

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	24 January 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Implementation of D365/Replacement of Carefirst
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/23/034
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	2.1

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise elected members on the successful implementation of D365 as the new client management system and replacement of Carefirst.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Note the report and recognise the contribution and commitment of social work staff from across all functions, in addition to that of staff from the Finance, Digital and Technology, Data and Insights and People and Organisational Development clusters to the successful delivery of Dynamics 365 (D365); and
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to progress conversations with partners, to see if D365 can be a platform that can deliver integrated multi-agency chronologies.

### 3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1.1 In November 1999 Aberdeen City Council moved to adopting Carefirst as its data system to hold and retain electronic client records. In the subsequent twenty-three years the system functionality evolved and expanded adapting to changing legislative and policy duties, new reporting requirements as well as new ways of working. By 2017 it was recognised that the Carefirst system was fast coming to the point where it could not continue to be developed to meet operational requirements.
- 3.1.2 In September 2018 the Strategic Commissioning Committee gave approval for the Council to work with its digital partner to develop a new system that would better serve the needs of social work going forward.
- 3.1.3 The case for change:
- Staff were increasingly reporting frustration in relation to the functionality and limitations of Carefirst.

- As a consequence, and by necessity the limitations of the Carefirst system meant a significant percentage of data around our clients and service planning was outside of Carefirst
- The Carefirst system had become cumbersome to operate (staff describing it as clunky), and it did not operate in an intuitive manner
- Staff were unable to access the system off-line limiting the flexibility of working practices and requiring double entry for staff.
- Structure of Carefirst was a barrier to cross service working, not able to link to other key systems.

3.1.4 The replacement of Carefirst presented an opportunity to further develop the Council's approach to being data led, adopting a corporate approach to customer case management. Enabling

- A clear understanding of how current line of business customer systems are used and exploring alternative enabling technologies to drive modernisation and transformation
- A platform for the future delivery of customer applications, including the capabilities and benefits of a unified, integrated solution and maximising investment and driving better outcomes.

3.1.5 The Council's partnership with Microsoft provided the opportunity to work with stakeholders and system users to modernise and transform our social work data system using Microsoft technologies. In 2019 Microsoft were commissioned to help us implement **Dynamics 365** (D365) across all social work functions.

3.1.6 The information held within Carefirst is some of the most sensitive data held by the Council. The security of this data had to be at the forefront of the planning as we developed and transitioned to our new D365 system. As noted in Figure 1 the system holds the records of in excess of 200,000 individuals of whom approximately 10% are active cases at any one time. In addition, the system as well as being integral to the work of social workers is a key platform that serves the activities of several other Council clusters. For example, it is critical to the financial planning and forecasting duties of the Chief Finance Officer as well as the statutory reporting overseen by the Chief Officer for Data & Insights. It is also critical to the delivery of services situated within the Health & Social Care Partnership.

Figure 1

### Social Work and Care in Aberdeen



400 + ACC Staff  
Social work  
Data & Insights  
D&T  
Finance



1600 + Business Users  
ACC Social work Admin  
staff  
Bon accord Care  
NHS  
Foster Parents



At any given time Current Service Users 20,000 +  
In total 206,000 records for Adult & Children's  
Service affected users across Aberdeen City over  
20 Years

3.1.7 Although noting and capitalising on the cross-cutting functionality, first and foremost the development of D365 was to build a data system that more effectively met the needs of social work and social workers. Consequently, the voice and needs of those who would use the D365 system was critical to its design and build. In essence D365 is a system designed by social workers for social workers.

3.1.8 While social workers had the subject matter expertise the development of D365 was a true multi cluster and multi partner project. The technical skills and expertise of Microsoft and Hitachi along with the connectedness of colleagues from the Finance, Digital and Technology, Data and Insights and People and Organisation clusters was absolutely critical to ensuring the successful delivery of the D365 system.

