Co-Designing a Safe, Fair, and Trustworthy Digital Greater Manchester: Workshop Report

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Introduction

Greater Manchester (GM) is an ambitious digital city region, well-advanced in planning and implementing the digital infrastructure and policies that will eventually underpin transport, healthcare, education, citizen welfare and well-being, policing, and security. GM offers a unique opportunity to identify, study and help deal with the TIPSS challenges of becoming an innovative, responsible, inclusive, digital city region.

This project examines the critical issues of Trust, Identity, Privacy, Safety, and Security (TIPSS) that arise in this transformation. It draws on insights from SPRITE+ network and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and is actively engaging with the wider Greater Manchester digital ecosystem - including industry partners and public sector bodies such as the police, fire service, NHS, and all ten GM local authorities - as well as residents from across the region. The project represents an opportunity to showcase the city region as a leader in data-driven, ethical digital public service delivery and model good practice.

Activities include workshops involving community and industry consultations, fact-finding research, policy round tables, white papers, and show case events. Our findings will inform local, regional, and national policymaking and provide a platform to engage internationally with similarly ambitious cities and city regions.

Our overarching aim is to define a set of standards and/or a charter for trustworthy connected places. Our specific objective is to develop using GM (as a live test case) those standards/that charter by addressing the core questions: What are the defining features of a trustworthy connected place? To what extent are these universal vs place-specific?

This document provides a report on the second of our workshops **Co-Designing a Safe, Fair, and Trustworthy Digital Greater Manchester** which was a community engagement with residents of Greater Manchester.

Workshop Design

The purpose of this workshop was to engage a diverse range of local residents in shaping ethical standards for digital public services, to ensure the future Ethical Digital Public Services Charter reflects community priorities and is co-designed with resident input.

In total, 23 residents from across Greater Manchester attended, with only Rochdale and Oldham not represented. Attendees of this workshop were invited through GMCA Networks including the GM Equalities Network, GM Older People's Panel, GM Digital Inclusion Action Network, the VCFSE Sector, and through general GMCA and SPRITE+ social media channels.

Workshop Activities

For much of the workshop the participants were working in groups with each group facilitated by a member of the project team supported by a notetaker. There were four groups; participants were assigned to groups randomly and then stayed with the same group for the duration. During the activities, each groups' output was captured through notes they themselves made and those of the notetaker.

Workshop activities were designed and delivered to focus on what residents most cared about and encouraged discussion on how digital technology can be used safely, fairly, and transparently, ensuring everyone benefits. Each activity was designed to create clear actions for the Greater Manchester Ethical Digital Public Services Charter and prioritised the themes of Trust, Inclusion, Privacy, Safety and Security. The following activities were included:

1. Everyday Digital Life
    a. Residents were invited to share and discuss their daily experiences with digital technology, focusing on both positive and challenging aspects.
2. Building a Safe and Fair Digital Greater Manchester: Each table focused on Trust, Privacy, Inclusion and Risks.
    a. Each group was assigned a specific theme: Trust, Privacy, Inclusion, or Risks and Benefits
3. Drafting Charter Statements
    a. Each group collaboratively drafted charter statements reflecting on the examples provided and their collective vision for public services in Greater Manchester.
    b. Groups then refined and ranked their statements based on a Likert scale of 1 (Not Important) to 5 (Very Important)

Please see Appendix A for the full workshop outline.

Summary of Findings

Throughout the activities, many attendees focused on general digital services, the need for digital services to earn trust, privacy concerns particularly with data and third-party access, online safety, transparency, accountability, and autonomy.

When discussing public sector services, the importance of reliable, accessible, and inclusive services was a core focus. Residents wanted their feedback to shape genuinely usable services for the community. Particularly, participants stressed the importance of ensuring an efficient, non-digital and human-cantered option is always available alongside digital options. For Greater Manchester Combined Authority this is an essential factor in how public services are designed and delivered.

Thematic analysis of text output

In the series of round table discussions, participants were asked to provide their experiences with digital services in Manchester. In the first round, they were asked to "Share one digital thing in Manchester that made their life easier, or they wished worked better". In Round 2 and 3, we asked, "How can we ensure fairness, reliability and confidence?" and "What would help you trust digital services more?"

From these discussions, we have summarised participants' responses in the following thematic analysis. The quotes at the top of each thematic section are either captured from groupwork or are the proposed charter statements produced by participants in the final exercise.

