Social Care Institute for Excellence

Bromley Digital Transformation Programme

Drivers of change: digital transformation, co-production and cost-efficiencies

Challenge

Like many local councils, the London Borough of Bromley is facing rising demand for social care support that exceeds available budgets and resources. Building on earlier collaboration with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), the council therefore commissioned a change programme designed to deliver sustainable savings in social care expenditure targeting approximately £2 million in the current year, rising to over £4.3 million per year 26/27 recurrently.

To meet these ambitious targets, Bromley and SCIE recognised the need to improve the efficiency of service delivery while crucially enhancing the experience of those receiving care.

Innovation

SCIE and Bromley identified a series of digital and practice-based opportunities that had the potential to make a tangible difference to residents. By modernising the tools and resources available to frontline staff, services could be delivered more efficiently and responsively, while also making it easier for residents to access the care and support they needed, more quickly, and in ways that felt more responsive and person-centred. Enhancing practitioner effectiveness was agreed as a key enabler, helping to ensure that improvements in service delivery translated directly into better outcomes for residents.

Bromley and SCIE's insight laid the groundwork for a twin-track proposal. On one hand, it focused on the design and implementation of new digital solutions tailored to Bromley's local context. On the other, it offered strategic support to develop and embed a co-production strategy more deeply into the culture of service delivery. By aligning technological innovation with a commitment to inclusive practice, Bromley and SCIE's partnership aimed to create a more person-centred, collaborative environment, where digital transformation and co-production were not parallel ambitions, but mutually reinforcing drivers of change.



We have very much valued SCIE's work at Bromley as we drive forwards with our transformation programme, which has helped to build a clear, compelling evidence base setting out how we could improve outcomes for our residents and strengthen our financial sustainability. They supported us to translate this into action plans and have stayed at our side, offering strategic insights, drawing from experience elsewhere, as we begin to deliver them. Transformation is never easy, but they have helped us stay on track towards the desired impact. It's hugely rewarding to see the emerging picture, especially the extremely positive feedback from our residents."

Donna Glover, Director of Adult Social Services, London Borough of Bromley

SCIE has taken time to understand the Bromley context, with the result being that we have created a partnership which has brought about a positivity towards the changes. SCIE have become part of our team, with the transformation work delivering benefits for our staff as well as creating efficiencies and supporting residents."

Heather Sinclair-Constance, Head of Service / Strategic Transformation Lead, Adult Services

Project overview

The digital transformation programme is one of several interconnected initiatives being developed and delivered in Bromley during the 18-month period of SCIE's involvement. Given the breadth of activity, strong governance and close alignment across programmes is essential to identify overlaps early and take corrective action where needed, and generally ensure the programme remains agile throughout.

Following the initial scoping, dependencies and 'parallel' and supporting projects were also identified and prioritised. These included the restructuring of the service Front Door, bringing social work and occupational therapy staff together to provide a single point of contact for people; piloting AI transcription tools for staff; incorporating additional safeguarding tools such as a Safeguarding Governance Framework, and undertaking an analysis of decision-making consistency across teams. This additional work has delivered further valuable insights into best practice and informed wider service improvements, ultimately helping more people remain at home with support for longer, and delivering better care and support outcomes.

At the heart of the programme is a project focused on expanding the use of Assistive Technology across five distinct contexts. This aims to support short-term interventions that promote greater independence for people, and help personalise any resulting, or existing, care packages. Complementary workstreams include a revision of Bromley's online offer, expanding its online self-service tools and information resources and improving the visibility of community-based resources directly available to residents.

These are making it easier for residents to self-refer; access support, from assessing their financial situation to finding local groups, services and activities tailored to their interests and needs; find guidance, and manage their care more independently.

To ensure these innovations translated into meaningful change, the programme is also supporting managers and practitioners through a review of the council's case management system, the development of performance dashboards (forthcoming) and targeted culture change activity. This includes not only fostering confidence in digital tools and embedding them into daily practice, but also encouraging more collaborative ways of working.

To ensure digital transformation delivers tangible benefits for both staff and residents, the programme has embedded a range of support mechanisms aimed at building practitioner confidence, consistency, and capacity.

