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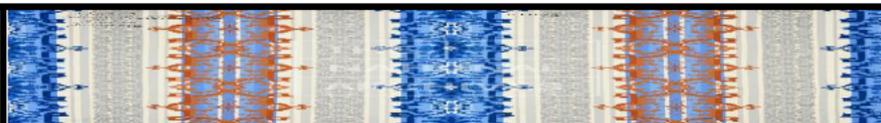
NATIONAL

ARCHIVES



IT Strategic Plan

2020-2024



Julian Muller

31/12/2020

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Every company is a technology company, no matter what product or service it provides. The companies that embrace this fact are the ones that shape our world.

(blog, The Forbes Technology Council, 2017)

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. Technology underpins nearly every aspect of our activity and provides us with both opportunities and challenges. It is more important than ever that we use technology to support our corporate aims of capturing the record and delivering it to new audiences, and particularly now with external influences that have meant we have to refocus our efforts on delivering content digitally.
- 1.2. Our commitment and focus on delivering maximum flexibility with value for money services continues and is complemented by the themes identified in the new strategic plan. Our aims are to improve upon the services delivered in the transformation of IT services, continue modernising, with an emphasis on automation and integration, converging on a central theme of making our systems easier to use.
- 1.3. We want to create a shared vision that synchronises with our corporate aims, articulates our direction of travel and resonates with people so that they want to be part of it.
- 1.4. The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced uncertainty in many aspects in the delivery of IT services and has fundamentally challenged us to rethink how we deliver our IT priorities. These challenges did not alter the main direction of travel for IT Operations but they forced us to reconsider our plans and question whether a new approach was necessary. Uncertainty about future funding and methods of working caused by the pandemic, and the consequent deliberation has introduced a delay in creating and delivering the new strategy and has influenced its style.
- 1.5. The IT strategy is a key enabler for the corporate aims articulated in Archives for Everyone and is aligned to The National Archives' five strategic intents.
 1. *Capture the record and aid legal certainty*
 2. *Take the collection to new audiences*

3. *Realise the value of archives through research, innovation and commercial exploitation*
4. *Lead the archives sector to a secure and sustainable future*
5. *Change the way we work*

- 1.6. This document provides a strategic framework and plan for corporate IT services for the next strategic period, 2020-2024. It builds on the previous IT strategy and is informed by engagement with our customers, staff, associates in comparable organisations and suppliers, as well as an extensive and sustained examination of the technology landscape.
- 1.7. This Plan cannot be read in isolation and should be viewed as an addendum to previous strategies; it compliments, reinforces and builds upon the enormous effort that has been invested in making IT Operations and IT service delivery a success at The National Archives. Many of the elements articulated in the previous IT Strategic Plan will continue, particularly the people initiatives; we are committed to building and developing our team and service culture.
- 1.8. Project plans and the IT Operations business plan, which details the timing, dependencies, resourcing and specific issues and risks will be developed as we begin the implementation of the initiatives contained in this Plan. This document will be reviewed annually to ensure it is still valid and relevant to the aims and objectives of The National Archives and the IT Operations Department.
- 1.9. This document has the following structure:

Looking Back to Move Forward briefly reviews our progress over the previous strategy period.

Valuing our staff restates our commitment to our people.

Principles and values considers what we do and how we meet the aims of the IT Strategic Plan.

Strategic Themes articulates our strategic themes and choices.

Our Plan details our programmes of activity and the projects we plan to deliver.

Opportunities and Challenges examines opportunities, challenges and risks for the next strategy period.

2. Looking back to move forward

- 2.1. At its launch in 2016, I intended the IT Strategy to support The National Archives' corporate aims articulated in Archives Inspire, to modernise IT and equip the workforce with the necessary technological means to offer choice in working styles and arrangements.
- 2.2. We are embarking on a new strategic period in IT, with a new focus and fresh corporate objectives to support. It is important that we take time to reflect and assess what we have achieved in the last four years, how we have transformed the delivery of IT services and the things we did well, while acknowledging what we could improve upon.
- 2.3. This review provides an overview of the transformation work that IT Operations has completed in the course of the past four years and highlights some of our successes and some of the lessons we learned.