Trust

"Tell me how my personal data is being used"

Trust is an important component of TIPSS and was frequently mentioned during discussions. While participants expressed greater trust in government than in private industry, fears were still raised over a lack of data transparency and the potential for cyber-attacks. A consistent theme emerged that residents were unaware of changes to services and to the use of their data, creating problems in maintaining trust with (local and national) government. Participants also noted that being open about existing digital vulnerabilities could enhance transparency and build public confidence.

Overall, trust was considered an attribute that needed to be earned through frequent interactions with the residents (both digital and physical), inclusive service provision, and increased knowledge of available resources.

Privacy

"Teaching people that everything posted online, private or not, is public"

"Need for rules for prevention of personal privacy data passed to 3rd parties and purchased"

"Citizens should be able to request deletion or amendment of their own personal data from public services"

Increased awareness of how to stay safe online, including making citizens aware that all data shared online is "public" even if shared in a private browser or incognito mode, was considered vital. Participants shared fears that their private data was being tracked and sold by tech companies, and some felt unnerved about the amount of targeted advertising they received. Methods about how to stay safe online were shared, including the use of VPNs, secure browsers such as DuckDuckGo and secure hardware such as Apple phones. It was deeply important to participants that the local government would not sell their private data to 3rd parties and that there was transparency on what data is owned by the government and where and when data has been shared.

The fine line between individual data privacy and the need for data tracking to prevent and stop criminal activity was also debated. Participants highlighted that modern police teams now have access to other streams of information, such as social media, to track criminal behaviour.

Security

"When computers or public Wi-Fi is used in communal areas, the privacy and security of individuals using the digital services must be protected"

In terms of security, there were general fears of cyber-attacks, hacking and phishing scams. Questions were raised on who owns these hardware, software and licensing systems. Participants stated better training was needed to provide human operatives with skills in reporting, finding and solving data breaches.

Breaches to security due to coercion, not just system malfunction, were also discussed, including the coercion to reveal more information than necessary.

Safety

"Where you put the tech matters as much as what the tech is"

"Digital systems should take into account the health implications on impacted workforce members and stakeholders (stress, accessibility etc)"

"Digital systems need to be …. located where people feel safest and where these systems provide the most utility"

When safety was discussed, participants highlighted the need for both physical and online safety, with the environment where digital tech is placed being as important as the safety of the tech itself. For instance, participants highlighted they might feel unsafe at cashpoints or at signing-up centres.

Lack of digital literacy was seen as a barrier to safety, as residents might be unsure of the safety and privacy features available to them. Whilst community digital upskilling sessions for the digitally excluded were considered great tools for improving digital literacy. Participants highlighted that when setting up digital systems containing confidential information, such as MyMFT, those who are digitally excluded may still be vulnerable. Therefore, having a network of people who are supportive and trustworthy was equally considered vital to feeling "safe" as improved cybersecurity measures.

Participants felt safe online when they could use it for daily browsing, verify information and talk to trusted contacts. Digital security barriers, such as ring cameras, were also highlighted as a reliable albeit intrusive method of increasing safety. However, concerns were raised about online scams and the dangers of social media usage, especially in relation to children. Online banking was regularly touched upon as a convenient method of managing finances, but also as a grey area in terms of safety. Constant digital change was also perceived to have an impact on workers' mental well-being, especially if the change was not accessible. Overall, participants emphasised that for any new digital service to be safe, it must also be simple to use.

(Digital) Identity

While an important component of TIPSS, identity was seldom mentioned in the workshop. Where it was, it was in relation to digital ID. Here, participants raised concerns about data privacy in the context of a national digital identification system, which streamlined all confidential identity documents into one service.

Transparency and Accountability

"Who is accountable for decisions?"

"Organisations should be transparent on how they collect, store and use our data"

"We need a process of accountability and responsibility, embedded throughout the development process of AI and Technology"

Transparency emerged as a recurrent theme in discussions relating to privacy, safety and trust. Participants emphasised the importance of governmental accountability, with residents being made aware of how much is being spent on digital services and the people in charge of their data. Improving public awareness of the current accountability networks, such as Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, was also highlighted.

When the government is in partnerships with industry, participants relayed the importance of representatives intervening at the contract stage to minimise data transfer and to ensure if data is included with contracts, the public is aware. Further, making sure residents are looped into decision-making and consulted

when changes are made to government systems was seen as vital to building trust and maintaining transparency.

"How are they using our data. What can access that data?"

