



**REPORT TITLE:** Adult Social Care Technology Strategy 2022 - 2025

<b>Cabinet Date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin, Adult Social Care Commissioning and Cllr Kathy Williams, Adult Social Care Delivery
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<p>This report introduces the Adult Social Care Technology Strategy 2022 - 2025, and asks that it is adopted.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out the vision and ambitions for the role of technology in supporting people to live independently.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	To approve the adoption of the Adult Social Care Technology Strategy 2022-2025.
<b>Reasons for recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Technology and digital innovation can help more people to sustain or regain independent living and promote their own wellbeing.</li><li>2. It can also help our staff and care providers to work more effectively and bring about improvements in efficiency which helps us to improve the quality of care.</li><li>3. The time is right as the COVID-19 pandemic, though unwelcome, has created a unique opportunity for change. People have adopted technologies to monitor their own health, to help them with activities of daily living, and to stay connected with loved ones at an accelerated rate and with a high degree of success. Sustaining this momentum will be important in enabling us to continue to meet people's needs in future.</li></ol>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	<p>The one-off cost of delivering the Technology Strategy will be £1.43m and is met within existing resources and from the Care Act budget.</p> <p>This investment will support improvements in productivity and efficiency and enable prevention of escalating demands on the external care budget.</p>

<b>Background Documents</b>	<p>Gloucestershire County Council <a href="#">Digital Strategy</a> 2018-2023</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council <a href="#">Strategy</a> 2022- 2026 – Building Back Better in Gloucestershire</p> <p>Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all <a href="#">White Paper</a></p>
<b>Statutory Authority</b>	Care Act 2014
<b>Divisional Councillor(s)</b>	All
<b>Officer</b>	<p>Name: Louise Holder, Strategic Lead for Adult Social Care Transformation</p> <p>Tel. no: 01452 328515</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:louise.holder@gloucestershire.gov.uk">louise.holder@gloucestershire.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Timeline</b>	The Strategy covers the period 2022 to 2025.

## Background

1. The Adult Social Care Technology Strategy sets out the vision and ambitions for the potential of technology in transforming care and changing lives. We want technology to be a part of everyday life for vulnerable people in Gloucestershire, and part of everyday practice for adult social care professionals.
2. Our aim is to continue to improve the experiences of people who use services, and of our workforce, through the exploration, development and implementation of technology which promotes and enhances independence and creates working efficiencies through the lifetime of the strategy.
3. Over the last 5 years, the Adult Single Programme has delivered a comprehensive programme of efficiency, change and improvement. This Strategy builds on that success and provides a framework for the ongoing transformation of adult social care in Gloucestershire.

## The Adult Social Care Transformation - Technology Strategy 2022-2025

4. This Strategy reflects an increasing focus on our role in helping people to remain independent and healthy through activity which emphasises prevention. It sets out the Council's commitment to delivering that aim through the use of technology. It builds on the transformation already delivered through the Adult Single Programme and aligns with the national direction of travel as set out in February 2021's Health and Care White Paper, Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and care for all.
5. Technology is already reshaping the way adult social care services can be delivered, with the expectation of more changes on the horizon. The health and care landscape has changed rapidly because of Covid-19 with all system partners required to find innovative solutions to new problems. Technology Enabled Care (TEC) provides a vital tool for enabling us to better understand individuals' needs in this context and offers new practical remote and digital options to help both improve people's lives and meet the challenges we face in recovering from the pandemic.
6. The adoption of digital technologies within social care and more widely during the pandemic has raised the profile of technology and with it the expectation that we could do more to harness its potential to do more to support individuals, carers, professionals and services. Recent experience has highlighted benefits such as remote monitoring of health conditions, video consultations with health and care professionals, and proactive support for those who are socially isolated.
7. The move to digital technologies will also shift our thinking towards the ability to behave more proactively and preventatively. By using tools which enable predictive analysis, we could better understand the circumstances when detrimental events may occur, allowing us to put in place effective measures before a crisis even happens. This approach aligns with Gloucestershire's strength-based model of practice, reduces demand on the system and most importantly helps people to lead fuller and more independent lives.

8. The Health and Care White Paper emphasises the importance of integration through its intended creation of Integrated Care Systems. This is likely to generate a new impetus to develop digital technology which supports shared goals across the health and social care sectors and a drive to make better use of the data we collectively hold to deliver personalised services.
9. This Strategy will enable us to fully consider and respond to the national move from analogue to digital infrastructure, known as the digital switchover. By the end of 2025, the traditional telephone network will be switched off, affecting every landline in the country. This change will mean most of our existing telecare devices cease to be reliable or usable, and we will therefore need to act in good time to ensure people continue to be supported to live safely and independently by adopting new digital technology.

