



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Scaling standards in local authorities

 @LDgovUK

www.localdigital.gov.uk

#LocalDigital #FixThePlumbing

The logo consists of the words "LOCAL" and "DIGITAL" stacked vertically in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a white, rounded square border that has a slight shadow effect, making it stand out against the dark blue background of the graphic element it sits on.

**LOCAL
DIGITAL**

Introduction and context

Introduction

Research completed through the Local Digital programme identified an opportunity for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to support technical improvements and help provide local authority services with more flexible technology options.

The research recommended testing common approaches to data standards and systems architecture as part of this opportunity. More specifically, it focussed on reaching a tipping point of standard adoption to allow local authorities to benefit from a network effect across the sector.

This report presents a proposed framework for accelerating the adoption of data standards informed by a study of the tactics, successful or otherwise, of previous data standards and related initiatives in local government.

The recent report into [Scaling the Adoption of Open Referral UK](#) used this framework to guide that research.

What we mean by standards

Our working definition of 'standard' in this work is 'a rule or principle that is used to benchmark a level of quality in a service, process, dataset or system'. What might be examples of this?

Data model or schema

An abstract model of the data entities used in a system or service and how they relate to each other.

Examples: Open Referrals, Standard in Planning Data, Council Tax Support Updates, SAVVI, HACT, Open EHR

Register or taxonomy

A list or classification system used to define common entities in services, such as assets, needs, service types.

Examples: UPRN, LGA Local Government Business Model, GDS Registers, Brownfield land registers

Service quality standard

Requirements or principles that should be met by a service to be fit for purpose.

Examples: Local Digital Declaration

API specification

A standard way for systems to talk to one another, share data and enable common functions.

Examples: Supporting Families programme, Council Tax Support Updates

Export format or reporting standard

A structured model for a data set exported from a system or used in reporting on performance.

Examples: Local Government Open Data Incentive Scheme, H-clic

Pattern or process

Processes or reusable solutions for common journeys or problems deployed as part of a service.

Examples: HACT



Standards are documented, reusable agreements that solve a specific set of problems or meet clearly defined needs.

Standards detail the language, concepts, rules, guidance or results that have been agreed.

Standards are used when it's important to be consistent, be able to repeat processes, make comparisons, or reach a shared understanding.

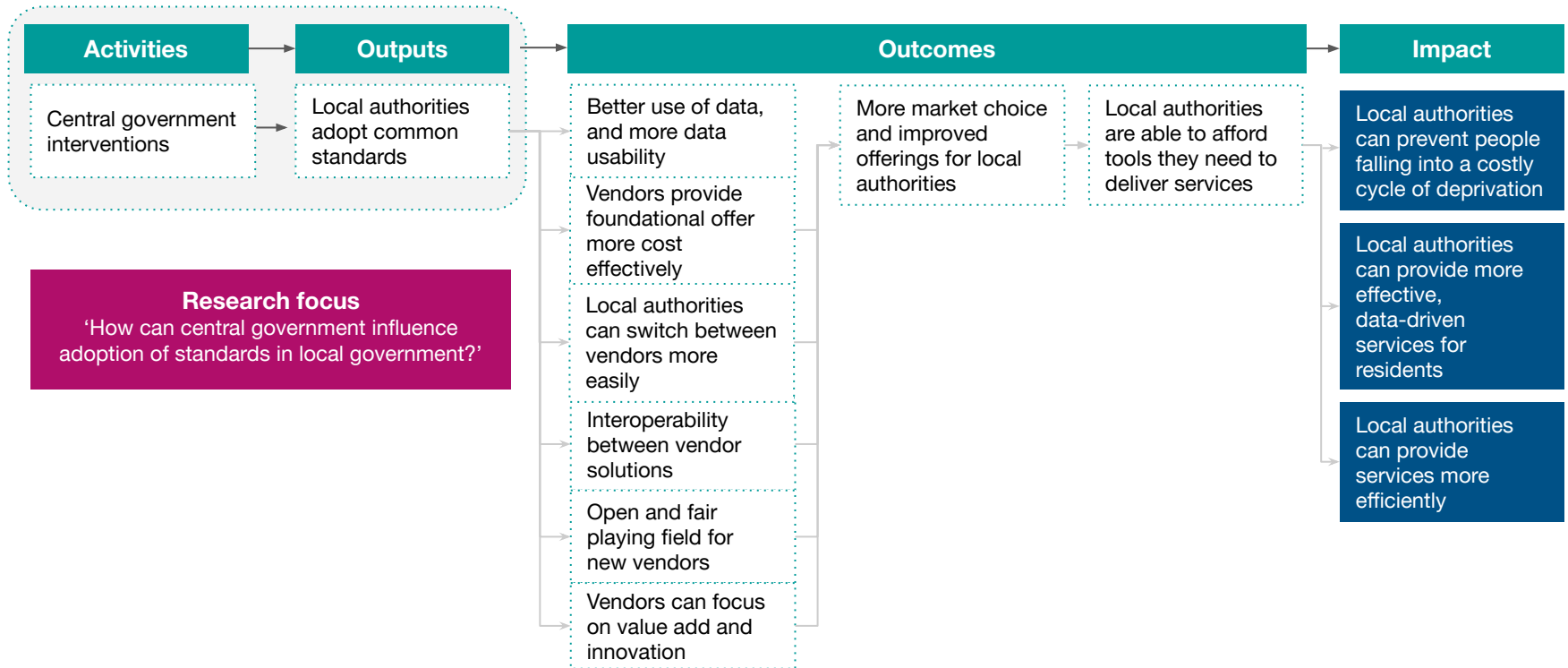
Standards are used in industries and sectors across the world to document agreements on physical items, ideas, digital products, processes, and more.