The critical point was ensuring local government prevents the passing or purchasing of private data to 3rd parties. In essence, participants wanted the local governmental services to be transparent about how their data is used, why it is needed, where it is stored, who can access it and how it is protected. Residents also wanted the ability to take ownership of their data, including opting in and out of databases, having the ability to remove incorrect data, and having the right to be 'forgotten'. Ensuring they have complete control over their personal data.

Who's left behind?

"Applications of digital that meet real needs, especially of those most digitally excluded, to draw them into inclusion"

"There must be alternative arrangements for those who cannot use digital services"

"Digital systems need to be designed with built-in provisions to ensure Equality Diversity and Inclusion principles to guarantee fair access"

In any digital transition, it's important to consider who benefits and who is left behind. During the workshop, participants were cognisant of the benefits of living in an urban digital city, including streamlined services in health, transport and education. However, there was also an awareness that the most immediate beneficiaries would be the digitally literate, such as young people, leaving many behind. Including those without a baseline knowledge of technology: such as the elderly, individuals with cognitive disabilities, people who struggle with the English language and those who have a lack of confidence in tech. Additionally, there may also be people who, for privacy reasons, choose to opt out of digital services. In either case, participants made it clear that inclusive and accessible services were vital to making sure all could benefit from Manchester's digital transition so that we don't exacerbate existing divides.

Accessibility

"Don't build systems and processes with accessibility as an option; make accessibility the norm"

"Accessibility as a built-in requirement for all web services - font, speech, background, colour etc."

"Digital systems should be equally accessible to all citizens"

A key takeaway from the workshop was the recognition that accessibility and inclusion are critical to achieving a modern, urban, and ambitious digital city

where no one is left behind. Participants wanted to underscore that accessibility should not be considered an afterthought but baked into any new digital service. This includes accessible fonts, captioned audios and alternative texts for those with screen readers. Ensuring there is a non-digital option, for instance, cash, where there is contactless, manned ticket machines, so residents can easily navigate the complicated Metrolink, and easy access to a human operator where services are online, was considered essential.

Participants were conscious of the fact that not all residents had access to personal devices, such as laptops, and therefore, it was important that non-digital alternatives were provided. Overall, the dearth of good non-digital alternatives to essential services was commented on, with participants stressing the long wait times in accessing vital services such as universal credit, over the phone.

Further, while inclusivity is talked about in an individual sense, regional inclusivity is just as important, and many made it clear that all boroughs of Greater Manchester should benefit from improved digital services. Even if they are considered to be 'poorer' than other regions.

Digital Apps: Good or Bad?

For participants, technology was a ubiquitous part of their daily lives, used for social connection, fact-finding, mobile banking, work, transport and entertainment. When asked questions about their daily technology use, Manchester-specific apps like MyMFT and Bee Network were frequently mentioned.

MyMFT is an online app which connects healthcare information from Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust. Patients can view appointment letters, test results, medical history, and complete pre-visit checks (Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, 2025). In the context of health apps, participants highlighted the utility of streamlining services, as currently multiple apps, including the NHS app, are used for the same services. Therefore, standardising practice so all local GP services and hospitals use the same system was suggested as an improvement to the current patchwork system of health apps and online booking systems currently available to residents.

However, while MyMFT was often mentioned in a neutral sense, the Bee Network app evoked strong reactions. The Bee network, which encompasses an integrated bus service and the Metrolink network, has seen over 58.6 million bus journeys and 44.5 million Metrolink journeys from the 2023/2024 period (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024). During the period of franchising, which established local control over the bus networks, the Bee Network app was created so residents could purchase their tickets on the go, track, with live updates, bus and tram timings and plan their journeys. So far, the app has been downloaded more than 850,000 times, including over 1.8 million in-app

purchases (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2025). While participants complained about some features of the app, such as the unreliability in bus arrival times and suggested new features, such as live traffic updates. The frequent mention of the Bee Network app during the workshop emphasised its high usage and underscored the need and a ready base for integrated digital tools which can aid local services in Manchester.

Suggestions were made on the best methods to digital and non-digital options, such as a physical digital screen showing the arrival time of buses at the stop, in-app alerts on diversions and strikes and volunteers to help those who require human guidance.

Positive and negative interactions with the council.

"Residents should be provided with a centralised service, physicalised service that caters to supporting their needs around council, library, housing services."

Participants described varied experiences with the current digital services offered by the council. While highlighting the utility of the council website, especially when reporting issues, to some, it was inaccessible, barely readable and had too much signposting.

