Report to:	**People Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting:	**15 July 2024**
By:	**Director of Adult Social Care & Health**
Title:	**Scrutiny Review of Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health**
Purpose:	**To provide the Committee with an update in respect of the action plan agreed upon the publication of the original Scrutiny review of the use of digital and technology in Adult Social Care**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the progress made against the agreed actions at Appendix 1.

1. Background Information

1.1.   Being Digital was the digital transformation programme in Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH), which commenced in April 2021 and concluded at the end of March 2024.

1.2.   The programme was developed upon the publication of the Department's digital strategy, also called Being Digital.

1.3. The programme aimed to deliver against four 'P's, these being:

- People (clients and carers),

- Practice (internal business improvements),

- Partners (local and national NHS trusts, neighbouring local authorities, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, etc.)

- Providers (services that we contract with to deliver care and support on our behalf).

1.4.   Commencing with the People Scrutiny Committee Scoping Board held on 5 July 2022, the Being Digital programme was the principal subject of The use of digital and technology in Adult Social Care Scrutiny Review.

1.5   The final report was agreed by the People Committee on 16 December 2022, and full Council agreed the report and the action plan on 7 February 2023. An update on delivery against the action plan was provided to the Committee on the 17 July 2023.

2. Community Engagement

2.1   In recommendations five, eight, nine and eleven, explicit reference was made to 'digital by default', this being the strategic direction the Being Digital programme sought to embed within the department.

2.2   This direction was not designed to remove any existing communication routes and the Being Digital programme actively engaged with members of our community on 'digital by default' to ensure that the associated Equality Impact Assessment was as comprehensive as possible. These groups included the Disability Rights Reference Group, Inclusion Advisory Group, East Sussex Seniors' Association, and ongoing dialogue with TechResort (a

Community Interest Company based in Eastbourne that delivers digital skills training) around targeted interventions to combat digital exclusion amongst vulnerable members of the community.

2.3   In addition, the Being Digital Programme also actively engaged with the People Bank, Care for the Carers, and a range of community forums, as well as having two lay members on the Inclusion Group established to support the delivery of the programme of work.

2.4   The programme also featured in local newspapers and radio in relation to its innovative robopets project.

3. Next steps

3.1   Although the review and associated actions are now complete, and the Being Digital programme has ended, the Department recognises the contribution that digital could have to supporting future service delivery and enabling residents to engage with us in a way that suits them.

3.2   We are still on a journey with the use of technology and digital to support and enhance our services, which is particularly important given the demand and financial challenges being faced in the future.

3.3   As such, the Department will continue to explore opportunities for the use of digital and technology moving forwards, including opportunities for the use of artificial intelligence, robotic process automation and self-serve online tools.

3.4   We will also continue to champion opportunities to try innovative ways of working, such as the Living Lab that we have recently launched in an extra care unit, for which we will be working with the University of Brighton as evaluation partners, enabling residents to trial technology such as virtual reality and falls sensors.

4. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

4.1   Maximising the use of digital and technology to interact with, and respond to, our resident's needs can support increasing demand and the best use of public resources. However, it is recognised that this requires a change in how our residents choose to engage with us, as well as the development of systems and processes to support this. It will also be an ongoing and long-term endeavour. As such, maximising the use of digital tools will remain a focus for the Department, and this will now be mainstreamed into improvement work across ASCH.

4.2 The recommendations from the Scrutiny Review were embedded within the programme and a full update of the progress made on the Review recommendations are outlined in the Action Plan at Appendix 1.

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Appendix 1: Action plan