need to access their work on any device, at any time. Supporting this broader scope of services, levels of complexity and increased security requirements demands a significant rethink around the ways we have traditionally delivered and supported our services.

The rules have changed beyond recognition and business as usual is over. Technology must deliver efficiency that connects silos, with end-to-end process design, automation, integration, and collaboration permeating every part of the business. Otherwise, inefficient shadow practices will emerge, and with remote working predicted to rise from 5% to 30%, any gaps that existed before the crisis have just been amplified six-fold.

For too long, the industry has been aware that up to 45% of employee process can be automated. Few organisations have even got close to this number, but as the economic conditions harden, this will become a prerequisite for survival. If your employees are not fully supported – at what point do you cease to have a business?

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8 Steps for Public Sector Service Desks to drive their organisations out of the COVID maelstrom

Although back-office operations provide critical support to customer facing functions, investment in employee support systems is dwarfed by public sector spending on ERP, CRM and other customer-facing technologies. However, if the organisation's break fix capabilities are not up to scratch, the ability to service both employee and customer demand is significantly impeded.

Across every enterprise, IT, HR, Facilities and other service delivery teams are working hard to ensure that the right people, processes, products and partnerships are in place so that staff can work from home effectively and continue to meet departmental and business objectives.

IT Service Desks are the most established and experienced service management practitioners. Standards, such as **ISO20000,** and IT Service Management (ITSM) frameworks such as **ITIL®** have driven best practice approaches that support effective service delivery and continual improvement. Although debate around frameworks and criticism about the way they are adopted is rife within the ITSM industry, best practice has undoubtedly delivered huge benefits and matured the effectiveness of IT organisations globally. Yet, even within the mature ITSM profession, Service Desks face significant challenges due to their propensity to stick with legacy technologies.

With increasing demand for IT services, escalating complexity of IT infrastructure, and ever more fires to fight, Service Desks rarely ever find the time, or the budget, to replace their existing tool. Past experiences of ITSM tool implementation might suggest that it is a time-consuming, expensive and disruptive exercise. As a result, Service Delivery Managers are stuck with an old tool, and the near impossible challenge of extracting higher levels of efficiency from existing (limited) resources, whilst striving to deliver the modern service experiences that employees and customers expect.

Implementing a new ITSM tool will not fix a broken culture, nor does it provide a cast-iron guarantee that service will improve. However, it does focus attention on existing challenges and specific areas where service can be improved. Done correctly, it creates capacity by reducing, or perhaps even eliminating low-value interactions that Service Desk teams should not have to manage. Second-generation SaaS tools deliver these capabilities, alongside improved workflow, collaboration, process automation, visual management (e.g. Kanban boards), knowledge management, and rich self-service – to name but a few.

1.

Self-Service must be the defacto channel

Against a backdrop of cost-containment, IT organisations will be called upon to rapidly develop digital solutions that are fit for the new normal. Service Management teams must therefore weed out those low-value interactions which have traditionally swamped the Service Desk and forced teams into firefighting mode.

IT groups that had already deployed an effective self-service portal before the crisis appreciated the ability to deflect calls, prioritize workload according to business impact, and encourage users to help themselves.

Let's face it, self-service is the channel we all prefer to use in our personal lives, and if it's truly effective, we neither need, nor want, to speak with a person. Hornbill customers unanimously agree – If you want to reduce firefighting – Self-Service is the best tool in your arsenal.

Have you already deployed Self-Service? If so, have your users widely adopted it? Was it designed primarily to reduce IT costs by deflecting calls away from the Service Desk, or to deliver an exceptional service experience?

Now is the time to act, but you need to knock it out of the park. Implemented correctly, Self-Service can eliminate low-value Service Desk interactions, and replace email and phone calls as the primary support channel.

Spotlight
**South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive**
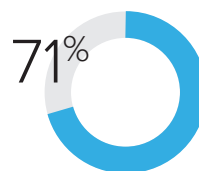
71% Self-Service adoption rate increases by 71% in March 2020.

Noticing their users using the chat facility in Microsoft Teams and Skype, the IT team deployed **Hornbill Live Chat,** adding fully integrated service management capabilities to the chat channel. Despite the huge spike in request volumes, the Service Desk was able to leverage these technologies and still meet their SLA's.

