

AP/MBC

Tel:

05 February 2020

To whom it may concern

Dear Sirs

As Leader of Norfolk County Council, I oversee a Local Authority that is home to one of the highest proportions of older people in the country. I see at first hand the challenges that our ageing populations bring to Local Government, the NHS, and to wider society, and that daily experience has made me an advocate of innovation to try and bring new solutions to these continuing problems. My local authority spends more than £200m annually on the delivery of care to the county's older residents, and demography projections tell me that the demand for our services and support will continue to grow. People are living for longer with more conditions. Their quality of life is often diminished long term. And the interface between the NHS and the care system doesn't work as well as it should.

Technology provides some potential answers to the challenges we face. But the pace of adoption in my County is slow. Technophobia and patchy Wi-Fi present obstacles. But the lack of a proving ground is a major constraint. That is why I've supported the development of proposals for a new community which will act as a test bed for new technological products and services at Colney Hall. And that is why I support so strongly the UEA/EAHSN Healthy Ageing Trailblazer bid to Innovate UK. Statutory Authorities need the market to help them deliver better services for older people, and for older people living independently, and thereby reduce the burden on the public purse. Above all, people as they age deserve more chances to live well for longer.

Yours sincerely

  
  
  
**Cllr Andrew Proctor**  
Leader of the Council