Better integration between digital and physical services was recommended, with better training for council teams potentially leading to improved resilience in delivering services. Participants also highlighted the difficulties of reaching a human operator, which created friction and reduced trust.

Many talked of their experiences with AI chatbots as being inaccessible and confusing, emphasising the need for clear pathways to access a human operator.

Digital change and transformations

"I feel like I'm constantly having to upskill, I just get used to doing something and they abandon that system for something new"

"Where decisions are made by AI that affect citizens, humans should remain in the loop to ensure decisions are fair and lack bias"

"Digital systems need to ensure contingency plans to guarantee access (e.g. to digital public services, NHS, transport) by citizens when digital systems are down."

"The use of digital tools/AI should be explicit at all stages of the process and evaluation undertaken of any unintended outcomes/biases."

Residents highlighted their concerns about the changing digital landscape. Some feel constant digital changes have made their lives harder, as they constantly must learn new skills to stay on top of their daily tasks. While the importance of improved digital hardware was understood, especially when it comes to data safety. For front-end design, participants maintained that a

friendly and intuitive user interface, accessible to all residents, should be the most important consideration.

While some participants felt technology was advancing too quickly, most agreed that AI doesn't have the current capabilities to be used for policy making. Worries were also presented about data safety with AI tools that scrape the internet for their training models. Who was creating and developing these AI tools was also discussed, along with the potential for hidden biases to be present in the trained models.

Increasing trust... inclusion

Serving the digitally excluded is vital if we are to increase trust and create an inclusive digital city. It was considered essential to make sure inclusion wasn't delivered as a 'tick box exercise' but was embedded into how digital tools are produced. Discussion was fruitful in producing suggestions about how to increase trust in digital services.

A common suggestion was having a kiosk-style service point, where the local council had a physical presence in local community centres, schools and libraries to answer commonly asked questions. Participants also suggested strategic partnerships with the local council, the public sector, such as local community groups focused on age or ethnicity, and private industry, to provide upskilling workshops and reduce digital exclusion in vulnerable communities. More creative suggestions, such as the idea of targeting ads in traditional media, were seen as a strategic way to reduce fears of phishing, scams and fraud, especially in the context AI generated misinformation. This concern is particularly relevant for older adults, with 61% of adults over 65 having been a target of scams (Independent Age, 2024).

Community was a key theme in discussions around inclusion, as participants were more likely to trust digital services that their peers used, and which come from organisations they recognised. They also mentioned the negatives of the digitisation of social services, including further reducing human interaction. Therefore, encouraging people to seek intergenerational help from friends and family was seen as an important step in mitigating digital exclusion, with parents mentioning how they already get help from their children to book online appointments and access Zoom meetings for work, but also parents teaching children how to use desktop computers. Making sure young children are given access to physical resources was also important, with one participant giving the worrying anecdote of a toddler swiping a book as if it were a tablet. Nevertheless, the digital world was also viewed to strengthen existing communities, for example, through participation in local Facebook groups or by connecting with long-distance friends and relatives.

Summary

We can best summarise the content of the thematic analysis in that there is a diverse collection of related topics all of which seem to circulate around the themes of trustworthiness and inclusion.