Structured training, thoughtful induction, and peer-led workshops have helped practitioners feel more competent and assured in their use of new tools and approaches. This has led to more consistent record-keeping, clearer decision-making, and improved safeguarding practices—each of which contributes to better governance and more responsive support for residents.

The introduction of AI transcription tools, performance dashboards, and revised protocols at the Front Door have reduced administrative burden and enabled staff to focus more on relational practice. These innovations not only streamline service delivery but also help practitioners identify and respond to support needs earlier and more compassionately.

> **Unlike my previous calls to adult social care… today I received all the help and information that I required from C, in order to move forward and get my mother reassessed for care support."**
>
> **Bromley resident**

> **Today, I spoke with L regarding a hoist repair… Usually, it takes around 30 minutes to get through the call line, but today I was connected within a few minutes… I am fully satisfied with his help."**
>
> **Bromley resident**

Key SCIE project activity

SCIE's work with Bromley has supported a whole-service transformation approach, with co-production embedded as a guiding principle throughout strategic planning, operational delivery and continuous improvement. SCIE has helped Bromley align service models with the lived experience of residents.

Governance structures, training programmes and evaluation tools have been co-developed to build internal capacity and ensure sustainability. Across safeguarding, workforce development and change management, SCIE has helped to facilitate inclusive processes that foster ownership, transparency and shared learning—ensuring that co-production is not only practised but deeply rooted in how services are shaped and delivered.

Strategic Development and Planning

- Business models developed with Bromley to map investment and benefit expectations across five core Assistive Technology (AT) initiatives, followed by support for redesigning the Front Door approach
- Support for the establishment of workstream groups, governance structures, and delivery plans for each programme element, with ongoing facilitation and guidance

Operational Implementation and Workforce Development

- Facilitation of training and embedding of AT data review processes through regular engagement with AT leads and frontline practitioners
- Protocols developed for the new Front Door, from collaboration with managers, practitioners, and partners, including a week-long induction for new and transferred staff followed by a series of cross-team workshops to extend early insights

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- Application of the SCIE web evaluation tool with stakeholders to identify development priorities for Bromley's online offer
- Independent evaluation of the AI Transcription pilot, providing recommendations for future development
- Delivery of a 'decision consistency' evaluation to surface and spread areas of best practice

Policy, Safeguarding and Governance

- Provision of methodology and direct support for reviewing high-priority policy and guidance documents
- Additional safeguarding training and support for the development of a Safeguarding Governance Framework

Engagement & Change Management

- Support for the development of the project's communications strategy and introduction of a Change Champion model to foster internal engagement and ownership

> **SCIE has demonstrated considerable flexibility, making sure their input was responsive to the culture of adult services in Bromley and the needs of our residents. Their breadth of knowledge of social care, trends and best practice has really helped in planning and then making those adjustments as we've progressed. On co-production, they have supported to build on the good practice we already had in place and begin to embedding it as a guiding principle in the Council and beyond in our wider partnership"**
>
> **Donna Glover, Director of Adult Social Services, London Borough of Bromley**

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) support

The digital transformation programme in Bromley is not simply a technical upgrade—it is a strategic enabler to help achieve service improvements and efficiencies, which is also supporting cultural change. By commissioning SCIE to review the council's case management system, develop performance dashboards, and support targeted culture change activity, Bromley has created the conditions for more transparent, inclusive and responsive service delivery. These digital tools help surface lived experience insights, track outcomes and support continuous improvement — all of which are central to the co-production framework co-developed through stakeholder workshops.

Embedding co-production into the culture of service delivery requires systems that can act on what people tell us, measure success and close the feedback loop. This programme directly supports this by enabling better governance, clearer decision-making and more meaningful opportunities for participation.

In this way, digital innovation and co-production are mutually reinforcing: technology provides the infrastructure, while co-production ensures that what's built reflects the voices, needs and lived experience of Bromley's residents. This has helped improve a culture of proactive, person-centred care, where technology enhances, rather than replaces, human connection.

