



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Tim Gollins,  
Assistant Director Mental Health, Safeguarding  
and Access

**Tel:** 07595700150

**Report of:** Director of Adult Health and Social Care

**Report to:** *Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *19<sup>th</sup> December 2022*

**Subject:** *Development of a New Information, Advice, And Guidance Platform*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 1344				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (<b>report/appendix</b>) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (<b>insert relevant paragraph number</b>) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

### Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to outline and explain the work being undertaken by adult social care and our partners to develop a comprehensive city-wide approach to information, advice, and guidance for citizens of Sheffield regarding adult and young people’s health and social care.

**Recommendations:**

The Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee is asked to:

1. Endorse the work being done to develop city-wide citizen facing information, advice and guidance for adults and young people in Sheffield.

**Background Papers:**

*Delivery plan*

**None**

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: <i>Ann Hardy</i>
	Legal: <i>Patrick Chisolm</i>
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Ed Sexton</i>
	Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b> <i>Alexis Chappell</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b> <i>George Lindars-Hammond</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Tim Gollins</i>
	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Assistant Director Mental Health, Safeguarding and Access</i>
<b>Date: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022</b>	

## 1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to provide information, advice, and guidance to people about health and social care. Specifically, section 4 of the Care Act 2014 covers:
- The duty placed on local authorities to establish and maintain information and advice services relating to care and support for all people in its area
  - The local authority role with respect to financial information and advice
  - The accessibility and proportionality of information and advice
- 1.2 The [Adult Health and Social Care Strategy](#) and accompanying [Delivery Plan](#) set out our vision for 2022 to 2030. Called 'Living the life you want to live', it's about how we work together to help the people of Sheffield to live long, healthy and fulfilled lives.
- 1.3 The development of an information and advice platform aligns to delivery upon Commitment 1 - *Support people to live a fulfilling life at home, connected to the community and resources around them, and provide care and support where needed*. It is also a key enabler of our [Adult Social Care Target Operating Model](#) which was approved at Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
- 1.4 Information and advice are fundamental to enabling people, carers, and families to take control of, and make well-informed choices about, their care and support and how they fund it. Not only does information and advice help to promote people's wellbeing by increasing their ability to exercise choice and control, it is also a vital component of preventing or delaying people's need for care and support.
- 1.5 To fulfil this broad duty under section 4 of the Care Act 2014, local authorities need to go further than providing information and advice directly to people eligible for adult social care (though direct provision is important), by working to ensure the coherence, sufficiency, availability and accessibility of information and advice relating to care and support across the local authority area.
- 1.6 Therefore, the duty to establish and maintain information and advice relates to the whole population of the local authority area, not just those with care and support needs or in some other way already known to the system.
- 1.7 The local authority must ensure that information and advice that is provided covers more than just basic information about care and support, it must address a wide range of care and support related areas including: prevention of care and support needs, finances, health, housing, employment, what to do in cases of abuse or neglect of an adult, and 'other areas where required'.

- 1.8 It is important to note that the availability and provision of information and advice, whether more general information about the way the system operates in Sheffield or more personalised information and guidance regarding a person's specific needs, are essential building blocks to meeting all of the duties in the Care Act 2014.
- 1.9 The 'guidance' requirements on local authorities in the Care Act legislation is met by Sheffield Adult Social Care service through a contract with Sheffield Advocacy Service, and through the work of social carer staff, families, and friends, with the consent of individuals. This paper focuses on the availability of information and advice.
- 1.10 A self-assessment using Local Government Association Towards Excellence in Social Care in 2021, identified that Sheffield did not have an adequate local offer in relation to the provision of information and advice. This was due to a combination of the platform functionality, leadership, and prioritisation of resource.
- 1.11 To deliver an improved offer to residents of Sheffield and professionals working across social care, targeted improvement activity was undertaken during the period 2021 – 2022 supported by a change to the platform provider. The platform provider has been changed to Public Partnerships, originally formed as Shop4Support in 2008, and subsequently taken over by Public Consulting Group (PCG) in 2014. The change of platform provider will realise several benefits, which include greater:
- Accessibility, e.g., different font sizes for people who are partially sighted or, 'read aloud' for example for people with reading difficulties
  - Functionality, including the development of the 'Virtual Wallet', care account management, self-assessment and citizen purchasing capabilities
  - Efficiency, and value for money as this will seek to generate greater coherence and ease of access to information and support, reduce duplication and reduce need for paper copies.
  - Opportunity to embed coproduction and engagement of citizens and people who use services in the design and development of information, advice and guidance offer to them.
  - Quality of information and the quality of presentation due to local editorial capability
  - Collaboration across multiple advice platforms, services, and partnerships locally and nationally to enable individuals to easily access a range of information relating to their circumstances in one place.
  - Capabilities to enable professionals across the health and social care system to provide up to date information to individuals and carers about options, available provisions and where to go for further help and assistance.
- 1.12 To support the web site development, a co-production network has been formed to review and grow the depth and quality of the information and

advice that is available to make sure it is as relevant as possible to the questions people have about adult social care. This co-production work includes working alongside representatives from the voluntary and community sector, wider partners, and colleagues across the Council.

1.13 The information and advice platform provides a foundation for which to further develop self-help and technological solutions which enable individuals, families, and carers to easily access the support. The future initiatives include:

- Self-Assessment options which enable easy access to equipment, adaptations, and availability of support.
- Easy access to online learning, videocalls and information about resources.
- Links to guidance around social care policies and procedures.
- Virtual wallets and Care Accounts so that individuals and carers can easily access information about their social care budgets and personal accounts.
- Bringing together directories, local and national information, and advice by local area in Sheffield to enable ease of navigation about supports available in local areas and neighbourhoods as well as when individuals travel to other areas.
- Development of an APP which individuals, carers and professionals can download and receive online updates.