[The Open Data Institute](#)



Data standard adoption: A theory of change

The theory of change outlines the link between central government intervention, standard adoption in local authorities, and flexible technology choice. This research focuses on the first link in this theory (activity to output).



Research approach

Research focus

Overall question

How can central government influence adoption of standards in local government?*

*By this, we refer to Government Digital Service Standard principle 'consistent, but not uniform'. This means standard uses of data and patterns for processes.

Primary questions

Interventions

What interventions have been used to standardise local government previously?

Powers

What powers or incentives were employed in each case?

Problem space

What was the problem space in each case? What were the drivers for the intervention?

Impacts

How successful were these attempts? What can we learn?

Secondary questions

Investment

What level of investment was made into the intervention?

Time

How long did it take to deliver?

This research is focussed on the ways mechanisms and levers available to government influence adoption. As such, for the purposes of this work we have chosen a broad definition of standard which is:

'A rule or principle that is used to benchmark a level of quality in a service, process, dataset or system'.

Research approach and outputs

Research approach

To explore this topic we have focussed on researching past precedents where central government departments or their agencies have attempted to implement standards to support local government.

While there were a number of case studies proposed, we focussed in on nine examples that are outlined in the appendix of this document.

Outputs

The outputs of this work are learnings from across these precedents around:

- considerations when seeking to promote the adoption of a standard, and the principles and tactics available to central government organisations
- variables across scenarios that may influence the adoption approach taken
- hypothesised scenarios as to how these scenarios could influence the adoption approach taken
- recommendations for the next piece of research and design

What we learned:

How to scale a standard

Learnings on how to scale a standard

Three stages to gaining adoption

The learnings from this work outlined different principles and tactics (see definitions on following page) that can be used to influence the adoption of standards. We grouped these according to the phase they were used in the adoption lifecycle. These phases are described below.

Build the standard

This is about identifying a problem space and owning it. Visible and committed leadership is key. The standard has to solve a real world problem that all parties can identify with and see some value in. Building a standard through co-design helps build traction and buy-in.

Encourage adoption

Once a standard is designed, how do you gain buy-in from councils to adopt it? Alongside the case for adoption sit a range of incentives and motivations that can be used, including funding, enforcement and promotion through tech suppliers. Sponsorship from senior leaders in the council helps to drive adoption, alongside a proactive communication and engagement strategy from the centre.

Maintain adoption

Once a council has agreed to adopt a standard, what are the mechanisms available to put a standard in place and to maintain it? Councils value support for implementation, including guidance and regular check ins. Measures help to show how the standard is impacting council operations while incentives help to prevent backsliding.

Scale a standard - definitions

Principles

What do we mean?

Building blocks of the adoption approach. Each of these should be present in any adoption approach, but emphasis on each can be flexed depending on the scenario.

Tactics

What do we mean?

Different options to implement a principle of the adoption approach.

Build the standard

1. Own the problem

A range of actors may support councils to promote standards, from the LGA to charities to central government, but in all cases visible ownership of the problem space is crucial to help lead efforts to positive adoption and successful outcomes.

Tactics

Tactics to promote adoption include:

- establishing a single owner of the standard who is visible
- making an enduring commitment to guarantee continuity of the standard
- commitment to funding both adoption and maintenance
- be willing to use convening power
- be ready and willing to design policy with councils

Case studies

The [Local Government Open Data Incentive scheme](#) was initially highly successful in building uptake among councils to publish three data sets using a standard format.

This work was sponsored visibly by Francis Maude in the Cabinet Office, with funding to back the work and a clear policy agenda. However, the scheme did not progress beyond the pilot stage as priorities evolved.

Considerations with ownership

Navigating the relationship between central and local government is not easy. Blockers to leadership might include:

- reluctance among civil servants to take responsibility for new costs
- departments unwilling to take responsibility for policy design with councils
- changing political priorities in government

2. Co-design the standard

A number of attempts to promote standards have been held back by inadequate effort to involve councils in co-design. By contrast, councils are more willing to sign up to a standard they have helped to shape or influence.

