

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	Adult Social Care: Point of First Contact Service
Meeting date	24 May 2021
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides an update to the paper that was presented to Health and Adult Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 January 2020.</p> <p>Work has commenced, albeit delayed due to the first national Covid-19 lockdown, to transform the Adult Social Care ‘front door’ daytime service. The ambition to bring together the two front door services under our legacy Authorities has been achieved with the launch of the Adult Social Care Contact Centre in October 2020.</p> <p>Despite the progress made under the most challenging and unforeseen circumstances, there is more to be achieved throughout 2022/23 and 2023/24.</p> <p>A briefing session about the work of the ASC Contact Centre is being planned for all Members in July 2021.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>(a) Committee note and comment on the content of this report.</p> <p>(b) Members require officers to present a progress report in respect of the Adult Social Care Contact Centre during the final quarter of 2021/22 for scrutiny.</p>
Reason for recommendations	Without action to continue to develop the Adult Social Care Contact Centre and implement early intervention and preventative responses to customer contacts, demand for long-term adult social

	care services, and associated costs, will continue to grow. Successfully implementing a redesigned model will help to ensure resources are directed to those most in need, reduce waiting times, and enhance the customers experience. Adopting a strengths-based approach will positively promote personal resilience, self-esteem, wellbeing and independence.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Karen Rampton, Portfolio Holder for Adults
Corporate Director	Jan Thurgood, Corporate Director – Adult Social Care
Report Authors	Tim Branson, Head of Access & Carer Services, Adult Social Care
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. Until October 2020, BCP Council operated two points of first contact for residents who require adult social care services. Inherited from preceding authorities, these were the **ASC Helpdesk** for residents in Poole and **Care Direct** for residents in Bournemouth and Christchurch.
2. Consultation with KPMG took place in 2019, culminating in a report and recommendations, published in December 2019, for a redesigned Adult Social Care 'Front Door'. These proposals were shared with Committee on 20 January 2020. The implementation of the proposals was due to commence immediately to allow the service to become operational in 2020/21.
3. The KPMG model suggests that the adult social care Front Door should be a specialist and discrete team within the overall corporate contact centre providing a range of social work and occupational therapy services which will improve early intervention and prevention responses.
4. The Front Door project also provides a vehicle for the launch and subsequent rollout of our strengths-based approaches in day to day practice.
5. Adopting a strengths-based approach means knowing about and supporting what people and communities can do for themselves, rather than focusing on what they cannot do. This is a central principle within the Care Act 2014. The Act expects local authority assessors to identify the strengths and capacities of the person and their personal social network, and the opportunities provided by their wider community, before deciding on a plan for additional care and support.

Progress to date

6. The initial phase of the project has focused on harmonisation of legacy council services to provide a single service recognisable to all BCP Council citizens regardless of where they live within the conurbation.
7. An interim Contact Centre Manager was appointed in July to oversee the unification process, and the re-branded **Adult Social Care Contact Centre** (ASCCC) launched on 1st October 2020, providing a new single point of contact telephone number – 01202 123654 – and email address: asc.contactcentre@bcpcouncil.gov.uk .
8. To support this, staff have been trained in more complex social care customer response methods which shift the focus away from the caller's 'problem' to discover the innate skills, knowledge and interests that an individual or their family, friends or carers can use to manage their own care needs. The approach also encourages the identification of resources within the local community that might resolve their issues.
9. ASCCC staff have worked closely with colleagues at Together We Can throughout the pandemic, most notably in supporting the triage of calls received into the TWC Helpline from people in need of support with access to food. This support has included signposting people to the most appropriate sources for food and ensuring that those in critical and urgent need received a food parcel, or had access to foodbank vouchers.

Covid-19

10. Implementation of our front door transformation has, not surprisingly, been hindered as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the consequences of national lockdowns and associated restrictions.
11. Since June 2020, all Contact Centre staff have worked remotely from home. This has posed a significant challenge in ensuring that staff are properly supported, particularly when dealing with calls from people in distress. Remote working has also meant that colleagues from legacy services have not had the same opportunity to get to know each other in the same way they would have under more normal circumstances, and the sharing of knowledge and expertise is similarly inhibited.
12. Certain elements of the staff training programme have also been set back by Covid-19, most notably the provision of Trusted Assessor training that enables Contact Centre staff to prescribe and issue small items of equipment and assistive technology.
13. The capacity for Outreach Officers, i.e. those staff who undertake visits to people in their own homes, has similarly been severely hampered by Covid-19 restrictions during lockdown. Visits have only been undertaken, after an

appropriate risk assessment, for those in the most urgent or critical need and where non-visiting alternatives will simply not work.

Adult Social Care call volumes were noticeably lower during the first lockdown, most likely because more people were at home, or not working, and were therefore able to support friends and relatives in need.

