

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 9 February 2021

A meeting of the above Committee will be held remotely on Tuesday 9 February 2021, at 6.00pm and available for the public to watch via the Warwick District Council [YouTube channel](#).

Councillor Milton (Chair)

Councillor G Cullinan

Councillor R Margrave

Councillor I Davison

Councillor M Noone

Councillor A Dearing

Councillor D Norris

Councillor O Jacques

Councillor P Redford

Councillor P Kohler

Councillor D Russell

Agenda

1. Apologies & Substitutes

- (a) to receive apologies for absence from any Councillor who is unable to attend; and
- (b) to receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Chief Executive, together with the name of the Councillor for whom they are acting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Declarations should be disclosed during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

3. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020. **(Pages 1 to 3)**

4. Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Executive

To consider a report from Democratic Services.

(Pages 1 to 3 and Appendices 1 to 4)

- Appendix 1 – Work Programme
- Appendix 2 – Comments from the Executive

- Appendix 3 – T&F Group - Role of Chairman
- Appendix 4 – Shared Environmental Enforcement with Rugby Borough Council update
- Task & Finish Group, Equality & Diversity - Verbal Update
- Verbal or written update on the Step-Back Review

5. **HEART Shared Service Review**

To consider a report from Housing Services.

(Pages 1 to 8 and Appendices 1 to 3)

6. **Noise Complaints**

To consider a briefing note from Health & Community Protection.

(Pages 1 to 3)

7. **Executive Agenda (Non-Confidential Items and Reports) – Thursday 11 February 2021**

To consider the non-confidential items on the Executive agenda which fall within the remit of this Committee. The only items to be considered are those which Committee Services have received notice of by 9.00am on the day of the meeting.

(Circulated Separately)

8. **Public & Press**

To consider resolving that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs 1,2 & 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

9. **Executive Agenda (Confidential Items and Reports) – Thursday 11 February 2021**

To consider the confidential items on the Executive agenda which fall within the remit of this Committee. The only items to be considered are those which Committee Services have received notice of by 9.00am on the day of the meeting.

(Circulated separately)

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the remote meeting held on Tuesday 8 December 2020 at 6.00pm, which was broadcast live via the Council's YouTube Channel.

Present: Councillor Milton (Chair); Councillors; Cullinan, Davison, A Dearing, Jacques, Kohler, Margrave, Noone, Norris and Russell.

Also Present: Councillors Day and Rhead.

31. **Apologies and Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Redford and from Councillor Wright, who had been due to substitute for Councillor Redford.

32. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

33. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10 November 2020 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

34. **Executive Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 10 December 2020**

The Committee considered the following items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 10 December 2020.

Item 4 – General Fund Financial Update

The Committee recognised the challenge of achieving financial savings whilst retaining the public facing service levels, wished to see more detail about how this balance would be achieved and agreed it would scrutinise proposals thoroughly as and when the details were available.

Item 7 – Climate Emergency Action Programme (CEAP) Review

The Committee supported the Climate Emergency Action Plan being an item in the Council's proposed budget for next year. It suggested that a "Plan for Good News" should be established to ensure residents could appreciate achievements. There was a general desire that the Council aimed high at the start of new projects and this should be set out as an ambition from the outset.

(Councillors Day and Rhead left the meeting.)

35. **Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from the Executive**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2020-2021, the Forward Plan and the response from the Executive to its comments in November.

Councillor Kohler asked Committee Members how they felt the Committee should be monitoring Service Area performance subsequent to stopping the annual reports and now relying on performance data provided on the Dashboard. The Chair stated that this was something he had spoken about to Committee Services and he suggested that it be further discussed with staff in the department. He was aware that the data provided by the Dashboard did not always identify issues and he gave the example of noise nuisance and the changes that had been made investigating fly-tipping subsequent to the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic. He felt that more work was required on the data being provided to ensure that "red flags" were shown early on.

Councillor Davison asked whether the Committee should be looking at service changes arising from the budget paper and whether this could be done before they occurred. The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) informed Members that currently there were no proposals to scrutinise in respect of services because until the budget figures were approved, officers could not look at how their Service Areas would adapt. Overview & Scrutiny Committee would have the opportunity to scrutinise reports that went to Executive but any reports dealing with staffing establishment would go to Employment Committee and did not need to go to Executive unless there was a financial implication. It was assumed that proposals would come forward after the budget had been approved in February 2021. The Chair suggested that it would be helpful for the Committee to be informed of likely proposals so that it could suggest ways to maintain service levels.

The Chair offered to speak to Committee Services about the Work Programme, with a view to clearing the decks around March 2021 so that the Committee would have enough time to examine any Service Area proposals arising from the budget figures approved in February. The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) informed Members that proposals would not come all at once, so before speaking with Committee Services, it would be appropriate to speak with SMT to get an idea of timings.

Councillor Davison raised a concern about the transparency of what services the Council was unable to provide because of the pandemic. He asked Members if this was something they should consider scrutinising, and if so, the timing of when this would be done; would after the pandemic was no longer an emergency be an appropriate time for learning points, or should it be done sooner? The Chair suggested that examining services that the Council had not been able to provide during the lockdown, should be added to the work being done on the Step Back Review and form part of this Task & Finish Group's report. He asked the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) to add this to the agenda for the next meeting of the Task & Finish Group.

The Chair asked that an officer attend the February 2021 meeting to answer questions on the Noise Service and Night Noise reports that were scheduled for that meeting.

Appendix 4 to the report, Update on the decisions made in respect of the Task & Finish Group, Role of the District Council Chairman, had been

deferred because the content of the report would very much depend on the outcome of the budget proposals for 2021/22.

A draft report had been completed for the Step Back Review, with the Group's findings and recommendations. Documentation gathered as evidence would form appendices to the report but Committee Services was currently checking that there would be no confidential information within these. The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) informed Members that CMT would have the opportunity to respond to the draft report findings and recommendations and this too would form an appendix to the report that would then come to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, for approval to go forward to Executive for consideration.

The Task & Finish Group, Equality & Diversity had nothing further to report since the last meeting when there was a slight change to the membership. Members had been unable to find a convenient date to meet. The Group had sought quotes for independent research work concerning staff, to interview them and understand their experience working for the Council. It was hoped that this would take place in January and the report on matters concerning staffing would be presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the March 2021 meeting.

Resolved that

- (1) the following appendices to the report be noted:
 - Appendix 2 – Comments from the Executive; and
 - Appendix 3 – Public Convenience Review Update – Briefing Note;
- (2) the Update on the decisions made in respect of the Task & Finish Group, Role of the District Council Chairman be deferred pending the finalisation and approval of the Council's budget 2021/22; and
- (3) the Task & Finish Group, Equality & Diversity report on the internal/staffing matters be put on the work Programme for March 2021.

(The meeting ended at 7.26pm)

CHAIR
9 February 2021

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
9 February 2021

Title: Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Executive

Lead Officer: Lesley Dury, Committee Services Officer

(E. committee@warwickdc.gov.uk; T. 01926 456114)

Portfolio Holder: Not applicable

Public report

Wards of the District directly affected: Not applicable

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report informs the Committee of its work programme for 2021/2022 (Appendix 1) and the current [Forward Plan](#).
- 1.2. In addition, it provides the Committee with the response that the Executive gave to its comments regarding the reports on 8 December 2020 (Appendix 2).
- 1.3. Appendix 3 is a briefing note on the T&F Group - Role of Chairman and the Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer is expected to attend the meeting to answer any questions.
- 1.4. Appendix 4 is a briefing note that the Committee requested, and officers will not attend the meeting unless a specific request with reasons is made to the Chair that the officer is required to attend the meeting. Members should direct any questions to the relevant officer ahead of the meeting.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members consider the work programme (Appendix 1) and agree any changes as appropriate.
- 2.2. The Committee to; identify any Executive items on the Forward Plan on which it wishes to have an input before the Executive makes its decision; and to nominate a Member to investigate that future decision and report back to the Committee.
- 2.3. Members note the responses made by the Executive on the Comments from the Executive report (Appendix 2).
- 2.4. Members consider Appendices 3 onwards and agree any changes as appropriate to the Work Programme.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1. The work programme should be updated at each meeting to accurately reflect the workload of the Committee.

- 3.2. The proposed plan at Appendix 1 has been developed in order for the Committee to focus on the four agreed core themes (Covid 19, Climate Change, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Business Plan). While this Committee will not have as much focus on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, it will have to spend significant times looking at the other areas in detail.
- 3.3. Two of the five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of Executive decisions and to feed into policy development.
- 3.4. If the Committee has an interest in a future decision to be made by the Executive, or policy to be implemented, it is within the Committee's remit to feed into the process.
- 3.5. The Forward Plan is actually the future work programme for the Executive. If a non-executive member highlighted a decision(s) which is to be taken by the Executive which they would like to be involved in, that member(s) could then provide useful background to the Committee when the report is submitted to the Executive and they are passing comment on it.
- 3.6. Appendix 2, Comments from Executive, is produced to create a dialogue between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It ensures that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is formally made aware of the Executive's responses.
- 3.7. Where Overview and Scrutiny Committee has made a recommendation as opposed to a comment, the Executive is required to respond to the recommendation(s) made, including whether or not it accepts the recommendation(s).