## **Proposed Changes**

10. The overall aim is to increase the part that technology plays in adult social care to achieve better outcomes for people. The Strategy proposes the following key areas of focus:

11. **Prevention and Self-help.** To deliver this, our priorities will include:

- developing and improving our digital information offer to help people to find personalised advice about the most appropriate local service or assistive technology for them while maintaining ways for customers to get help and information by phone and in person, including those that lack digital skills and online access;
- enabling people to purchase equipment, assistive technology or services through a digital marketplace and through the development of an online 'virtual smart home';
- and, continuing to invest in our Digital Innovation Fund to work with the voluntary and community sector enabling use of technology which supports independence and digital inclusion.

12. **Sustained Independent Living.** To deliver this, our priorities will include:

- Promoting and using digital tools to help people keep in touch with loved ones and professionals, reducing social isolation and promoting inclusion.
- Rolling out technologies which support the delivery of care in people's homes. This could include devices such as sensors placed in people's homes which send alerts when behaviour changes are detected. Or, for example, apps which support people with mental ill health and/or autism to progressively manage their condition with less professional intervention, or the use of a QR code-based technology to help people with learning disabilities by supporting them to independently do daily tasks like making simple meals or cleaning their home.
- Exploring the potential of enabling a portal into our case management system which allows people with an active social care case to view and interact with their care record and social worker online.

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13. **Facilitating Recovery.** To deliver this, our priorities will include:

- Extending the use of telehealth, telecare and digitally enabled care to people in the Home First Service (including rapid installation of equipment to allow remote monitoring to be quickly set up)
- Supporting people in the community and following discharge from hospital by integrating technology into their care and support plans
- Enable reablement workers to remotely view people's care notes and update them in the field through the provision of new devices and software

14. **Sustainable Workforce** To deliver this, our priorities will include:

- Introducing digital shared care records. The development, implementation and regular use of shared care records will give the care workforce a step change in their ability to deliver efficient, effective, high quality care.
- Exploring technologies which can play an active role in frontline care delivery. This might include using AI to better schedule care visits in localities, eliminating wasted journeys and freeing up valuable time for the carer to spend with people receiving their support.
- Considering the use of collaborative robots (cobots) to help the carer (either paid or unpaid) to work more independently and with reduced risk of sustaining an injury.

## Options

15. **Option 1** – adopt the Adult Social Care Technology Strategy. This option will enable Gloucestershire's citizens to benefit from the potential that new technologies have to support independence, connect people with their communities and proactively support our care and support workforce. It will also support us to meet our Care Act duties (to prevent, reduce and delay need) and those as described in the Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all White Paper (to better integrate systems, processes and data).

16. **Option 2** – not adopt the Adult Social Care Technology Strategy. This option would mean that Gloucestershire would be left behind and unable to innovate to help vulnerable people. Our ability to meet Care Act duties, such as the duty to prevent, reduce and delay need, as well as those emerging in the White Paper would also be compromised.

## Risks

17. Some people may not yet be familiar or confident with technology, and this could inhibit their desire to use it, both preventatively and as needs progress. This particularly applies to older people, people with disabilities and those living in rural areas. Some technologies are also not easily affordable for people who would be likely to benefit from them. Over time, as technology becomes more and more a part of everyday life,

these issues will naturally reduce although there are likely to remain pockets of digital exclusion for some time. Through targeted support to our community and voluntary organisations we will help to increase people's knowledge, skills and access to technology which can enrich their lives and slow the dependence for formal interventions. We will continue to invest in providing training, awareness and education at a very local level to ensure we are able to target our support where it is most needed. We will also focus any investment in digital technology on devices and applications which maximise accessibility to help overcome digital exclusion.

