Co-designed Needs Based Service Directory

DLUHC Funded COVID Project

Background

Huntingdonshire is a geographically large district within Cambridgeshire that is made up of a set of market towns, villages and rural areas. Some affluent areas, some deprived areas.

We (HDC) are a district council, so often the first port of call for residents, we don't handle social care but do handle homelessness. HDC doesn't have its own housing stock.

We put in a bid to the DLUHC COVID Digital fund to help move forward the work we were already doing on understanding root cause of poor outcomes in our residents and helping to build tools to support, predict and prevent poor outcomes via holistic support solutions for our residents delivered in partnership with charities and the community sector.

We predicted that the long term impact of COVID would be felt between 2021 and 2026 and see the creation of "newly vulnerable"; people who didn't have experience in getting support from the public or third sectors. We wanted to help deflect these people from a downwards trajectory by engaging with them early and providing holistic support (helping return to work) not just triage (a food parcel) and do it in partnership with others. This would reduce future expensive demand on the public sector system within Cambridgeshire.

The work

Over a set of design sprints we worked on turning our ideas around a digital tool that could support early intervention into a service blueprint, backlog and roadmap. The core of the "app" is essentially a service directory.
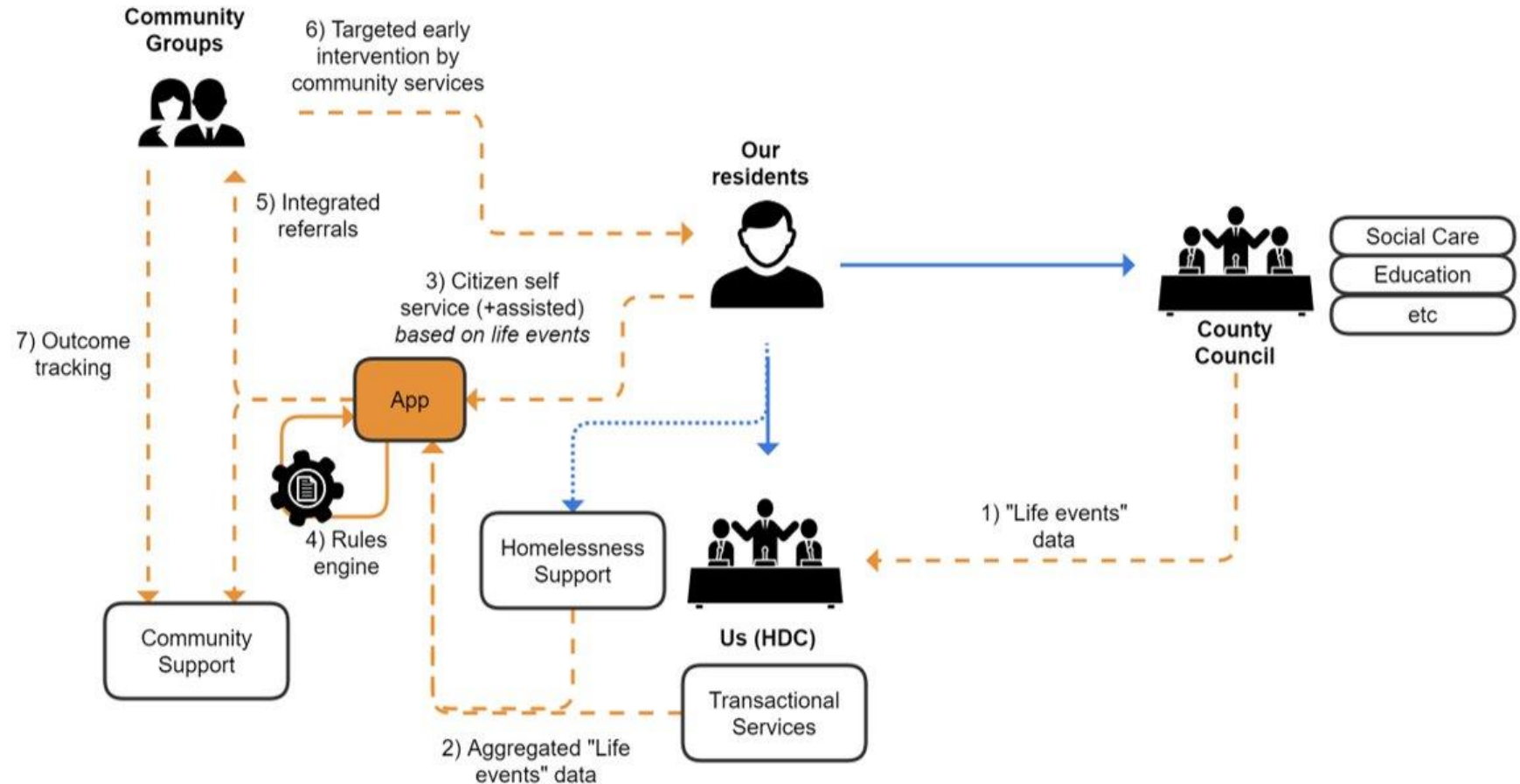
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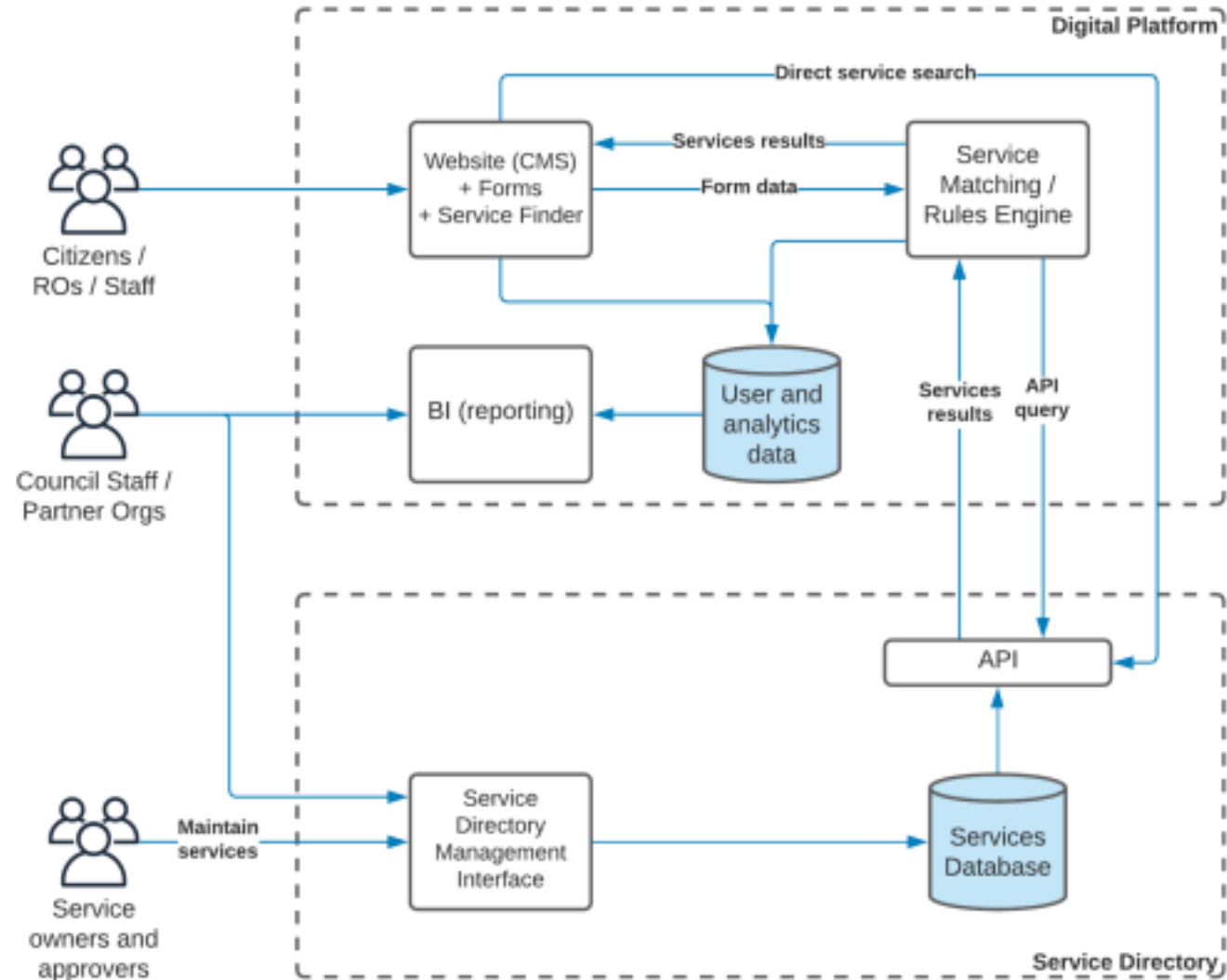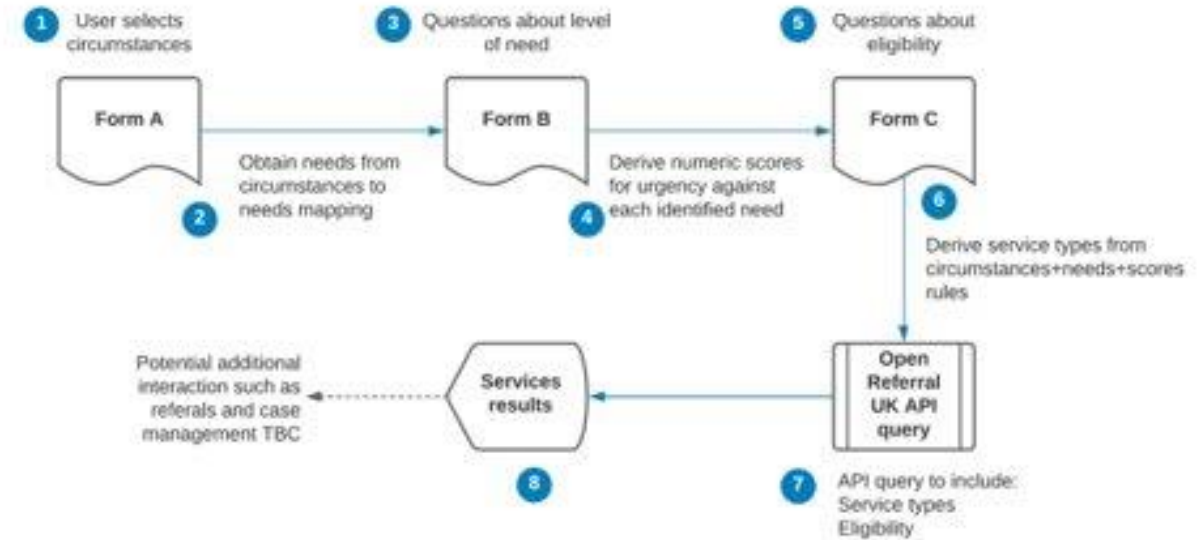
"Smarter" Searching

