

8 February 2021

Agenda Item: 4

## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR TRANSFORMATION AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S DIGITAL STRATEGY FOR 2021-2024**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed approach to the development of an Adult Social Care and Public Health Digital Strategy and Plan for 2021-2024.

#### **Information**

##### **Review of the department's approach to digital innovation**

2. During the Covid 19 pandemic the Adult Social Care and Public Health Department has responded to the need to support people in different ways, including through digital means. Whilst the department already had a good track record of introducing digital innovation, some of which was accelerated as part of the emergency response, the pandemic has emphasised the need to formalise the department's digital approach and offer into a Digital Strategy.
3. Since 2017 the department's approach to digital innovation, which has been largely focused on Adult Social Care, excluding Public Health, has been based on five themes:
  - a. **Automation:** to streamline business processes by using technology to replace routine manual activity
  - b. **Single view of the person:** for health and social care professionals to have a single view of the person; and for people to be able to access their record from one place
  - c. **Data analytics:** to use data to inform and plan, using analysis tools including information sharing with partners such as Health, providers and the voluntary sector
  - d. **Digital Notts:** enabling people to access and engage in their services through improved digital channels 24 hours a day
  - e. **Internet of things:** the network of devices, vehicles, and home appliances that contain electronics, software and connectivity such as Assistive Technology.
4. Over the period 2017-2020, 70 digital projects were initiated. 21 of these are still at a design stage, 31 are in implementation and 18 have already been delivered. Some of the fully delivered projects include:

- a. **Automation** – the development and introduction of an electronic portal to commission home based care directly with providers has reduced the time taken to set up a care package from 1 day to 2 hours. The department also made significant progress during 2019/20 to speed up how referrals are made to the Council’s social work teams for hospital patients, and to introduce automatic alerts from health systems informing social care when circumstances change for these patients. For example, if circumstances change, people get discharged via another route or pass away, the Council’s staff are made aware of this change immediately, rather than finding out from nursing staff or a person’s relatives. Benefits include a reduction in time (4.5 hours on average) spent processing referrals, and the prevention of inappropriate referrals for patients who are not the responsibility of Nottinghamshire County Council. Streamlining processes with health partners in this way has also contributed to a reduction in the average length of hospital stay (e.g. in Mid Nottinghamshire, a reduction from 21 to 18 days).
- b. **Single view of the person** – the Health and Care Portal links relevant health information (matched by NHS number) with a person’s social care records. The Portal allows social care staff to see which health staff are already involved in a person’s care and support, preventing the duplication of work. The department uses NHS tools to ensure that a high proportion of social care records have an accurate NHS number. Additionally, in order to help health colleagues, information about people known to adult social care has been shared into the Portal since April 2020. Sharing information through the Health and Care Portal helps to improve the quality of decision-making and prevents confusion about the status of a person’s health and social care support.

Case study:

*‘Vicky was referred for some equipment and re-housing support. Using the Health and Care Portal, the social care worker was able to establish a good understanding of Vicky’s wider support needs and was able to include health professionals already known to Vicky (her GP and the local Community Mental Health Team) in arranging her equipment and accommodation needs. This ensured all of Vicky’s support needs were taken into account and not just those mentioned in the referral.’*

- c. **Data analytics** – information sharing with partners is key to anticipating future demand and understanding the need for preventative services. An information governance framework was put in place to enable data sharing between health, social care and district councils. The Council shares information into a Nottinghamshire-wide database, allowing partner agencies to see who is already being supported by the Council, and from this to identify, for example, people who are carers, or people who may be at risk of falls. This information helps front line staff to make better decisions about who is most at risk of losing their health and independence so that staff can intervene proactively to resolve problems at an early stage. During the early stages of the Covid 19 pandemic, the framework enabled health, housing and social care to share data on people who needed to be rehoused as part of the “Everyone In” campaign and supported a joined-up approach to their care and support.
- d. **Digital Notts** – the development of an on-line carers assessment and also, based on the information people provide about their income, savings and capital, [the care contribution calculator](#) was developed to provide an estimate of the financial contribution a person may be asked to make towards any adult social care and support that is arranged for them by the Council.
- e. **The internet of things** – the introduction of technology enabled care solutions to support people to maintain their independence at home for longer, for example systems which use

movement, door and activity sensors to provide an objective overview of how well someone is managing their independence.