3. 2016-2020 IT Strategy review

- 3.1. In reflecting over the last four years, I feel confident that IT Operations has successfully met the challenges and is delivering services in a different, more modern and flexible way. We have delivered on all the objectives contained in our Strategy, and more, and we have been influential in changing the way our workforce operate and collaborate.
- 3.2. We delivered on the overarching aim of ensuring we develop services that properly support The National Archives in harnessing the potential of the ICT architecture and infrastructure so it delivers maximum flexibility, optimum benefit, controlled risk and value for money and helps shape an organisation that sets itself the highest standards in public service.
- 3.3. We made bold decisions about our corporate IT systems. Decisions that delivered material change and advanced our corporate aims. Decisions that delivered agility in working arrangements that meant we were able to switch to a fully remote working capability, with virtually no issues, when faced with the significant challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 3.4. The IT transformation programme has not been without its difficulties; we have adopted technologies new to the market, new to TNA and new to the technical staff supporting them. We have witnessed a cultural shift in moving to new ways of working and thinking and staff have experienced significant change, not least for those delivering these new technology services.
- 3.5. Successful adoption of new and improved IT services that offer both opportunity and challenge in equal measure needs advocates at the top of the organisation and to continue to deliver change we need a continuation of senior-level support.
- 3.6. In looking back at the last four years, we can claim a number of notable success:
- Changed the organisational structure, introduced a service culture, recruited new talent, created apprenticeship opportunities and supported learning and development for all staff in IT Operations.
 - We migrated our on premise telephone PBX system to a VoIP cloud-based unified communications platform.
 - We upgraded our IT estate to [REDACTED] systems, rationalised the IT equipment and issued up to-date laptops, hybrid tablets and smartphones.
 - We aligned ourselves to the [REDACTED].
 - We [REDACTED].
 - Introduced different ways to connect with [REDACTED].
 - We simplified and improved the network, increased bandwidth, decommissioned [REDACTED] for corporate services and the public.
 - We achieved ISO 27001 and Cyber Essentials accreditations
 - All of the above was achieved while continuing to deliver operations business as usual activities.