Tactics

Tactics to promote adoption include:

- co-designing the standard with technology or data teams within councils. Better still include end-users and frontline workers
- co-designing standards with bodies representing councils and familiar with their challenges, such as the LGA
- co-designing with tech suppliers in lieu of council tech teams

Case studies

The [Brownfields Land Registers](#) standard was introduced through statutory mandate but continues to face challenges of patchy data quality in part because the standard was enforced not co-designed.

The [SAVI](#) project aims to design interventions with councils in programmatic settings while the schema for [Council Tax Support updates](#) is agreed with suppliers.

Considerations with co-design approaches

Co-designing standards can expand the range of stakeholders involved. This might impact on time and cost, but is likely to improve quality and uptake.

There might be differing or opposing views as the stakeholder pool expands. This is again why committed leadership and continuity are key.

3. Make the case clear

Standards need to solve a problem for council CEOs. A case that is too broad - such as general appeals to 'openness' - can fail to attract sufficient support from within the council.

Tactics

Tactics to promote adoption include:

- setting out to solve a real world issue that councils currently grapple with that is specific enough to gain traction but also aligned with broader strategic goals
- engaging suppliers to help make a coherent case
- creating a case that brings value for all stakeholders

Case studies

Persistent Resolvable Identifiers

helped councils solve an issue. They needed to measure avoidable contact with service users. By solving a real issue, councils bought into adoption, further strengthening the network value of the standard.

Elsewhere, government departments are inconsistent in their adoption of UPRNs because the case for its value add is not always explicitly defined in business cases.

Considerations for making the case

Problem definition in service design is a specialist skill that requires deep user insight and technical awareness. In some instances, the case for change is too high level.

Appeals to 'openness' or addressing system-wide challenges can fall short in persuading adoption. On the other hand, very niche problems, like publishing public toilet data, can fall by the wayside.

Encourage adoption

1. Find your incentive

There are a range of ways to incentivise uptake of standards that span the conventional 'carrot and stick' spectrum, from mandates to funding.

Tactics

Tactics to incentivise include:

- mandating through enforceable guidance or statutory instrument
- enforcing through audit and threat of penalties
- funding adoption
- encouraging suppliers to conform through procurement processes or direct engagement
- motivating councils by bringing on peers or working in the open

Case studies

The [UPRN](#) has benefitted from being mandated by the Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO), although there has been limited focus on active enforcement.

The [Local Digital Declaration](#) was promoted by funding opportunities, although the breadth of opportunities supported perhaps made it difficult for standards work to gain momentum.

Meanwhile, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) worked directly with suppliers through iStand UK to automate [council tax support updates](#).

Considerations with incentives

Some combinations of incentives and other tactics that have inherent pitfalls:

- selecting incentives without co-designing the approach
- not providing sufficient guidance or support beyond the incentives
- funding without clear ties to delivery of the benefits outlined in the business case

2. Sponsor locally

Some interventions, such as the Local Digital Declaration, require the full support of the whole council and demand the buy-in of the council CEO. Others would face too many blockers to get this and only require a well trusted Subject Matter Expert.

Tactics

For introducing standards there are broadly three tiers of local sponsorship:

- **CEO level:** where a standard is a key strategic imperative for the whole council
- **CTO level:** where the buy-in of a DDAT function is needed to enable change
- **SME level:** where a policy, technical or data owner can make targeted rapid change

Case studies

Arguably, the [Local Digital Declaration](#) was somewhat limited in its impact by the perception it was driven out of Digital/Technology teams. Without CEOs driving the agenda, implementation became highly variable.

By contrast, the [Local Government Open Data Incentive Scheme](#) required support from technical SMEs to implement quickly with small chunks of funding attached. [Open Referrals](#) benefits from CTO involvement to drive implementation through procurement.

Considerations with sponsorship

What can impact on sponsorship?

- A case for adoption misaligned to the level of seniority or agenda of a sponsor may fail to win support
- SMEs need tools such as the possibility of consequences to make the case in the council
- The visibility of leadership with the standard will impact on CEO buy-in

3. Build momentum

Maintaining a standard is crucial and for this you need a business model. Designing a viable income stream to sustain your standard shows stakeholders it is worth investing in and creates time to build adoption.

Tactics

Tactics to build momentum include:

- talk up the project by designing proactive communication and engagement strategies
- win over your first users or early adopters with specific inducements, as they can then help bring others on board
- develop a business model for the standard that ensures income and continuity

Case studies

The [SAWI](#) project has developed a bespoke engagement strategy to grow adoption including videos, blogs and case studies, drawing on a specialist in the team. Standards in Planning Data is using early adopters to showcase the work to others.

Geoplace developed a business model for the [UPRN](#) involving licencing the address information to paying customers, so as to ensure the standard is maintained and enhanced.

Considerations - business model

There is not a one-size-fits-all business model. Examples include:

- licence fee
- subscription model
- grant funding

Maintain adoption

1. Give support

Councils welcome and desire support to adopt standards, from capacity to guidance. Making the path to adoption easier encourages uptake and engagement, which in turn brings others into the fold.