3.1.9 At the outset of the D365 project social work staff identified a number of key priorities for the new system to deliver. These included:

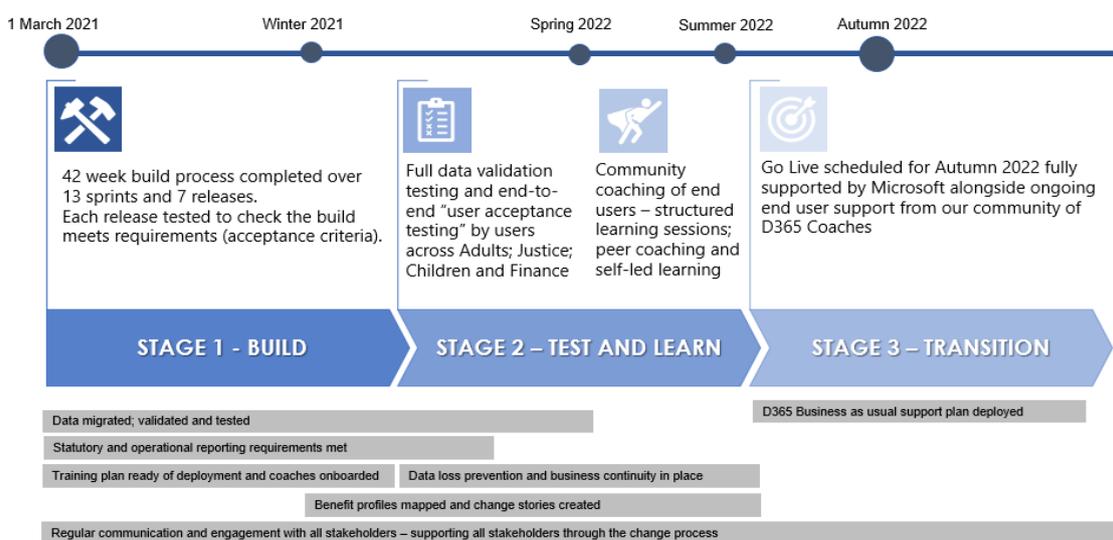
<p><b>Save Time &amp; Effort/Reduced Bureaucracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No need for hard copy templates</li> <li>• No need for written notes</li> <li>• No need for system re-keying</li> <li>• No need for email notifications</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work from anywhere</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access &amp; update information on the go</li> <li>• No need to return to the office to update the data system</li> </ul>
<p><b>Better data, easier to input, easier to analyse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More meaningful reporting capability</li> <li>• Spot patterns, trends and areas of concern</li> <li>• Deliver more responsive intervention</li> </ul>	<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More consistency in ways of working, across all areas of social work/social care</li> <li>• Improved processes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clear view of client</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build picture of an individual's contact with the council</li> <li>• See who else is working on a client's case</li> </ul>	<p><b>Improved management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easier performance reviews</li> <li>• Improved case load allocation</li> <li>• View of every interaction in the system</li> <li>• Fully auditable and traceable</li> </ul>

## 3.2 Project Timeline

3.2.1 The decision to develop the D365 system was made prior to the COVID pandemic. In 2019 staff from Microsoft and Hitachi came to Aberdeen to engage with social work staff to understand their needs and to develop a scope for the build. It was always planned that the detailed specification and the build itself would be undertaken largely on an in-person basis. However, the pandemic meant this had to shift to being undertaken on an online basis. Figure 2 below, sets out the timeline of the build, the entirety of this delivered via online workshops and engagement.

Figure 2

## Project Timeline



3.2.2 The COVID pandemic has had a huge impact on social work and social workers. As well as having to contend with the demands imposed by and arriving out of the pandemic, staff from across the spectrum of social work services needed to come together to ensure the totality of our needs were understood and factored into the build. The build having been completed those same staff needed to test the system to ensure it delivered what was required.

3.2.3 The commitment shown by social work staff cannot be understated. However, the prize of having a system that better reflected their needs and the key priorities noted above was recognised by all and served to ensure continuing momentum with minimal delays.

3.2.4 Engagement with the workforce has been critical throughout the build. This engagement was led by colleagues from People & Organisation. Via this staff identified their preferred learning styles. Overwhelmingly being able to learn on the job was identified as a strong preference. In response to this a small army of coaches from across all aspects of the social work service were trained on the functionality of the system and then empowered to support their colleagues to learn and develop the knowledge and skills to use the system.