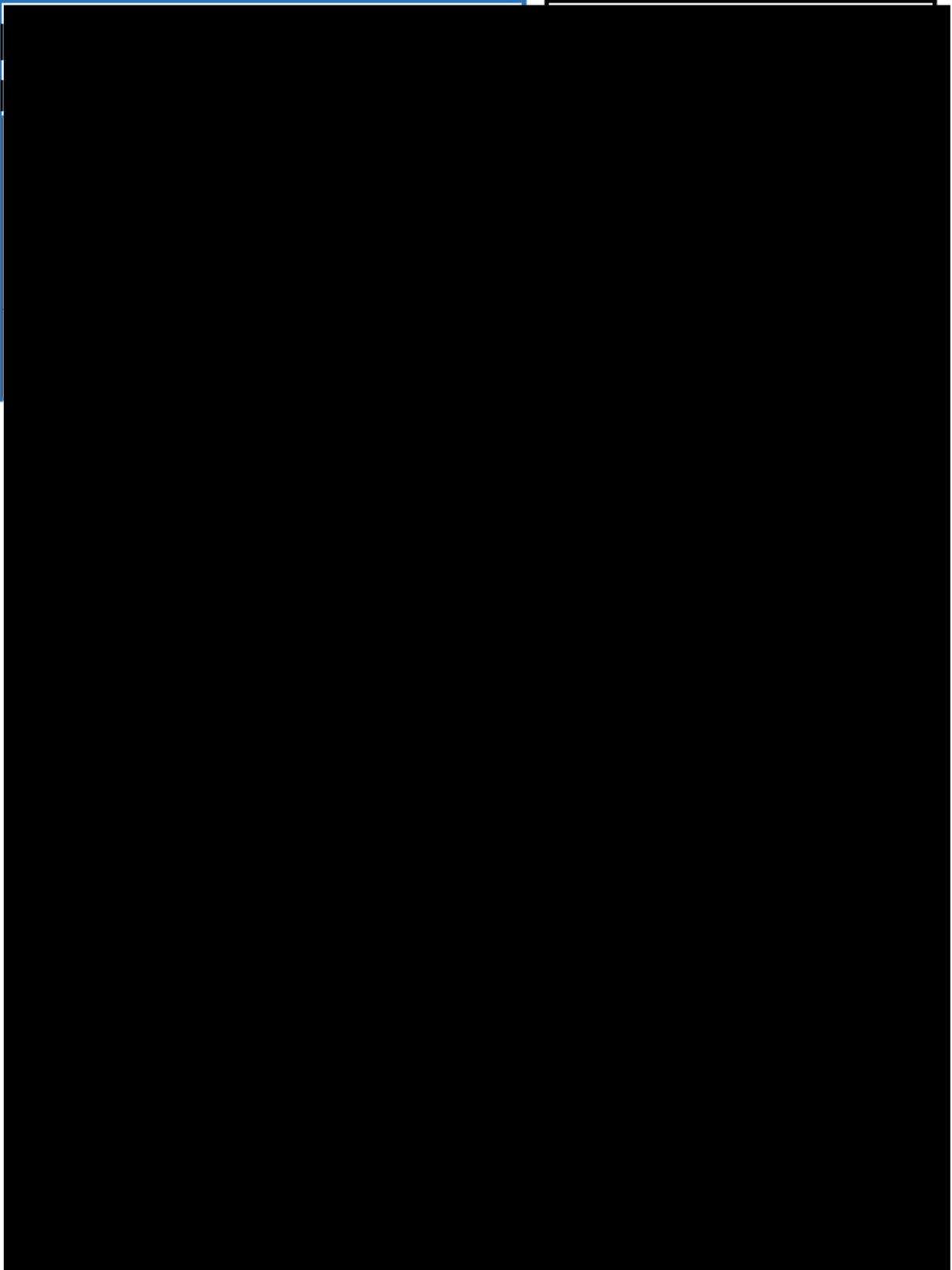
What did we learn?

- That we needed to be clearer in explaining the future technological roadmap and the capabilities we can offer.
- That IT delivery is a partnership between business and product owners and IT Operations.
- That the benefits derived from more and better security can introduce obstacles to efficient working.

...And how did we respond?

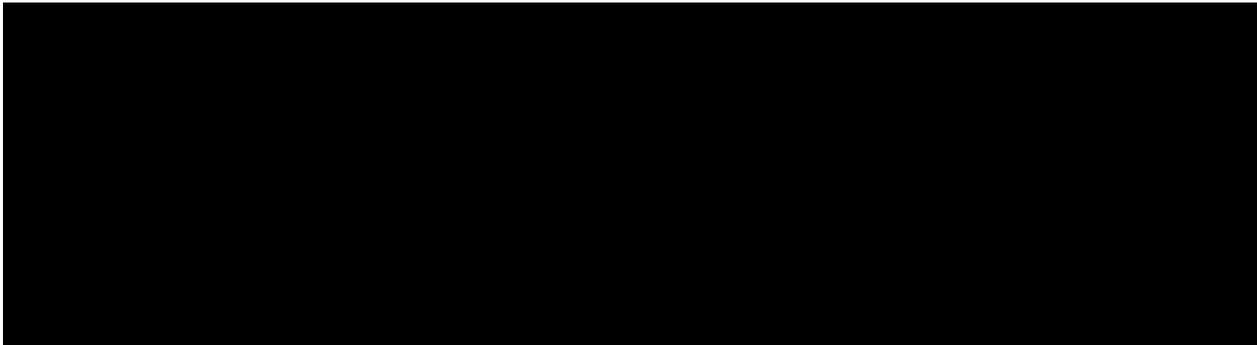
- We reviewed feedback and provided opportunities to explain our plans through forums like the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- We recognised that our IT Security measures can impose obstacles and we have included an initiative in this Plan to [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

our Highlights....