Tactics

Support tactics include:

- empower councils to adopt a standard
- committing capacity to maintaining a standard so it continues to remain relevant to changing need
- providing regular check ins with councils to support with adoption strategies
- encouraging suppliers to create products or systems to consume the standard
- providing adoption guidance

Case studies

The Standards in Planning Data and [Supporting Families](#) programmes have developed a support wrap with guidance, check ins, peer groups and Show and Tells. [UPRN](#) continues to be maintained by Geoplace, crucial to uptake.

However, more could be done to support councils to upgrade to the standard - for example through procurement. The [Local Gov Open Data Incentive Scheme](#) lacked an ecosystem to consume the data which was identified in the pilot.

Considerations with support

How a standard is owned impacts on the support provision. There are examples of central government opting to mandate change without committing to a commensurate level of support.

This, in part, could be to do with the view that local government has to own its own problems.

2. Measure success

By measuring adoption process and assessing the following benefits, it is possible to tailor adoption strategies to meet changing need. This approach can help strengthen the case for adoption across the sector.

Tactics

Tactics to measure include:

- assessing councils to benchmark adoption of a standard and hold them accountable
- running spot checks on data in the council to assess compliance with a standard
- establishing a reporting process on the adoption of a standard, tracking the new products or outcomes directly enabled through use of the standard

Case studies

The [Supporting Families](#) programme uses data maturity assessments to benchmark councils, hold them to account and tailor support. This has in part contributed to improved data maturity and uptake of standards.

Elsewhere, councils track the automation rates of [Council Tax Support Updates](#) to evidence value which, in turn, helps to build the case for continued investment in the intervention.

Considerations with measures

Measuring the success of a standard is a task relating to the issue the standard sets out to resolve. The narrower the problem, the simpler the measurement. Standards with broader application, like [UPRN](#), may in turn have impacts that could never have been envisaged or measured.

For example, enabling councils embracing UPRN to respond faster to identifying vulnerability during the Covid pandemic.

3. Set penalties

Penalties and conditions can be a useful motivator to spur adoption, but need to be used judiciously with financially constrained councils that perceive themselves to be heavily monitored already.

Tactics

Tactics to penalise include:

- linking funding opportunities to adoption of a standard, or an intention to adopt. This could also mean removing funding for failure to meet standards
- running audits and publish results
- working in the open
- suppliers who fail to meet prescribed standards in procurement exercises would receive lower scores

Case studies

The ability to take away funding proved highly effective in enabling advocates of the [Supporting Families standards](#) in councils to make the case for adoption. There are fewer examples of councils facing penalties in standard adoption.

However, only accepting suppliers that are compliant with criteria to procurement frameworks is standard practice and new rules in social housing are introducing audits and fines.

Considerations with consequences

Penalties have to be deployed with care. Heavy-handed deployment of penalties could undermine the outcomes sought by making it harder for councils to meet a standard in the long run. This may explain why the majority of interventions to promote standards focus on carrot rather than stick.

Involvement suppliers

Supplier involvement

Suppliers of core software in council services have a role to play in introducing standards. Whether building new APIs, conforming to data models or designing export formats, suppliers respond better when involved early. This has been proved through the work DLUHC's Digital Planning team is doing alongside suppliers to develop APIs and agreed standards.

Why this is important

Software suppliers hold the keys to introducing standards into council services. Involving suppliers early has many potential benefits:

- suppliers can ensure change is appropriately planned in their roadmap
- suppliers bring insights and skills to improve outcomes
- suppliers can provide healthy challenge from a vantage point across councils

Case studies

Software suppliers NEC, Capita and Civica work with DWP to ingest a feed of universal credit changes into their software. iStand UK operates as a broker for schema changes and plans are agreed with suppliers, who voice concerns and shape decisions.

This stands in contrast to some standards in the health sector which have not been adopted by some incumbent software suppliers.

Types of supplier involvement

There are a range of levels where suppliers could be engaged:

- building prototypes with new open data standards
- responding to standards through procurement processes
- planning changes to meet standards
- shaping the design of standards

Variables that can influence adoption

Variables that influence adoption

Through past precedents, we also heard about the different variables that may influence the adoption approach taken. These are important considerations that should be taken into account when choosing the tactics selected. These have been categorised into three areas as outlined:

What the intervention is

What is the standard, pattern or intervention you are trying to implement? What does it consist of and what is the ask of the organisation/s that will be required to implement it?

Who the intervention is for

Who is the intervention for, what problem is it solving for them? Do all parties involved see the benefit in implementing the intervention?

What the source of the intervention is

Where has the intervention been sourced, who is trying to scale it, and what authorities / principles do they have available?