This is captured perhaps most thoroughly by the word cloud show in Figure 1. To generate this wordcloud we ingested all the notetakers notes from the interactive sessions, the charter statements and the captured notes of the participants. The words "digital" and "online" were excluded from the cloud as were common words "and" "the" and basic verbs like "make" and "do"
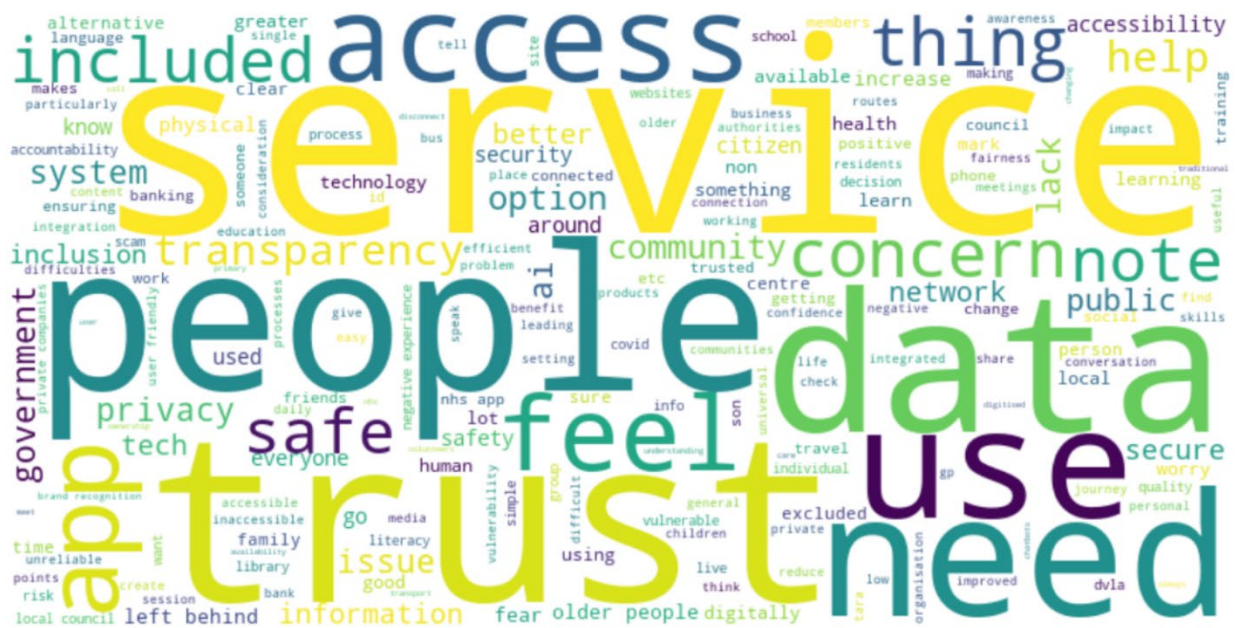
Figure 1: word cloud of all text generated at the workshop.

Charter statement analysis

In the final session of the day the participants had two tasks. They first had to brainstorm potential charter statements. To do this they were shown some examples that had been developed by the team:

- Personal information should only be used for the reasons people were told about.
- Digital systems used in Greater Manchester should have the highest possible security standards.
- People should be able to control how their identity is used when they use online (digital) public services.
- Local authorities should be clear and honest about how digital systems are used.
- People should be told what personal data is collected about them in public spaces.
- Smart technology (like cameras or sensors) should be used to help keep people safe in public spaces.

The seventeen statements that they generated between them were as follows:

- Need for rules for prevention of personal privacy data passed to 3rd parties and purchased
- There must be alternative arrangements for those who cannot use digital services
- The right to remove incorrect data
- Organisations should be transparent on how they collect, store and use our data
- Digital systems should be equally accessible to all citizens
- When computers or public Wi-Fi is used in communal areas, the privacy and security of individuals using the digital services must be protected
- Where decisions are made by AI that affect citizens, humans should remain in the loop to ensure decisions are fair and lack bias
- Digital systems need to ensure contingency plans to guarantee access (e.g. to digital public services, NHS, transport) by citizens when digital systems are down
- Digital systems need to be designed with built-in provisions to ensure Equality Diversity and Inclusion principles to guarantee fair access
- If digital tools (like AI or automated systems) are used to make decisions about people, it should be clear how those decisions are made
- The use of digital tools/AI should be explicit at all stages of the process and evaluation undertaken of any unintended outcomes/biases.
- We need a process of accountability and responsibility, embedded throughout the development process of AI and Technology

- Accessibility as a built-in requirement for all web services - font, speech, background, colour etc.
- Digital systems need to be accessible, transparent and accountable; located where people feel safest and where these systems provide the most utility
- Citizens should be able to request deletion or amendment of their own personal data from public services
- Residents should be provided with a centralised service, physicalised service that caters to supporting their needs around council, library, housing services
- Digital systems should take into account the health implications on impacted workforce members and stakeholders (stress, accessibility etc)

At the second step the participants then answered an individual survey – using pen and paper rating each of the 23 statements (the six generated by the team were adding in for this exercise) on the following scale:

- Very Important
- Moderately important
- Neutral
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

Eighteen of the participants took part in the survey.

To analyse the responses, these were coded from 0 to 4. A small number of blanks were coded as neutral. Means were calculated and the results are shown in Figure 2. It is worth noting that for all statements the largest category response was "very important". This is perhaps unsurprising as both sources of the statements – the team and the workshop participants were attempting to generate statements that they though were important. However, going forward we may want to make the exercise one of ordering or choosing the most important.