5. All 18 of the fully delivered projects have met the intended objectives. These projects have already delivered positive change in the department and continue to deliver proven benefits. For example:
  - reductions in the time spent by staff accessing information and responding to referrals
  - adult social care staff now have access to health information
  - the way the Council has implemented sharing information with health about the people who receive support from the department has fed into standards being adopted at a national level
  - better real time data is also now available for business-critical dashboards
  - automation of processes has supported the virtual ways of working that have been required to support the emergency response to the pandemic.
6. During the period 2017-2020 many lessons about digital development have been learned which the department will take forward into the work to develop a Digital Strategy and Plan for 2021-2024.
7. Information and technology can be used to support people to live at home for longer, enable professionals to work effectively together across multiple organisations, and help commissioners to target services where they will have the greatest impact. The pandemic has presented its own challenges in terms of how people are supported through digital means.
8. Enabling people to interact with care services through digital channels that work for them and enables people to take ownership of their own care, or the care for others, is key. The ability to easily find information and advice, find out eligibility for services, and commission and manage their own care through online channels will give people ownership of their care. Promoting independence and wellbeing through the use of digital services and technologies, at home if needed, helps people to maintain their independence and wellbeing for longer, whilst preventing them from reaching crisis point and reducing social isolation.
9. The key to this work is to improve the way support and services are identified for people by analysis and use of the information available to the department about activity and costs but also about the way in which people want to engage with the support and services that the department provides and commissions.
10. Enabling care professionals to work remotely has been accelerated by the pandemic due to national restrictions. Workers should be able to interact securely with other care professionals, partners and providers using a number of digital tools and methods and be able to deliver care and support to people more efficiently and effectively, working collaboratively across organisations through digital means.
11. Digital innovation, some of which has been driven by the emergency response to the pandemic has continued in the department. For example, as part of the department's Covid 19 response, the department has developed a digital device lending and gifting scheme which is due to launch in March 2021 for a period of 12 months. The scheme was discussed at the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021, as an example of work already underway within the department linked to the [Service Improvement Programme for 2021/22-2023/24](#). Committee asked for additional information about the scheme and this is provided in **paragraphs 12 – 16**.

## **Digital Device Lending and Gifting Scheme**

12. The Covid19 pandemic has meant that some people have been unable to access their usual formal and informal support, such as day services and contact with friends and family. This has exacerbated the isolation and loneliness that some people have experienced. In response to this many support providers have switched to the use of online platforms. For example, the Reach charity has offered online social events and courses for people with learning disabilities, and the Nottinghamshire Carers Hub is providing regular virtual carer support groups using Zoom and one to one video carer support sessions using WhatsApp. Outside of formal support, many families now use video calling to maintain contact with vulnerable family members.
13. Whilst the use of digital platforms has been successful, they require people to have a digital device, internet connection and the skills to be able to use a device. Many people can use a device, but others will need support to use one. To reduce the risk of people, the department supports, being digitally excluded, a lending and gifting scheme will be trialled for a period of 12 months.
14. The scheme will provide digital devices, mobile network-based internet connections and support to vulnerable adults whose access to support has been affected by Covid 19. It is also proposed that carers living in the same property as a person who has been unable to access some long-term social care services will also be able to access the scheme in order to prevent carer breakdown or the cared for person requiring a larger package of support from the Council.
15. The scheme has been developed using learning from the Council's deployment of the Department of Education initiative to provide children with devices during Covid19. It is anticipated that there will be a mixed scheme of gifting and lending based on what has been agreed as part of the individual's care and support plan. It is anticipated that up to 300 people will benefit from the scheme. The referral routes for the scheme will be through social care workers as part of a statutory support planning process.
16. The department will work with a third-party provider to issue and support people with technical issues. Safeguards will also be put in place to ensure people and carers can use the devices safely and securely. The cost of providing the service will be met through the existing Adult Social Care budget.