4. Valuing our staff

- 4.1. Our staff are at the heart of what we do and how we do it. We recognise that our success relies on our staff and every member of our IT Operations team is an enabler of our strategy.
- 4.2. Our programme of learning and development, set out in the last Strategic Plan, has provided the skills and knowledge to support individual career objectives, has assisted in delivering high-quality services and ensured our workforce has the skills to thrive in a digital world. We remain committed to the vision we set out in the previous strategy; we will build upon the successes from the last period and continue to identify learning opportunities for staff, encouraging development to enhance existing and learn new skills. We will use a variety of learning methods to keep skills up to-date with technology, leveraging opportunities such as [REDACTED], computer-based training as well as creating individual development plans in conjunction with our Learning and Development team.
- 4.3. We support the aims of Archives for Everyone and more specifically the plans to become the inclusive archive, not only in the technology support we provide the organisation to facilitate meeting these aims, but also in our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. We will continue to align our processes and procedures and we will strive to ensure we follow and sometimes lead by example in creating a culture of inclusiveness and in becoming more representative.
- 4.4. We continually monitor performance and request feedback through perception and online surveys. These responses along with nominations for awards are key indicators of our success in meeting the needs of our staff and customers. Recognition of our successes is important and we will continue to celebrate our achievements and use this commentary as a means to build upon our customer service skills.



5. Principles and values

- 5.1. Everything we do in the IT Operations Department – delivering services to staff and the public, supporting The National Archives in achieving its corporate objectives, ensuring an efficient, modern infrastructure and running our own department - will be shaped by the broad principles and values outlined below.
- 5.2. We will ensure that our systems are fit for purpose that tools and applications are continually developed to meet TNA corporate needs and that our processes are effective and designed with the user experience in mind.
- 5.3. We will formalise processes, controls and governance in respect to managing the introduction and transition of services from projects into supported operation, ensuring that new and updated IT services are incorporated into the organisation in a manner that minimises disruption to normal operations.
- 5.4. We will continue to develop our workforce to ensure we have an adequately skilled digital workforce
- 5.5. [REDACTED] and we will take advantage of these benefits by making the developments available to our staff and users and we will seek to [REDACTED] provides equivalent functionality with greater controls.
- 5.6. The technology approach that will enable TNA's goals and ensure its digital services and enterprise systems have a modern technological footing is outlined below.
 - We will engage effectively with operational teams to inform, shape and translate business needs into pragmatic, timely and sustainable solutions.
 - There is still a tendency to request bespoke products at the expense of increasing support complexity and cost. We will develop our systems and deliver our services in a way that does not [REDACTED] and uses commercially available products where possible.
 - We will exploit commodity software products that deliver best value for money and simplify the application landscape.

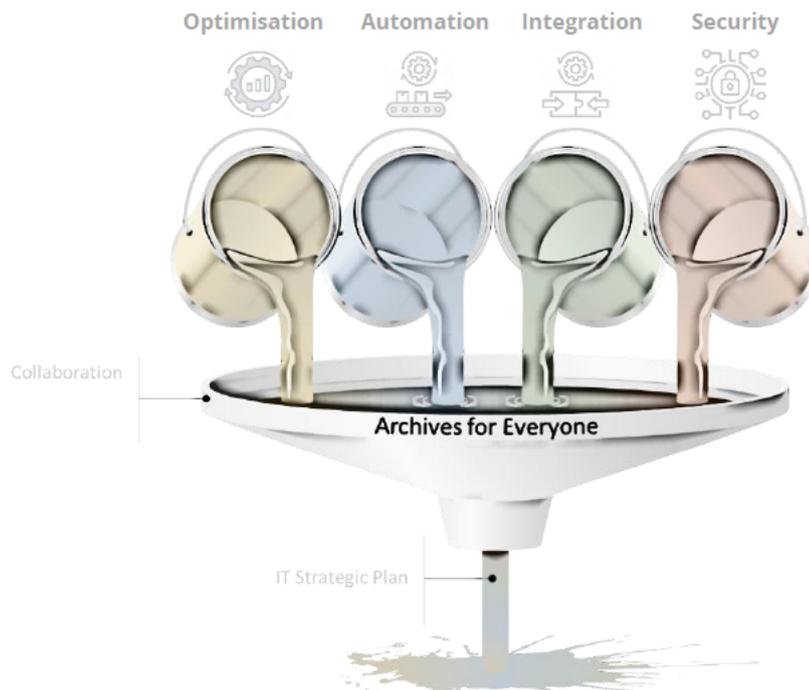
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] to inform operational decisions, reduce cost and increase revenue.
- We will continue to ensure the [REDACTED]
- IT and digital training will largely be delivered through online resources.