The interactions of the participants with the workshop's roundtables brought out some nuance in their responses, with 12 themes being identified in our thematic analysis above. However, it is possible to collapse those themes down to two overarching meta-themes trustworthiness and inclusion. The more specific themes above can be understood as sitting underneath those two.

In terms of the charter statements, conceptual analysis of the seventeen produced by the participants shows that those two meta themes are also prevalent and a third one safety also emerged (See figure 3 below).

If that is born out as the project collects more data, then our question could boil down to this:

"How do we build a digital city that is both trustworthy, safe and inclusive?"
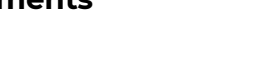
Next Steps:

The TIPSS project is running until Summer/Autumn 2026 and there will be future opportunities to engage in this work. All workshop participants who have provided consent to be contacted in the future will receive further information closer to the time through the newsletter.

We will be asking for further community input into the development of this project through future workshops and a public survey. This will allow a broader range of Greater Manchester residents to contribute their perspectives and help refine the charter statements.

There will be 3 further workshops in total, including a virtual resident workshop in Summer 2026. In Summer 2026, the final resident workshop will include testing charter statements and showcase the progress and developments that have been achieved, including potential future cases of how the charter will be implemented across Greater Manchester. The other two workshops will focus on developing and testing the resident designed statements with the Greater Manchester Public Sector Workforce – including local councils, Greater Manchester Police, Fire Service, NHS, and digital transformation officers.

Statement	Mean	Graphically
Need for rules for prevention of personal privacy data passed to 3rd parties and purchased	3.8	
There must be alternative arrangements for those who cannot use digital services	3.7	
The right to remove incorrect data	3.7	
Organisations should be transparent on how they collect, store and use our data	3.6	
Personal information should only be used for the reasons people were told about	3.6	
Digital systems used in Greater Manchester should have the highest possible security standards.	3.6	
Digital systems should be equally accessible to all citizens	3.6	
When computers or public wifi is used in communal areas, the privacy and security of individuals using the digital services must be protected	3.5	
People should be able to control how their identity is used when they use online (digital) public services	3.5	
Local authorities should be clear and honest about how digital systems are used.	3.5	
Where decisions are made by AI that affect citizens, humans should remain in the loop to ensure decisions are fair and lack bias	3.5	
Digital systems need to ensure contingency plans to guarantee access (e.g. to digital public services, NHS, transport) by citizens when digital systems	3.4	
Digital systems need to be designed with built-in provisions to ensure Equality Diversity and Inclusion principles to guarantee fair access	3.4	
If digital tools (like AI or automated systems) are used to make decisions about people, it should be clear how those decisions are made	3.3	
The use of digital tools/AI should be explicit at all stages of the process and evaluation undertaken of any unintended outcomes/biases.	3.3	
We need a process of accountability and responsibility, embedded throughout the development process of AI and Technology	3.2	
Accessibility as a built in requirement for all web services - font, speech, background, colour etc.	3.2	
People should be told what personal data is collected about them in public spaces	3.2	
Digital systems need to be accessible, transparent and accountable; located where people feel safest and where these systems provide the most utility	3.1	
Citizens should be able to request deletion or amendment of their own personal data from public services	3.1	
Smart technology (like cameras or sensors) should be used to help keep people safe in public spaces	2.9	
Residents should be provided with a centralised service, physicalised service that caters to supporting their needs around council, library, housing	2.8	
Digital systems should take into account the health implications on impacted workforce members and stakeholders (stress, accessibility etc)	2.6	

