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policy

briefing

Using Digital Innovation to Generate Value

Introduction

This briefing sets out to discuss ways in which digital innovation can been used in local government and the wider sphere of public services not only to improve efficiency but, more importantly, how it can be used to generate value for citizens and communities in their places. It is based on material presented by Socitm's Director of Policy & Research to a discussion session at the SOLACE Summit in Bournemouth (8 October 2015).

Contents

1. What is the problem we are trying to fix?

We start with the contention that we've been looking in the wrong place. We have focused on:

- transactions not relationships
- websites not outcomes for the citizen
- channel shift as opposed to service re-design and digital transformation
- atomising the individual rather than personalising the service.

We need to 'follow the spend'. It is the big areas of expenditure that are crying out for redesign and digital innovation – these involve a relationship between the citizen and the traditional service providers characterised by dialogue, deliberation, co-design and co-production.

Examples:
Adult care assessments
In a 2008 study of support to vulnerable older people in South Lakeland, 133 services were identified from across 29 agencies. 44 application forms needed to be completed to access these, which in turn fed 63 eligibility entitlement processes and 56 assessment processes. However, 95% of the data required was in just two forms; the rest was duplication.

Missing children, Gwent
Lack of data matching: children, mothers, fathers, social services, police, prison services, health visitors… 55 missing children cost Gwent CC 2.25m in a 9 month period.

Becoming adopters
In one local authority in south east England, over 50% of those applying in a particular cohort dropped out – most because they were worn down by the process. For those remaining, it took up to two and a half years to navigate the process just to be approved, never mind to be matched with a child.

Blue Badge applications
We know from work completed by Warwickshire and GDS that an application turnaround of 8 weeks could be reduced to 20 minutes through redesign and digital transformation of the process.

Common features:
- Duplication.
- Fragmentation.
- Inability/unwillingness to share data
- Service failure – 'designed' to fail, not to be supportive/succeed.
- Process accretion.
- Producer-led – convenience of the organisation, not the user.
- Lack of service design.
- Failure to exploit the Internet to do things differently.

2. Some Successes

There is much to be optimistic about. (Socitm's Living with Austerity and associated research reports highlight numerous examples.) We don't always need to reinvent.

Transforming East Riding
This programme aims to save £143m over seven years. It comprises:
- an education cultural change programme for all staff
- analysis of data to understand their people
- a focus on users' needs and outcomes
- application of digital principles to guide the council's journey and skills development
- a multi-disciplinary approach.

Socitm *Insight's* research identified a commitment to redesign and digital transformation characterised by: vision, leadership, governance, a strong sense of purpose, sound implementation skills, a shared approach across the organisation and, above all, a dedication to user engagement.

Isolation in Leeds
Exploiting health, social care and other data sources to target isolation amongst older people, engaging the community and its inherent capacity to support and 'reconnect' people physically and virtually (social media). Significant savings were calculated from reduced care needs and hospitalisation.

Adult care assessments in West Cornwall
The 'kitchen table' conversation, corralling resources and services from the community in the widest sense to meet needs and improve outcomes.

Buurtzorg community nursing
Self-managing community nursing teams in The Netherlands, devolved down to the lowest level possible. The shift away from a performance- and target-driven organisational model towards empowered teams has resulted in better outcomes, increased morale, lower turnover, better qualified staff and a dramatic reduction in support functions (35 back office staff for 8000 community nurses).

Common features:

- Collaborative leadership, with shared vision and governance, across place.
- Whole place, whole organisation(s), whole systems, whole people.
- Starting with people and going beyond the rhetoric. Our speaker drew spontaneous applause at the *Socitm-ADASS Health and Social Care Summits* (Autumn 2014) with her presentation on adult care assessments and the 'kitchen table conversation' in Cornwall. These are prime examples of the service user engaged and at the core of developing the products, services and delivery methods to meet their needs.
- Exploiting data to manage demand and meet needs through better citizen insights.
- Processes re-designed, simplified and targeted to enable better information exchange and better service outcomes, with a focus on earlier interventions.
- Changing citizen and community behaviours to create more resilience and self-sufficiency.
- Applying digital technology to make it work for people and communities, not as an end in itself.

