

Scrutiny Review Terms of Reference Document

Scrutiny Review	Use of Digital and Technology in ASC
Responsible Committee	People Scrutiny Committee
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Version	1.0
Date	7 July 2022

1 Background

1.1 At its meeting on 24 March 2022, the People Scrutiny Committee heard from the Director of Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) that the Department recognised it needed to look beyond its current Being Digital Strategy and programme of work to think about how digitisation and technology might be used by the Department in future, particularly to identify innovative and bold ways technologies could maintain a high standard of care and support sustainability of ASC services in the next five-to-ten years. The Department welcomed scrutiny's consideration of this to identify both additional opportunities arising from, and how the Department should prepare strategically for, greater use of technology and digitisation of processes and services.

1.2 The Committee agreed to appoint an Initial Scoping Board to consider whether the Committee should undertake a Scrutiny Review of this area.

1.3 The Scoping Board met on 5 July 2022 and considered a presentation from the Department on the Being Digital Strategy (2020-23) and programme of work underway. The Strategy was also circulated to the Board for review as part of the scoping exercise.

1.4 The main issues discussed by the Scoping Board were:

- Opportunities presented by use of technology and digitisation.** The Board heard about a wide range of work that had been delivered and that was underway through the Being Digital programme to use digitisation and technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services and processes, the way the Department transacted with clients and carers, and worked with partners, such as the NHS. The Board also heard about the Department's planned direction of travel for this work, which included encouraging greater use of 'self-service' options such as online financial assessments and needs assessments; and linked to this, working towards a 'digital by default' approach where portals, self-assessment tools and directories were offered to clients, carers and providers by default, rather than optionally. The Board noted that this approach had already been adopted successfully by Suffolk County Council. This would not see the Department removing phone-calls or face-to-face interaction for those who needed it. The Board discussed with officers potential additional opportunities for digitisation and use of technology, including opportunities to connect carers with carers and residents with each other.
- Drivers and risks of greater use of technology and digitisation.** The Board heard from the Department the contextual factors driving the need for greater

use of 'self-service' options and a 'digital by default' approach, including that the social care charging reforms due to commence in October 2023 were expected to generate a need for the Department to support more financial and Care Act assessments. This was alongside the Department managing long-term rising demand from an ageing local population with restricted resources, both financial and in the workforce, which drove a need to ensure resources were being used to the best effect. The Department also knew that the transformations discussed could create better and simpler experiences for clients, carers, partners and providers in their interactions with the Department. The Board noted that the risks were digital exclusion (and the Department was undertaking work to foster inclusion as a result) and costs for residents arising from running additional technology in their home, which the Department agreed needed to be considered and managed.

- **Role of behaviour and attitudes.** The Board heard that the Department knew - from action taken to date (for example, in working to increase recording of clients' emails to support digital communication) and from the learning in places that had adopted a 'digital by default' approach - that significant cultural and behavioural change was required to implement a 'digital by default' approach. The change related to both the way staff worked and to clients', carers' and providers' behaviour and attitudes regarding use of digital platforms and channels. Work was needed, for example, to understand why residents and partners made the choices they did in the channels they used to communicate with ASC. Once the Department had a better understanding of this, this could inform work to encourage people to change their approach.
- **Digital inclusion.** The Board noted the importance of ensuring the move to greater use of digital services was inclusive and engaged the 'digitally hard to engage'. It was agreed that the potential barriers digital communication and services presented to the 'digitally hard to reach' would be better considered by the planned Scrutiny Review of ASC Equality and Inclusion and that this would be captured in that Review's draft Terms of Reference.

1.5 The Board discussed with officers whether it was the right timing to undertake a review of this area given the work already underway and that a number of pilot projects were due to report in 3 to 6 months. The Board heard that as the move to greater use of 'self-service' options and a 'digital by default' way of working was expected to be important to the Department having capacity to deliver upcoming care charging reforms, scrutiny's consideration now of ways to support this would be well-timed to inform that.