In order to deliver on the requirements and IT Plan, IT Operations require the following from the TNA organisation:

- Business ownership in managing demand into IT, ensuring new requirements have a clear business sponsor, tangible benefits and that consideration is given to the needs and aims of the organisation.
- There are domain specific business groups that provide the input to drive IT solutions and product development for all business areas
- Buy in and engagement to standardise processes and IT solutions where this is in the best interest of the organisation, for example in end user computing services [REDACTED].
- Recognition that tailoring specific IT solutions for individual function can only occur where the business case is viable and capacity allows.
- Engaging IT Operations from the outset for any new technology requirements and collaborate on the development of the IT Operations' budget.
- Staff will take more responsibility for support through the use of self-service facilities for some issues.

6. Themes

- 6.1. The Strategic Themes are derived from and synchronised with the strategic needs of the organisation, the Digital and IT plans, discussions with business function leaders and in collaboration with Government. The themes convey a direction of travel for IT and will assist in refining solutions.
- 6.2. Corporate and business requirements were identified through Senior Leadership Team sessions, stakeholder engagement activities and through collaboration with our external partners. Requirements were developed from these conversations and we assembled and proposed a set of themes that were presented to and gained agreement from our Executive Team.
- 6.3. [REDACTED]
- 6.4. Our overarching focus will be to deliver an exceptional user experience while continually improving our services. The main new themes are:



7. Our plan

The sections below articulate the direction of travel associated with each theme and there are significant overlaps and parallels between them. They should be read not in isolation but collectively; each supporting the other.



Optimisation

- 7.1. Our IT transformation programme has led to significant change in the way our staff use technology and it is now time to reflect a little on the products we have delivered and to develop and improve them before embarking on further significant modernisation. This is not a signal to stop our programme of improvement but to ensure we gain the best value from the investments we have already made.
- 7.2. Opportunities exist to get more from what we have and to take full advantage of our recent investments. Optimising existing products will supplement and improve the service offered to staff and will provide greater choice and flexibility in using systems that are at the same time familiar to us.
- 7.3. We intend to extend and expand the features and products in the new services we have deployed over recent years, including a greater number of services and apps delivered through [REDACTED] introducing ways to collaborate that are more flexible using our messaging system of choice.
- 7.4. [REDACTED]
- 7.5. [REDACTED]

7.6. [Redacted]

7.7. [Redacted]

7.8. [Redacted]

7.9. In the last strategic plan, we introduced the concept of smaller, smarter, anywhere connectivity and delivered remote, flexible and mobile working. [Redacted]

7.10. Multi-sessions delivered on any device will support and enhance the experience of our Research and Digital teams and will overcome the device, app and connection challenges. [Redacted]

7.11. [Redacted]

7.12. [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]

7.13. [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]

7.14. [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]
 [Redacted]

Objectives	
Op1	Extend and expand the features and products in our existing services
Op2	Leverage additional benefits available to us in the [Redacted]
Op3	Modernise and improve the infrastructure to provide additional benefits
Op4	Remove [Redacted] through replacement and rationalisation
Op5	Improve collaboration and secure sharing of information