Watch Nick Brailsford, IT Operations Manager, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive in this **video recorded during the heat of the crisis.**

Our recent **briefing paper: A New Era for Self-Service Automation** - details the best practice required to ensure self-service delivers its potential.
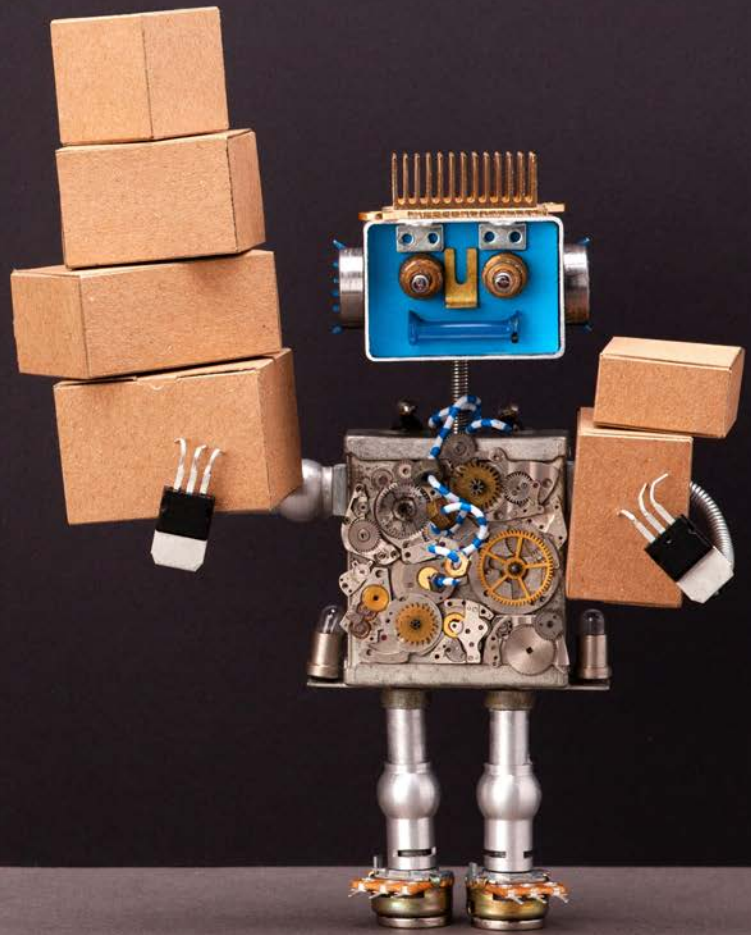
2.

Get serious about Automation

Using technology to eliminate manual, repetitive, and mundane tasks was already high on IT agendas, but COVID-19 has substantially quickened the pace. Thousands of hours can be saved, year after year, by automating password resets, joiners, leavers, account updates, software deployments, standard changes, and a whole host of other low-value activities, which service desk staff should no longer need to touch.

Whilst ITSM functions recognise the efficiencies that can be derived from using software, instead of people, to orchestrate and execute tasks, adoption of automation has been limited. Traditionally, the expertise, effort, and cost associated with developing and maintaining robotic process automation and integrating the technology with enterprise systems has held organisations back. However, modern service management tools have made process automation and integration a point and click exercise, which requires no coding or technical skills.

Automation makes teams more efficient and less stressed, as the tool handles low-value, repetitive tasks, leaving the service desk free to focus on more important work. In addition, there will be reductions in costs and errors and an increase in flexibility.

Automation can also add business value that is visible to employees. For example, if an employee needs software installed urgently, at home, even at the weekend, it can be authorised and deployed with a single click. Adding value that is visible to employees, suddenly makes IT look a whole lot better. It means that you are not just delivering a service, you are a partner that works with your colleagues, enabling them to work as effectively as they can. When other business units are doing something, they will want IT to be involved.

3.

The need for speed

Automating in an environment where there is little change, and where processes only occasionally need to be adapted, is one thing. Automating in an environment of change, change and change again is an entirely different matter. The ability to empower non-technical users to automate, constantly adapt and realign will be the difference between surviving and thriving. As business practices shift, employees will need more support, and the increased volume and complexity of support requests will magnify the need for this to be seamless.

Compounded with a market which will be thinner, more competitive, and less tolerant of poor experiences, the requirement to think beyond what Service Management was, is key. As other service delivery teams come on board, legacy systems can be retired, but service management processes must ensure that work can flow between teams. Onboarding and offboarding staff is just one of the many processes that touches most parts of the organisation, which could easily be streamlined, automated, and integrated to reduce cost, expedite the process, and deliver a consistent service experience.

