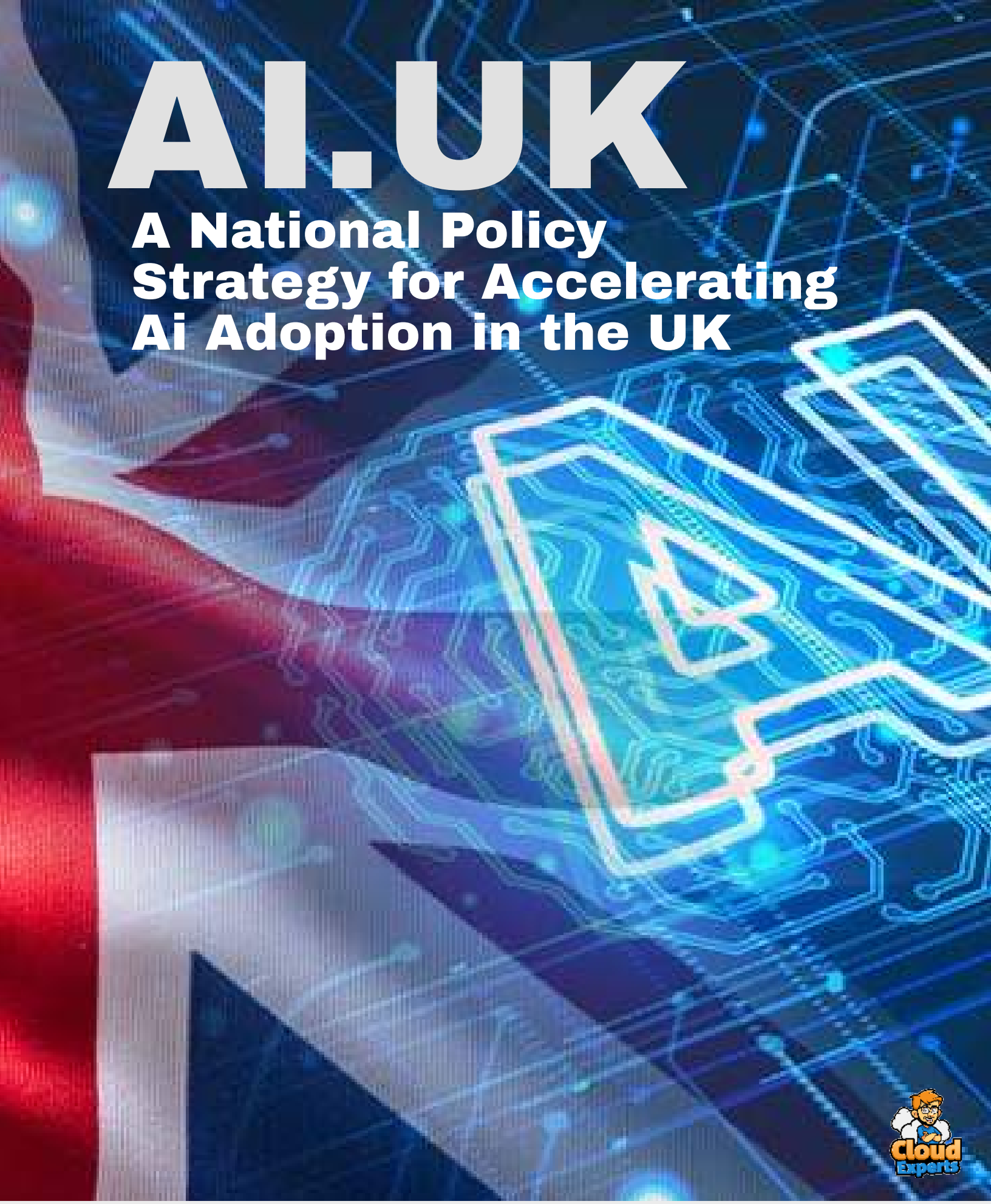

AI.UK

A National Policy Strategy for Accelerating Ai Adoption in the UK

AiFutures.institute

AI UK - Igniting The British AI Revolution: How Government Ai Adoption Could Supercharge the UK Economy

At the beginning of the year Keir Starmer unveiled a comprehensive 50-point plan to 'unleash AI' across the UK to boost growth, shaping the future of technology and innovation in the country.

In a speech setting out the government's plans to use AI across the UK to boost growth and deliver services more efficiently, the PM vowed to "Mainline AI into the Veins of the UK".

The potential of this technology for the UK is huge, offering a dual potential to transform the public sector for vast efficiency benefits and cost savings, while simultaneously massively booting the tech sector through startups and commercialization growth.

Far from being a mere tool for automation, AI offers the potential to enhance efficiency, unlock new industries, and position the UK as a global leader in the digital age, and the UK boasts a wealth of expertise and thought leaders who can realize this vision for the UK and with it deliver these enormous economic benefits.