Activities	Priorities
1 [Redacted]	Yr 1
2 [Redacted]	Yr 1
3 Produce a roadmap for [Redacted] and introduce new apps	Yrs 1 - 4
4 Replace our [Redacted]	Yr 2 - 3
5 Replace the [Redacted]	Yrs 1 - 3
6 Design and [Redacted] proof of concept	Yr 1
7 Plan for a full-scale [Redacted]	Yr 2
8 Following analysis, [Redacted]	Yrs 3 - 4
9 Replace hybrid tablet laptops with more modern equivalents	Yr 2
10 Replace laptop estate with more modern equivalents	Yrs 2 - 3
11 Replace and upgrade the [Redacted]	Yrs 2 - 4
12 Design and adopt [Redacted]	Yr 2



Automation

- 7.15. We will focus on automation and introduce workflow tools to drive efficiencies in our processes and at a simple level, remove our reliance on paper-based forms and replace them with digital forms and digital signatures.
- 7.16. Automation is fundamental in all the initiatives proposed in this document. We will build automation into any new or changed system and seek to reduce or eliminate manual process by using automated workflows and forms.
- 7.17. We will continue to optimise the business process engineering exercises we successfully conducted in the last period and we will further improve our own processes in IT Operations by the use of automation workflows.
- 7.18. [REDACTED]
- 7.19. [REDACTED]
- 7.20. The laptop and tablet build process will be further automated in support of the hybrid-working initiative. We will adopt technologies to facilitate the build of laptop and tablet devices, providing improved efficiencies and eliminating the need for staff to visit site. By adopting this technology, we can easily provision new devices by using pre-prepared images and drivers, resulting in end-users receiving their devices using a simple process.
- 7.21. Paper-based forms will be replaced with automated online forms that provide richer information and process efficiency. The requirement for electronic forms and digital signatures will be embedded in all

specifications for new systems and tools will be made available to create new online forms and surveys.

Objectives		
Au1	Introduce workflow tools to drive efficiencies in our processes	
Au2	Continue to develop an IT organisation fit to deliver service excellence	
Au3	Support greater efficiencies with workflow tools	

Activities		Priorities
1	Develop a solution for the [REDACTED]	Yr 1
2	Create a solution for paid search and automate existing forms	Yr 1 - 2
3	Review all processes and improve or implement new processes	Yrs 1 - 4
4	Upgrade our service management toolset that integrates and automates more tasks	Yr 2
5	Investigate and develop a workflow solution for [REDACTED] enquiries	Yr 2
6	Work with M&C and Commercial to identify further opportunities for workflow efficiencies	Yrs 2 - 4
7	Automate the laptop and Hybrid build process [REDACTED] technologies	Yr 3
8	Replace [REDACTED] forms with automated electronic forms	Yrs 1 - 4



Integration

7.22. System and data integration is key to surfacing information that is accurate and reliable. We will integrate our systems by either replacing multiple systems with a single integrated solution, using add-ins or introducing a means to ensure we have data consistency, information available where we need it and a single version of the truth.

7.23. Arguably, two of the most important corporate enterprise systems are our [REDACTED].

7.24. We should drive innovation in our technology requirement and design and adopt systems that will evolve and support our needs in future. [REDACTED], but we will have a tool that we will give us

confidence in the information it provides and meet our future demands as our needs evolve.

7.25. We recognise the need to modernise and better integrate our retail applications and to design and implement a platform that has multiple business uses. In adopting a new retail system, we have an opportunity to replace our legacy retail applications and to better support the needs of the business. We will work with our retail teams to determine requirements, implement a new retail system and retire our legacy applications.

7.26. [REDACTED]

7.27. We will draw together the different strands of communication and collaboration, messaging and calling, document sharing and editing, scheduling and project management [REDACTED]

7.28. If the organisation is to make best use of its data, understand its consumers and deliver services in a coordinated and consistent way, we need access to disparate and consolidated master data assets to derive insights through our applications. Master Data Management (MDM) integrates and enriches data to enable a single view of entities, ensuring accurate data is leveraged across all business processes.