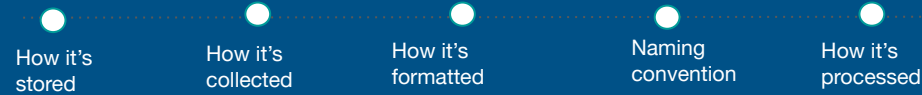
What is the intervention?

Variable

What is the type of standard you are trying to influence?



What is the type of data activity you want to change?



What is the policy area (examples, not an exhaustive list)



Sensitivity of data concerned



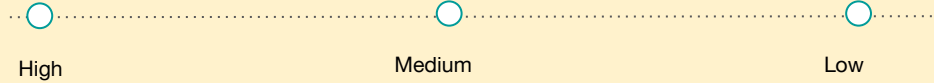
What this could influence

- scale of change required
 - who needs to be engaged in the organisation
 - technical capability required to implement
- scale of change required
 - who needs to be engaged in the organisation
 - technical capability required to implement
 - information security requirements
 - level of supplier engagement required
- different tech markets and vendors and an engagement approach to these vendors
 - ability to influence policy / standards adoption centrally
- change resistance from organisations involved
 - capability required to implement
 - time required to implement

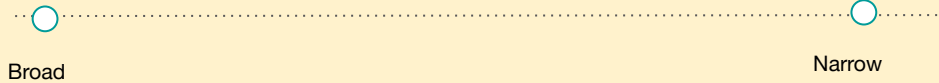
Who the intervention is for and what are the benefits?

Variable

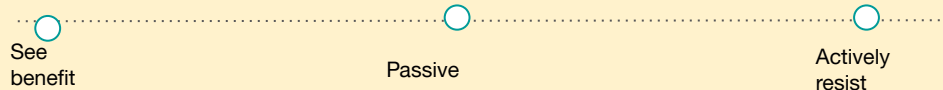
To what extent is the intervention solving a problem for the user?



How broad is the application of the intervention?



Perceived benefits for suppliers



What is their ability to comply (technical and capacity)



What this could influence

- level of regulation required
- level of incentivisation required to bring user organisation on board

- level of investment in creating the case
- types of measures that help build adoption
- who is engaged in the organisation

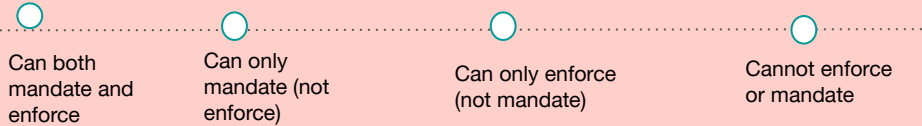
- level of engagement required with suppliers
- level of market intervention required centrally

- level of capability required to support to be provide by central government

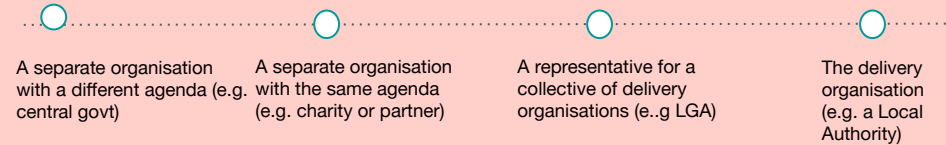
Source of the intervention

Variable

Can the source organisation mandate and / or enforce the standard?



How close to the delivery of the standard is the source organisation?



What was the instigating problem space?



What this could influence

- type of follow up support or enforcement provided
- incentivisation provided up front
- level of investment in comms and building the case

- how co-design is delivered
- level of incentivisation
- level of Investment in comms and building the case

- incentivisation provided up front
- ability to engage suppliers in co-design
- ability to use citizens to provide follow up

Appendix

Brownfields land registers data standard

The problem space

There is no single place to identify brownfield land, which means there are missed opportunities to use this land effectively for the purposes of development.

The extent to which it was adopted

While the mechanism has been successful in collating the data on brownfield sites, the standard has not been fully adopted across councils and the data received is patchy.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- build a register of all of the brownfield sites across the country that would in theory, provide a place to identify land, that's easier to develop
- local authorities are required to keep brownfield land registers updated. Storing this centrally could support or enable:
 - planning for housing-led development
 - creating new digital services
 - giving community members insight into local development

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- developed a standard (independently of local planning authorities), this was then baked into legislation, and mandated it to all local authorities
- Statutory instrument was introduced for brownfield sites that required the registers to capture information in a consistent, standardised way.
- Secretary of State has the power to require local planning authorities to provide information from their registers in a particular format
- Limited on-going measures to enforce it (teeth), or supports put in place to enable adoption of the standard

Lessons learned through the process:

- standards need to be co-designed with those that are accountable for implementing them
- project rather than a programme - needed an ongoing mechanism to maintain it
- people involved were very technical, and struggled to build the use-case and sell the benefit

Local Digital Declaration

The problem space

The Local Digital Declaration is a collective ambition for local public services. It commits signatories to design services that best meet the needs of citizens, challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services, protect citizens' privacy and security and deliver better value for money.