4.

Demonstrate value by getting out of your silo

Today, the lion's share of our customers have deployed Hornbill across multiple service delivery teams within their organisations. Having already resolved their own service management challenges, these progressive IT groups demonstrate real value by helping other service delivery teams leverage the same technology to improve their service experience.

Numerous **customer Spotlight articles** and Enterprise Service Management (ESM) success stories, explain how IT teams have brought colleagues from HR, Facilities, Legal and other service delivery teams into the light and given them complete ownership to fully automate and integrate their workflows without on-going IT involvement.

5.

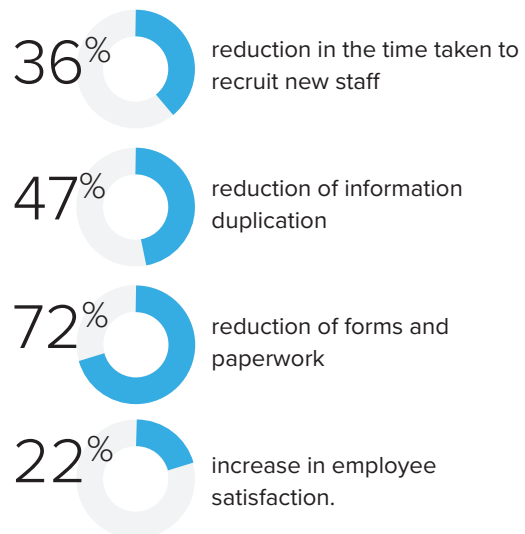### IT enabled self-sufficiency

The new normal requires service delivery teams to be self-sufficient. Service management tools must allow them to rapidly adapt, automate and integrate any service interaction, right across the enterprise. Whether you work in IT, HR, Facilities, or any internal service delivery team, and whether you use the terms customer, colleague, or user, you support the same people.

As the return to work gathers momentum, HR teams will play a frontline role. Swamped by inquiries from employees, they will struggle to manage the deluge using manual processes, paper-based forms, email, and spreadsheets. Health and Safety teams will also be on the frontline, and as other teams deal with constant change, this frontline will continue to shift. Will HR and IT integration be mandatory is this the new frontline?

Spotlight
London Borough of Waltham Forest

When London Borough of Waltham Forest deployed Hornbill for IT, and then HR, they achieved the following results.

36%   reduction in the time taken to recruit new staff

47%   reduction of information duplication

72%   reduction of forms and paperwork

22%   increase in employee satisfaction.

Impressive results, especially as it was the HR team, and not technical gurus, who delivered the solution and continue to evolve it daily. Although IT was involved in the early stages, they transferred the knowledge and ownership of the tool, leaving HR teams in charge of their own destiny and improvement opportunities.

Read about the approach and challenges London Borough of Waltham Forest tackled on their journey ih the **Smart Guide: Deliver the HR service experience your employees deserve**

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By integrating Hornbill with other core systems, we can automate our processes to reduce unnecessary work and eliminate repetitive tasks, not just in IT, but across several other areas of our business. Our Children's Services team are using Hornbill and we are always looking to see how it can support other business areas. We have lots of work to do, but it's a fantastic opportunity for IT to deliver real value."

Philippa Smith, City of York Council
Read the full spotlight article

6.

Enterprise Service Management is Critical

Enterprise Service Management (ESM) is the application of IT Service Management (ITSM) concepts and practices in other business areas, outside of IT. Over the last couple of decades, ITSM has enabled IT organisations to solve so many of the challenges that have beleaguered them for years. Yet, outside of IT, their colleagues continue to struggle with the same issues.

As different teams start to execute their return to work plans, they will need technology to lighten the load. Employees engage daily with a multitude of services delivered by different business units. When accessing these services, staff are forced through separate channels, and must contend with the inefficiencies of siloed working practices. Disjointed processes, disparate systems and reliance on email, spreadsheets, or home-grown applications, means that employees have no visibility of the progress of their requests. As a result, service delivery teams are swamped with unnecessary calls and low-value interactions, and employees suffer through lost productivity and a poor service experience.

7.

One place for employees to interact with every business unit

With an effective ESM platform, business units can publish their services and make them available to employees through a central Enterprise Service Catalog. Teams can easily publish information, such as service bulletins, FAQ's and Known Issues to communicate the availability and health of their services.

