

# **ADULT CARE AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 13 OCTOBER 2023**

## **UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS AT THE ADULT FRONT DOOR**

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### **Summary**

1. The Adult Care and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel has requested an update on the developments at the Adult Front Door as part of the Panel's Work Programme. The Adult Front Door is the way in which customers can access services to support the care and support needs including adult social care.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care and the Strategic Director and Senior Officers from the Directorate of People have been invited to the meeting to respond to any questions the Panel may have.

### **Background**

3. Due to ongoing market pressures and the aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic, Adult Social Care services across the country are seeing increased demand for support, and Worcestershire is not exempt from these demand pressures.
4. To enable management of current and future demand, whilst ensuring the most appropriate service for residents, Worcestershire County Council (the Council) has undertaken a review of the way customers access the Council's services. The purpose of this review was to develop understanding of how the Directorate can improve the end-to-end customer journey and enable more capacity for Social Care Service to support residents. As a result of this, the Adult Contact, Connect Health & Wellbeing, and the Here2Help Teams have been brought together to create the Adult Front Door (AFD).
5. The Adult Front Door took its new form in January 2023 as the main point of contact for Worcestershire residents (18+), their families, carers, and professionals who require access and support to services, information and advice, and practical help to manage care and support needs or are in times of crisis.
6. When contacted, the AFD advisors will have a 'strengths-based conversation' with the resident. This is when the advisor will talk to the resident about their situation to understand how they are currently managing independently, and what their likely needs may be, to agree the best support available. For many residents this will involve the advisor providing support, signposting, advice, and guidance to meet their needs, as well as making a referral to available community support and services. Sometimes information, advice and guidance will not be enough to meet the residents' needs, and in this instance the resident may be referred to one of the Front Door's Targeted Adult Support Teams (TASTs).

7. There will be two TASTs within the Adult Front Door, and they will be working in the Community in the next few months:
  - **North Team** (covering Redditch, Bromsgrove & Wyre Forest)
  - **South Team** (covering Wychavon, Worcester & Malvern Hills).
8. These teams will work with residents to offer a targeted package of support designed to prevent, reduce, and/or delay residents' needs reaching the point where Adult Social Care support is required. If a resident's needs already meet the requirement for Adult Social Care, the Adult Front Door will refer this directly to the appropriate social work team.
9. The newly formed AFD has increased the amount of information, advice, guidance and signposting as well as direct referrals to support in the community. The new operating model for the service works on a prevent, reduce, delay approach to further reduce pressures on Adult Social Care. Going forward, the service will continue to work with wider system partners to take collective responsibility for managing demand on Adult Social Care, post Covid-19, and do all that it can to integrate and embed this preventative approach.
10. Prevention is determined as a key requirement of the Care Act and of the Council's statutory duties. Moreover, prevention makes financial sense for the authority and moral sense with respect to the duty to enable residents to live as independent lives as possible.

## **Progress in the Past 12 Months**

11. Below is a summary of progress in the past 12 months:
  - Integration of the teams (as outlined above), including training, staff competency tools and the introduction of strength-based conversations.
  - Development and launch of a quality assurance framework to assess productivity and outcomes.
  - Since October 2022, all contacts into the AFD are recorded, even for the lower level / Universal IAG to build better data that can be analysed and utilised in the preventative approach.
  - Working with Public Health colleagues to highlight specific areas of need (e.g. hoarding) and identifying preventative action and joint working.
  - A Social Worker Practice Lead and Advanced Social Worker Practitioner have been appointed to oversee and support care act and safeguarding eligibility decisions.
  - In January 2023 all professional referrals / requests for help were channelled through an online portal to reduce drift and delay in decision making.
  - Staffing structure has been created to work towards the following timeframes: Pass to social care / provide Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) etc within 5 working days for non-urgent requests for help.
  - For urgent/emergency risk assess and pass one to relevant team within 2 working days.
  - Participation in a hospital discharge pilot scheme to inform future work at the AFD and future commissioning around independence at home.