The extent to which it was adopted

The Local Digital Declaration has over 360 signatories, and many has been used in many digital strategies. However the extent to which it has resulted in a change in behaviour and the adoption of digital services, or standardised approaches is mixed.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- an artifact on the Local Digital website that lists ambition statements committing signatories to a collective ambition
- councils (and any public sector or non-profit organisation) that align with this ambition can apply to sign up for the Local Digital Declaration
- councils are encouraged to adopt practices that align to the commitments within the Declaration

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- co-created principles with 45+ councils, sector bodies and government departments working together to develop it
- councils go through a thorough sign-up process to join the Declaration
- from 2019-2023, councils were incentivised to adapt the standard by applying for funding for a collaborative project through the Local Digital Fund
- the Declaration offers 'momentum and energy' from the wider local digital community and the dedicated Local Digital team, however councils have called for more support to adhere to the principles / commitments within the Declaration

Lessons learned through the process:

- limited accountability meant that local authorities did not always have the push to adopt the practices
- high level principles without the detail / capability to implement practices hindered councils' ability to embed them or move forward
- turnover in local authorities has seen many signatories leaving their organisation, often resulting in a lack of awareness or momentum to continue to apply the Declaration principles
- funding was not directly linked to measured increases in digital maturity

Supporting Families

The problem space

Vulnerable families often have multiple issues and interact with government services in different ways. This data is not normally joined up and therefore cannot be used to identify or prevent escalation.

The extent to which it was adopted

Supporting Families is an ongoing programme with a broad remit. The programme has been effective in supporting local authorities in improving their data in this field. The maturity assessments have enabled them to benchmark councils and hold them to account against a standard.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- providing the integration / accessibility of data to enable workers to identify vulnerable families and ensure they get the right intervention in the right way, as early as possible.
- supporting councils to develop data systems to pull together family data from multiple partners and use this to proactively identify vulnerable families and intervene
- provide outcomes framework (maturity assessment) so councils can track their own effectiveness.

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- deliver an annual data assessment that tracks maturity of councils across 5 broad maturity levels
- the CEO of the council is expected to commit to certain data maturity milestones when joining the programme
- data maturity is linked to the funding available through the programme
- the programme provides support mechanisms for councils including show and tells, peer support groups etc.
- provide additional support to lower maturity councils

Lessons learned through the process:

- standards that are too prescriptive can stifle local authorities and prevent them identifying new or emerging issues
- cost of data system transformation / response is not always equivalent to the size of the council. Funding for large councils cannot be too different to funding to smaller ones
- having a punitive measure (ie ability to take away funding) can be highly effective in enabling supporters of standards within councils to make the case for adoption
- for council data maturity - standards don't come first, aggregation of data does (data lakes, warehouses)
- importance of being able to incentivise suppliers to adopt standards and improve data quality, if they hold the data

Open Referral UK (Open Directory)

The problem space

Councils are required to maintain a directory of the services they provide, but these are poorly maintained with out of date data and duplication. This impacts usefulness and uptake.

The extent to which it was adopted

There has been steady uptake across councils and the broader ecosystem. To date 6 councils have adopted with another 6 showing interest. DfE, following a government mandate, is looking to use Open Referral UK to receive details of family services on gov.uk. A few suppliers and Idox (planning software) have promised to implement it.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

Standard for directories included:

- data structure: rich information about services
- what it is and who provides it
- locations, charges, eligibility criteria when scheduled to happen
- languages supported
- organisations that have verified it

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- Open Referral UK initially emerged from the Local Digital Fund's Open Community project before aligning with the US based Open Referral standard
- Open Referral UK have been successfully working with suppliers to encourage adoption
- the standard has been agreed by the Cabinet Office Data Standards Authority
- continual engagement with councils to persuade them to embed the standard

Lessons learned through the process:

- local authorities can face difficulties due to their limited expert resources with technical understanding and procurement capabilities
- technology suppliers are broadly supportive of the standard and shown a willingness to engage
- power of adopting standards is getting all councils / bodies involved. May need to incentivise the first few to create the use case for others
- engagement with CTOs in councils is critical in being able to encourage suppliers to adopt standards

Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN)

The problem space

Postcodes are not specific enough to define property and land in the gazetteers that councils are required to maintain. Additionally, councils seek to make secondary use of data tied by a unique reference and reduce duplication in their contact listings.

