"What Works": iNetwork Innovation Awards 2015

Title	Ask Ollie Warrington's Local Offer Website
Organisation(s)	**Warrington Borough Council**
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Service area[1]	1257. School SEN approval, 225.Adult Carers, 993. ICT Website
Tags	IAPS, SEN, Web design, Carers

Description of project

Further to the Local Offer legislation of September 2014 and the requirement that every local authority has a way of displaying information about products and services for people with special educational needs or disability (SEND). Warrington Borough Council set up the Ask Ollie website. Ashley Smith is the Information Advice and Guidance Manager at Warrington Borough Council, led a team of Wendy Anthony Thompson, Wendy Radley, Angela McLoughlin and a local group called "Oi Listen" to develop and implement the website. The website was designed to make an impact, a positive impact on children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. This approach enables that rather than searching for services through conventional means of web searches and depending on local knowledge users can search in one place and feel confident that the results that are returned are comprehensive and unbiased.

What makes this initiative remarkable?

The Ask Ollie website has been designed to make a positive impact on children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. The innovative nature of the work in each category: The Ask Ollie website is a bespoke development and the first of its kind that our web provider has ever built. It uses semantic technology to help users find services based on their search terms. We have also introduced a registration function which allows users to tell us about what services interest them. When the site is updated users will be automatically emailed informing them about the changes. We have looked at how other authorities have managed the SEND reforms and most have added a section to their existing websites to tick the send reform box. We have been approached by other organisations to seen how we have built Ask Ollie as they hope to adopt this innovative approach.

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[1] Based on the Local Government Service List.
http://standards.esd.org.uk/?uri=list%2FenglishAndWelshServices&tab=downloads

What has the project achieved?

After speaking with local people it was clear that a standalone website would better meet the needs of those with SEND, so much so that we included a local group "Oi Listen" to help with the development of the site. This ensured that we were really meeting their needs and that the website was accessible to all. As we have a standalone product we are also considering developing this further to include the "Care act" reforms that come in to force in April 2016. This would mean that Ask Ollie is truly a one stop shop for everyone in Warrington with SEND. Our web provider has said that there has been a lot of interest in our product both in their office and by other local authorities. Our provider has also expressed an interest to market our designs to other authorities as it truly meets the requirements of the SEND reforms.

Video case study:	**-**
Links:	**https://www.warrington.gov.uk/localoffer/**
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For more iNetwork "What Works" studies see:

http://i-network.org.uk/case-studies/