

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date: 16 December 2022

By: Chair of the Review Board

Title: Scrutiny Review – Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health

Purpose: To present the outcomes of the Scrutiny Review and make recommendations

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is recommended to consider and endorse the report of the Review Board, and make recommendations to Cabinet for comment and County Council for approval.

1. Background

1.1 In March 2022 the People Scrutiny Committee established a Scoping Board to look into the merit of conducting a scrutiny review of use of digital and technology in Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH).

1.2 The Scoping Board met on 5 July 2022 and considered opportunities presented by, as well as the drivers and risks of, greater use of technology and digitisation in ASCH. The Scoping Board heard that in line with the approach being taken by other councils, the Department was looking to encourage greater use of self-service options, such as online financial assessments and needs assessments; and linked to this, working towards implementing a 'digital by default' approach whereby digital and self-service means of contacting, accessing services from, and transacting with the Department are encouraged to be used as the primary route by those who are able to do so. 'Traditional' means of accessing services and contacting ASCH (in person or via telephone) will remain in place for those who require them. The Scoping Board also heard that significant cultural and behavioural changes are required to support this planned direction of travel.

1.3 The Scoping Board concluded that based on the discussion with officers about the strategic challenges being 'digital by default' would help with, including the Department having capacity to deliver the planned care charging reforms, the topic would benefit from closer examination by People Scrutiny. On the recommendation of the Scoping Board, the People Scrutiny Committee agreed at their July 2022 meeting that this review should explore what cultural and behavioural changes are needed to support greater use of online services, self-service options and adoption of a 'digital by default' approach by the Department, with a focus on the following service areas to avoid the Review being too broad:

- Financial assessments
- Reviews (especially carer reviews)
- Information, advice and signposting
- Carer assessments

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Scrutiny Review Board is comprised of Councillors Penny di Cara, Nuala Geary and Wendy Maples. Councillor di Cara was appointed as the Chair of the Review Board.

2.2 The attached report (Appendix 1) contains the findings and recommendations of the Review Board. Copies of evidence papers listed in the report and other support documentation are available on request from the contact officer.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Committee is recommended to consider and endorse the Review Board's report for submission to Cabinet and County Council on 24 January 2023 and 7 February 2023 respectively.

Councillor Penny di Cara

Chair of the Review Board

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