## **Adult Social Care and Public Health Digital Strategy for 2021-2024**

17. The need to develop a Digital Strategy has been identified as a work strand in the Adult Social Care and Public Health Service Improvement Programme for 2021/22 – 2023/24, which was presented to the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
18. The following approach to developing the Digital Strategy is proposed:
  - a. development of a whole department Digital Strategy, including Public Health
  - b. incorporating the learning from the pandemic emergency response
  - c. supporting departmental priorities
  - d. focused on the need to develop and enhance new ways of working
  - e. providing digital capability to support people remotely
  - f. building on lessons learned from the implementation of previous digital innovation
  - g. closely aligning development with digital transformation across the Council, including for example work already underway corporately to improve residents' access to information, advice, guidance and services from the Council

- h. keeping an eye on health partnership developments, for example, the Data, Analytics, Information and Technology Implementation Plan (DAIT) which covers how health and social care partners in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire will develop public facing digital services;
- i. co-produced with stakeholders across eight key themes.

19. Building on successes and taking into account lessons learned to date, including those learned during the pandemic, it is proposed that the digital strategy is based on the following eight themes:



20. The following principles that will underpin the department's future digital development are proposed:

- a. digital initiatives will be department led but jointly designed, resourced and planned with ICT colleagues
- b. the department will co-produce digital initiatives with citizens, the people it supports, the workforce, and its providers and partners
- c. the department will avoid technical jargon to make sure that any digital change and its benefits are easily understood
- d. accessibility will be at the heart of the department's public facing digital initiatives and work will be actively undertaken to reduce digital exclusion
- e. the department will use digital innovation to enhance existing methods of communication and service delivery, not replace them
- f. the department will seek to use existing Council digital tools first, providing they are fit for purpose, rather than seek to procure new ones
- g. the department will explore the scope to introduce digital innovation in all change and service improvement introduced
- h. all initiatives will have an identified Adult Social Care and Public Health sponsor who will be responsible for ensuring that the initiative aligns with departmental, corporate and local Integrated Care System strategies

- i. the strategy will build in time to understand what other organisations are doing well so that the department can benefit from their learning and so that the department’s learning can be shared with others.

## Development of an Adult Social Care and Public Health Digital Plan for 2021-2024

21. Using the approach, themes and principles described in this report, further engagement will be undertaken with a wider cohort of Adult Social Care and Public Health stakeholders, including people who receive social care support, the workforce, and providers and partners, in order to better understand the department’s digital requirements and to develop the strategy. Subject to the outcome of engagement with stakeholders, the table at **Appendix 1**, provides a summary of some of what it is proposed will be achieved across the themes described in **paragraph 19**.

22. A Digital Plan will also be developed to accompany the Digital Strategy. Proposed timescales for the development of the strategy and plan are as follows:

Date	Activity	Outcome
9 February 2021 – 9 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement and co-production</li> <li>• Develop draft Digital Strategy and Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-produced draft Digital Strategy and Plan</li> </ul>
14 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval for co-produced Digital Strategy and Plan to be submitted to Policy Committee</li> <li>• Approval of any resources required</li> </ul>
14 July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of Adult Social Care and Public Health Digital Strategy</li> </ul>
15 July 2021 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Digital Strategy and Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Strategy and Plan implementation</li> </ul>

## Other Options Considered

23. No other options were considered.

## Reason for Recommendations

24. The need to develop the Digital Strategy has been identified as a work strand in the Adult Social Care and Public Health Service Improvement Programme for 2021/22 – 2023/24, which was presented to the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The recommendations in this report will support the department to deliver this work strand.

