Why change is hard (what you can do about it)

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Discussion

When Jonathan says digital he means what Tom Loosemore defined it as (definitionofdigital.com)

There are lots of game changing levers, Digital is just one of them. Analytics, civic entrepreneurialism, new delivery models, commercialism, etc etc. Competes for space and can add value to them.

Look back to 2003! BVPI 157 - why so many crap websites exist :) no iPhone… no general power of competence, big state infrastructure and increase in public spending - the chief execs and "clients" of today were learning their craft/shaping their worldview in this context.

The last time councils had a major top down redesign was back then…

"All generalisations about Local Government are false" (even this one!)

Variability - example of "not many people go to Hackney to die"

We need councils to:

- Provide councils
- Make impossible decisions
- Provide local leadership

We tend to just focus on the first one.

Because councils are monopoly providers of essential services they are inevitably regulated very closely and has implications for the governance system, speed of decisions and risk appetite - councils have got used to this and internalised it as the pace that everything should work at.

All council decisions are rational - in people's own heads they make the right decisions, when we get frustrated that they don't do what we are trying to persuade them to do it's often us who haven't understood why they are making the decisions they make, what their internal calculations are.

Discussion of the dynamics of political groups, leadership, how politicians get appointed to senior roles.

Last piece of advice - if you are stuck in an org that doesn't appreciate what you can do, isn't ready for the digital excellence you can deliver, then seriously consider leaving! People in LocalGov tend to stick around and keep trying to make a difference - but it's often better to find an organisation that wants you.

People brought in from outside are often given the mandate to challenge the culture and seek to change it, where insiders are not.