**Video transcript: Sam Bassett, Suffolk County Council, presents to WM ADASS Digital Network on culture change aspects of the council's caretech programme**

The culture change piece - it just never ends – it's hard work.

We've just started a new caretech service. We've had a really patchy history with assistive tech and telecare historically, so we actually took the opportunity to almost start from scratch.

Cassius is our care tech fulfilment management mechanism which we launched in July this year. We created a call offer of 10 devices grouped into packages that we think will actually cover most needs. We took a long time designing those. Then we have a route of access for things which sit outside of that.

The bread and cloud is the sensor solution [it] gives us a powerful data to understand people's routines and behaviours, and then we have some integrated devices into that so we have digital pendant which is for falls and for wandering, we have a smart watch which is the same thing for wandering - and inactivity monitoring actually. Digital bed and chair mats again, linked into the whole ecosystem we have analogue versions of those as well. We have a smart speaker device, we have an Amazon Echo Show on there, and an analogue version which is a dementia clock. We have our tablet care phone device which acts as a central hub for a lot of those bits and pieces and then we have a video monitor as well.

We went through a very long procurement. We did some soft engagement with the market first. We wanted to sense check that we could do what we thought we wanted. We had different bits of the puzzle from different suppliers so that enabled us to create this really nice spec.

And we really wanted a partnership approach, we wanted to use the expertise from the sector, so we didn't want to assume that as commissioners 'we know best', because we don't. So it wasn't a traditional 'look, here's a spec, we're pretty confident the spec is right, off you go and deliver it' because that's not the reality, especially in this sector which is moving at such a pace.

So we used a competitive procedural negotiation that was really important for us so that we could discuss some of the areas that we weren't so sure about with the people who engaged in that process and then we could redefine what we wanted based on those discussions. That was really helpful. There are some things which we put out to market which they just said 'we don't know what that is, we can't deliver it in the way you've envisioned it'. There are things which we weren't aware of in terms of certain aspects like benefits, tech, data, which we then added into our specification for the second round.

The spec specifically included culture change support, training and comms, these things which we have capacity in the business to do but perhaps not on the scale or focus that we might need to support a change programme of this reach.

We finally awarded in April/May and we did a really quick service build it took 10 weeks and then we launched in middle of July, so we've been operational now for about five months.

The Cassius Partnership, I'm the commissioner, I have a team of digital care advisors, we're responsible for a lot of the internal culture change and delivery mechanism, [the] support and practice piece. Alcove are our software technology partners. They manage end-to-end everything around technology including data aspects. Rethink Partners are supporting the culture change piece, and then we have Provide who do our monitoring and response.

Its been going very well but there was a lot pre-work and a lot of that was around culture change. People have a perception around care tech and digital, we have a lot of preconceptions around 'people want access tech, people won't be connected' all this kind of stuff. Getting the tech is easy, right? Go to Amazon and get what you want. Getting people to use it, to comply with it, to use it in a way which is effective to support the best outcome, that's the hard bit.

Two or three years ago, we implemented a Champions Network so we can start to get some peer to peer support in teams and then that actually developed into a team of dedicated, funded posts. So I have a team of digital care advisors, I have five of them, three that cover different localities in Suffolk, I have one that covers LD&A and mental health, and then really importantly actually I've got one post that covers the care market.

With Rethink we created a road map for the culture change piece, not just internally but in the wider system. One of the first things we did was design some values which are all aligned to the things we were expecting to deliver. Given that we want to work in a collaborative partnership approach it's a little bit different to the traditional relationship we might have with a supplier.

These are all of the activities around culture change which we have designed and implemented as part of our Cassius service. We have got a really good relationship with all of the partners in Cassius. It took a bit of time for us to all understand what we were looking to achieve, and for them to understand what some of the drivers are and for us to understand what their expertise is. So there's some work to be done in developing that approach but it's very valuable in the long term.

One of the ways which we supported that work was to create a 'buddy' approach. So, I've got all of my team 'buddied up' with different parts of the partnership for different things. That approach, co-working at a smaller scale, has been really successful and supported ownership in my team and in the partnership to give them some accountability to go and deliver those things, so it's not all done in this kind of committee approach which can waste a lot time.

We created a brand. That was a very deliberate step to make it feel like something attractive, something aspirational that people will expect to access. Everything that we do is now branded in that same way so it has consistency so it feels really professional. That's been a really powerful tool for us.

In terms of training, we trained nearly 500 frontline practitioners in the last five months and many, many more who were not frontline. We've had this half day virtual session which is very immersive, it's got case studies, videos, breakout rooms and has a number of different people from my team, from Alcove, from Rethink, to deliver different parts of that.

We've had lots of assets made for that as well so it feels like a really professional type training and we have e-learning separately for people who are not frontline referrers, and what we will probably do is top those sessions up throughout the year.

We take the tech out to offices and get people to come and see it, to touch it, to understand it, see how it works. Until they actually see it, you can't get their true buy in from a kind of a social work practice point of view. [They] need to understand what's it looks like, what's that going to do, 'what's it going to look like sat next to the armchair of somebody I'm supporting.'

In terms of referral pathway a big barrier around our care tech is that the referral process is difficult. Practitioners are very busy and the first thing they will say is '[I'm] too busy to do that, make it easier for me.' We already had a care tech fulfilment route, we just enhanced that. They don't have to log in to a separate browser, a separate application or do multiple different forms.

So, as a practitioner in Suffolk you attend this full morning virtual session I've described and you have a baseline of understanding and then there is continued support for you. It's not just 'See you later, you've done the training, please refer into our service'.

We have a referral hotline practitioners call to talk about cases to understand what the best tech might be to pull best outcomes. We have our existing network of champions but my team of advisors, which are the level above that, and then we've got these other assets.

We've got Yammer, and we've got a really beautiful Page Tiger which should have everything in it there practitioner needs to know including ops management and processes and videos. And we've got the Alcove data portal the practitioner can go in, and view what's happened to the person they are supporting if they want to, around behaviour, routine, whatever else it might be.

And then there's this is follow up. Alcove follow up with the practitioner queries but also follow up with the person after seven days and check that the tech is doing what it needs to do. In our old model we used to push out tech and we'd call them up after a few months and they'd go: 'Oh, I just put it in a cupboard, it didn't work, I couldn't turn it on'. We've already done some baselining of benefits at the point of installation and we check in on that baseline in a 28 day review. So from a practitioner's perspective they have a huge amount of support around them and they also get feedback on what's happened.

Comms is unbelievably important. Please focus on your comms, your messaging, how you communicate and to who. It will make or break what you're doing because you can't assume that people just know it or if they listen once they will keep doing it. You need to keep that sustained communication and it needs to stand out, it needs to be appealing, it needs to be

bitsize, it needs to go through different channels, you need to understand who your stakeholders are and how you're going to communicate with them.

That's not just your business, that's the system, that's your counsellors, your strategic leaders, the public. We have an end-to-end comms plan around that and we have a comms lead, and we've got a series of campaigns which are set in over next year or so. So it's not just a useful thing to support your change programme but also to drive a type of behaviour or activity which you expect.

Business engagement - usual champions in the business – so, people who know you need to access support you with practice, training, finance, whoever it might be, use the people who you have a good relationship with and who you know will support your cause, because one blocker in a chain of many, many, pieces will make the whole thing fall down.