Figure 2: Mean coded responses to the potential charter statements

Statement	Concepts	Trustworthiness	Inclusion	Safety
Need for rules for prevention of personal privacy data passed to 3rd parties and purchased	Privacy	X		
There must be alternative arrangements for those who cannot use digital services	Inclusion		X	
The right to remove incorrect data	Identity, Autonomy	X		
Organisations should be transparent on how they collect, store and use our data	Transparency	X		
Digital systems should be equally accessible to all citizens	Inclusion, Accessibility		X	
When computers or public wifi is used in communal areas, the privacy and security of individuals using the digital services must be protected	Privacy, Security			
Where decisions are made by AI that affect citizens, humans should remain in the loop to ensure decisions are fair and lack bias	Safety, Equality		X	X
Digital systems need to ensure contingency plans to guarantee access (e.g. to digital public services, NHS, transport) by citizens when digital systems are down	Accessibility		X	
Digital systems need to be designed with built-in provisions to ensure Equality Diversity and Inclusion principles to guarantee fair access	Inclusion		X	
If digital tools (like AI or automated systems) are used to make decisions about people, it should be clear how those decisions are made	Transparency	X		
The use of digital tools/AI should be explicit at all stages of the process and evaluation undertaken of any unintended outcomes/biases.	Safety, Equality		X	X
We need a process of accountability and responsibility, embedded throughout the development process of AI and Technology	Accountability	X		
Accessibility as a built in requirement for all web services - font, speech, background, colour etc.	Accessibility		X	
Digital systems need to be accessible, transparent and accountable; located where people feel safest and where these systems provide the most utility	Transparency, Accountability	X		X
Citizens should be able to request deletion or amendment of their own personal data from public services	Privacy, Identity, Autonomy	X		
Residents should be provided with a centralised service, physicalised service that caters to supporting their needs around council, library, housing services	Inclusion, Accessibility		X	
Digital systems should take into account the health implications on impacted workforce members and stakeholders (stress, accessibility etc)	Safety			X

Figure 3: Conceptualisation of the charter statements generated by the participants.

Key References

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Appendix A: Workshop Agenda

When	What	Notes
Arrival of GMCA / SPRITE+ 11:45am – 12:30pm	See Agenda	N / A
Arrival of participants (12:30 – 1:00 PM)	See Agenda	N / A
Welcome (1.00 PM – 1:30 PM)	Welcome from GMCA & SPRITE+ (15 mins) • Overview of the day's plan and the importance of participants' voices • How this relates to GM's future work (5 mins) Short talk: Plain-English explanation of (15 mins) • What makes a connected place trustworthy – and for whom? "What "digital Greater Manchester" means • Why your voice matters • Digital tech examples in GM (smart transport, digital health, public safety cameras etc)	Key Discussion Points: • Why digital public services matter • The city-region's ambition to be a leader in responsible digital transformation. • The importance of resident voices in shaping ethical standards.

	• Opportunities and challenges these bring:
	  - "How do we make sure technology benefits everyone?"
	  - "How do we get the right balance between safety and privacy?"	

Conversation Round 1 – Everyday Digital Life
 	
(1:30–2:05 PM)
	Small-group discussions (3/4x groups of 6 people, plus facilitator & note-taker per table)
	
	Activity:
	
	"**One Digital Thing**": Share one digital thing in Greater Manchester that makes life better, or one you wish worked better?
	
	Quickly write on a post-it note
	
	• Focus: Capture positive and negative lived experiences related to security, safety, inclusion, and trust in digital services
	
	Answer these questions on your flip chart:
	
	• Guiding questions include:
	
	  o How do you use digital services daily?
	  o What positive or negative experiences have you had?
	  o What makes you feel safe or unsafe using digital tech?
		Probing Questions and priorities:
		
		• Can you think of a time when a digital service made your life easier? What about a time it made things harder?
		• Have you ever felt worried or unsure about using something online? What happened?
		• Are there digital services you avoid? Why?
		• What would help you or people you know feel more confident using digital services?
		• Do you know where to go for help if you get stuck online?

	o Do you feel included or excluded? o What would increase your trust?	
Refreshment Break (2:05–2:20 PM	Tea, coffee and biscuits provided	N/A
Conversation Round 2 – Building a Safe & Fair Digital GM (2:20–3:00 PM)	Present questions: Each table will focus on their table number. Facilitators should spend most time on their table number question, but if time move onto one of choice. 1. How important is privacy to you? Do you feel your privacy is respected? 2. Who benefits, who's left behind, and how to include everyone? 3. How to ensure fairness, reliability, and confidence? 4. What are the risks and how do we reduce them? Feedback to main group 10 minutes	1. Privacy • What does privacy mean to you in your daily life? • Can you think of a time when you felt your privacy was not respected online? • What would help you feel more confident that your information is safe? 2. Inclusion • Who do you think benefits most from digital services in Manchester? • Are there groups or individuals who might be left out? Why? • What could be done to make digital services more accessible for everyone? 3. Fairness, Reliability, Confidence • What does "fairness" look like in digital services?