The extent to which it was adopted

The results are variable - some councils have most of their systems using UPRNs while others have none at all. It will vary depending on resources. However all have a gazetteer and the standard is maintained and in use

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- UPRN is a unique reference for a property or piece of land
- it was developed by Geoplace with the LGA, Ordnance Survey, and local authorities
- the UPRN reference is open, although the linked address information is only available through a licence

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- a condition of opening up UPRNs by the Geoplace board was that government would be mandated to use UPRNs in any systems. This is a Cabinet Office (CDDO) standard
- councils and other organisations using UPRNs pay a licence fee for the full address details linked to UPRNs. This provides a business model for sustainability
- Geoplace and the LGA are working to encourage further uptake by councils. They provide guidance on their websites, offer custodians to help adding UPRNs to systems and run events
- key people in the LGA often challenge government and NHS to use UPRN in data projects

Lessons learned through the process:

- there are resources devoted to engagement and adoption, although the strategy for this could be better coordinated. Roll out is gradual rather than big bang - which works
- there is a business model for the upkeep of UPRNs by Geoplace
- there is a mandate of the standard by CDDO which helps to drive adoption, although this could be better enforced
- it is very challenging to bring systems into line with UPRN and retrospectively update case data. This requires funding and resources in councils
- more could be done with procurement of third party systems

Scalable approach to vulnerability via interoperability (SAVVI)

The problem space

Councils are not able to predict and prevent residents falling into vulnerability because data is siloed across different legacy systems and government agencies.

The extent to which it was adopted

SAVVI was used to find 150 'at risk' 2-3 year olds in North Yorkshire and to inform smarter interventions and referrals in Hunts, with further projects in Wigan and Greater Manchester.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- since 2020, SAVVI has introduced national data standards that improve a locality's ability to make use of data to support vulnerable people and households
- SAVVI has produced a playbook containing a process for running a vulnerability project, an open data standard enabling organisations to publish, access, share and use better quality data, and a catalogue of case studies to help councils tackle IG issues relating to vulnerability data
- the SAVVI data standard attempts to limit technical and IG risk by stripping back case management data to risk factor flags

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- the project received funding through DLUHC's Local Digital Fund
- iStand UK have been promoting SAVVI with councils through an engagement strategy and a series of case studies
- the SAVVI project team is able to tailor support to different council settings. Where programmes are not data mature, the SAVVI team will focus on undertaking fresh data capture exercises in these settings

Lessons learned through the process:

- SAVVI has built an engagement team to help partner data projects onboard SAVVI principles
- SAVVI responds to an agenda identified by council CEOs since the pandemic. Councils better understand the power of data to make an intervention. SAVVI responds to a problem councils have

Council Tax Support updates

The problem space

DWP wanted to eliminate inefficiency and improve user experience in the administration of Universal Credit and Council Tax Support. Previously residents had to make separate applications for changes.

The extent to which it was adopted

The standard is implemented and regularly updated leading to efficiency gains for local authorities and a simpler user experience for residents. Changes in Universal Credit are automatically reflected in Council Tax Support in many cases, councils track automation rates.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- DWP provides a data feed of Universal Credit changes (formerly housing benefit) to local authorities to enable them to make automatic changes to Council Tax Support for the same residents
- in order for local authorities to ingest and use the data feed, iStand UK was commissioned by DWP to develop a standard schema
- iStand UK works with three suppliers - NEC, Capita and Civica - to update the schema and confirm the data can be ingested. DWP pay for this

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- DWP funds iStand UK to write and own the schema standard
- DWP funds the suppliers to implement the standard in housing management software and pass the benefit to local authorities at no cost
- iStand UK operates as a broker between DWP and the suppliers. Sometimes, this involves difficult conversations about the schema design. The goal is to agree a format that all parties can agree on

Lessons learned through the process:

- The strategic impetus for this standard comes from DWP, who have an objective to improve user experience and find efficiency gains
- the standard offers a benefit to the council by eliminating the need for staff to perform time-consuming and cost-ineffective manual tasks
- DWP's funding creates an incentive for suppliers
- iStand UK acts as an effective broker and owner of the standard with suppliers. Suppliers are involved in the schema design

LGA Local Government Business Model (persistent resolvable identifiers)

The problem space

Councils were required to create new measures of avoidable contact with residents as part of 150 'Best Value Performance Indicators'. The LGA commissioned Porism to build these measures

The extent to which it was adopted

Widely adopted by councils, these taxonomies are used in many council websites and service directories as well as by legal services and knowledge managers required to retain records for set duties.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- from the early noughties, councils began to develop with the LGA and Porism a curated list of taxonomies used to define a range of local government activities, such as services, resident needs, and resident circumstances
- every taxonomy term has a Unique Reference Identifier (URI) and a browser page containing a human readable definition as well as a JSON file that can be queried
- as an example, councils might create a definition and URI for a natural neighbourhood - a geography split across councils that needs to be represented in service directories, operational tools or reports

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- this intervention was seen as a solution to a issue councils faced. There was a strong business case for channel shift to digital in council services, but this required more consistent measures and reporting
- there was a clear mandate from central government to meet the best value performance indicators and save money
- the LGA and Porism have maintained the taxonomies thanks to a funding model whereby councils pay for this

Lessons learned through the process:

- the intervention was seen as a means to address an issue that council leaders had
- continuity is crucial for standards to gain traction. Cabinet Office committed to these standards for 10 years. The LGA involvement has helped to maintain the standards despite the changing priorities of government
- Porism and the LGA built adoption by speaking the same language as councils in promoting these taxonomies.
- councils were involved in the design of the standard, unlike GDS registers which failed
- the LGA created a business model for continuity by making councils pay

Local Government Open Data Incentive Scheme

The problem space

Much useful data that councils maintain is not published in standard format allowing others to interpret and aggregate it. The scheme sought to encourage councils to publish useful data more openly in consistent ways.