3.   What do we need to do?

Digital innovation occurs when businesses/services exploit the Internet's ubiquity and ability to be anywhere at any time – a reason to press on with the journey to universal broadband coverage – as well as its ability to join-up people, their data, and things. It gives us the opportunity to re-design whole systems and processes, not just the front-end.

The current 'devolution' agenda is building the momentum for collaboration and digital innovation. This presents opportunities in areas such as adult care assessments, home care, missing children, becoming an adopter, hospital discharges, overcoming isolation, and more.

A place-based approach to delivering outcomes, not services, provides the opportunity to deconstruct siloed, paper orientated processes and proprietary technologies, and separate these out to be more commoditised, simplified and shared capabilities.

Simplify … Standardise … Share

Simplify
Work across places – leadership – governance – digital re-design capability.

Work with people and data to better understand real needs and outcomes. Design and build 'Place-based Platforms', using interoperable systems and data sharing to address these needs and outcomes.

Standardise

Focus on common business and digital capabilities to enable outcomes that can be reused and applied across one place and shared across many different places.

Develop business/service capabilities such as connectivity (PSN), identity, payments, assessments, triage, etc.

Develop digital capabilities (e.g. Adur and Worthing) that underpin these common service/business capabilities with an open systems approach:

- Open requirements specification and business cases for common capabilities.
- Open governance: information sharing and data protection standards to address priority outcomes.
- Open citizen: working with pioneering organisations and citizen advocacy groups to stimulate citizen engagement in outcome delivery – data requirements, service designs, benefits, risks and concerns.
- Open interfaces between systems.
- Open architectures: common data models as the basis for integration e.g. current work on a common Integrated Digital Care Record (openEHR).

Share

Open up capabilities and data sources to all partners across place, regardless of sector.

Build on existing hubs and centres of excellence around the country and beyond to share capabilities and designs, e.g. Health and Social Care Integration Pioneers.

4. Call to Action: how can we move forward strongly as a sector?

There is no shortage of advice:
- SOLACE Digital Leadership Network.
- Socitm Leadership Academy – broadening and deepening the leadership skills of our members in supporting and enabling digital innovation.
- Socitm's Women in IT initiative – encouraging more women into IT and into senior roles digital innovation.
- Socitm's Virtual Chief Digital Officer – shared chief digital officer facilitating redesign and digital transformation across across smaller local authorities and partners.
- Socitm's Digital Maturity Assessment – online tool – where are we? Where are the gaps?
- Socitm's Better Connected – going digital in scope and delivery.
- Socitm's research and reports – Do you do digital? Living with austerity.
- Health and social care integration – (Department of Health – NHS England – Health and Social Care Information Centre – Pioneers – Vanguards – Better Care Fund – ADASS-Informatics Network – Socitm) summits and workshops; citizen online briefings; delivering locally – input to implementation of the Personalised Care 2020 Framework) – all set a pattern of collaboration and building standard designs – but there remains much more to be done to enable sharing.

And that's just SOLACE and Socitm; there is much more going on internationally, nationally and locally.

So, how can we move forward strongly as a sector?

Local Digital Alliance (SOLACE – Socitm – LGA – New Local Government Network – Local Government Delivery Council – Local CIO Council – Health and Social Care Integration Pioneers, Vanguards etc.) made a submission to DCLG for the Government Spending Review 2015. Regardless of the outcome of the Spending Review, we can and need to do things differently. We need to focus our collaborative effort on:
- relationships, not transactions.
- leadership to build on successes
- Simplify, Standardise, Share … and Save.

Our call to action is set out in the Socitm Policy Briefing – Local Digital (July 2015) and proposes four foundations for collaborative endeavour:
1. Build a new collaborative digital leadership capability for the sector at the national and local levels, taking forward the work of the Local Digital Alliance.
2. Harness data using information governance and data analytics.
3. Build the place-based platforms for interoperability and data sharing.
4. Create and share national scalable exemplars to address priority outcomes in areas such as adult care assessments, missing children, becoming an adopter, etc.

It is up to us to collaborate and take charge of digital innovation - as Socitm, SOLACE and our potential partners, as individual members, as networks of leaders working across places, and as public, private and voluntary organisations.

Have your say

We welcome comments and discussion on the ideas presented in this Policy Briefing.

Socitm Member group
www.khub.net/socitm

martin.ferguson@socitm.net

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