18. Connectivity, especially in the more rural areas of Gloucestershire can be challenging, so we will continue to identify areas of low or non-connectivity and feed this information into the Fastershire programme, as well as seeking technologies which are responsive to our environment. We will ensure any technology we use takes account of and responds to our geographical challenges.
19. It will be challenging to get to the point where social care practitioners are confident and knowledgeable in the use of technology, particularly at a time when workloads are already significant in response to the pandemic. Moving technology to the forefront of interventions will require a significant cultural shift. Increased use of digital technology which is novel for the Council will also require a cultural step in terms of positive risk taking around procurement, information governance and ICT. We will therefore develop a training programme for internal staff and those working in the independent sector to upskill the workforce and include in our plans technologies which are intended to be simpler and more effective to use.
20. While giving us new opportunities to intervene earlier and improve people's lives as a consequence, increasing the role of personal data to inform practice can be vulnerable to misuse. We will work closely with our Information Management Service (IMS) to balance the benefits and risks of new ways of working in order to mitigate this risk.
21. The technology enabled care market is immature and fragmented, making identifying future useful technologies challenging in terms of scale, availability and longevity. The cost of investment in some technologies is also considerable, but there is a lack of robust evidence of return on investment. To overcome this, we will continue to scope and test technologies before we invest more substantially, ensuring we make evidence-led decisions about which technologies are best for Gloucestershire.
22. Our system partners do not always use the same operating systems as us or each other, making it difficult to maximise the impact of change. We will continue to work closely with internal and external colleagues to best align our work with competing pressures and where possible implement solutions which allow connectivity across a mixed technology estate. Legislative proposals, as outlined in the Health and Care White Paper, endorse this approach.

## **Financial implications**

23. As set out in the ASC Commissioning Intentions annex to the MTFs agreed at Council in February, the strategy forms part of the overall Adult Single Programme and its twin drivers of improving outcomes for people by helping them to live independently whilst

achieving better use of resources. The costs of delivering this Strategy are fully covered from within the Care Act budget.

24. The £1.43 million funds will cover the following elements:

- Trialling new technologies (£400k)
- Digital Innovation Fund (£400k)
- Review of Assistive Technology (£295k)
- Systems upgrade and support (£334k)

### **Climate change implications**

25. Greater use of technology has potential positive implications on climate change. The ability to monitor people's condition remotely, our staff having mobile working enabled in the field and people being able to virtually engage with support in their communities would all save unnecessary journeys in a geographically large county, for example.

### **Equality implications**

26. Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? Yes. This identified that, in time, this Strategy is anticipated to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics. It also identified that older people and those with disabilities are typically less likely to have engaged with the internet. We have therefore put in place a programme of community level work led by the VCS to deliver skills in local areas to the people who will need most support.

27. Cabinet Members should read and consider the Equalities Impact Assessment in order to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard has been given.

### **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications**

28. Individual DPIAs will be conducted for each relevant area of the Strategy as the implications will vary according to the technology and data used. In general terms, we will ensure that personal and sensitive data continues to be held and managed safely while exploring how we can make better use of the potential of shared data sets to personalise services and support positive outcomes.

29. Clear protocols for the collection and use of data will be put in place which are understood by individuals and their families, including guidelines for governing our use of data. IMS are currently working on a Research Governance Framework which will encompass the Technology Enabled Care Trials described in the Strategy.

### **Social value implications**

30. The implementation of the Adult Social Care Technology Strategy will have positive implications for social value. The changes created aim to, for example, connect people more effectively with their communities, promote their independence and improve wellbeing and skills as well as creating value for the wider health and social care system.

### **Consultation feedback**

31. Senior Management teams across Adults (Operations and Commissioning) have been consulted, as have key individuals such as the Executive Director for Corporate Resources, the Director of People and the Head of Digital and Business Relationships. All received it positively, and their feedback has been included in the Strategy.
32. A Tech Champions Group has been established within the Adult Social Care Operations Team which includes representation from every locality, and meets regularly to discuss the use of technology in practice to ensure that ongoing feedback about the implementation of the Strategy is recognised.
33. A new Community of Practice has established a direct link between those identifying, prescribing and receiving technologies to inform the future direction of travel use of technology in adult social care and create a shared understanding around the different perceptions about the use of technology. The development of this Strategy has been shared and is influenced by their input.
34. The Technology Strategy has also been shared for consultation with the members of the Digital Delivery Group of Gloucestershire's Integrated Care System.

#### **Officer recommendations**

35. Officers recommend that the Adult Social Care Technology Strategy 2022 -2025 is approved and adopted as outlined in Option 1.

#### **Performance Management/Follow-up**

36. The implementation of the Strategy will be driven and monitored as part of the existing governance process for the Adult Single Programme.
37. Where a need to procure specific systems or services, or put in place other measures which require Cabinet or senior officer approval, the appropriate authorisation will be sought.