7.29. [REDACTED]

Objectives	
In1	Integrate our systems by either consolidating multiple systems with a single integrated solution, adding to existing systems or introducing data consistency.
In2	████████████████████ and adopt systems that will evolve and support our needs in future.
In3	Understand and consolidate our data, eliminate waste, facilitate improvement in data quality and create a single version of the truth.
In4	Align our Intranet services with our direction of travel and integrate the Intranet architecture with our technology platforms and applications
In5	Create a fully integrated platform that offers ease of use, a familiar interface and resilience

Activities	Priorities
1 Develop a new retail system ██████████ manage the retail shop business and extend its use to events and images. Explore further opportunities to extend its use.	Yr 1 - 3
2 Support the introduction of an ██████████ ██████████	Yrs 2 - 3
3 Implement an MDM solution that integrates multiple system architecture, applications and systems.	Yr 4
4 Replace ██████████ ██████████ as appropriate.	Yrs 1 - 4
5 Work with our Marketing and Internal Communications teams to ██████████ ██████████ ██████████.	Yr 2
6 Deploy ██████████ ██████████	Yr 1



IT Security

7.30. IT Security is key and core in all that we do and we will continue to maintain optimal IT security in both design and delivery. We will protect our information from the threats that cyber criminals pose, improving customer trust, confidence and use of digital services.

7.31. We will establish a business aligned IT security strategy and architecture across business, data, applications and infrastructure and create a transformation roadmap to help realise it.

7.32. ██████████
 ██████████
 ██████████
 ██████████
 ██████████

7.33. [Redacted]

7.34. [Redacted]

7.35. [Redacted]

7.36. [Redacted]

7.37. [Redacted]

7.38. [Redacted]

IT Strategic Plan

- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

Objectives

Se1	Define the sub set of underlying IT security strategies through which the corporate IT services will be designed, prioritised and provisioned
Se2	Encourage understanding of IT Security and improve delivery of information security awareness
Se3	Adopt a continual development approach to skills and training
Se4	Balance IT security design needs with usability and ease of use
Se5	Continue to develop our monitoring and reporting capability
Se6	Co-ordinate and govern the release of [REDACTED] to maintain security in the ever-changing on-line environment

Activities

		Priorities
1	Develop and publish a new IT Security Strategy with particular emphasis [REDACTED]	Yr 1
2	[REDACTED] with a view to replacing them with an alternative product	Yrs 2 - 3
3	Create a [REDACTED]	Yrs 1 - 4
4	Review and enhance our [REDACTED]	Yr 2
5	Explore and deliver ways to [REDACTED]	Yrs 2 - 3
6	Develop a [REDACTED]	Yr 2
7	Agree the security architecture to [REDACTED]	Yrs 1 - 4
8	Establish a [REDACTED]	Yr 1
9	Identify [REDACTED]	Yrs 1 - 4

8. Complementary aims

- 8.1. The strategic themes articulated in the paragraphs above are complimented by initiatives that we want to focus on that may not necessarily be considered a strategic theme but are worthy of mention and will certainly add benefit and complement or form part of the themes above.

Communicating and collaborating effectively

- 8.2. We are committed to developing our systems to enable effective communication and collaboration internally and with external participants.
- 8.3. Better collaboration was at the heart of the previous strategy and we embarked on a programme of change to introduce new technology to support this aim. We introduced VoIP telephony – a more modern document management system – a unified communications platform – cloud-based storage & services platform. This important objective remains at the heart of this strategy and we will continue to enhance and optimise our collaboration capability by continuing to develop existing products and services and introducing new platforms and means to collaborate externally.
- 8.4. This relates not only to improving our communications and collaboration tools, which will form part of the optimisation theme, but to sharing data and information externally. This need continues to grow and we need to support this with the balance between IT Security and usability in mind.
- 8.5. We recognise the increasing demand for safe, secure and accessible storage for collaboration purposes, particularly to facilitate the exchange of information between our commercial partners and TNA. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- 8.6. We are working remotely as an organisation and this may continue in-full or in-part in future. We need to ensure we are inclusive in our technology decisions and that everyone can connect to our services regardless of location, demographic or personal circumstances. We are sensitive to and aware of our responsibilities to ensure we do not exclude people through the use of technology.