Emerging Outcomes

14. Colleagues in our Management Information Team are supporting the development of a Performance Dashboard.
15. Early iterations of the dashboard, give an insight into the types of outcomes that stem from initial contacts received into the Adult Social Care Contact Centre:
 - a. In January 2021, 5726 contacts were received, of which 65% were resolved immediately without the need to capture demographic details for case management systems.
 - b. Fifty-three percent of the remaining contacts had a new Conversation Record completed, allowing for a more in-depth strengths-based conversation.
 - c. Of all Conversation Records in January resulting in a Care Act assessment, the ASCCC completed thirteen percent of these; effectively removing this work from long-term teams and ensuring customers received a prompt response.
 - d. From mid-December 2020 to 28 February 2021, five percent of Conversation Record interventions diverted an admission to acute hospital.
 - e. Of all Conversation Records completed during the same period which indicated the reason for contact was a safeguarding concern, 52% (136) were diverted away from a formal safeguarding process.
16. We can now analyse reasons for repeat referrals, rather than just record the numbers. The majority of repeat contacts were for persistent or worsening conditions. This data will allow us to target certain areas for service/team improvement and preventative initiatives if, for example, there are high numbers of people phoning back who did not understand or retain the previously agreed solution.

Next steps

17. There are further service developments to be addressed in the next phases of the transformation programme, which KPMG suggest will require a further two years of development. These include:

- Consolidation of the two legacy Case Management Systems into a single system.
- The implementation of Anywhere 365 software to provide the real-time data necessary for understanding the extent to which demand is appropriately managed.
- A review of our assistive technology offer.
- Work with Strategic Improvement Partners to develop digital customer interfaces for more routine enquiries, for example webchat and enhanced online assessment.
- Update existing website information and functionality
- Development of an early intervention and prevention fieldwork team, closely aligned to the Contact Centre
- Recruitment of Occupational Therapy staff and additional Outreach Officers
- Options for student placements
- Exploration of embedded physiotherapy advice in association with Dorset Healthcare
- Further training and development of strengths-based practices
- Improved linkage with CRISP and the Carers Centre
- Enhanced working with voluntary sector partners and colleagues in Community Development, in support of our corporate approach to Asset Based Community Development

Summary of financial implications

18. For the purpose of developing a savings proposal, and based on the findings from the KPMG review, a pragmatic saving of £1,000,000 was assumed for 2020/21 and further (incremental) savings of £750,000 assumed for each of 2021/22 and 2022/23. The delays in implementation brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a re-profiling of these savings as follows:

2021/22 savings £1.25m

2022/23 savings £1.25m

Summary of legal implications

19. The Adult Social Care Contact Centre provides services compliant with the underpinning legislation for adult social care. That is the Care Act 2014, Mental Health Act (1983) and Mental Capacity Act (2005).

20. There is no requirement in law to operate a “Front Door” service for adult social care, but such a service presents a way of delivering early assessment and support in line with statutory duties.

Summary of human resources implications

21. The ongoing development of the ASC Contact Centre may require transfer of staff from long-term social care teams as successes in early intervention work

reduce long-term demand, creating capacity to further invest in preventative initiatives.

Summary of sustainability impact

22. It is proposed that the ASC Contact Centre will have a base within the new Civic Centre building, however staff will be encouraged to work flexibly and remotely, where possible, and utilise facilities available in community hubs and other customer touchpoints.
23. Where individuals are signposted toward opportunities and services closer to their home, and self-service options such as websites are used, there will be less need for face to face visits and the associated journeys. The environmental impact will be evaluated by the implementation project team and measures taken to minimise any adverse environmental impact.

Summary of public health implications

24. The ability to prevent or delay need through early engagement is a critical component of realising the wellbeing principle of the Care Act 2014 and positively influencing public health.

Summary of equality implications

25. A full equality impact assessment has been undertaken as part of designing the structure and operating model for the new Front Door service. There are, however, some broad principles which should help to mitigate any adverse equality impacts, including:
 - Maintaining an opportunity for face to face contact where necessary.
 - Simplified methods of contacting adult social care so that people who find communication difficult are not disadvantaged.
 - An approach to co-production with service users and carers which will help the implementation project team to better understand the needs of local residents and inform the service design.
 - Providing support to residents in order to use the council's digital front door
 - Adopting a "Tell us once" approach so that local residents do not have to repeat personal details on numerous occasions.
 - Ensuring that regardless of the method of contact, the advice and service given is equitable.
26. It will be important for the new Front Door to recognise the need for service provision to be accessible to all residents, including those with a disability, mental ill health, sensory impairment or where English is not their first language. In doing this it is recognised that information and advice will need to be available in a range of formats, including easy-read and braille and that a variety of contact

routes, which will include telephone, digital and face to face, are available to meet a range of different needs.

Summary of risk assessment

27. The project management approach to developing the ASC Contact Centre includes risk management overseen by a project governance board.

Background papers

Adult Social Care Front Door Design Summary Report (November 2019)

Report to Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (20 January 2020): '*Adult Social Care: Point of First Contact Service Design*'

Equality Impact Assessment

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.