4. Background

- 4.1. The five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are: holding to account; performance management; policy review; policy development; and external scrutiny.
- 4.2. The pre-decision scrutiny of Executive decisions falls within the role of 'holding to account'. To feed into the pre-decision scrutiny of Executive decisions, the Committee needs to examine the Council's Forward Plan and identify items which it would like to have an impact upon.
- 4.3. The Council's Forward Plan is published on a monthly basis and sets out the key decisions to be taken by the Council in the next twelve months. The Council only has a statutory duty to publish key decisions to be taken in the next four months. However, the Forward Plan was expanded to a twelve-month period to give a clearer picture of how and when the Council will be making important decisions.
- 4.4. A key decision is a decision which has a significant impact or effect on two or more wards and / or a budgetary effect of £50,000 or more.
- 4.5. The Forward Plan also identifies non-key decisions to be made by the Council in the next twelve months, and the Committee, if it wishes, may also pre-scrutinise these decisions.

- 4.6. There may also be policies identified on the Forward Plan, either as key or non-key decisions, which the Committee could pre-scrutinise and have an impact upon how these are formulated.
- 4.7. The Committee should be mindful that any work it wishes to undertake would need to be undertaken without the need to change the timescales as set out within the Forward Plan.
- 4.8. At each meeting, the Committee will consider their work programme and make amendments where necessary, and also make comments on specific Executive items, where notice has been given by 9am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Committee will also receive a report detailing the response from the Executive, on the comments the Committee made on the Executive agenda in the previous cycle.
- 4.9. The Forward Plan is considered at each meeting and allows the Committee to look at future items and become involved in those Executive decisions to be taken, if members so wish.
- 4.10. As part of the new scrutiny process, the Committee is no longer considering the whole of the Executive agenda.
- 4.11. On the day of publication of the Executive agenda all Councillors are sent an e-mail asking them to contact Committee Services, by 09.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to advise which Executive items they would like the Committee to consider.
- 4.12. As a result, the Committee considered the items detailed in appendix 2. The response the Executive gave on each item is also shown.
- 4.13. In reviewing these responses, the Committee can identify any issues for which they would like a progress report. A future report, for example on how the decision has been implemented, would then be submitted to the Committee at an agreed date which would then be incorporated within the work programme.

Meeting Date: 9 February 2021

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Shared Environmental Enforcement with Rugby Borough Council update.	Committee meeting 10 November 2020.	Briefing Note	Zoë Court	TBA	No officer will attend the Committee meeting unless there is a request. If there is a request, Members should send their questions to the report author before the meeting.
Update on the Night Noise Service.	Committee meeting 20 August 2019.	Briefing Note	Marianne Rolfe.	To be advised if applicable.	HoS asked to attend meeting
Discussion – Environmental Protection Team Service Delivery. Focus particularly on noise nuisance	29 September 2020, 10 November 2020	Discussion	Marianne Rolfe		HoS asked to attend meeting
Progress report on HEART service subsequent to last report 2 April 2019		Report or Briefing Note	Lisa Barker and Mark Lingard	TBA	Following concerns being raised in respect of operational matters and a

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
					subsequent independent audit, all districts and boroughs involved with HEART are looking to put an improvement report to members in the new year. HoS asked Chair if this could be added.
<p>1. Report in respect of decisions made on the role of the Chairman of the Council – Task & Finish Group; and</p> <p>2. Review on the progress / success of the recommendations from the Task & Finish Group –</p>	<p>1. Executive Minutes 10 July 2019, Minute number 8 – Resolutions, agreed at Council 4 September 2019.</p> <p>2. Committee meeting 2 April 2019.</p>	Briefing note to be appended to Work Programme Report	Graham Leach / Andrew Jones	To be advised if applicable.	No officer will attend the Committee meeting unless there is a request. If there is a request, Members should send their questions to the report author before the meeting.

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Role of the District Council Chairman.					
Step Back Review Progress	8 December 2020	Verbal or written update	Graham Leach / Councillor Milton	TBA	
Update from the Task & Finish Group – Race & Equality		Verbal or written update	Councillor Mangat	March 2021	
<p>**Update on plans to improve accessibility to, and the condition / cleanliness of, toilets for people living with disabilities subsequent to the presentation of the plans at the September 2019 Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.</p> <p>**There is no new information on plans to improve accessibility to, and the condition / cleanliness of, toilets for people living with disabilities – Officers request that this update is postponed until such time as budget figures for improvements are known.</p>	Committee meeting 26 September 2019 and briefing note 8 December 2020.	Briefing Note	Zoë Court	To be advised if applicable.	No officer will attend the Committee meeting in February unless there is a request. If there is a request, Members should send their questions to the report author before the meeting.

Meeting Date: 16 March 2021

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
<p>Annual update from Shakespeare's England.</p> <p>(At the Committee meeting 29 August 2018, the Committee requested that the next report included Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for the District Council and what had been done over the previous 12 months. The Committee did not want a presentation at the meeting, it simply wanted the report and it would feedback comments at the meeting.)</p>	<p>Committee meeting 29 August 2018</p> <p>Committee meeting 29 September 2020, it was agreed that this report could be postponed until March 2021 so that it would include performance during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>	Written report.	Martin O'Neill and Councillor Hales.	March 2022.	This is an annual report.
Criteria for call in of Executive Reports to Scrutiny Committees - Review	10 November 2020	Written report that can be adapted for inclusion in the Council agenda if agreed.	Graham Leach and Councillors Milton and Nicholls		If agreed, then the procedure will go to Council for inclusion in the Scrutiny procedure.

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Task & Finish Group – Race & Equality – Report on the Group’s findings and recommendations for internal matters to the Council		Written report	Councillor Mangat		

Meeting Date: 20 April 2021

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Overview & Scrutiny End of Term report.	Standing Annual Item.	Written report.	Committee Services Officer.	April 2022.	This is an annual report.
Childrens' and Adults' Safeguarding Champions: End of Term Report.	Standing Annual Item.	Briefing note to all Councillors with a paragraph explaining that if they have any concerns that they feel require scrutiny, to raise these for consideration as part of the work programme.	Lisa Barker.	April 2022.	This is an briefing note to all Councillors.

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Members' Annual Feedback on Outside Appointments / Annual review of membership/participation of Outside Bodies (Includes a short synopsis on remaining Working Parties, Forums and other Champions)	Standing Annual Items	Not for O&S agenda	Andrew Jones	April 2022	Briefing note to all Councillors with a paragraph explaining that if they have any concerns that they feel requires scrutiny, to raise these for consideration as part of the work programme and if any are to be considered to be ceased, the Deputy Chief Executive will discuss these with the LCG

Meeting Date: To Be Advised

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Decide if an update is required on the Catering and Events Concessions Contract – Royal Pump Rooms and Jephson Gardens Glasshouse.	Committee meeting 26 September 2019.	Informal update.	Dave Guilding / Philip Clarke.	TBA	D Guilding and P Clarke were asked when they can give an informal update considering the impact of Covid-19 on this service. A response from them is awaited.
Annual Review of the Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Approach, including Plastics Policy update.	Committee meeting 9 July 2019 / 10 November 2020.	Written report	Dave Barber.	TBA	

Meeting Dates 2021/2022:

2021: 6 July, 21 September, 2 November, 14 December

2022: 8 February, 8 March, 12 April

**Response from the meeting of the Executive on the
O&S Committee's Comments – 8 December 2020**

Item Number: 4 – General Fund Financial Update.

Requested by: Councillor Milton.

Reason Considered:

To look at the Service Provision aspects and to review what caused the late release of the report.

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee recognised the challenge of achieving financial savings whilst retaining the public facing service levels, wished to see more detail about how this balance would be achieved and agreed it would scrutinise proposals thoroughly as and when the details were available.

Executive Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Item Number: 7 – Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) Review

Requested by: The Liberal Democrat Group.

Reason Considered:

There are two areas that we would like to explore with officers further:

1. Funding options to support CEAP
2. Our approach to developing carbon neutral building projects as a Council

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the Climate Emergency Action Plan being an item in the Council's proposed budget for next year. It suggested that a "Plan for Good News" should be established to ensure residents could appreciate achievements. There was a general desire that the Council aimed high at the start of new projects and this should be set out as an ambition from the outset.

Executive Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
9 February 2021

Title: T&F Group - Role of Chairman

Lead Officer: Graham Leach, Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer, 01926 456114 graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk

Portfolio Holder: Andrew Day

Public briefing note

Wards of the District directly affected: None

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: No

Included within the Forward Plan: No

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: No

Final Decision: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	7/12/2020	Andrew Jones
Head of Service		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer	7/12/2020	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	7/12/2020	Andrew Jones
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)	7/12/2020	Andrew Day

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2018/19, a Task & Finish Group was established to review the role of the Chairman and provide recommendations. A report was produced and recommendations approved at Council in September 2019. The table below provides the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an update on the implementation of those recommendations.

Recommendation	Update on implementation of recommendation
2.1 Council adopts a revised to Article 5 of the Constitution.	This was adopted and has been updated in the Constitution
2.2 That the Executive accepts that the current budget for supporting the Chairman is appropriate but that in light of the underspend on their allowance over each of the last four years, this be reduced by £1500 per annum as part of the 2020/21 budget	This was implemented with the Chairman still underspending their allowance by over £8,000. This underspend was considerable but in no small part due to the impact of the Pandemic. In that context, the Executive has asked officers to consider if there are any further savings that can be made from the Civic functions. There will be further information in the Executive report.
2.3 That the Executive agrees that in the event of relocation to a new HQ, a room is not dedicated solely for the chairman's use, but a suitable room be made available to the chairman for use when inviting guests or meeting with staff	This recommendation was approved by the Executive.
2.4 The Executive welcomes the updated guidance/protocol for leading on events as set out at Appendix 7 to report	This is in operation via monitoring by Media Team and Civic Office.
2.5 That the Executive notes that a review of the current civic gifts with the Chairman's office will be undertaken with a view as to how these can be made more publicly accessible or if appropriate disposed of	This work was started but was delayed by the impact from unscheduled European and Parliament Elections (as well as WDC By-Elections) followed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The advice received is that the first step is to identify the history of the object and provide context to each piece before the museum would consider it. There would be a secondary aim of any new awards and making them publicly available at the Council's HQ, however, this is dependent on the operation of RSH and will be reviewed at a time when RSH is considered for re-opening to the public.