- 8.7. As the organisation changes post Covid and it adopts new working practices, we too need to evolve the methods we use to collaborate. To satisfy the need for a hybrid working style, we will equip more offices with new and improved ways to communicate using audio and video and we will install systems that provide a familiar interface and that are compatible with our use of unified communication platforms on our personal devices.

Better Information

- 8.8. As we better integrate our systems, we can surface the information that is important to us. We will deliver an organisation-wide reporting and business intelligence capability that will offer the means to bring together data from various sources, delivering the information we need when we need it.
- 8.9. The value of analytics is commensurate with the quality of the data. Management Information and business intelligence relies on data availability, quality and governance and we will collaborate with business stakeholders to define a data and business intelligence strategy so that TNA can be confident in the data that decision makers use to collect, analyse and interpret data to generate insights.
- 8.10. Defining, establishing and embedding consistent governance over data is supported by the data management objectives described in 7.28 and 7.29 in the Integration section. Data governance, data quality and master data management is often seen as the responsibility of the IT function. There needs to be recognition that these challenges are not exclusively IT related and need significant involvement from business teams across TNA.
- 8.11. In support of the data activities outlined above we will engage with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and business stakeholders to capture current reporting capability and needs and collaborate to design and develop new and improved business intelligence analytics.

Research

- 8.12. In meeting the needs of the disruptive archive we aim to make research open to everyone. We will continue to develop and configure our systems to make the use of research tools easier and more commonplace.

Supporting public services

- 8.13. We recognise the need to grow a bigger and more diverse audience by delivering more content online and supporting TNA’s Strategic Intent, *Take the collection to new audiences*. Public services delivered to visitors at Kew remains an important part of TNA’s obligations and we will continue to support on-site activities.

- 8.14. We will explore alternative ways to deliver visitor content using existing and emerging technologies, as we rethink our priorities following the pandemic, and we will work closely with our Public Engagement colleagues to advise on new ways to deliver services and devise technologies that will enhance the visitor experience. These could include innovations such as:

- [Redacted]

9. Opportunities and challenges

Financing our ambitions

- 9.1. The pace of change in information technologies means it is not always possible to predict accurately the financial commitment required to achieve the objectives within the life of a plan. In order to deliver our objectives, there needs to be a consistent financial investment over the full period of the Plan.
- 9.2. Given the need for a consistent financial commitment, we acknowledge that long-term and multi-year planning has been challenging in recent years owing to the imposition of annual settlements. Funding uncertainties continue and the COVID-19 pandemic has made longer-term forecasting more difficult.
- 9.3. Our capacity to fund initiatives is key to achieving the strategic ambitions of IT Operations. Over the previous four-year strategy period, we have maintained our budget of Opex and Capex costs, delivering to the required budget thresholds each year.
- 9.4. We will seek funding to cover the full design and implementation for each programme phase through the appropriate annual business planning process. However, future-funding uncertainties puts delivery of the aims and objectives articulated in this strategy at risk and funding levels will influence our ability to achieve the objectives set out in this plan.
- 9.5. New technological solutions increasingly demand a subscription commitment rather than a traditional one-off capital expense. While there are many advantages in subscription-based solutions such as maintaining technology currency, this type of business model requires a change in the approach to public funding and an acknowledgement that the balance will shift to a budget with more resource expenditure (RDEL) demands than capital (CDEL), in future.

An excellent foundation to build upon

- 9.6. We have made excellent progress in transforming our technologies, developing our people and finessing our processes. We are committed to the aims articulated in the previous strategy and we intend to build upon this firm technological footing in this strategic period to deliver better, more modern and cost effective services.

- 9.7. [REDACTED]