The extent to which it was adopted

The project initially had considerable success. A large number of councils took part in the scheme, and new independent services emerged using the data - such as the Great British Toilet Map. However, it has not continued.

What is the standard and how was it expected to resolve the problem:

- between 2014 and 2015, councils were encouraged to publish data on a) planning applications, b) premises licences, and c) public toilets using a new standard format
- Open data under the scheme was made available freely in tabular comma separated variables (CSV) format complying with a schema which defines the content of each data column

Principles and tactics for adoption:

- councils were paid £2,000 per theme for publishing the data in the correct format and a further £1,000 for publishing all three in the scheme

Lessons learned through the process:

- the initial success suggested that the funding model worked to attract councils
- the change required was focused on a narrow set of data and relatively simple to implement
- the case for change resonated with technologists in councils and benefited from the sponsorship of Francis Maude in the Cabinet Office
- ultimately, the change was not sustained because the schema was not maintained in a system
- there was not a sustainable funding mechanism for the councils bearing the burden of publishing the data

Long list of interventions

Intervention	Summary	Sector	Source	Implemented by
Local Digital Declaration	A collective ambition for local public services to meet set principles	Platforms, across local government	DLUHC	Local authorities
Standards in planning data	A platform to host data standards for planning	Planning	DLUHC	Local authorities
GOV.UK Notify	A government platform that lets internal teams send emails, text messages and letters to users	Platforms	GDS	Departments, local authorities
GOV.UK Pay	A government platform that lets internal teams take and process online payments	Platforms	GDS	Departments, local authorities
HACT for Social Housing	A data and process standard for social housing services	Housing	HACT	Local authorities
Brownfield land registers data standard	Build a register of all of the brownfield sites across the country	Planning	DLUHC	Local authorities
UPRN - Unique Property Reference Number	A unique reference for a property or piece of land	Planning, any place-based service where local authorities provide something to a residence	Cabinet Office	Care providers and NHS, local authorities and LGA
Scalable Approach to Vulnerability Via Interoperability (SAVVI)	Data standards that improve an LA's ability to use of data to support vulnerable people	Across local government	DLUHC	Local authorities

Long list of interventions

Intervention	Summary	Sector	Source	Implemented by
Council tax support updates	DWP provides a data feed of Universal Credit changes to enable local authorities to make automatic updates to Council Tax Support	Housing, Revs and Bens	DWP	App developers, local authorities
H-clic homelessness	A standard for homelessness applications and reporting	Homelessness	DLUHC	Local authorities
Supporting families	Enable workers to identify vulnerable families and ensure they get the right intervention	Children social care case management	DLUHC	Local authorities
Standards on reporting elections	Guidance for reporting elections	Across local government	Cabinet Office	Local authorities
GDS Registers	Standard taxonomies introduced for council services and resident needs	Across local government	Cabinet Office, GDS	Local authorities
LGA Local Government Business Model (Persistent Resolvable Identifiers)	A curated list of taxonomies used to define a range of local government activities	Across local government	Cabinet Office	Local authorities
Local Data Open Incentive Scheme	A standard format for councils to publish data on planning applications, public toilets and premises licences	Planning, licencing, public toilets	Cabinet Office, LGA	Local authorities
Discharge to Access	Standard processes and data for discharging users from health to social care	Health and Social Care	NHS	Care providers and NHS

Long list of interventions

Intervention	Summary	Sector	Source	Implemented by
Summary Care Record	An electronic record of important patient information, created from GP medical records for use in emergencies	Health	NHS England, NHS Digital	Care providers and NHS
GP IT Futures	A procurement framework for GP systems promoting open standards	Health	NHS England, NHS Digital	Care providers and NHS
SNOMED CT	A structured clinical vocabulary for use in electronic health records	Health	NHS England	Care providers and NHS
FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources)	A structured clinical vocabulary for use in electronic health records	Health	NHS Digital	App developers
Open EHR	A standard for electronic health records to promote patient-centricity	Health	openEHR	App developers
Open Referral	A standard for service directories	Services Directory	DLUHC with support from local authorities in Devon, Bristol, iStand UK, Porism, Snook	Local authorities
151 Officer Returns	A standard for CFOs to share reports on spend in education	The 151 - return they have to do about how they spent their money.		
National Parking Platform Pilot	A parking data platform allowing all service providers to offer their services in all participating car parks	Parking	DFT, Manchester and Parking Matters	Parking operators and parking services providers