Recommendation	Update on implementation of recommendation
<p>2.6 That the Executive asks the Chairman to undertake a review of the purpose and arrangements for Annual Council, including who is invited and they report on this to Council by no later than November 2019</p>	<p>This didn't take place due to the impact from unscheduled European and Parliament Elections (as well as WDC By-Elections) followed by the Pandemic. Annual Council this year was held remotely and therefore, significantly different, with guests unable to participating, but being encouraged to watch the broadcast live on YouTube. At the time of writing, the video recording had 326 views</p> <p>The Committee should note that no matter what approach is taken in future Annual Council cannot be held in the Assembly Hall at the Town Hall as this has been let to Motion House. Therefore, in future the meeting will need to be held in the Council Chamber or away from the Town Hall. This will be discussed with the Chairman of the Council in February 2020.</p> <p>Executive has asked officers to consider if there are any further savings that can be made from the Civic functions. There will be further information in the Executive report.</p>

- 1.2 The overall success was defined in the scope as: *Reduced budgetary impact for delivery of service and Monitor if revised role and remit works effectively.* These will be hard to measure at present because of the impact of the pandemic. This will continue to be until physical engagements can resume and the Executive budget report is considered and implemented.

Overview and Scrutiny
9th February 2021

Title: Shared Environmental Enforcement with Rugby Borough Council
update

Lead Officer: Zoë Court

Portfolio Holder: Alan Rhead

Public briefing note

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework:

Contrary to the budgetary framework:

Key Decision:

Included within the Forward Plan:

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken:

Consultation & Community Engagement:

Final Decision:

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive		
Head of Service	27/1/2021	Julie Lewis
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer		
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)		

Background

Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested an update on the shared environmental enforcement service with Rugby Borough Council. The following information is an update as requested from the last briefing note in November 2020

As outlined in the last briefing note due to Covid-19 no enforcement work has been carried out since April 2020.

Update

Notice has now been given to end the partnership with Rugby Borough Council at the end of March 2021. The Street Scene Team at Stratford District Council (SDC) will support the Contract Services Team as required.

Refresher training is being arranged, particularly important for the new members of the Contract Services and for the Manager to ensure the team are skilled to carry out their enforcement duties effectively.

Reported fly tips have continued to be cleared quickly, but crews are not currently looking for evidence.

Idverde will become the new Street Cleansing contractor from April 1st 2021, the contractor responsible for the removal of fly tips from Warwick District Council (WDC) owned land. Contract mobilisation discussions between Contract Services and Idverde have started, including improved use of technology and an integrated software. WDC has started the implementation of a new software system (called Arcus). Contract Service staff are involved with this project and the intention is to get the fly tipping module live in April 2021.

Amongst other service improvements, this integration means that fly tips and other environmental crimes reported via our website will be sent directly to the contractor. The Contract Services Team will monitor these transactions for KPIs/performance and to identify any trends. The contractor will 'close' the report when collected and the customer notified. Any evidence found will be scanned and sent to the team and items stored securely at Idverde depot.

Next Steps

The Contract Services Manager intends to have everything in place for April 2021 to restart fly-tipping enforcement with the support of Idverde and Enforcement Officers at SDC. A marketing campaign will be launched in conjunction with SDC and Warwickshire County Council on social media with the objective of deterring fly tipping and promoting how easy it is to now report. Fly tip removal and enforcement action data will be shared on a quarterly basis on request.

Overview & Scrutiny
9 February 2021

Title: HEART Shared Service Review
Lead Officer: Lisa Barker, Head of Housing Services and
Mark Lingard, Private Sector Housing Manager
Portfolio Holder: Jan Matecki
Public report / Confidential report: Public
Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework: No
 Contrary to the budgetary framework: No
 Key Decision: No
 Included within the Forward Plan: Yes
 Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No
 Consultation & Community Engagement: No
 Final Decision: No
 Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	25/01/21	Bill Hunt
Head of Service	22/01/21	Lisa Barker
CMT	25/01/21	Chris Elliott
Section 151 Officer	22/01/21	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	25/01/21	Andrew Jones
Portfolio Holder(s)	25/01/21	Councillor Jan Matecki

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council delivers its Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) function through the Home Environment Assessment and Response Team (HEART) shared service. A Review of the HEART Service has been undertaken on behalf of the HEART Board. The findings have informed an improvement plan that the HEART Board are monitoring and the Host authority (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) are implementing. This report summarises these documents.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny:

- 2.1 Note the progress to provide one, consistent service to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants for the whole County.
- 2.2 Consider the findings of the independent review of the service.
- 2.3 Note the improvement plan for the service.
- 2.4 Note that a further independent review is to be undertaken in March/April 2021.
- 2.5 Note the necessity to consider the position of the Host in advance of the end of the five-year contractual term of the shared service partnership in March 2022.
- 2.6 Agree that a further report is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by August 2021, to consider the options for the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants from April 2022 onwards and to make a recommendation to Executive.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 The HEART service is an integrated approach between social care and housing which aimed to focus on the customer and their carers, not organisations, to deliver the right practitioner at the right time with the right solution. This approach aimed to enable the customer choice and control to manage their own lives and maintain their abilities in daily activities within their home that is safe and warm and enable delivery without delay. The countywide HEART shared service is underpinned by a five-year formal Partnership Agreement which commenced on 1st November 2016 (Appendix 1 is the HEART Business Case).
- 3.2 The Partnership Agreement required a review of the service mid-way through the period of the agreement and a consultant was engaged to undertake this on behalf of the HEART Board (Appendix 2).
- 3.3 The HEART Board agreed an improvement plan produced by the host, based on the findings of the review, to address the concerns raised (Appendix 3).
- 3.4 The purpose of the follow up review is to audit and provide assurance to the Board that the actions to improve the service have been completed, and to consider further options for the service.
- 3.5 It would be prudent to consider how successfully the Host has implemented the improvement plan and whether this has led to an improvement in performance, following the outcome of the further review.

- 3.6 Bringing forward a further report by August 2021 will enable the Council to begin consideration of its future engagement with the HEART shared service.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all. Housing needs for all met. Impressive cultural and sports activities. Cohesive and active communities.	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Becoming a net-zero carbon organisation by 2025 Total carbon emissions within Warwick District are as close to zero as possible by 2030 Area has well looked after public spaces. All communities have access to decent open space. Improved air quality. Low levels of crime and ASB.	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy. Vibrant town centres. Improved performance/ productivity of local economy. Increased employment and income levels.
Impacts of Proposal		
The HEART service enables people with physical disabilities to meet their housing needs and remain in their own homes for longer.	None	None.
Internal		

Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained. All staff have the appropriate tools. All staff are engaged, empowered and supported. The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours.	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers' needs. Continuously improve our processes. Increase the digital provision of services.	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets. Full Cost accounting. Continued cost management. Maximise income earning opportunities. Seek best value for money.
Impacts of Proposal		
The improvement plan covers staffing issues	Further independent review in March/April 2021 to provide assurance that actions to improve the service have been completed	None

4.2 Supporting Strategies

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies. Improving housing standards in residents' homes directly and positively contributes to the Housing and Health-and-Wellbeing priorities. It also contributes to the Housing and Homelessness Strategy objective of improving the management and maintenance of existing housing.

4.3 Changes to Existing Policies

The report does not propose changes to any existing policies.

4.4 Impact Assessments

An impact assessment has not been completed because this is a report on a shared service review.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1 The HEART project has been set up as a countywide shared service and has its own revenue budgets. The capital funding previously provided to Warwick District Council from central government to provide DFG's is passed directly across to the HEART service for the same purpose.

- 5.2 Whilst HEART undertakes the assessment for adaptations in all tenures, DFG's fund private sector adaptations with the Housing Revenue Account covering the costs of adaptations for council tenants.

6. Risks

- 6.1 That the improvement plan is not fully implemented and that performance does not improve.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1 Not applicable at this stage as this is a report on the shared service review.

8. Background

- 8.1 On 28th September 2016 Executive resolved that Warwick District Council should participate in the countywide Home Environment Assessment and Response Team (HEART) shared service for the future delivery of its home adaptation responsibilities for a period of five years from 1st April 2017.
- 8.2 This followed a previous pilot project, the Housing Assessment Team or HAT, which had been running across the south of the county since 2014.
- 8.3 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) hosts the HEART service and provides all of the infrastructure and administrative support. Operational management is provided by an officer from NBBC seconded to the post of Head of Home Environment Services. The "on-the-ground" service for the south of the county (Warwick District Council & Stratford on Avon District Council), until the first Covid 19 national lockdown, has been delivered locally from Warwick District Council's office at Riverside House. The service is currently being provided by staff working remotely.
- 8.4 Strategic management is provided by a Management Board consisting of the Heads of Housing (or equivalent) from each of the five district and borough councils and senior managers from relevant services within Warwickshire County Council.
- 8.5 The Partnership Agreement governing this shared service required a review of the service mid-way through the period of the agreement and an independent consultant was engaged to undertake this on behalf of the HEART Board. The information below and documents accompanying this report summarise the findings of this Review.