By embracing AI with bold vision and strategic intent, the government can unlock a £630 billion economic boost by 2035, as estimated by Accenture and Frontier Economics.

AI UK - Igniting The British AI Revolution: How Government Ai Adoption Could Supercharge the UK Economy

UK-AI Action Plan: Ai Powered Economic Transformation

Following the appointment of Matt Clifford the strategy is based on his new AI Opportunities Action Plan, to build a UK AI sector that can scale and compete on the global stage. This will set out how to boost take up of the technology across all parts of the economy, and consider the necessary infrastructure, talent, and data access required to drive adoption by the public and private sectors, covering:

- AI will be used by the public sector to enable its workers to spend less time doing admin and more time delivering services.
- Several “AI Growth Zones” around the UK will be created, involving big building projects and new jobs.
- AI will be fed through cameras around the country to inspect roads and spot potholes that need fixing
- Teachers and small business owners were highlighted as two groups that could start using AI for things like faster planning and record-keeping.
- AI is already being used in UK hospitals for important tasks such as diagnosing cancer more quickly and it will continue to be used to support the NHS.

AI UK - Igniting The British AI Revolution: How Government Ai Adoption Could Supercharge the UK Economy

A Catalyst for Efficiency and Cost Savings

Government operations, often burdened by bureaucracy and legacy systems, are ripe for reinvention through AI.

From streamlining tax collection to optimizing public healthcare delivery, AI can dramatically improve efficiency. The ultimate goal is to more effectively utilize these technologies such that they deliver a further £45 billion in cost efficiency savings across the whole of the UK public sector.

The government has also recently announced Feryal Clark as the UK's new Minister for AI and Digital Government – a role in which she will take on oversight of Whitehall's core technology units. Speaking with PublicTechnology last year Feryal described Labour's ambition to completely transform the way that public services interact with citizens.

For instance, machine learning algorithms can analyze vast datasets to detect tax evasion with unprecedented accuracy, potentially recovering billions in lost revenue. The UK's HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) could use predictive analytics to identify patterns of non-compliance, reducing the need for costly audits while boosting public funds.

Peter Kyle and Tony Blair: How Will AI Transform Government

AI-powered systems could optimize energy grids, reduce emissions, and manage traffic in real time, making UK cities more sustainable and attractive to businesses. This not only improves quality of life but also positions the UK as a leader in green tech—a sector projected to be worth £2.5 trillion globally by 2030. Exporting these innovations could bolster the UK's trade balance and enhance its soft power.

In healthcare, the National Health Service (NHS) could deploy AI to triage patients, predict outbreaks, and personalize treatments, all while reducing wait times and operational costs. A 2023 PwC report estimated that AI could save the NHS £10 billion annually by 2030 through automation and improved resource allocation.

Early NHS projects are deploying apps like "Humphrey" to streamline public services, eliminate delays through improved data sharing, and reduce costs, including consultant spending.

In conversation with the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, Peter Kyle, at the inaugural SXSW London, TBI Executive Chairman Tony Blair discusses how governments should embrace the 21st-century technological revolution to deliver transformative change for their citizens.

Peter Kyle and Tony Blair: How Will AI Transform Government

On June 5, 2025, the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change hosted a compelling discussion titled “How Will AI Transform Government?” featuring former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and Peter Kyle, the current Secretary of State for Science, Innovation, and Technology.

The conversation offered a visionary exploration of AI’s potential to reshape public services, streamline governance, and address pressing societal challenges. Below, we review the key themes, insights, and implications of this significant dialogue, which underscores the Labour government’s ambition to position the UK as an “AI superpower.”

A Vision for AI-Driven Governance

The talk opened with a shared optimism about AI’s transformative power. Blair, once famously tech-averse during his premiership (he reportedly never carried a mobile phone), has become a fervent advocate for AI’s role in modernizing government.

He argued that AI represents a “game-changer” capable of revolutionizing public services, from healthcare to education, and addressing systemic inefficiencies. Kyle echoed this sentiment, emphasizing that AI is central to the Labour government’s agenda to boost economic growth and improve public services. Their discussion framed AI not merely as a technological tool but as a catalyst for reordering the state to be “smaller, more strategic, and providing greater efficiency at lower cost.”

Peter Kyle and Tony Blair: How Will AI Transform Government

Blair's vision, informed by reports from his think tank, the Tony Blair Institute (TBI), highlighted specific applications of AI. He pointed to potential savings of £200 billion over five years through AI adoption in public services, citing tools like personalized Digital Public Assistants, Multidisciplinary AI Support Teams, and National Policy Twins to streamline administrative tasks and policy planning. Kyle, drawing from personal experience, noted AI's potential in healthcare, suggesting that advanced diagnostic tools could have detected his late mother's lung cancer earlier, saving lives and reducing costs.

