

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 24 SEPTEMBER 2021

HERE2HELP UPDATE

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility (CMR) for Communities and the Assistant Director for Communities have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on the Council's community action scheme (Here2Help).
2. Prior to the elections, the Panel was briefed on the scheme and initial work to build on the initiative for the benefit of residents going forward, and a further update was added to the work programme

Background

3. Here2Help was originally launched in March 2020, as One Worcestershire's community action response with the sole aim of supporting residents through the COVID-19 pandemic. It has since provided a range of support to over 8000 individuals including emergency food parcels, medication collections, food collections and delivery. It has significantly grown the volunteering offer and strengthened relationships with districts, partners and the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS).
4. The Here2Help scheme was originally dedicated to helping those who needed support during the COVID-19 pandemic. The service was designed to capture, and co-ordinate offers of help from individuals and companies to help meet the demand from those having to shield, self-isolate and/or who had additional needs as a result of the pandemic, which could not be met by family, friends or neighbours. Due to the success of the scheme, it is now being evolved to offer advice, support and help on a wide range of services across Worcestershire.
5. The following report has been structured in two parts. The first part relates to current performance of H2H as the support for individuals throughout the COVID-19 pandemic continues. The second part focuses on future developments and plans.

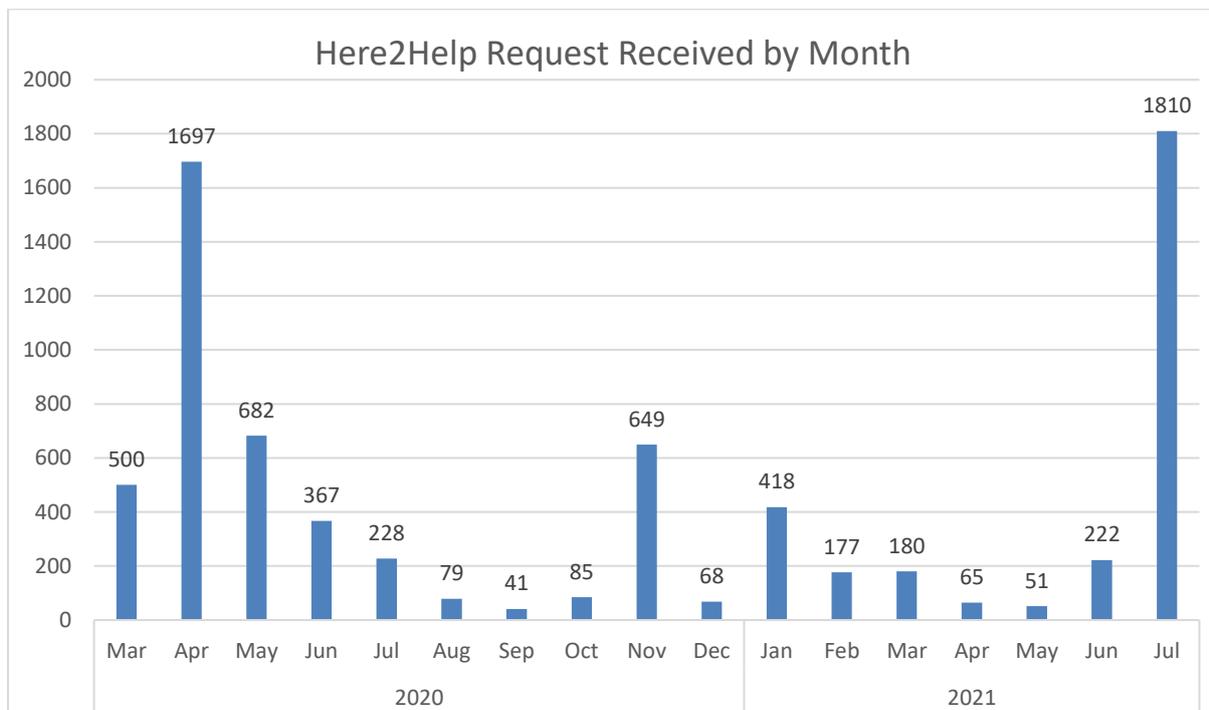
Part 1: The Here2Help Service: Performance (Requests for Help)