9 The Review

- 9.1 The Review considered five key lines of enquiry agreed by the HEART Board, these were:

- Leadership and governance and operational management is effective - To include partnership arrangements, governance, the Board and reporting.
- Data is recorded and counted accurately (operational and strategic level) - To include operational data, trends, understanding systems and highlighting pressure points.
- Processes are optimised - To include the flow through the system and testing process when under pressure and working with partners.
- Demand is actively managed - To include performance against priority outcomes, benchmark comparisons, capacity and productivity.
- Service offer and capacity is appropriate - To include expenditure and how we compare nationally, capacity in the system and cost benefit analysis of services as well as consistency across the teams. Leadership and governance and operational management.

10. The Review Findings

10.1 The principle findings of the Review were:

- A lack of staff capacity is a contributory factor in the increasing waiting times customers are experiencing for the service.
- The absence of appropriate IT systems is a factor in demand not being met more efficiently.
- A more flexible system of assessing customer needs and prioritising interventions should be introduced.
- The systems of work in HEART could be more efficient and should be reviewed to provide for better service pathways which are fully implemented by staff and meet customer needs.
- In line with the findings of the Foundations report data collection methods and performance reporting should be improved.
- The Management Board reflect on its own role in delivering the HEART service and to ensure that the leadership, governance and operational management is provided in a manner which allows HEART to thrive and meet customer expectations.

10.2 It is clear that there were a number of opportunities for the host (NBBC) to improve service delivery and for the Board to improve their role in securing that the host delivered this.

10.3 The above is a summary of the Review findings and the HEART Board have prepared a single agreed more detailed report on the Review (Appendix 2). As with this report, Appendix 2 will be presented to an appropriate committee at each partner authority.

11. Service Improvement Priorities

11.1 In response to the Review findings the Board requested that a service improvement plan was developed, the plan includes the following:

- Specifying and procuring an IT system to support the HEART service and work effectively with the County Council's preferred IT software. Agree a revised privacy statement which will enable all staff to fully utilise both IT systems which are used by the service.
- Review the performance data provided to the Board to ensure the information can be used to give strategic direction for the service.
- Updating and revising the staff structure, management structure, how HR policies support the team, where the team is based and how budget provision can support recruitment of additional staff.
- Use budget reserves to increase the staff establishment and recruit dedicated duty officers to support customer assessments and release other staff to undertake home visits.
- Review the level of fee charges in order to revise the staff structure and meet current demand.
- Appoint an experienced consultant to review and recommend efficiencies in systems of work and in accordance with recommendations update procedures.
- Revise procedures to enable the team to assess the need for urgent action and fast track interventions for customers at an early stage.
- Reflecting on the requirements of the shared service agreement and recommend changes where they are needed to enhance governance, leadership and service performance.
- Refresh the Business Case (Appendix 1) in order to give clear direction for the shared service.

11.2 Subsequent to the Review this work has been the focus of the Board and good progress is being made. Details of the Improvement Plan and progress made are in Appendix 3.

12. Remaining in the HEART Partnership at the end of the current Partnership Agreement

12.1 Since the Disabled Facilities Grant responsibilities were absorbed into the HEART shared service, performance has been generally poorer than our experience whilst delivering the service ourselves. The principle challenge is that whilst the process is now more streamlined, fewer grants are generally approved and therefore a considerable waiting list has developed. This has been compounded over recent months by the impact of the pandemic.

12.2 The current Partnership Agreement ends in March 2022 so before then we have an opportunity to formally evaluate the project, in light of the Review, and consider whether we want to continue delivering DFG's through HEART or seek to deliver our DFG responsibilities in a different manner.

- 12.3 As an improvement plan is now in place and the pandemic is still impacting on services, a review of how the DFG's are delivered would be inappropriate at present.

13. Options Appraisal – Warwick District Council's future engagement with the HEART Partnership

- 13.1 There is potential for the performance to improve, as the Improvement Plan is implemented. However, given the outcome of the Review it would remain prudent to appraise future options and for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider these in August 2021. This will enable an agreed position to be established in good time for the end of the current partnership agreement.
- 13.2 An options appraisal will enable an informed decision to be made on the preferred delivery mechanism for DFG's. It would identify the system wide benefits of different models of delivery, an optimal model in terms of customer experience, compare value for money and service resilience and whether the initial objectives of the HEART project have been achieved.



Home Environment Assessment & Response Team

HEART: Helping you Live Independently at Home

Business Case

Document Title:	A Business Case for a Home Environment Assessment & Response Team (HEART) Service through a shared agreement.
Description:	This Business case proposal is to provide a Home Environment Assessment & Response Team (HEART) Service delivered by the 5 District & Borough Councils and the County Council through a shared service agreement.
Authors:	Denise Cross & Paul Coopey
Contact:	
Status:	Version 1
Date:	27.05.2016
Audience (if restricted)	
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Version History

Version	Author	Date	Changes
0.1	Denise Cross	19.02.2016	
0.2	Denise Cross	18.04.2016	Consultation with Project Board
0.3	Denise Cross & Paul Coopey	24.04.2016	Additional Benchmarking and formatting
0.4	Denise Cross	25.04.2016	Inclusion of amended financial information
0.5	Caroline Potter	27.04.2016	Amemdments to financial information
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0.7	Denise Cross	19.05.2016	Amendments to financial info
0.8	Denise Cross	11.05.2016	Formatting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The new HEART service is an integrated approach between social care and housing which focuses on the customer and their carers, not organisations, to deliver the right practitioner at the right time with the right solution. This will enable the customer choice and control to manage their own lives and maintain their abilities in daily activities within their home that is safe and warm and enable delivery without delay.
- 1.2 This is by far and away the best model going forward because it builds on existing trusted relationships, embeds these services as part of an integrated range of targeted support services for adults, provided by the local public sector, aligns with the Warwickshire Homefirst strategy (Warwickshire County Council & South Warwickshire Foundation Trust, 2015) and meets the national strategic policy direction of integrated services.
- 1.3 The proposal is to continue the rollout of the Home Environment Assessment & Response Team (HEART) service delivered by the 5 District & Borough Councils and the County Council in Warwickshire through a shared service agreement

2. Background

- 2.1 To facilitate radical change and be part of a whole system solution the partners (5 District / Borough Councils and the County Council) agreed an ambitious and challenging collaborative project aimed at creating a new way of delivering Home Improvement Agency (HIA) services and housing adaptations for disabled and older people across Warwickshire. It was ambitious because of bringing together 6 organisations to deliver an integrated one customer pathway for the delivery of housing solutions which includes the HIA, home safety checks and major adaptations without delay, through a Lean systems approach, and sustaining the continuous improvement.
- 2.2 Prior to the undertaking of this partnership the “old model” of service delivery had the Occupational Therapy (OT) practitioners located in different WCC bases across the county and each of the 5 District and Borough Council had their officers in each of their bases. The OT practitioner would undertake their assessment with the customer and then send a letter of recommendation to the relevant council to assess for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). The customer was frequently sitting on a waiting list in social care and then moving on to another waiting list in the district/ borough so timescales were very variable across the county. The Housing grants officer would then visit undertake their assessment and then request a contractor visit. The customer whilst waiting for their adaptation may also be visited by the Home Improvement Agency staff to assist with the process and undertake e.g. home safety check or benefits check and at the time by other services such as PHYLLIS. The table 1. below shows the improvements to-date achieved through an integrated service delivery model.

Before	Improvement Area	Now
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple, disconnected access points • Multiple assessors for different parts of journey • Multiple visits - between 3 & 7 people involved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disjointed journey • Confusing 	Customer Journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single multiagency contact point • One assessor per customer who assesses home and person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One key visit by 1 assessor • 1 or possible 2 people involved • Co-ordinated pathway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple teams, multiple managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different offices • Narrow roles within whole process 	Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased multiskilled workers in social care and housing • Trained to deliver an extensive range of interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience • Single line managed team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 220 steps within the journey • Duplication of work between the agencies • Competing priorities and differing goals 	Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated, managed pathway • Whole system managed - around 22 steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single base • Shared vision and goals and strategic direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New ways of working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams delivering different parts of a whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No single ownership of all the solutions being delivered • Reactive, managing backlog etc. 	Service Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive - prevention for all customers • Capacity to deliver multiple interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown customer demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 waiting lists • No overall service management 	Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countywide demand known <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 access point and list • Known and managed adaptations costs • Multiagency management board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop out rate at 35% • Average major adaptations at 395 days 	Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop our rate around 3% • Average time for major adaption North = 179 days. Best times are within weeks of delivery South = 301 days (backlog being cleared)

Table 1. Comparison between “Old” and “New” Service Delivery Models

2.3 The aim of the project was to create a new customer focused service delivery model which would bring together the different professions from each of the organisations, create a new role of a Housing Assessment Officer; combining the skills of an Occupational Therapy Assistant and a Housing Caseworker to do the non-complex customer work and link together existing services within a service model that involves working together to deliver holistic housing assessment and appropriate solutions. The purpose of the new **Home Environment Assessment and Response Team (HEART)** service was to shift from being a process done to a customer to a process which works with and for the customer:

“To provide customers with the advice and information to help them make the right choice, and provide practical help to deliver the right housing solution when they want it”

2.4 The approach of HEART is tailored to focus on and support the customer and carers to identify their own needs and preferred solutions e.g. advice and information, equipment, housing options, adaptations, telecare, falls prevention strategies. There is evidence that where customers are supported to make choices, they often choose lower-cost and lower intervention solutions (DFG’s in England: A Research Report for the District Councils’ Network and the Society of District Council Treasurers, April

2013). It is important to develop a partnership with the person and all other parties if necessary over the long term leading to an improvement of the quality of life and their experience.

