

**TITLE OF REPORT:     Assistive and Digital Technology - Helping  
                                  people to stay at home safely**

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                                  Well- being and Learning**

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### **SUMMARY**

This report gives details of the evidence gathering session that will take place on 11 December 2018. The views of the Committee are being sought on the evidence presented and the future direction and developments.

#### **Background**

Care, Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee have agreed that the focus of its review in 2018-19 will be “helping people to stay at home safely”.

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018, Committee agreed that the review will consider how health, social care and voluntary services support people’s confidence and independence to live safely in their own home. The review will centre on the 6 core themes of

- Assistive technology and digital information;
- Enablement services;
- Housing options to support independent living;
- Commissioning for enablement outcomes;
- Emergency and community services;
- Personalisation and choice.

The Committee will consider the range and extent of current activity in these areas, with a view to agreeing a set of recommendations

#### **Purpose of this Session**

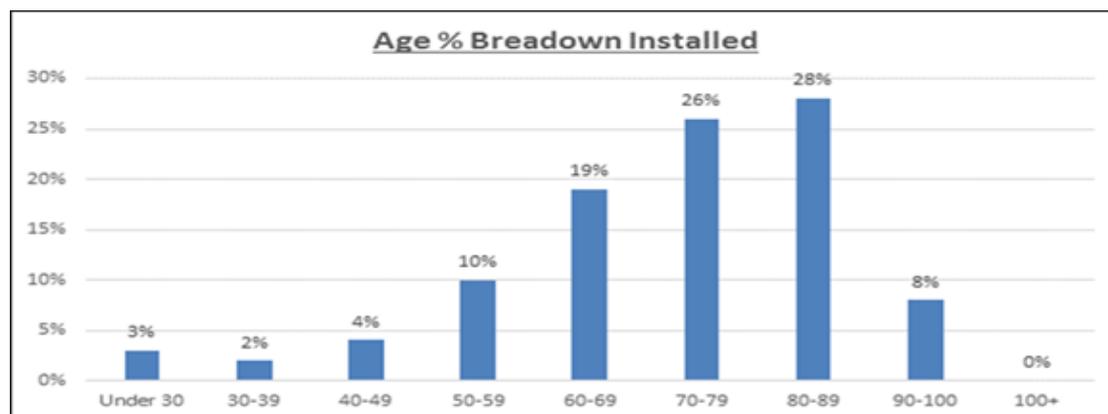
This evidence gathering session will hear presentations from:-

- Lorinda Russell, Care Call Manager, Assistive Technology
- Roger Abbot, Digital Services Manager , Digital Technologies

The presenters will provide an overview of the current work being undertaken.



## Age Profile



## EVOLVING TECHNOLOGY

We will be completing trials on a wide range of evolving technology, in particular around virtual assistants, some examples below of what other Local Authorities are currently piloting.

### Hampshire

The potential to use Amazon Alexa software and associated devices to support people with severe disabilities.

### Wigan

A project called Voice Controlled Empowerment, aimed to explore how Alexa could support people to live independently and bridge the 'digital literacy' gap that can prevent older people – especially those with cognitive impairments – benefiting from technology.

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- Assistive technology within residential care
- ACT (Achieving Change Together) review of packages of care to improve the level of assistive technology to support clients.
- Virtual Assistants Pilot
- Commissioning Scoping Paper
- Council Strategy
- Capital Investment within Council Housing Stock
- Funding Opportunities

## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY – ADULT SOCIAL CARE FRONT DOOR

### Overview

The Digital Gateshead programme assisted in a review of the Adult Social Care (ASC) front door and presented their findings in July 2018.

### **The research found**

- High call volumes – an average of 3,171 per month (March – May 2018)
  - Initial 37% of calls abandoned before they reached an agent
  - Further 23% abandoned once call hits the telephony queue
  - Overall call abandonment rate of 60%

- Call talk time averages 15 mins
- More time was spent calling back service users rather receiving calls in the first instance
- High numbers of email – 1,275 per month on average
  - Email rarely contains all the information required so staff spend time in repeat contact
  - Email response time could be over 1 week, sometimes as long as 5 weeks

The Digital Gateshead programme made a commitment to provide resource to help improve the Adult Social Care Front Door project through improved IT, telephony, process mapping tools and digital services in order to:

- Help the Adult Social Care Direct team manage the demand on the service
- Reduce telephone contact, queue and wait times
- Promote the input of clean useful data to avoid waste
- Improve efficiency in the referral to the wider ASC team
- Increase awareness of ASC services with the public
- Improve the Customer Experience
- Channel shift to online form processes and therefore reduce contact by both telephone and email
- Reduce contact for further information whilst providing better quality information on [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk) and over the phone
- Provide customer data and intelligence
- Promote self-service and signposting

For the Digital workstream a key strand is the delivery of high quality online forms using the GOSS Digital Platform, with the following features;

- Structured layout with mandatory fields to ensure better quality information is submitted thus reducing the need for repeat contact
- Mobile friendly so forms are easy to complete on smartphones, tablets, laptops and PCs
- Understandable and accessible
- Signpost to relevant services as the form is completed
- Notifications to staff and clients when forms are processed
- A simple to use back office interface on the Intranet for staff to manage and triage incoming requests

On 12th November 2018 the ASC email address was removed from the website and replaced with the following online forms:

- Initial Care Assessment
- Care and support review
- General enquiry form

The forms will be reviewed and amended as required to ensure there is continuous improvement. The data and customer insight we receive from the launch of this new digital service will help inform future decision making. Particularly with the procurement of the new Social Care system.

### **Next Steps**

In addition, Digital Gateshead will;

- Support an improvement plan for better web content assisted by the Business Manager for Safeguarding Adults
- Investigate the delivery of a directory of services so staff can more easily signpost over the phone and residents can self-serve online
- Provide access to the Engage process mapping tool to support the development of new end to end processes and encourage shared learning

- Provide data and information on use and usefulness of the website using Google Analytics and Dashboards
- Complete a Safeguarding web form to add to the ASC contact page
- Deliver a customer account so service users can save and return to forms and track progress
- Monitor when and why people don't complete forms to see where further improvements could be made

## **FUTURE DEMAND**

Over the next 10-15 years in Gateshead we will see an ageing population and we will need to maximise the benefits and opportunities provided by Assistive Technology, bringing these to the heart of our social care offer, working with Services, carers and communities to support healthy, fulfilled and independent lives.

## **STRATEGY**

A new strategy is being developed which will encompass all Assistive and Digital Technologies looking at key themes around: -

- Prevention and Independence
- Information and Choice
- Future Proofing
- Partnership
- Value

## **Issues to Consider**

When considering the evidence outlined above the Committee may wish to consider the following:

- The future direction of Assistive and Digital Technologies
- Strategic Approach
- Access and support to Gateshead residents to enable the use of Digital Technologies

## **Recommendations**

The views of the OSC are sought on the information provided.

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