6. Here2Help continues to offer support for those requesting help in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. From 1st April 2021, Here2Help began contacting those individuals who are self-isolating that have been identified by Test and Trace as requiring additional support. This has generated the most of amount of demand seen to date.
7. The number of requests for help from individuals' self-isolating and identified as requiring support by Test and Trace, has continued to increase over recent weeks to levels more than what was seen in March 2020. In response to this, additional staffing resource has been arranged to help with the increased workload associated with this.

8. 2859 people who were confirmed as positive cases or close contacts and in need of support have been registered on Here2Help up to 13th August (796 1st-18th August, 1794 in July, 205 in June, 30 in May and 34 in April). Of the requests for help that require support after contact has been made, the categories of 'Financial support' and 'Access to Food' remain the two areas of greatest need.

9. On Tuesday 17 August a new field was added to the data received from Test and Trace detailing whether individuals are exempt from isolation as a result of the change in isolation rules that came into effect on Monday 16 August. This additional information is being used to identify those who are required to self-isolate under the revised rules who are also in need of practical support.

10. The table below outlines the monthly demand seen by Here2Help since the start of the pandemic. Appendix 1 also contains information around the breakdown of requests, by District area (Worcester City has had the highest number of requests) and the categories of type of requests (food and supplies, followed by health and medication are the top two reasons people needed help).



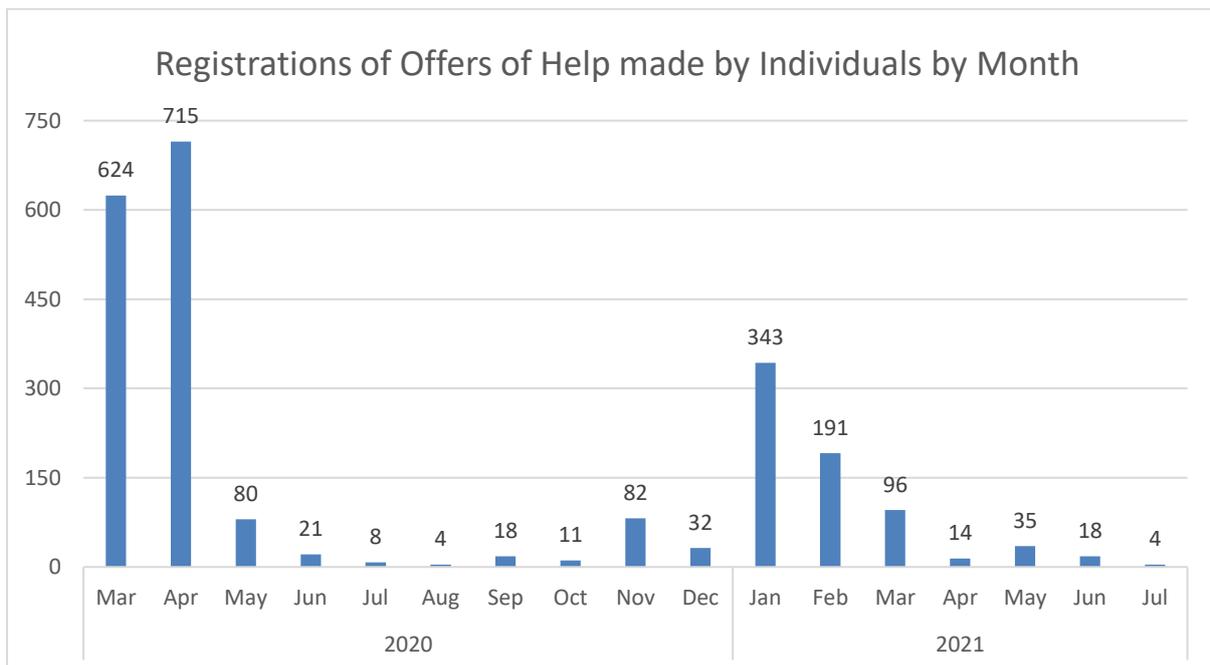
Part 1: The Here2Help Service: Performance (Offers of Help)

11. The Here2Help service has also helped collect and collate offers of help from individuals and organisations. The individual offers of help come from those wanting to volunteer. This complements a wide range of local volunteering opportunities coordinated by volunteer centres managed in Districts as well as the volunteering that happens within council services such as Libraries and Museums.