3.2.5 This approach has ensured we have a sustainable model to support the workforce, including new staff, to build their skills and knowledge of D365 in an increasingly self-serving approach. Our coaches are well placed to identify "fixes" on the system and work with the technical experts to resolve this in an approach that prioritises future developments.

3.2.6 D365 went live on 17 October 2022. Given the level of testing undertaken prior to Go Live the switch from Carefirst to D365 went smoothly. While, as you would expect from any large-scale data transfer, there were a number of issues flagged, none of these were assessed as being significant. Work has continued to resolve these bugs/fixes and as social work staff get to grips with the system, they are identifying usability changes that will further improve the system.

### **3.3 Post Go Live**

- 3.3.1 Recognising that the policy and legislative landscape for social work is an ever changing one, D365 has to have the capacity to flex and adapt. Indeed, during the 'Build Phase' there were changes which now require to be reflected in the system. Microsoft and Hitachi staff have supported our Digital and Technology staff to develop the skills so we can be largely self-sufficient adapting D365 to meet our needs on a continuous and iterative basis.
- 3.3.2 The potential for D365 is only beginning to be utilised. As staff develop their confidence, skills and knowledge this will further allow for new ways of working to be explored both internally and with partners.
- 3.3.3 On a recurring basis, findings from case reviews and multi-agency inspections, have highlighted challenges in relation to the quality of multi-agency chronologies. The sharing of data in real time to allow for the professional assessments of risk and vulnerability is critical to ensuring families receive the right support at the right time. Given D365 is built utilising the tools of SharePoint, tools which all partner agencies use, there is the genuine potential for the system to be appropriately and securely opened up to enable integrated multi-agency chronologies to become a reality. This has to be done in a manner that does not compromise the safety of the data D365 holds.
- 3.3.4 The Council has demonstrated the functionality and potential of D365 to local partners. Aberdeen City's Chief Officers Group for public protection has additionally recommended that locally partners explore the potential interface options with D365 to enhance our collective data sharing capabilities. These conversations will continue to be explored and developed during 2023.
- 3.3.5 The Scottish Government as part of the planning for a National Care Service has committed to the delivery of an integrated client record. D365 ensures Aberdeen City is well placed to respond and deliver this.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Compliance</b>	Failure to comply with our statutory duties' including securing the data of individuals risks undermining the reputation of the Council.	Managers across Children's Social Work are aware of legislative requirements and ensure compliance	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work. Having a secure and data intuitive system is critical to the assessment of risk and vulnerability enabling effective planning and intervention.	The testing of the D365 system prior to Go Live gave strong assurance it would meet our needs. There is internal capacity within the Council to support the continuous improvement and development of the D365 system.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	No significant related financial risks from this report.	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Reputational</b>	Failure to comply with our statutory duties' including securing the data of individuals risks undermining the reputation of the Council.	The report highlights that D365 provides strong compliance with our statutory responsibilities.	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people has a direct relevance to the delivery

	<p>of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <p>4. Support the implementation of Developing the Young Workforce, seek to gain the highest level of investors in young people accreditation and ensure there is a focus on supporting pupils excel in STEM subjects.</p> <p>7. Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p> <p>9. Promote diversion activities for youths and adults in our city with enhanced focus on our three locality areas.</p>
<b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered has a direct relevance to the following stretch outcomes in the LOIP:</p> <p>4. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026</p> <p>5. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026.</p> <p>6. 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>7. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children’s Social Work. This activity is relevant to the Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, and the Children’s Services Plan.</p>
<b>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</b>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children’s Social Work supports the Scottish Government’s drive to #KeepthePromise. This wide ranging and ambitious programme impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children including those contained in the Children(Scotland) Act 1995, Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, Children &amp; Young People</p>

	(Scotland) Act 2014, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Children (Scotland) Act 2020.
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## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	This report provides members with assurance on the Council's compliance with their statutory duties relating to the retention of records for individuals open to social work does not require a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required.
<b>Other</b>	Not required.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

## 11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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