Digital ID and Public Sector Efficiency

A significant portion of the discussion focused on digital identification as a backbone for AI-driven governance.

Blair advocated for a robust digital ID system, arguing it could tackle issues like immigration control, benefit fraud, and access to services. He suggested that digital IDs could process the "vast flow of people coming through our borders" and ensure that only eligible individuals access public benefits, signaling a tougher stance on immigration.

Kyle supported this, noting that the government is launching a digital wallet in June 2025 to store documents like driving licenses, with "nothing off the table" for further applications. However, Blair acknowledged a looming "big debate" on privacy versus efficiency, suggesting that the public might be willing to trade some privacy for enhanced service delivery.

Peter Kyle and Tony Blair: How Will AI Transform Government

Challenges and Criticisms

While the talk was optimistic, it also touched on challenges. Blair and Kyle recognized the need for significant investment—potentially £4 billion annually—to overhaul legacy digital infrastructure and train workforces.

Critics, including tech consultant Rachel Coldicutt, have warned that such costs may not yield immediate returns, questioning whether funds could be better spent elsewhere. Additionally, concerns about digital exclusion were raised, with nearly a third of disabled people and half of those over 65 rarely using the internet, potentially leaving vulnerable groups behind in an AI-driven system.

The discussion also addressed criticisms of the government's close ties to Big Tech. Kyle's 28 meetings with tech sector representatives in six months have drawn scrutiny, with some arguing that smaller AI firms are being sidelined. Reports have also questioned the reliability of TBI's data, with allegations that some figures supporting the UK's AI push were generated by ChatGPT, raising concerns about policy rigor.

Balancing Innovation and Regulation

Kyle emphasized a "pro-innovation" approach, including plans for a national data library and long-term R&D funding to bolster the UK's tech sector. However, he stressed the need for balanced regulation to address public concerns, such as job displacement (45% of Britons fear AI-related job losses) and loss of human creativity.

UK-AI: Incubator and Best Practice Playbook for Growing AI Adoption Across the UK Government

Blair urged politicians to deepen their understanding of AI, warning that nations failing to harness it risk falling behind. Both speakers highlighted successful international examples, like South Korea's Seoul Talk and Portugal's Automatic Social Energy Tariff, as models for AI-driven public services.

Looking Ahead

The talk concluded with a call to action for governments to act swiftly. Blair's evangelical zeal for AI, combined with Kyle's policy focus, painted a picture of a future where AI could save billions, enhance services, and drive economic growth. However, the path forward requires navigating technical complexities, public skepticism, and ethical concerns. As Kyle noted, regulation must be "right on time" to avoid stifling innovation or compromising rights.

The dialogue between Peter Kyle and Tony Blair was a clarion call for embracing AI to transform governance. It highlighted both the immense potential and the significant challenges of integrating AI into public services. While their vision is ambitious, the success of this transformation will depend on addressing digital exclusion, ensuring robust regulation, and maintaining public trust.

As the UK moves toward its goal of becoming an AI superpower, this conversation serves as a critical starting point for reimagining the state in the 21st century.

UK-AI: Incubator and Best Practice Playbook for Growing AI Adoption Across the UK Government

The UK has developed an exciting national Ai strategy, to realize massive public sector efficiency benefits and accelerate a portfolio of high value tech startups.

The potential of this technology for the UK is huge, offering a dual potential to transform the public sector for vast efficiency benefits and cost savings, while simultaneously massively booting the tech sector through startups and commercialization growth.

Realizing this potential is a significant challenge, requiring new skills across the entire public sector and intelligent selection and adoption of the right tools and technologies.

There are a number of major programs taking shape to help support this:

Learning Resources

The Cabinet Office recently published a framework to support the adoption of generative AI in the public sector, as well as two enlightening reports: i) The People Factor: A human-centred approach to scaling AI tools, and ii) The Mitigating 'Hidden' AI Risks Toolkit.

Also the UK Government Digital Service (GDS), under the leadership of Technology Secretary Peter Kyle, launched the AI Playbook, a comprehensive guide designed to steer public sector organizations toward the safe, effective, and responsible use of AI, formed through three main sections:

UK-AI: Incubator and Best Practice Playbook for Growing AI Adoption Across the UK Government

- **Building AI Solutions:** Technical and corporate guidance for selecting, procuring, and deploying AI solutions, aimed at those involved in AI projects.
- **Using AI Safely and Responsibly:** Practical steps to ensure AI systems are developed and deployed with legal, ethical, and security considerations in mind.
- **AI Use Cases in the Public Sector:** Real-world examples and case studies showcasing AI applications across government, providing actionable insights.