1.14 The new Information and Advice website went live to the citizens of Sheffield with a soft launch at the end of November 2022 with our workforce and partners. The link to the website is here: [Sheffield Directory - Home Page | Sheffield \(sheffielddirectory.org.uk\)](https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk)

1.15 A formal public launch and media campaign will take place in the New Year, with regular updates provided throughout the year.

## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

2.1 Developing the Information, advice and guidance offer for people who live in Sheffield is an important part of the Adult Social Care Strategy. Specifically, it helps people to stay safe and well by enabling people to self-serve through access to equipment and adaptations, and voluntary and community sector organisations.

2.2 The work supports people to be active and independent, by providing information and guidance about healthy living options. It helps people to be connected and engaged by providing accessible opportunities for people to link to their communities more.

2.3 Having a fit for purpose information and advice platform which is accessible and usable by professionals as well as citizens brings with it improvements to practice, smarter and more efficient solutions become possible, and people get better outcomes.

- 2.4 The benefit of developing our information, advice and guidance offer enables people who live in Sheffield, or people who are preparing to move to Sheffield to 'self-serve'. With a good communications campaign using social media information about Sheffield adult social care, the local offer, and children's services as well as SEND will be up to date, relevant and accessible. The additional capabilities of the platform will then provide opportunities to respond positively to increasing demand in the most cost-effective way.
- 2.5 The development of a new information, advice and guidance platform for the City focused on adult social care and health creates possibilities for future efficiencies. For example, in future it may be possible to bringing together diverse information and advice provisions within the City, so they are accessible from a central platform, which, as its primary function aims to support and promote independence and autonomy. Its development registers a shift towards citizen and community empowerment.

### **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 Changing the information, advice and guidance platform did not require any consultation, it was a necessary business decision that saved resources (see finance section) whilst providing a more fit for purpose solution.
- 3.2 The 'soft launch' in November 2022 will involve communications with key stakeholders and staff whilst the public launch would take place in the New Year / final quarter of 2022 financial year.
- 3.3 The Information, Advice and Guidance Board has a wide array of partners involved and this includes people who use services and carers groups.
- 3.4 A coproduction network has been set up which will review content and develop it on an ongoing basis, making sure we are answering the questions that people who use services and carers have about adult health and social care, and helping us keep the site up to date and relevant.
- 3.5 There are several further development opportunities that the new platform brings with it. These are being explored with partners with the care cap reform potentially coming in next year, and opportunities to develop out direct payments and personal health budgets offer through use of a 'virtual wallet'.

### **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### **4.1 Equality Implications**

- 4.1.1 The new provisions will significantly increase the Council's ability to provide needed information advice and guidance about the adult health and social care system as well as specific issues and areas of adult social care to a wide variety of audiences in formats that suit them, in their own languages.

## 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 The cost of the original platform is £33k per annum. The table below demonstrates the cost of delivery of the new platform.

---

		<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2025/26</u>	<u>2026/27</u>
<b>IDOX</b>					
<b>System</b>	Yearly Cost	£33,075	£33,075	£33,075	£33,075
<b>PPL</b>					
<b>System</b>	Set-Up Costs	£21,000			
	Yearly Cost	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000
	Co-Production Costs	£8,400	£8,400	£8,400	£8,400
	Total	£54,400	£33,400	£33,400	£33,400
	Additional Cost	£21,325	£325	£325	£325

---

4.2.2 The system will not yield any savings in future years and will cause a pressure based on the set-up costs in year 1. This pressure needs to be addressed to remain within budget.

## 4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The contract with Idox, the previous platform provider, has been ended and data is being transferred from the previous platform to the new. Once completed there will be no further work with the previous provider. There have been technical challenges in transferring some information from the previous platform, but they have agreed extensions to enable this to be resolved, however, no legal work has been necessary, or is expected.

4.3.2 Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud 12 Framework was used to procure the new platform, overseen by corporate procurement services.

4.3.3 The proposal will allow the Local Authority to continue to meet its Care Act duties to establish and maintain information and advice services.

## 4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 The proposal is not considered to have significant climate impacts and as such a full assessment is not required, however relevant impact areas have been addressed below.

- 4.4.2 A fully functional platform will reduce the need to provide as many hard copy leaflets as possible in future, although it will not irradiate this need completely.
- 4.4.3 When introducing the platform to staff there will be a focus on not using printing options and supporting an electronic 'basket' of information that can be sent to people they are working with by email or text with a link, rather than using printing options. The new platform therefore supports the notion of channel shift from paper-based information, advice, and guidance provision to electronic formats.
- 4.4.4 The platform is procured through Crown Commercial Services who themselves are working towards government Net Zero targets and this is reflected in the framework where relevant.

#### 4.5 Other Implications

- 4.5.1 There are no redundancies because of this work

### 5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The alternative was to remain with the old platform, but in discussion with all stakeholders, after due consideration it was agreed the platform was not fit for purpose, and a step change in our information and advice capability was needed.
- 5.2 Procurement options were considered and the national framework for information and advice organisations developed by ADASS was used to secure the leading provider. This was led by corporate procurement colleagues. All procurement rules were followed.

### 6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Endorsing the work being done and the future development of the city-wide platform for information, advice and guidance about social care, and health will enable further development to partnership working across health and social care, with the voluntary sector and people who use services and carers to provide a truly coproduced and relevant, cutting-edge information, advice and guidance service. It provides options to develop cost effective demand management functions over the next year in response to legislative changes.