2.5 In many Local Authorities, the system of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) delivery for housing adaptations was and is still not working well: resources are not deployed as effectively as they could be, customers are left waiting too long, sometimes two years or more (DFG's in England: A Research Report for the District Councils' Network and the Society of District Council Treasurers, April 2013). In Warwickshire, there were significant issues with the old way of delivering services including delays of 395 days on average from customer enquiry to providing an adaptation, with some delays being far, far greater than this. Whilst not satisfactory, this was a similar performance to other local authorities and in line with a national picture of delays in this area. It is widely acknowledged that poorly joined-up care risks distress and harm and is also hugely frustrating for patients/service users and carers (The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust (2012), Report to the Department of Health and NHS Future Forum). There was also a 35% customer drop out as teams struggled to deliver the major adaptation. The root cause of the problem was having three separate strands in delivering services with 8 different organisations and that we had tried to improve each strand but the fundamental review focused on the customer's experience and involving all organisations across Warwickshire that had been involved in the system brought the conclusion that building 'one customer focussing service' was the only way of bringing the "radical" change which was required.

2.6 A small number of exemplary local authorities have formed well-managed partnerships and Warwickshire HEART service is one of the ground-breaking, innovative and avant-garde services. HEART has the flexibility and agility to meet local need through its new ways of working with different partners. It takes a holistic view of a person and their carer's health and well-being and their home to provide an array of solutions which will meet their needs now and in the future. This effective integrated approach improves the quality of solutions and the person's experience through a more effectively coordinated delivery of the service.

Case Study from the HEART service

A customer was referred to the HEART service having difficulty managing to get in and out of her bath.

Outcome

The appointment to carry out the assessment was made whilst the customer was giving her details about the bathing difficulties. The assessment took place 3 days later and the contractor was able to view the bathroom the same day. The Disabled Facilities Grant was approved and the level shower was installed within 3 weeks. The customer rang to say the shower was "brilliant".

2.7 The majority of services across England are not currently pursuing an integrated systems approach and are still delivering Home Improvement Agency (HIA) and housing adaptations by retaining the silo working, professional boundaries and convoluted processes of work between the Occupational Therapy service and Housing departments, which is how Warwickshire was providing these services.

- 2.8 Since the start of the collaborative project pressures are only increasing in health and social care. The population is ageing, the prevalence of chronic health conditions increasing, survival rates at birth and major trauma with advances in medical technology are greater, and hence the demand is rising at the same time as savings within the public sector are required. Systems have not aligned with the needs of the society and this is not sustainable. Although, difficult choices on public expenditure were announced in the 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review it was recognised the significant importance of DFG's and explicit in the plans of a commitment of over £500 million for DFG's by 2019-20.
- 2.9 The commitment of partners across the 6 organisations has facilitated the partnership to forge and mature at all levels within the organisations. This has enabled the radical change in the service provision and establishes the sustainable and transformational change across the county. The project has brought together the Occupational Therapy practitioners, Home Improvement Agency Caseworkers, Grant Technical Services and working with the contractors as an integral part of the whole. It has dissolved the traditional boundaries between the different parts of the system, developed leaner processes, adoption of good practice and significantly improved the outcomes for the customers and carers.
- 2.10 Key principles to ensure the new HEART service is meeting the people's needs and wishes are being met are:

Customer's Feedback

"In this day and age of budget cuts and when it seems common to hear the public services freely criticised, it is a pleasure to be able to offer my grateful appreciation for the service you have provided. Thanks and Well Done"

"I would like to thank you; you were so understanding and helpful"

"We thank you all for bringing that bit of comfort and safety into the life of the most important person in our family"

- The service is driven by the customer's and /or carer needs and personal goals;
- The focus is on proactive solutions and self-management;
- The importance of having an integrated service delivering one customer pathway with a single access point for the service;
- A multi-agency multi-skilled team;
- Ensure workforce, training and core skills reflect modern day requirement;
- Leadership should encourage us to do things differently; and

- Performance metrics must truly reflect the experience for the customer and the carer and drive improvement.

(Adapted from Commission for Improving Urgent Care for Older People March 2016
www.nhsconfed.org)

- 2.11 Our health is primarily determined by factors beyond just health and social care (Appendix 1). Good Housing is essential to health and well-being: the effects of poor housing cost the NHS over £2 billion every year. Housing plays a crucial role in supporting other determinants such as educational attainment, employment prospects and social interaction. There is evidence that Occupational Therapy and housing-related preventative services prevent or defray much larger housing, health and social care costs as well as improving quality of life (Heywood, F. Turner, L. (2007), *Better outcomes, lower costs – Implications for health and social care budgets of investment in housing adaptations, improvements and equipment: a review of the evidence*).
- 2.12 The integrated HEART service provides a great and unique opportunity to build on the “Making Every Contact Count” initiative and make further improvements in prevention and reductions in costly health and social care, and enable people to maximise their abilities in daily living activities by bringing together a matrix of services and the capability of delivering a wider range of preventative or early intervention solutions either at a county or local district / borough level in Warwickshire.
- 2.13 In the 2011 census, 38,815 residents in Warwickshire that have a long term limiting illness stated it limited their activities a lot and this is projected to rise to 63,944 in 2037 (Warwickshire Observatory, (2015) *Quality of Life in Warwickshire 2014/15*). An estimated two-thirds of those who have reached pensionable age have at least two chronic conditions (cited in Nolte, E. Knal, C. McKee, M. (2008) *Managing chronic conditions*) and 850,000 people in the UK are living with dementia (Age UK (2015) *Later Life in United Kingdom*). There are 1.3 million households aged 55 years and over who live in a home with at least one Category 1 hazard, namely a home that did not meet the minimum standard for housing in England. Around a fifth of homes are not fully useable (level access, flush threshold, WC at entrance level, sufficient circulation space in hallway). The cost of poor housing among older households aged 55 years or more to the NHS equals £624 million (Building Research Trust, (2010) *The Real Cost of Poor Housing & Homes and ageing in England*). The table 2 illustrates the savings if the identified hazards were resolved.

Hazard	Issues	Savings per annum if hazard fixed
Excess Cold	Loneliness & stress Falls Depression Absence from work Anti-social behaviour Medical conditions e.g. asthma, fractures, pneumonia Truancy from school Burglaries	£441,564,353
Falls on stairs		£71,609,794
Falls on the level		£34,700,172
Falls between levels		£17,519,361
Fire		£12,725,126
All other 20 hazards (e.g. sanitation, food safety, pests, carbon monoxide, lighting)		£45,660,759
TOTAL		£623,779,566

Table 2. Hazard savings

2.14 It is important to mitigate the hazards through interventions such as housing adaptations e.g. handrails to the main stairs at a cost of £200 would save health costs of around £930 and if the falls risk is removed this increases to about £1,250. The payback period of less than one year plus it may also save on home care costs (Building Research Trust, (2010) *The Real Cost of Poor Housing & Homes and ageing in England*). Hospital “bed blocking” is very expensive, costing from £1,750 a week up to over £3,000 for an acute bed (Georghiou, T. and Bardsley, M. (2014) *Exploring the Cost of Care at the End of Life*). Moreover, inappropriate hospital stays for frail older people are dangerous and debilitating.

2.15 Demands for adaptations has also been accelerated by changes in social policy and medical advances which have allowed people of all ages, with varying levels of disabilities and complex needs, to lead more independent lives in the community (Home Adaptations Consortium, (Oct 2013), *Home Adaptations for Disabled People*). The Care Act 2014 has been enacted but does not replace the Housing & Regeneration Act 1996 and the responsibilities for the provision of DFG's. The Care Act implementation from April 2015 has seen the planning and implementation of a large number of reforms including:

- Establishing a new statutory “well-being principle.”
- A new duty to prevent, delay or reduce needs for care and support.
- An expanded duty to assess the needs of carers.
- Integrating service provision and combining and aligning processes.

2.16 The Better Care Fund arrangements have been established nationally. The Better Care Fund arrangement known as “Warwickshire Cares Better together” has given an opportunity to build the profile of these services, and their contribution to the prevention and wellbeing agenda. The DFG funding stream for the next 5 years is from the DCLG via the Department of Health and will increase from £220m in 2015 -

16 to £500m in 2019-20 (Report on the DFG Summit, Jan 2016, Foundations & College of Occupational Therapists). In 2015-16 Warwickshire received £1,925,079 through Warwickshire Cares Better together.

2.17 The redesign of the customer pathway, via a lean thinking approach, has only those steps that are of value to the customer and the improvements to-date are:

- Initial customer contact to assessment steps have been reduced from 22 steps to one step through a direct contact number to the team.
- Development of all the team members' skills to provide housing solutions thus reducing duplication in roles / customer visits and documentation.
- Development and implementation of a new role of Housing Assessment Officer (HAO) in Sept 2013. This role enables the functional ability of the person and the conditions of their home environment to be assessed and modified accordingly. This has involved extensive training and mentoring of the HAO's by OT's.
- Single assessment process.
- Portfolio of core interventions that are delivered by all practitioners from advice on specific topics such as falls prevention, home safety through to equipment for daily living, assistive technology (e.g. telecare) and minor and major adaptations.
- Resilience within the service.
- Significantly improvement in key performance indicators.
- Improved collaborative working with other teams e.g. Lettings in Districts and Borough, Personalisation within the County.
- The project was a Runner up for a national award within Housing in 2013, cited in DFG's in England: A Research Report for the District Councils' Network and the Society of District Council Treasurers, April 2013 and recognised by Improvement & Efficiency West Midlands (IEWM).
- The service has been the focus of two PhD theses from Warwick Business School.