Complex forms are replaced by a clean interface, with service-specific questions that present the right information, to the right teams, so that requests can be fulfilled more efficiently, with fewer reassignments. Visual management features provide graphical views of the status of requests, enabling employees to track progress themselves at-a-glance, without contacting the Service Desk.

8.

Lead – You have to own IT

Business everywhere, public and private, small and large, is transforming. In a **survey by TechRepublic Premium,** 60% of technology leaders said that COVID-19 had forced them to alter their digital transformation plans. Digital is the enabler, but this is business transformation, which includes business models, infrastructure, processes, partner and supplier eco-systems, culture, employee and customer experiences, and so much more.

There has never been more of an opportunity for IT to drive change within organisations. But to be honest, IT has no option but to be the change leader. Research from McKinsey in their paper **IT's Future Value Proposition** highlights the risk of not leading.

Their research across more than 360 organisations highlighted that more than four in ten executives believe IT is either significantly or fully replaceable by third parties. This is in stark contrast to the views of IT leaders with an 80% difference of opinion.

As organisations prioritise their investments on the path out of COVID-19, IT groups that are perceived as a cost will have further cost and efficiency measures imposed upon them. IT teams perceived as value-adding, will be trusted to lead the way. Many IT teams that fell into the 'cost' bucket but performed well to deliver business continuity through the crisis, now have an opportunity to move firmly into the value-add category.

It is all about what they do next, and whether the technologies they invest in can drive automation and integration to find simpler and faster ways to make life at work better. The old practices of relying on IT gurus who tinker with tools, and revel in their complexity, is a luxury that their businesses can no longer fund.

COVID's future impact on the UK Public Sector Service Management

If IT is not seen to be adding and driving business value, it will be outsourced. This market trend has existed for more than a decade, through the rise of the MSPs, or shared services, where efficient service delivery teams add measurable value, by absorbing the user base of poor performers.

Any business case for technology investment must have clear measurable benefits in terms of efficiency, self-sufficiency, and a lightening ability to adapt to change.

Modernise your Service Management

The previous cycle of replacing service management solutions every three years has just been ripped up. Before the impact of COVID-19, research from HDI already indicated that replacement cycles were accelerating, as the market moved away from on-premise solutions.

On-premise is dead

Although IT groups had earmarked legacy on-premise solutions for replacement, far too many remain. This dying breed has survived, because they either served a distinct purpose, or were too disruptive to replace. The

crisis has hammered the final nails into the coffin, and your digital strategy must accelerate their replacement.

First-generation SaaS no longer cuts it

Over the last decade, first-generation SaaS tools reshaped, and still dominate, the ITSM software market. These are powerful tools, but they depend upon an entire eco-system of consultants, implementation partners and trainers, just to get them up-and-running, and a small army of developers and administrators to keep them in check. In the new normal, with significant costs cuts looming, and with IT having to deliver change, change, and change again, this approach no longer cuts it.