## Statutory and Policy Implications

25. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, people we support, smarter working, sustainability and the

environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## Data Protection and Information Governance

26. The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) require the Council to put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that data protection principles and individual's information rights are built into everything the Council does. The provision of digital devices and data will place some obligations on the Council concerning data protection and information governance. Legal Services and Information Governance colleagues within the Council have provided guidance on how to progress to ensure council obligations are met. The development of the Digital Strategy and Plan, and subsequent implementation of the plan, will also be managed in keeping with this requirement.

## Financial Implications

27. Some resource to support the development of the Digital Strategy and Plan has already been identified from within the department's Service Improvement Team. Additionally, a significant number of digital projects are already happening within the department which are already resourced with departmental or ICT staff. This existing work will continue alongside the development of the strategy and plan. It is proposed that any additional resource requirements that are subsequently identified as part of the work, and which cannot be met within existing departmental or ICT resources, will be presented to the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee in June 2021.

28. The estimated yearly costs for providing the Digital Device Lending and Gifting Scheme, which can be met through the existing Adult Social Care community care budget, are shown in the table below:

Service Element	Cost to support 300 people
Tablet Devices	£62,000
4G Internet Connectivity	£29,500
Device technical set up and device management platform	£18,000
Service User Support (device delivery, training to use the device and remote ongoing support)	£96,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£205,500</b>

## Public Sector Equality Duty implications

29. The development of the Digital Strategy and the development and implementation of an accompanying plan will be conducted in keeping with the department's established practices for the safety and inclusion of the vulnerable people the department supports. These practices give due attention to the needs of people with protected characteristics. For this work the main protected characteristics impacted will be age and disability. An Equality Impact Assessment will be produced to accompany this work, taking into account feedback gained as part of the engagement that will be undertaken with Adult Social Care and Public Health stakeholders, including people who receive social care support, the workforce, and providers and partners.

## Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

30. During the pandemic operational social care teams have identified that there has been an increase in safeguarding referrals where the primary cause has been additional carer stress

caused by the inability of the carer and cared for person to access their usual formal and informal support services. The proposed lending and gifting scheme will help to reduce carer stress by enabling both carers and the cared for to access support remotely. The development of the Digital Strategy will support the department to continue to maximise the benefits of digital innovation, which include helping people to maintain their independence and wellbeing for longer; enabling professionals to work effectively together across multiple organisations; and helping commissioners to target services where they will have the greatest impact.

### **Implications for People the Department Supports**

31. The Digital Device Lending and Gifting Scheme will provide an alternative route for some people, who have not been able to continue to access support from the department face to face during the pandemic, to access support in different, digital ways.
32. As described in **paragraph 21** of this report, the Digital Strategy and Plan will be co-produced with key stakeholders including representatives of the people who the department supports. In terms of the future development of new digital initiatives, these will seek to enhance existing methods of communication and service delivery and not replace them. Where digital innovation is introduced, accessibility will be a key requirement in order to ensure that everyone who wishes to take advantage of the innovation is able to do so and that digital exclusion is minimised.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Committee:

- 1) approves the proposed approach, themes and principles to be adopted for the development of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Digital Strategy for 2021 - 2024 as detailed in **paragraphs 18-20** of this report.
- 2) gives permission for the engagement and co-production with stakeholders of the eight themes described in **paragraph 19** of this report.
- 3) agrees to receive a report on the co-produced Digital Strategy and Plan, at the June 2021 Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee meeting, ahead of the strategy being submitted to the County Council's Policy Committee for approval.

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### **Constitutional Comments (AK 26/01/21)**

33. This report falls within the remit of Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

### **Financial Comments (KAS 28/01/21)**

34. The financial implications are contained within **paragraphs 27 and 28** of the report. Where additional funding is required for individual projects or to develop the strategy and plan this will be brought to committee.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Adult Social Care and Public Health Service Improvement Programme for 2021/22 – 2023/24: report to Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on 11th January 2021](#)

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.