2.18 On-going funding pressures make the need to demonstrate the benefits of housing solutions and this is that unique opportunity to have one delivery method to enhance the resources we have available as a partnership for housing solutions. The delivery of the HEART service enables people to live more independently at home, for longer. It also reduces the risk of 'crisis' events, like serious falls. This therefore improves health, wellbeing and independence. These services therefore also reduce demand on long term and acute services such as hospital admissions due to falls, or long term home support. However, the "one-off" nature of much of the work makes tracking of longer-term outcomes less easy to achieve. Although there is well-researched evidence base supporting the belief that adaptations can reduce the need for more costly interventions, there are no established structural links between DFG budgets and the statutory beneficiaries of their preventative outcomes ((Home Adaptations Consortium, (Oct 2013), *Home Adaptations for Disabled People*).

2.19 In Warwickshire the Occupational Therapy services provided by Warwickshire County Council had already been re-modelled into specialisms ahead of other local authorities to meet the increasing complex needs of customers and carers and “care closer to home”. This enabled the specialist housing OTs to be co-located in Borough/District Council offices and facilitate closer working with housing colleagues dealing with DFG’s and adaptations under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. Section 24 of the Act requires a local housing authority which is not a social services authority to consult the social services authority when deciding whether to approve applications for a DFG, in order to satisfy itself that works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant. The co-location developed into piloting a shared service hosted by NBBC, and also involving NWBC and RBC and WCC to become part of single line-managed team in NBBC, supported by agreed HR protocols. This has been extended to a pilot in South Warwickshire with Stratford upon Avon and Warwick District Councils and WCC in 2014, and continues with working arrangements with South Warwickshire Foundation Trust OT Children and Young People and Families service, Orbit and Age UK.

Case Study from the HEART Service

A Customer in her seventies with arthritis was referred by a relative as they were worried about her going up and down the stairs. Housing Assessment Officer (HAO) observed the customer going up and down the stairs and performing activities of daily living.

Outcome: *Customer was able to manage the stairs at the present time but required grab rails in the bathroom. Advice and information was given about adaptations (level access shower and stair lift), Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process and Benefits check. The discussion on benefits led to the customer saying “I am not entitled to a pension” With the consent of the customer Department for Work & Pensions was contacted by HAO and this led to the customer being paid her pension and deferred payments which had accumulated to £90,000 before tax.*

2.20 The aims of the HEART service are:

- A. To enable customers with multiple and complex conditions to maximise their potential and live in their chosen home environment.
- B. To reduce pressure on other expensive services e.g. residential homes, hospitals, and home care by postponing the need or reducing the amount of care and support required.
- C. To improve quality of life for older and disabled people and their carers (improved dignity, less stressful, empowering, and improved flexibility in daily tasks).
- D. To be proactive and avoid where possible, crisis situations for customers and carers in regards to managing in their chosen home environment.
- E. To promote positive health and well-being styles of living, prevention of falls, and reduce hypothermia in older people.
- F. To improve living conditions by reducing hazards in the home.
- G. To reduce demand elsewhere in the housing, health and care system.

- H. To prevent hospital admissions and/or facilitate timely hospital discharges.
- I. To develop practitioners with the skills and capabilities that enables them to provide the appropriate intervention, to minimise risk to their customers and carers, be outcome focussed and able to 'get it right first time'.
- J. To contribute to the following strategic drivers:
 - Integration & Partnership working.
 - New legislation – Care Act.
 - Safety, Well-being & Prevention.
 - Preventing & Facilitating hospital discharges.
 - Better outcomes for customers & carers in their home environment (*Public Health, Social Care & NHS Outcomes Frameworks for 2015-16*).
 - Maximising capacity to meet demand within existing or less resources, e.g. Avoidance of growth in Non-Elective Admissions.
- K. Potential for strategic thinking and planning in building accessible new homes, refurbishment programmes, and best use of stock with registered social landlords.

3. Customer / Carer Feedback

- 3.1 It is important to hear and listen to customer and carer views to enable the service to improve the quality and experience. The customer survey conducted by the HEART service is not solely related to DFG but all interventions provided to the customer by the service.
- 3.2 There are 6 key themes to the customer survey which are:
 - **Respect and Dignity**
 - **Communication**
 - **Responsiveness**
 - **Reliability**
 - **Contractors**
 - **Overall experience**
- 3.3 The table 3 below shows the overall score for each key theme. The 2014/15 Overall Experience rated by customers of the HEART service was 96.25% and up to Q3 2015-16 is 97.9%.

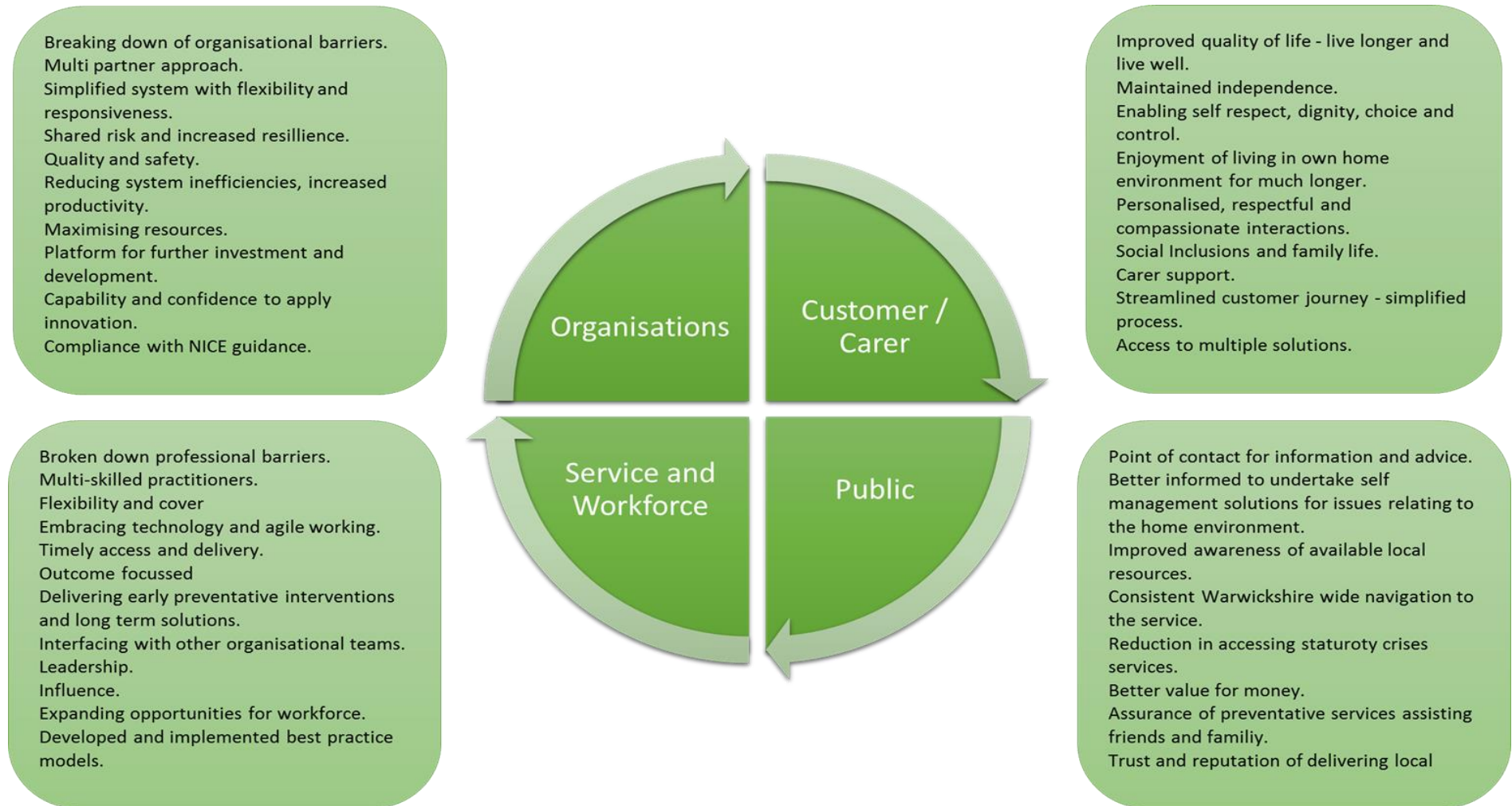
KEY THEME	Overall mean for 2014-15	Overall mean for 2015-16
Respect and Dignity	91.62%	98.4%
Communication	95.25%	97.3%
Responsiveness	96.50%	96.5%
Reliability	98.75%	98.7%
Contractors	93.25%	94.3%
Overall Experience	96.25%	97.9%

Table 3 Customer Satisfaction of HEART

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4. Benefits

- 4.1 A successful service contributes to and links to the key objectives of Warwickshire and this Business Case proposes the HEART service as the continuing delivery model. The customer, carers, the communities and organisations will benefit in many different ways given the unique delivery of this innovative seamless service that spans the two tiers of local government.