Each section includes checklists and recommendations, with the playbook complemented by a new AI Insights series for in-depth technical discussions and bimonthly updates to keep pace with AI advancements.

This pivotal resource, accessible to all on GOV.UK, builds on the Generative AI Framework and expands its scope to encompass a broader range of AI technologies, including machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and speech recognition.

The Incubator for Artificial Intelligence (i.AI), housed within the Government Digital Service under the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, is a dynamic team dedicated to revolutionizing public services through AI. Operating from Bristol, London, and Manchester, i.AI brings together experts from industry, academia, and the public sector to develop ethical, secure, and innovative AI solutions.

AI Exemplars To Act as Leading Lights to Drive Adoption Across the UK Public Sector

Led by Dr. Laura Gilbert, the incubator focuses on enhancing government efficiency and improving service delivery for citizens by identifying high-impact AI opportunities, rapidly prototyping tools, and scaling successful projects across departments.

The team's work involves scanning for AI applications by collaborating with government bodies and private sector partners like Microsoft and Google, prioritizing projects based on feasibility and value. Notable tools include Consult, which streamlines public consultation analysis, and Extract, which digitizes planning documents to accelerate council decisions.

Other innovations, such as Redbox for summarizing ministerial documents, Connect for optimizing renewable energy grid connections, and Caddy, an AI copilot for customer service, demonstrate i.AI's commitment to addressing diverse challenges, from policy-making to net-zero goals.

By recruiting 40 new roles to expand production capabilities, i.AI is poised to scale its impact, transforming public services in areas like health, education, and home affairs while maintaining a focus on ethical AI deployment.

Knowledge Hub

They recently announced the AI adoption Knowledge Hub, a starting point for understanding and harnessing AI across government. Dive into a wealth of resources including:

- **Use Case Library:** Explore how AI is transforming government services through real-world examples across the public sector.
- **Guidance for AI Adoption:** Get essential advice from finding the right problem to ensuring responsible AI usage.
- **Build Your Understanding:** Explore documents outlining the UK government's approach to AI to deepen your knowledge.

This dynamic resource will continue to grow, shaped by the needs of public sector teams.

AI Exemplars To Act as Leading Lights to Drive Adoption Across the UK Public Sector

The UK Government is seeking to catalyze wholesale adoption of AI across the entire public sector, with a view to realizing large-scale transformation and efficiencies.

This includes highly challenging environments systems like Healthcare, a notoriously complex system with immediately tangible performance factors like patient wait times.

The Kings Fund reported on the challenges for AI adoption in this sector, highlighting significant infrastructure challenges hindering the NHS from fully utilizing AI's potential.

The charity notes that enthusiastic staff are often stymied by outdated technology and poor data access. The report points to issues like inadequate data standards, limited skills, and insufficient funding, which impede AI integration. Recommendations include investing in IT team capacity, securing multi-year funding for technology, and establishing robust data access mechanisms.

Pathfinders Leading the Ai Transformation Journey

To help drive momentum to overcome these challenges and grow AI adoption across the whole public sector the Prime Minister has launched the 'AI Exemplars' programme, a showcase of the AI adoption projects trailblazing the pathway for others to follow.

AI Exemplars To Act as Leading Lights to Drive Adoption Across the UK Public Sector

The UK government has announced the deployment of an AI-assisted tool at Chelsea and Westminster NHS Trust to streamline hospital discharge processes, reducing paperwork and freeing up doctors' time for patient care.

This tool uses a large language model to draft discharge documents by extracting key details from medical records, such as diagnoses and test results, for review by medical experts. This initiative aims to cut waiting times, reduce errors in discharge summaries, and help patients leave hospitals faster, easing ward congestion.

They have also deployed a suite of AI tools named 'Humphrey', designed to streamline civil service tasks, such as policy analysis and meeting transcription, saving time and reducing reliance on expensive consultants. The initiative aims to eliminate outdated processes, improve data sharing across departments to reduce delays and fraud, and target £45 billion in annual productivity savings.

Other AI projects in the programme include Extract, an AI-powered tool which aims to modernize the UK's planning system by digitizing historic planning documents, such as paper maps and PDFs. The tool streamlines the processing of 350,000 annual planning applications, reducing document processing time from hours to minutes, potentially saving 250,000 hours of manual work yearly.

"Minute" is a transcription and summarization tool designed to ease the administrative burden on public servants, by transcribing and summarizes meetings, interviews, and appointments, producing polished summaries in formats like Cabinet Office-style minutes or tailored templates for local government, such as care assessments.

'Justice Transcribe' for probation officers and tools to digitize planning documents and support teachers. The government estimates these innovations could unlock £45 billion in productivity gains by enhancing public sector efficiency.