2 Scope of the Review

2.1 The Board concluded that, based on the discussion with officers about timing and the strategic challenges this work would support a response to, the topic would benefit from closer examination by scrutiny. The Board therefore resolved to recommend to the Committee that it undertake a scrutiny review of use of technology and digital in ASC.

2.2 To refine the scope of this review, Members recommend that the Scrutiny 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.

2.3 The Board agreed that considering the above in all service areas within the ASC Department would be too broad. Instead it is expected that the review will particularly focus on the following service areas:

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

2.4 Members recommend that this is explored through the following **key lines of enquiry**:

- Within the service areas outlined at 2.3:
 - To what extent are residents, clients, carers and/or providers currently using online services, self-service options and/or digital communication channels?
 - If there is high or low use, why is that?
 - Why do people choose to use the channels they do to communicate with ASC in these areas?
 - What cultural and behavioural changes are needed to support greater use of online services, self-service options and/or digital communication channels?
 - How can that cultural and behavioural change be encouraged?

2.5 The review should also look more broadly at:

- What insights are there from other councils that have a high take-up of online services and have implemented a 'digital by default' approach on the cultural and behavioural changes needed?
 - How have they encouraged those?

3 Review methods

3.1 It is anticipated that the Review Board will review documentary evidence, question witnesses and undertake research in order to gather evidence to inform its recommendations. It is anticipated that these will include:

- Speaking to the services outlined at 2.3
- Engaging with users of those services
- Considering learning from the work of councils in this area
- Considering any national best practice or guidance in ASC services

4. Review Organisation and Responsibilities

4.1 Initial Scoping Board

The initial scoping for this review was undertaken by Councillors di Cara and Maples.

4.2 Review Board

The Review Board is: *to be confirmed by the People Scrutiny Committee*

The Chair of the Review Board is: *to be confirmed by the People Scrutiny Committee*

4.3 The Review Board is responsible for:

- making decisions regarding the scope and direction of the review;
- monitoring and control of the overall progress of the review;
- agreeing how Board members will undertake evidence gathering activities as required by the review;
- considering and providing challenge to all evidence presented to it; and
- developing and agreeing the final report, including the findings and recommendations of the review.

5 Scrutiny Review Support

5.1 Support for the review will be provided by the Policy Team to:

- manage the review process;
- undertake research as agreed by the Board;
- draft the final report.

5.2 The Lead Officer who will support the review from the Policy Team is Beth McGhee, Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser. Their role is to manage the review, ensuring its aims and objectives are met and that the final report is delivered to the People Scrutiny Committee within the agreed timescales.

6 Scrutiny Review Completion

6.1 When the review has been completed the Lead Officer will co-ordinate the production of a final report outlining the findings and recommendations for agreement by the Review Board. Once agreed, the Review Board will present this to the People Scrutiny Committee for it to agree the recommendations.

6.2 The report will then be presented to Cabinet for comment and County Council for approval. Progress updates on how the recommendations are being implemented by the Department will be presented to the People Scrutiny Committee in due course (usually six and twelve months after the review has been approved by County Council).

7 Review Timetable

7.1 Based on the initial scoping of the Review, the Review Board aims to submit the final report to the People Scrutiny Committee at the meeting to be held on 17 November 2022.

7.2 An initial timetable of the meetings and activities required to complete the review is outlined below. [*The number of review board meetings is not fixed and there can be more or less depending on the nature of the review. The Review Board will agree the number and content of the meetings and review activity*].

Activity	Timescale/Date
<u>Review Board Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider initial evidence • Review lines of enquiry/terms of reference • Agree further evidence gathering/requirements 	August
<u>Review Board Activity/Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence gathering 	Early September
<u>Review Board Activity/Meeting</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence gathering 	Late September/ Early October
Draft Scrutiny Review report and finalise findings and recommendations of the review.	Mid-October
<u>Final Review Board Meeting to agree Report</u> Review Board meeting to agree draft report, findings and recommendations with input from key officers.	Late October – w/c 24 October
Deadline for Report Dispatch	9 November 2022
<u>Report to People Scrutiny Committee for agreement</u>	17 November 2022
Report to Cabinet	13 December 2022
Report to Council	7 February 2023