- 4.2 Additionally, for this large workforce, there is also an opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills that would deliver significant additional benefits in prevention and promoting physical and mental wellbeing. For example, falls prevention and enabling strategies can be incorporated. Councillor Izzi Seccombe (2014) highlights that “every contact with a customer should be seen as an opportunity to encourage healthier lifestyle choices” and there is the need for a ‘whole system’ approach to achieve the ‘Making Every Contact Count (MECC)’. Boroughs and Districts have adopted the MECC approach.
- 4.3 In the UK, falls are the most common cause of death from injury in the over 65’s (Fenton, (2014), *The Human Cost of Falls: Health and Wellbeing, Reducing the Burden of Disease*). They are the largest cause of hospital admissions for older people and lead to 70 - 75,000 hip fractures per year and one in five die within three months of fracture. The annual cost to health and social care is estimated to be £2 billion partly due to the fact that half of the people who fracture their hip never fully regain their previous level of function and therefore need additional care and support. Falls are also a major precipitant of people moving from their home to residential or nursing care (Department of Health, 2012).

Example of savings

Table 4: Cost of Falls

Hazard Category 1	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Falls on the level	Quadriplegic	Femur Fracture	Wrist Fracture	Treated cut or bruise
Costs in 1st Year	£92,490	£39,906	£1,545	£115

(Building Research Trust, (2010) *The Real Cost of Poor Housing & Homes and ageing in England*).

- 4.4 The HEART service is an appropriate service to incorporate:
- Physical and Mental wellbeing - maintaining health & wellbeing through
 - Brief optimistic advice and preventing falls.
 - Disabilities awareness.
 - Equality and diversity.
 - Design for Dementia – positive actions and solutions in the home.
 - Enabling techniques.
- 4.5 The additional benefits are:
- Compliance with Falls: assessment and prevention of falls in older people (NICE clinical guideline 161; June 2013) and a ‘Falls in older people’ assessment after a fall to help prevent further falls (NICE Quality standard 86; March 2015).
 - Improving Making Every Contact Count (MECC).
 - Supporting the challenge on Dementia.
 - Supporting the new ‘Care Certificate’ (recommendation from the Francis Report 2013).

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- Embedding of 'Enabling' techniques so that carers are 'enablers' rather than 'doers' which would promote customer independence and prevent or delay increased formal care services.
- Choice & control, dignity and respect, kindness and compassion.

Table 5: Home conditions

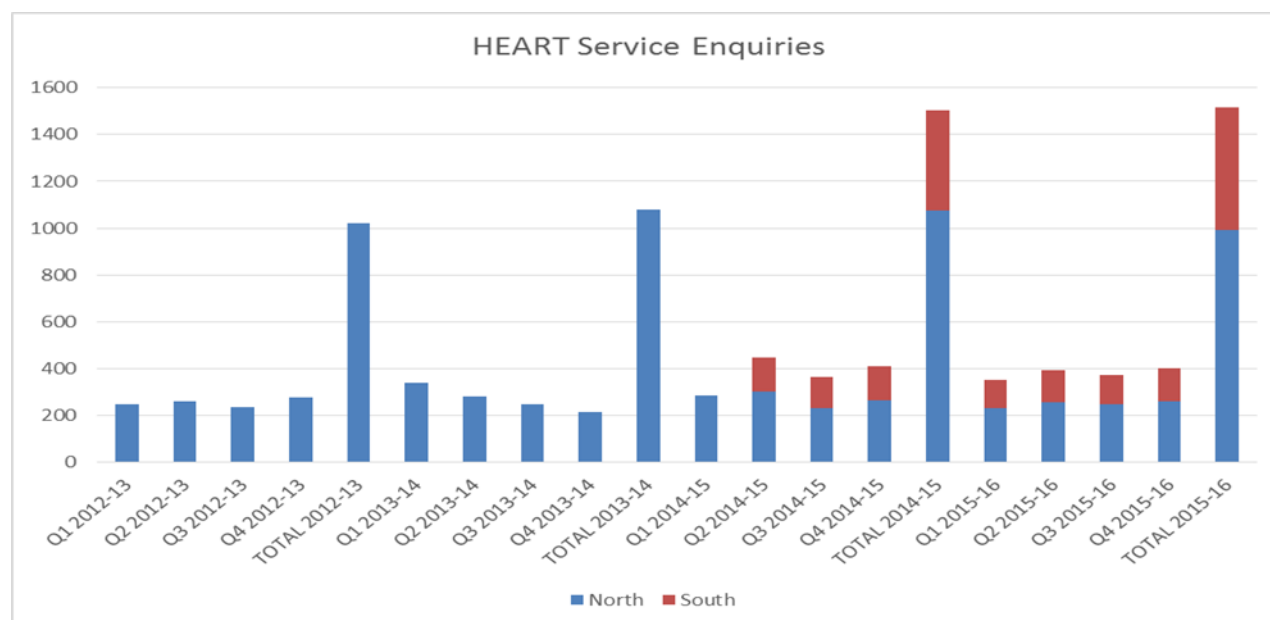
Hazard Category 1	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Excess cold	Heart attack, care, death	Heart attack	Respiratory condition	Mild pneumonia
Costs in 1st Year	£19,851	£22,295	£519	£84
Damp and mould	Not applicable	Type 1 allergy	Severe asthma	Mild asthma
Costs in 1st Year		£2,034	£1,027	£242

(Building Research Trust, (2010) *The Real Cost of Poor Housing & Homes and ageing in England*).

5. Performance Data

5.1 The HEART performance data has expanded and become more comprehensive as a consequence of more teams joining the HEART service. However, the service is inputting into a number of different IT systems which makes consistency difficult but in the future will be addressed.

Table 6. Number of HEART Enquiries



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Table 7. Number of Referrals for Council Major Adaptations

