



Transformational Government

Enabled by technology

Local Government

Delivery experts working in local government have worked up, in their own words, some hypothetical examples that give a glimpse of what may be possible in the future. These scenarios are not policy statements of what will happen: they are illustrations of what might be possible in a simple pragmatic way when the principles of the strategy are delivered. These illustrations simply apply existing technologies to public sector delivery models, rather than trying to stretch the technology too far.

Services will be available in person via mobile workers who will be able to register, and increasingly resolve issues on the spot even when they are not within their immediate remit.

Irene, a social worker, is visiting Mrs Goldberg who is quite elderly and has just returned home from having an operation in hospital. Irene finds her in a state of anxiety about youths who have started to congregate outside the passageway by her house. She says that last night they threw empty milk bottles at her wall after dark. Irene takes out her tablet lap top that is enabled by a 3G card so it can connect to the internet.

Irene knows that the community police officer has a website on which there is a simple proforma action sheet which she completes and sends off there and then. Mrs Goldberg says that she doubts she will be able to put out the dustbin at the front of the house for collection as normally required by the refuse service. As with the community police officer, the refuse collection service has electronic reporting facilities, so Irene signs the service amendment request for the refuse collectors to deal with the movement of the dustbin themselves.

Finally, Irene's customer record shows that a visit will be made the following Thursday morning by staff of the Aids and Adaptations Division to assess the installation requirements of a stair lift. However, the hospital has booked Mrs Goldberg in for a check-up at the same time. Mrs Goldberg says she has been waiting some time for the stair lift. Irene accesses the patient appointment system and requests a change of visit to Thursday afternoon and signs the request. The appointment system immediately confirms the request.

Irene leaves Mrs Goldberg calm and contented. The following day the Community Police Officer adds "youth and the elderly" to the agenda of the video conference he is to have with local head teachers, community workers and the leisure service.

Information submitted to any public service will be used to inform all public services that require it. The occasions when extra levels of information are required to update customer details will happen less often. This means that the customer may input personal details to a local authority that will (if they wish) be shared with other public services.

Jim Mason goes to record the birth of his first son Jonathan. He is amazed to find that the registration process will, if he agrees, ensure that he receives Child Benefit, an increase in Housing and Council Tax Benefit, update the family's GP patient list, and inform pupil planning and parental engagement records at the local primary school. Each of these systems will in turn recognise the new data and process it in appropriate ways, perhaps by awarding additional benefit or triggering, in a few years' time, a call to parents from the local primary school administrator suggesting they take a look at the school's nursery unit.

Thanwick has been telling people how they have joined up all their major systems and even joined up with some other public services so records can be updated automatically once the first system has been updated, saving administrative costs for the public services and enormous amounts of form filling and hassle for people like Jim.

The publicity about this joined up working has given assurances that great care will be taken in protecting personal data, with security built into the service systems so that only the right people will have access to the data. Additional training on confidentiality and proper conduct will be given to staff. The advance publicity has already won Jim's trust and he is happy to agree to Jonathan's details being distributed appropriately through the network.