12. For those individuals who want to sign up to Here2Help as volunteers there is a self-service booking system that they are able to use. This system has been gradually improved to develop into a streamlined and effective system. The Volunteer system covers all relevant vetting and directs individuals to the DBS portal if appropriate. The

Here2Help service follows up with an ID process. The take up of volunteering increased significantly at the start of the Covid vaccination programme and the Here2Help volunteer system was in a good position to support the Clinical Commissioning Group's delivery of this

13. In July most venues were no longer vaccinating at pace or had arrangements in places to cover the reduced number of vaccinations administered. As a result, during July only 201 hours of Here2Help volunteer time were arranged to support at five venues including PCN run clinics in a local surgery, two mass vaccination centres, a “walk-in” venue and a pharmacy run clinic venue. This continues the month on month decrease in the number of hours arranged from a high of 3,700 hours in February but takes the overall number of volunteer hours to 14,400.



14. Worcestershire County Council celebrated the contribution that Here2Help volunteers had made to the local community response to the COVID pandemic as part of Volunteer Week 2021 which ran from 1st to 7th June. In particular the support given to COVID vaccination clinics was highlighted.

15. Feedback from the CCG and the vaccination clinics has been positive in terms of the support provided by Here2Help and the volunteers who have played a significant role in this. Here2Help is now working with the CCG again to support phase 3 of this.

Part 2: Here2Help Future Developments

16. Here2Help has continued to adapt and respond to the changing needs and guidance required to provide appropriate support to residents throughout this time. Currently, while still responding to the current situation (e.g. proactively contacting those self-isolating and providing appropriate support), the service is now looking forward to how it can build on this experience and success to move into a wider preventative response for the council. The Here2Help service will transform into the Councils front door for residents and this work starts with the People and Communities services.

17. Underpinning all of the Here2Help transformation are the following 4 values;
- Empower and Enable People to make their own choices and find their own solutions
 - Connect People with their communities
 - Support Communities to be strong and resilient
 - Efficient and accessible offering a joined up and transparent experience across all areas of the council

18. These values are embedded throughout the service and its future transformation so that the service has a strong outcome focused and person-centred foundation to its model. Taking this strength-based community approach Here2Help will build on the connections and partnerships which have evolved throughout the response to COVID-19, and the ambition is to improve the customer journey in how they access information and services. The future ambition of Here2Help is to give individuals clear information to connect to their own community-based solutions and ensure there are clear pathways into other services when required either through self-referrals or Here2Help directly.

19. This will be done in three ways:

- **Digital:** Enhancing the system so that individuals can use it to access the information and support they need. This can include self-referrals, accessing self-help tools and information and online bookings for various community services. The development of a community directory will process residents' access to a range of local organisations and groups who have registered onto Here2Help. Here2Help ambassadors will help to keep this as up to date as accurate as possible.
- **Telephone contact:** The main contact for Here2Help will continue with increased staffing to providing more capacity to respond to the service as it develops.
- **Face to Face:** Providing the Here2Help community platform, initially using libraries as points where people can access here2help in person, making libraries a community asset for residents, community groups and partners.

20. In addition to the above, developing a Here2Help ambassador role (leads for organisations/services) as part of a community network will support partners to come together to be the eyes and ears of the Here2Help service, to share ideas, learning and innovation. The role will provide partners an opportunity to co-produce Here2Help developments and work together to find solutions in how to respond to the changing future demands and needs which we all face. This role will demonstrate the community partnership ethos of Here2Help providing challenge and will co-produce ongoing developments. There is a workstream, which involves various partners, is focused on helping to shape this role to ensure that the role provides benefits across the system.