Post C-19, IT groups will need to be self-sufficient and agile enough to improve, automate and integrate any business process. The traditional approach of implementing a new Service Desk tool - as a project - with complex configuration and customisation, where go-live signals the end of the journey, is no longer sustainable. Six-week tool upgrade projects, just to fix bugs and get the latest features, are not acceptable. Fortunately, with cloud-native tools, this is no longer necessary.
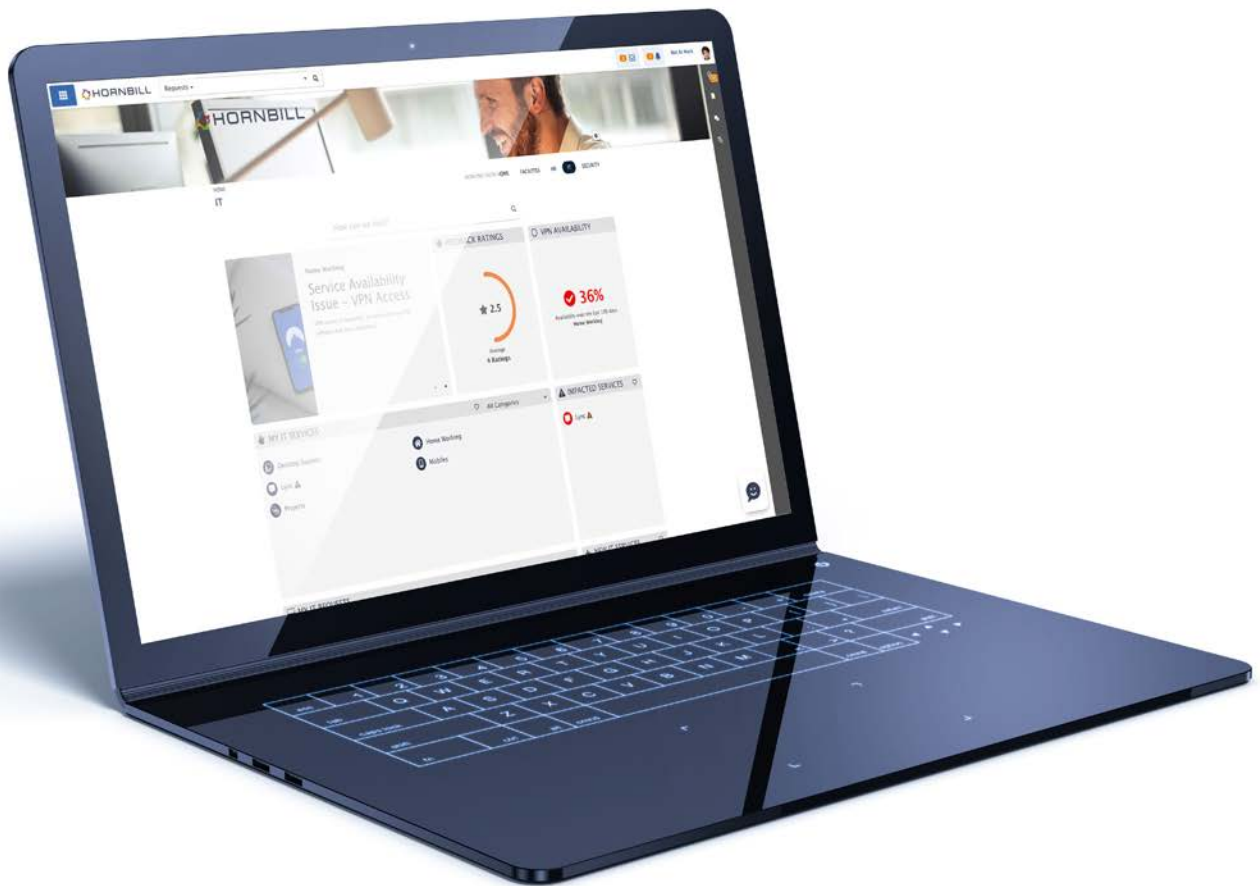
The era of second-generation SaaS Platforms

In the new normal, second-generation SaaS solutions have the edge, because of the levels of simplicity and innovation they deliver, both for the customer and the SaaS vendor.

With all customers on the same software version, vendors can focus most of their development resources on adding new features, getting feedback, and updating software based on customer needs.

These modern tools can be implemented in weeks, not months. Configuration and customisation is a point-and-click exercise, so there is no need for technical gurus.

Upgrades simply happen in the background, and customisations continue to work, without having to reapply or rework them. The vendor does all the heavy lifting, taking full responsibility for backups, resilience, security, and architectural enhancements. Isn't it better when things just work?

Regardless of how long it takes to emerge from this crisis, or for how long it takes for economies to rebound, the drive to adopt new technology is happening now. The UK government's cloud-first policy has paved the way, and the G-Cloud framework has dramatically simplified the selection and procurement process.

If your organisation has not yet risen to the challenge, now is the perfect time to discover how second-generation SaaS solutions have truly redefined the delivery of Software... **as a Service**

Watch the webinar

Public Sector Service Challenges 2021

8 Steps for IT groups to drive their business out of the COVID Maelstrom

Patrick Bolger Chief Evangelist @patb0512
Barclay Rae Consultant/Author @barclayrae

Join webinar

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Chief Evangelist and renowned industry expert, Patrick Bolger, is a key voice and guiding influencer in the Service Management industry. He is an active contributor to strategic industry groups and partnerships and is a compelling and popular speaker at events worldwide.

More than 34,000 users trust Hornbill

30,000+ analysts use Hornbill solutions to manage service delivery every day.
For two decades, Service Desks around the world have used Hornbill solutions to proactively manage IT service delivery and customer service.

Hornbill helps customers to modernize their service management and address their top service delivery challenges. We embrace the growing pace of change and the consumerization of technology, and commit to helping customers, by making life at work better.

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