- Completed self-assessment and subsequent action plan for CQC inspection readiness.
  - Decision made to integrate Liquidlogic Adult Social Care system with EMIS (System GPs use) to improve referral flow between AFD and Primary Care.
12. The long-term aim is for all new demand to come through the AFD. 'Demand' is defined as any request for support from residents aged 18+ or referrals from professionals. Appropriate action will be taken to meet residents' needs from signposting to universal services and the Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, to escalating need that does not quite meet threshold for ASC through to the Targeted Adult Support Team.
13. There is also an ambition as part of Care Quality Commission inspection readiness and the Council's customer journey that there will be measurable timescales related to Adult Social Care assessments – these are outlined below. The current staff structure at the AFD is not based on these requirements so will need to be adjusted.
- Start an assessment within 2 days of first contact (non-urgent)
  - For urgent/emergency, start an assessment and provide care/support within 48 hours – this is likely to mean a turnaround of 24 hours at the AFD.

### **Update on Data and Demand**

14. There has been a greater focus on understanding the demand that comes through the AFD to best meet individuals' needs; in order to manage the demand in the most efficient and effective way and to better understand how to prevent, reduce or delay care and support needs. A summary of data and demand is below:
- Over the last 12 months, the average overall demand is 2038 contacts a month. This requires 13 full time equivalent Adult Front Door advisors including carrying out strength-based conversations.
  - Contacts created have increased since the AFD mandated the recording of all contacts to improve the data captured and help with the objective to prevent, reduce, and delay demand. This demand was there previously, just not recorded.
  - The percentage of signposting, information and guidance recorded has more than doubled in the last 12 months.
  - Significant demand, of on average 48-55% avoidable contacts (mainly related to information about individuals already open to Adult Social Care) is being analysed to develop a clear picture of the sources of this demand. This will enable the AFD to work with partners and with systems to reduce this.
15. A Lead Analyst has been appointed to develop a coherent data set for the AFD that demonstrates its effectiveness in managing demand. An early set of the demand data into the AFD is included in Appendix 1.

## Future Plans

16. The long-term ambition for the Adult Front Door is to:
  - Meet current demand, continuing to deliver fuller strengths-based conversations.
  - Embed the AFD Social Work capacity to increase Care Act eligibility decision making to reduce the number of 'preventable' referrals sent to Adult Social Care
  - Create capacity to deliver additional preventative work (to be proactive not reactive).
  
17. To achieve this ambition, a programme of work is being implemented to continue to progress developments and improvements at the Adult Front Door. A summary of the activity with this plan is outlined below: -
  - Work with Adult Social Care and partners within the Worcestershire Adult Safeguarding Board to introduce a Support Levels guidance which provides further clarity on how care act eligible decisions are made, when and how to refer to Safeguarding and determining what support is required across all levels.
  - Embed the safeguarding advice helpline and triaging into the AFD. This will require an increase of social work capacity.
  - Work towards reducing the 48-55% of avoidable contacts in to the AFD – mainly where individuals are already open to Adult Social Care through the introduction of the Single view of the adult and better utilisation of Shared Care Records.
  - Increase the AFD Social Work capacity to enable more Care act eligibility decision making and the completion of simple assessments to help reduce the number of referrals going into the social work teams and reducing the number of NFAs (no further action) once a referral into Adult Social Care has been made.
  - Develop greater connections and working relationships with wider partners to enable more preventative work to take place e.g.direct referral to Occupational Therapy/ Assistive Technology.
  - Improve multi agency approach to decision making including working more closely with partners e.g. housing, police, Age UK, occupational therapy, urgent care.
  - Expand and build on community services directory and broaden the IAR offer.
  - Develop a robust data set that aligns with adult social care data to capture and monitor productivity and preventative impact.
  - Embed the TAST, commence referrals and measure impact.
  - Introduction of online self-assessment
  - Introduce the AFD updating care records when there is a minor change of circumstances (linked to social work capacity need)

## Purpose of the Meeting

18. The Panel is asked to:
  - Determine whether any further information or scrutiny of the Adult Front Door is required

- Agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

### **Contact Points**

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844964 / 844965  
Email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – AFDS data for Scrutiny

### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.