

REPORT OF THE PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The People Scrutiny Committee met on 16 December 2022.

Present: Councillors Sam Adeniji, Penny di Cara, Chris Dowling, Nuala Geary, Johanna Howell (Chair), Wendy Maples, Stephen Shing, John Ungar (Vice Chair)
Ms Maria Cowler (Roman Catholic Diocese Representative), Mr Trevor Cristin (Diocese of Chichester Representative)

Also Present: Councillors Charles Clark, Kathryn Field and Trevor Webb (by MS Teams), Councillor Bob Stanley (Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability), Councillor Bob Bowdler (Lead Member for Children and Families)

1. Scrutiny Review of Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health

1.1 The People Scrutiny Committee has completed its Scrutiny Review of Use of Digital and Technology in Adult Social Care and Health. A copy of the Committee's full report is attached at Appendix 1.

1.2 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).

1.3 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. 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.

1.4 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

1.5 The People Scrutiny Committee **recommends** to the County Council that –

1.5.1 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should ensure the planned implementation of Online Financial Assessments being the default route for financial assessments collects feedback from users on the form, including on any barriers to completing it, and why those who were asked to complete an online assessment and did not, chose not to.

1.5.2 The People Scrutiny Committee should be informed of the progress of take up of Online Financial Assessments, and feedback received, as part of the monitoring of this Scrutiny Review.

1.5.3 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should continue implementation of learning from other local authority Adult Social Care departments to improve take-up of Online Financial Assessments and turnaround time of financial assessments, particularly considering introducing Robotic Process Automation.

1.5.4 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should continue to explore opportunities to simplify operational processes alongside implementing the Being Digital programme.

1.5.5 The People Scrutiny Committee should be informed of progress against Being Digital programme targets as part of the monitoring of this Scrutiny Review.

1.5.6 The People Scrutiny Committee should be informed of the outcome of the third phase of the Department's Behavioural Change work with the UCL as part of the monitoring of this Scrutiny Review.

1.5.7 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should reflect feedback from residents who have benefited from digital and self-service options in communications to staff.

1.5.8 Information on Being Digital and the digital and self-service platforms on offer in ASCH, should be included in all new ASCH staff inductions.

1.5.9 Digital transformation should be included as a discussion point in team and 1-2-1 (where appropriate) meetings within areas undergoing rollout of a new digital or self-service platform; and in ongoing Adult Social Care and Health departmental communications (such as Yammer, To The Point and Brief Encounter).

1.5.10 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should continue to work with colleagues through the One Council Digital Inclusion programme to map the digital inclusion offer in East Sussex, and, where appropriate, share this with Adult Social Care and Health staff and partners.

1.5.11 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should ensure it is promoting to staff, and utilising, the range of national and local digital inclusion resources and schemes available in moving to being digital by default.

1.5.12 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should explore opportunities for partners, including voluntary sector organisations, to support engagement with and signposting to ASCH's digital offer.

1.5.13 The Adult Social Care and Health Department should consider whether a Digital Ambassador Scheme could provide added value to Being Digital, informed by learning from the NHS Digital First Digital Ambassador pilot when it concludes, and consideration of other models.

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

[See also Report of the Cabinet – 24 January 2023]

16 December 2022

JOHANNA HOWELL
Chair