

Patricia Brooks, Culture Change and Strategy Implementation Consultant

I started my working life taking various entry level roles mostly in IT; database administrator, PA, user support, trainer, before moving into IT training management at the age of 23. Early in my career I was fortunate to work for managers who recognised potential in me and encouraged me to do roles that I didn't think I was capable of. This allowed me to gain valuable experience needed to progress. I've held several management roles and directorships across various industries within the public and private sector. In 2019 I left permanent employment becoming an independent business consultant specialising in strategy, business culture and people change.

I am currently working with Surrey and Borders NHS Foundation Trust, in Digital, and have supported them in creating different strategies to improve the Digital offering; People Change, Learning and Digital Transformation.

The [Trust's Digital Strategy](#) is possibly one of the most important documents I have created as it is integral to the delivery of the clinical strategy, a clear statement of SABP's commitment to deliver high quality, effective, safe and accountable care.

The Digital strategy is ambitious and forward thinking, a real step-change in how services will be delivered and consumed in the future, offering options to people who use services in how they connect and take advantage of available self-care opportunities. It was a pleasure to be asked to play such a key role in what I believe is set to be the beginning of real Digital change for SABP.

My role was to develop a document that set out the strategy everyone feels connected to and will take an active role in delivering. A document that visibly emphasised the change to come. The document was very different to SABP's normal style.

Co-developed with senior Digital & Information (D&I) leaders and collaborating with over 200 clinicians across the Trust the strategy responds to the technical challenges and frustrations experienced by the workforce enabling them, through the use of digital, to deliver the best service possible in different ways.

To develop the strategy, I first met with the most senior leaders at the Trust and took part in forums, meetings, boards and one-to-one discussions with clinical and corporate staff. From these conversations, research, plus the ambitions and desires of D&I senior leaders I began to piece things together.

Hundreds of hours later, working closely with senior D&I Leaders, the strategy was signed off at Trust Board in February 2020.

Responding to COVID has meant elements of the strategy have been delivered early, such as enabling video consultations, and the task now is to stabilise the tools and services introduced and ensure they are effectively adopted.

For this to be successful operational inclusion will be maintained by continuing to grow digital leadership amongst the clinical workforce, where there will be a lead psychiatrist/psychologist, nurse and AHP within every division. We'll foster social inclusion by engaging with people who use services and the wider community to better understand their needs and requirements. It is anticipated it will take a further 2-3 years to fully implement and embed and I hope to continue to play an active role in the implementation.

I'm also working to further build my credibility as a thought leader in the areas of strategy, people change and business culture, using my blog to share thoughts, lessons and findings, www.the-culture-vulture.co.uk, and talking wherever I can about how I can help organisations support their staff through continuous change.

I have a few years left in my career and I hope to continue to make a difference in the Digital space.

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