SCIE's involvement in Bromley has been grounded in a close, collaborative partnership with transformation and service leads, supporting both strategic direction-setting and practical delivery. This has included targeted workstreams in digital innovation, safeguarding, workforce development and stakeholder engagement. All are areas where co-production with people with lived experience of social care has underpinned and informed our approach.

Rather than delivering change to Bromley, SCIE has worked alongside the council to build internal capacity for sustainable improvement. This includes co-developing a co-production framework and toolkit, facilitating knowledge transfer sessions, and supporting the development of a Champion Network and Co-production Charter. These efforts reflect a deliberate focus on cultural change: moving beyond siloed or consultative activity toward a model where lived experience shapes governance, practice, and evaluation.

We know at SCIE that co-production with people with lived experience of social care is essential to enable the understanding and support of best practice, which has been central to this work. It has informed the definition of co-production adopted by Bromley, guided the design of tools and training, and helped embed a 'golden thread' of co-production throughout the transformation programme.

> **I was initially rather apprehensive about contacting you but from the start you were so kind and helpful and reassuring that I immediately was able to relax and open up."**
>
> Bromley resident

Emerging learnings and insights

The Bromley programme has been a wide-ranging and ambitious undertaking, generating valuable learning for both the Council and the SCIE team involved. It has:

- highlighted the significance of aligning digital innovation with practice reform, demonstrating how technology can actively reinforce person-centred approaches to care
- offered important insights through its governance model into how agility and coherence can be balanced, enabling responsiveness to emerging priorities without losing strategic direction
- underscored the importance of structured training, thoughtful induction and peer-led support in embedding new tools and practices

- revealed patterns through the evaluation of decision-making consistency that not only inform internal improvement but also offer opportunities to surface and share best practice more widely
- surfaced safeguarding as a particularly dynamic area of learning, with digital developments prompting an ongoing evolution in governance frameworks and professional dialogue
- reaffirmed the critical role of change management, especially the impact of clear communications and the use of Change Champions in fostering engagement, ownership, and sustained transformation across the organisation.

Emerging impact

With ten months still to go, the programme is already showing promising results across several early workstreams. Highlights include:

- **Assistive Technology in Assessments**
  Where Assistive Technology has been embedded into assessment activities, we've seen a broader range of support options used. We forecast a 15-20% reduction in care costs, but this has been exceeded reducing care costs by nearly 30%. More importantly, it's enabling Bromley residents and their carers to exercise greater independence and direct control over the support options that best suit their lives.

- **AI Transcription Pilot**
  Most practitioners involved found these tools highly supportive, reducing administrative time by around 20% and allowing more focus on meaningful, person-centred interactions. One practitioner shared: "It helps me concentrate on the context, the person's body language, to capture their voice in their words… I want it!"

- **Revised Front Door Service**
  The first phase of Bromley's revised Front Door service has delivered marked improvements in response times, enabled multi-disciplinary triage of incoming work and introduced a number of new short-term care and support pathways, giving better access to Reablement support and Occupational Therapy. It has also helped reduce the volume of work passed to community teams, allowing them to focus more effectively on complex and longer-term support needs, and delivered a reduction in the number of cases being referred for long term support by 14% year-to-date, resulting in significant benefits to residents and the Council.



Very efficient, quick response. Understood the need and supplied the appropriate equipment within two days."

Bromley resident

About SCIE

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is an independent social care charity, collaborating and innovating with a wide range of partners and people with lived experience, to improve people's lives. Working across social care, health and related services such as housing, for adults, children and families, we contribute to the development and implementation of better care, support and safeguarding at local and national level.

As we are not-for-profit, our income goes towards improving social care, delivered through our four offers: innovative **consultancy**, expert **training**, extensive **resources** and information, and evidence-based **insights**.

Co-production with people with lived experience underpins and informs what we do, and with over 20 years' experience we bring a wealth of trusted, evidence-based expertise to work together to help transform care.



Your not-for-profit partner, working with you to identify and implement improvements



Research, evidence and policy insights to drive improvements and innovation, and influence national policy and practice



Bespoke online or face-to-face learning and development including:

- safeguarding
- co-production
- strengths-based approaches



Guidance and tools to support best practice, co-production and innovation

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