		• Have you ever felt a digital service was unreliable or unfair? What happened? • What would help you trust digital services more? 4. Risks & Reducing Them • What worries you most about using digital services? • Have you or someone you know experienced a problem or risk online? • What support or safeguards would help you feel safer?
Drafting the Charter (3:00–3:45 PM)	"Drafting the charter" an exemplar Present draft statements charter statements	Briefly share example statements and build on these in your group Explain that these are starting points—participants can agree, adapt, and will create new ones. • Which of these statements feel most important to you? • Is there anything missing from these examples? • How would you change or improve them?

	Group Work: Draft Statements (30 mins)	Probing Questions for creating statements:
	• Each group produces 3-4 of their own statements for an ethical city region – note takers to input into the google doc	• What does a "safe and fair" digital Manchester look like to you? • How should digital services treat your personal information? • What would help everyone feel included and confident using digital technology? • How can we make sure digital services are reliable and trustworthy? • What should happen if something goes wrong with a digital service? (e.g., "Everyone should feel safe using digital services," "Personal data must be protected and only used with consent," "Digital services should be accessible to all, regardless of ability or background").

	Individual Work: Ranking Charter Statements	Facilitator Support: Intended quiet exercise
	- Distribute paper sheets with numbered boxes for each statement. - Ranking exercise using Likert Scale via paper-based system - Collect the sheets and put into Table number envelope Feedback to Group (if time) - (5 mins)	Explain the ranking process clearly – each individual statement is ranked on a 1 – 5 basis Which statements were the most important to your group?
Plenary, Collective Priorities, Closing & Next Steps (3:45–4:00 PM)	Next steps (5 minutes): - Summarise the day and what we've achieved - Outline how input feeds into final Charter and broader Digital GM plans - Explain opportunities for ongoing involvement	- To explain how today's input will shape the final Charter and Greater Manchester's digital future. - To outline opportunities for ongoing involvement and next steps in the TIPSS project.
Close (4:00 PM)		

Facilitator Notes

What is this project?

- The project is supported by the University of Manchester and the SPRITE+ Network, a leading international consortium focused on research and innovation in digital security, privacy, identity, and trust, bringing together researchers, practitioners, policy makers.

- The TIPSS project responds to the growing need for ethical standards in digital public services, reflecting Greater Manchester's ambition to be an exemplar city-region for responsible digital transformation. The project will explore what it means to create ethical "connected places" such as smart public spaces, digital services, AI in public sector use and data-sharing that people can rely on.

- The project seeks to capture real voices and lived experiences to ensure the Charter reflects community priorities and practical expectations.

Charter Purpose:

- The Charter will be co-designed with residents, public services, and stakeholders through workshops and ongoing consultation

- Central government is increasingly prioritising digital safety and public trust in services: There is a national focus on digital safety and public trust, with declining user satisfaction in digital public services and new legislation such as the Online Safety Act 2023

- To co-design, with public services, residents, and stakeholders, a set of standards or charter that sets out the vision, standards, and practical expectations for ethical digital public services across Greater Manchester that goes beyond legislative requirements.

- To support delivery of the wider Greater Manchester Strategy, including digital inclusion and transformation to support in making smarter decisions, deliver better outcomes, and support programmes like LiveWell.

Examples of Digital services

National Digital Services	Greater Manchester Digital Services
NHS App & Online GP Services: Book appointments, order prescriptions, view medical records. **Gov.uk**: Access to government services (tax, benefits, passports, driving licences). **Universal Credit Online:** Manage benefits and claims. **DVLA Online:** Renew driving licences, pay road tax. **HMRC Online:** Tax returns, child benefit, self-assessment. **Online Voting Registration:** Register to vote and check status. **Transport Apps:** National Rail, Trainline, and contactless payments for travel.	**NHS App**: Regional health service apps including - MyGP, online prescriptions **Early Years App:** Digitises early years assessments **Victims Gateway:** Joins up victim's services to ensure testimonies are only shared once. **Transport Apps:** BeeNetwork App, Council Apps: e.g. Manchester City Council online services MappingGM

Information	Background
Online Safety Act 2023	Establishes new standards for digital safety and accountability. Aims to protect users from online harms, including children and vulnerable groups. Places legal duties on digital service providers to manage risks and report harmful content
Reduction in trust in digital public services	The State of Digital Government Review (January 2025) reports that user satisfaction with digital public services has declined to 68% from 79%.
UK Data Protection Act 2018 & GDPR	Governs how personal data must be handled, stored, and shared. Ensures privacy rights for individuals and sets standards for data security and transparency.
Good Landlords Charter Good Employer Charter	Previous local charters that set ethical standards and practical expectations for public services in Greater Manchester