21. The development of Here2Help is managed through a large programme of work. Achievements to date are listed below:-

- Raised awareness and promoting H2H development with partners e.g. Redditch & Bromsgrove Collaboratives to ensure they are engaged and shaping development
- People and Places workstream kick off meeting has taken place. Agreement with members to mobilise the following focus groups:

- Initiated a Libraries Hub & Spoke Model Focus Group
- Initiated H2H Community Network Model Focus Group
- Initiated the Culture and New Ways of Working workstream. Workstream attendees have been agreed in principle
- H2H Transformation webpage live and all WCC Staff Drop in H2H Transformation session held. Staff live event promoting H2H Transformation Programme
- Resident forum established. Residents have decided upon the new logo
- Here2Help staff recruitment taking place and staff trained on the 3c conversation approach
- Wider Steering Group established and chaired by AD communities.
- Representation from Communities and Here2Help on the Integrated Well-being Steering Group
- Links made and representatives identified within WCF to explore opportunities between Here2Help and Family Front Door, Independence Hubs etc
- Funding secured for Strategic VCS lead to sit in the VCS sector confirmed and currently being recruited
- Phase One Service Redesign Workshops progressing well with Adults, Libraries and Registrars
- WCF colleagues involved as part of the to-be re-design sessions to ensure family approach
- Development of the additional enhancements to the Community Services Directory progressing well. Due to go live September.

22. The next stages of development are:

- Mobilisation of the Voluntary and Community Sector, Collaborative Commissioning and Co-Production Workstream
- Business Outcomes & Quality Framework drafted with key stakeholders
- H2H Operational business model in place including transfer of Adult Access Centre.
- Recruitment of Service Development Manager and VCS strategic lead
- Go live of the Here2Help Community Services Directory digital tool
- Digital Business Proposal Papers prioritised at Digital Board (ICES, WCC Urgent Care)
- Resident Focus Group ongoing sessions
- Development of Hub and Spoke model (F2F offer)
- Development of the community network new ways of working to support H2H ambassador role
- Planning for the Here2Help Health and Well-being week event March 2022.
- Further User Experience feedback activity
- Baselining volumetrics data including benchmarking KPIs and capturing benefits measures
- Final service redesign session walkthrough sessions with Key Stakeholders and Managers carried out for (1) Adults and (2) Libraries.

23. As a preventative response Here2Help plays a critical role in contributing to the development of the Integrated Well-being Offer (IWO) in Worcestershire. Worcestershire's Integrated Wellbeing Offer (IWO) will empower people to live well, by addressing the factors that influence their health and wellbeing and building their

capability to be independent, resilient and maintain good wellbeing for themselves and those around them. It will move beyond focusing on single issues and take a holistic and person-centered approach, addressing the psychosocial determinants of health behaviour. It will augment the collective response to early intervention and prevention to meet people's needs across the life course, improve health and wellbeing and address inequalities.

24. Work to develop and implement the IWO is led by a multi-agency steering group composed of partners from across the County Council, District Councils, NHS and Voluntary Sector. The group is co-chaired by the Director of Public Health and a voluntary sector representative. The steering group considers system wide developments and interdependencies and identifies opportunities to create a whole system approach.

25. As Here2Help delivers an early intervention response that works with partners to connect people to their communities and appropriate support and services, therefore it will play a significant role in the future IWO. To ensure this, there is core representation from Here2Help on the IWO steering group to ensure that the experience and ongoing service development of Here2Help is embedded into this development as it moved forward.

Purpose of the Meeting

The Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- (a) Consider the information in the update
- (b) Determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny, and
- (c) Agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Requests for Help

Appendix 2: Offers of Help

Appendix 3: Programme Overview

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and Minutes of Corporate and Communities Scrutiny Panel – November 2020

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)