We wanted a better way for residents to find services, so they could tell us their situation and we would provide recommendations rather than presuming they knew what they needed. The OpenReferral UK standard lets you add vocabularies to services, which we would use to store this extra meta-data.
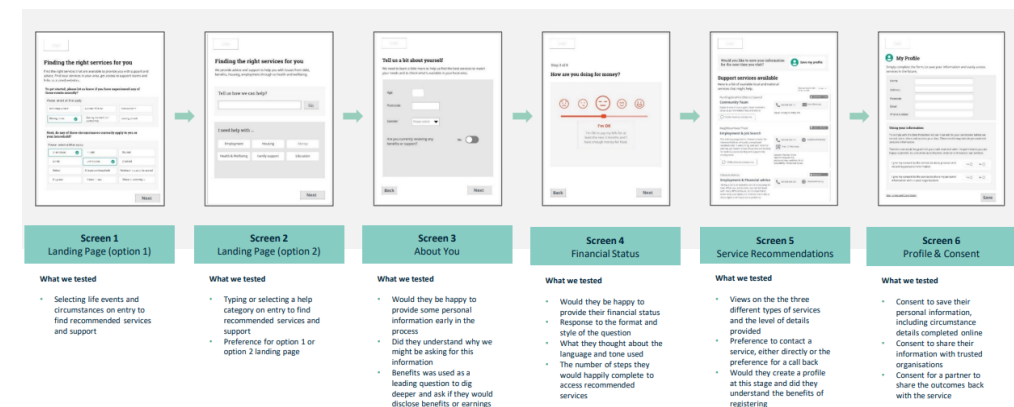
To improve the search, we looked at attaching different vocabularies to services (and extending some of them them):-

- LGA's Needs List
- LGA's Personal Circumstance List
- LGA's Services List

The detail of this is written up here,
SENA Phase 2 – Technical Architecture – Huntingdonshire District Council Projects (huntingdonshire-projects.org)

User Testing
Wireframes

"Smarter" Searching

Screen 1
Landing page (option 1)

Finding the right services for you

Find the right services that are available to provide you with support and advice. Find local services in your area, get access to support teams and links to trusted websites.

To get started, please let us know if you have experienced any of these events recently?

Please select all that apply

| Becoming a carer | A victim of crime | Bereavement |
| Moving home ✓ | Getting married/ civil partnership | Leaving school |

Next, do any of these circumstances currently apply to you or your household?

Please select all that apply

Unemployed ✓	In debt	Student
Lonely	Low income ✓	Disabled
Retired	One person household	Relationship status 'separated'
Drug user	Mental illness	Obese or overweight

Next

Summary

| 4 out of 7 users preferred selecting circumstances. An information icon would be helpful to explain the terms. | There was some confusion regarding the difference between life events and circumstances. | The site needs to consider a journey for users who do not see relevant option they can select. |

Screen 2
Landing page (option 2)

Finding the right services for you

We provide advice and support to help you with issues from debt, benefits, housing, employment through to health and wellbeing.

Tell us how we can help?

[_____] Go

I need help with …

| Employment | Housing | Money |
| Health & Wellbeing | Family support | Education |

Next

Summary

| Typing in the open-text field had a mixed response. This was mainly due to bad experiences with help chatbots. | Selecting a category was preferred, but the options were considered much broader compared to the circumstances. | The language overall was approachable and easy to understand in plain English. |

Screen 4
Financial status

Step 3 of 8

How are you doing for money?

☹ ☹ 😐 🙂 😊

I'm OK

I'm OK to pay my bills for at least the next 3 months and I have enough money for food.

Back   Next

Summary

| A more visual interactive style of question was well received and engaging. | Users who did not previously disclose benefits or earnings, were happy to share their financial circumstances in this format. | Users were prepared and expected to complete several steps; the preference was for less questions on a screen at once. |

SENA Phase 2 – User Research Outputs – Huntingdonshire District Council Projects (huntingdonshire-projects.org)

Showing the results & what next

As well as user research on how to better show helpful services and why they were helpful, we worked with service providers to co-design a referral and reporting process. So people could support more easily and we would know if our recommends where useful.

[SENA Phase 2 – Service Design Outputs – Huntingdonshire District Council Projects (huntingdonshire-projects.org)](huntingdonshire-projects.org)

Questions?