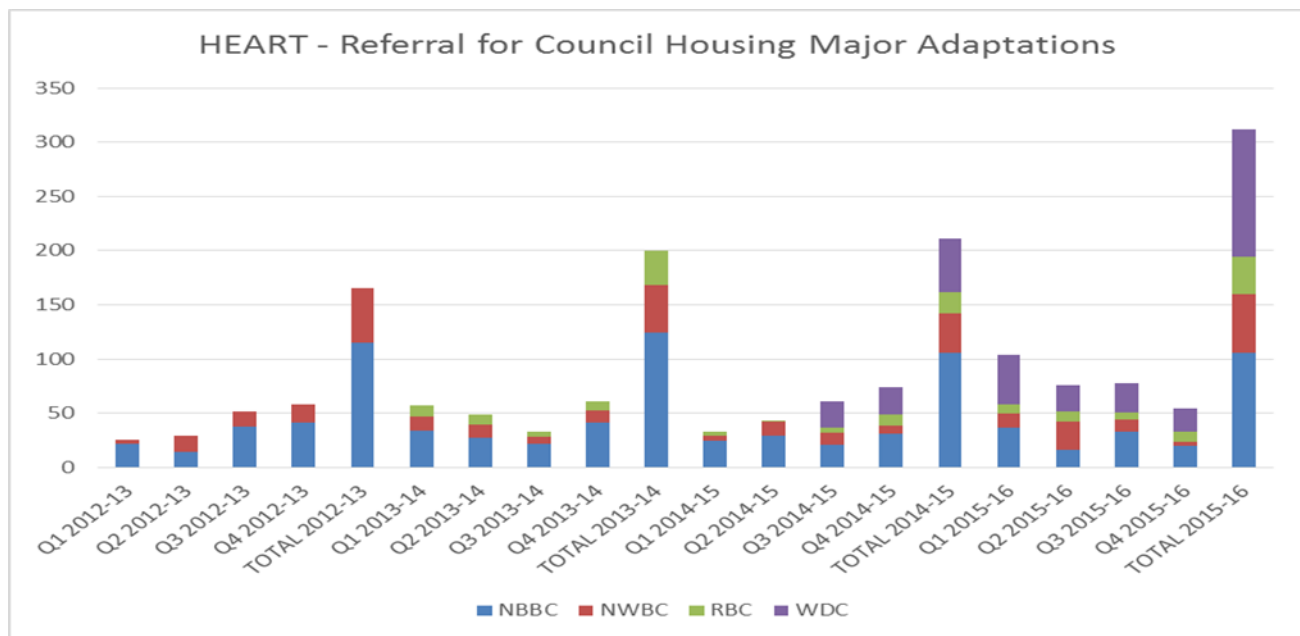


Table 8. Number of DFG Approvals

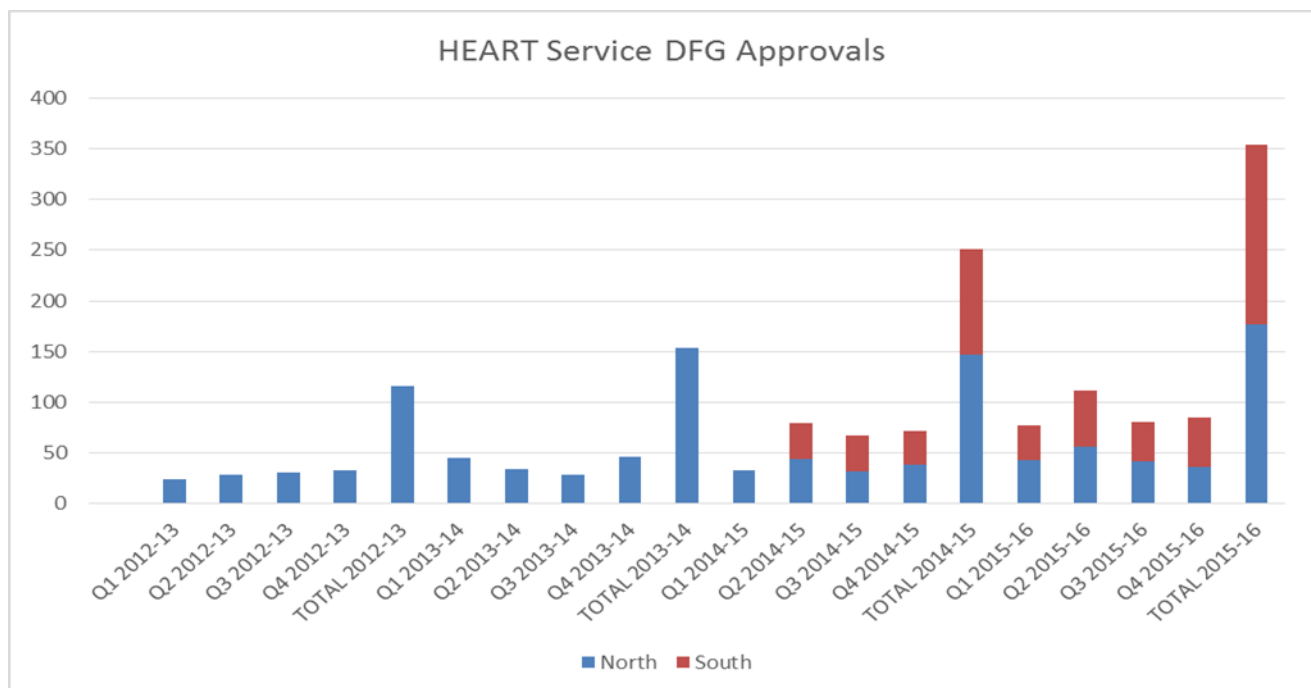
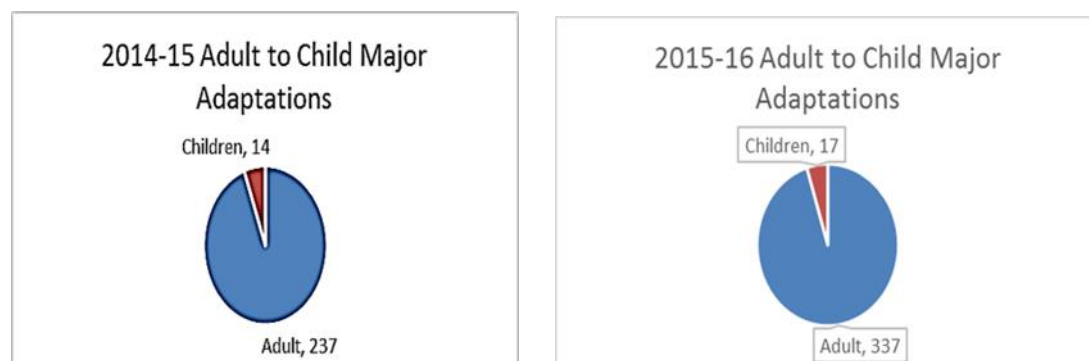


Table 9 & 10 Number of Children & Young People Major Adaptations



5.2 Enquiry to Completion of DFG works

The following tables show the performance of HEART in relation to DFG funded major adaptations, and then how the service is comparing with other Local Authorities. It has always been difficult to undertake benchmarking as service provision is different across England and there is no national data set, but the data clearly shows the progress made in Warwickshire.

Table 11 End to End Time Trend for DFG funded Major Adaptations

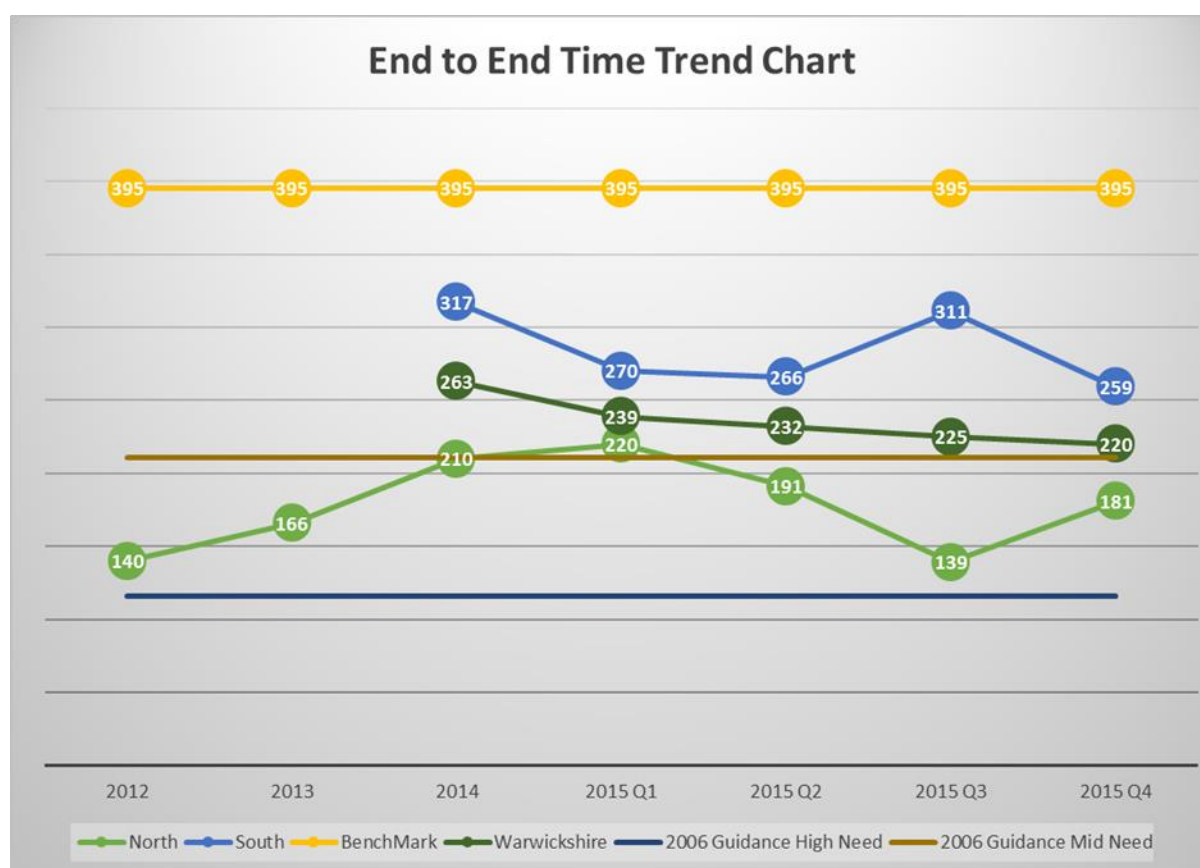
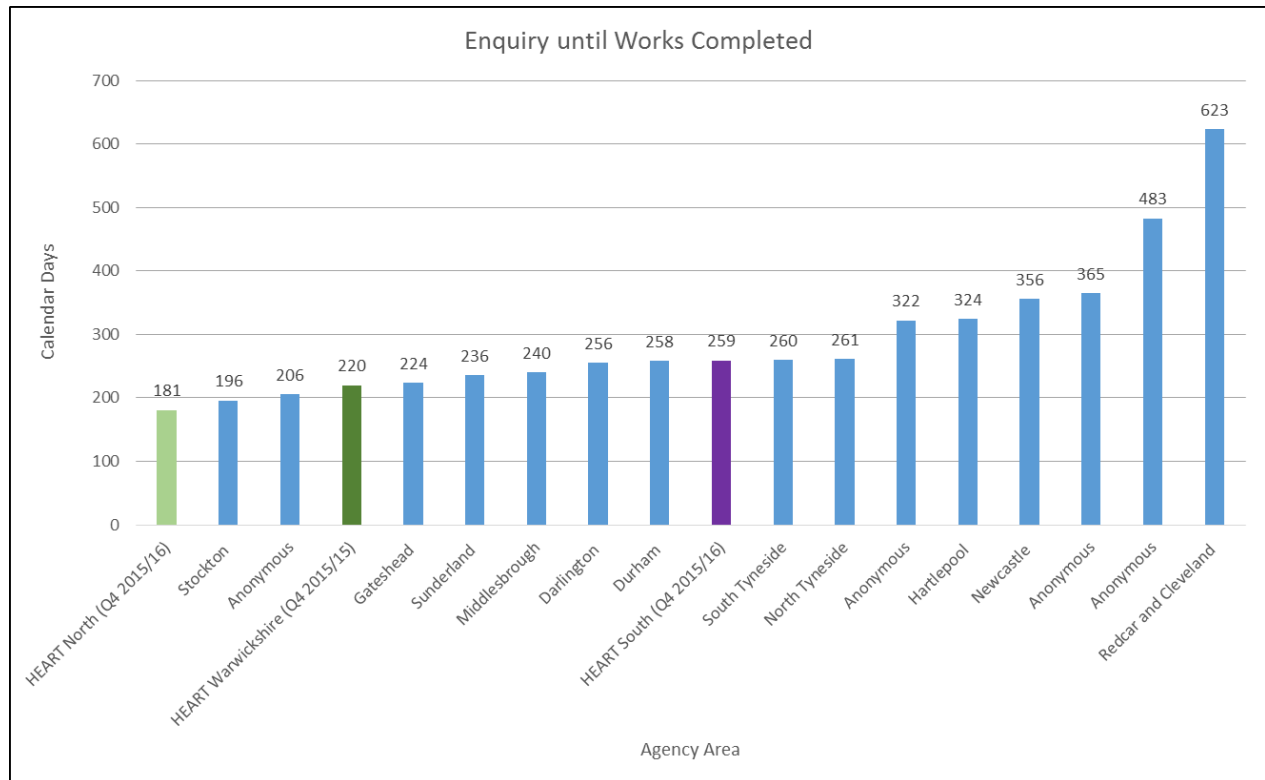


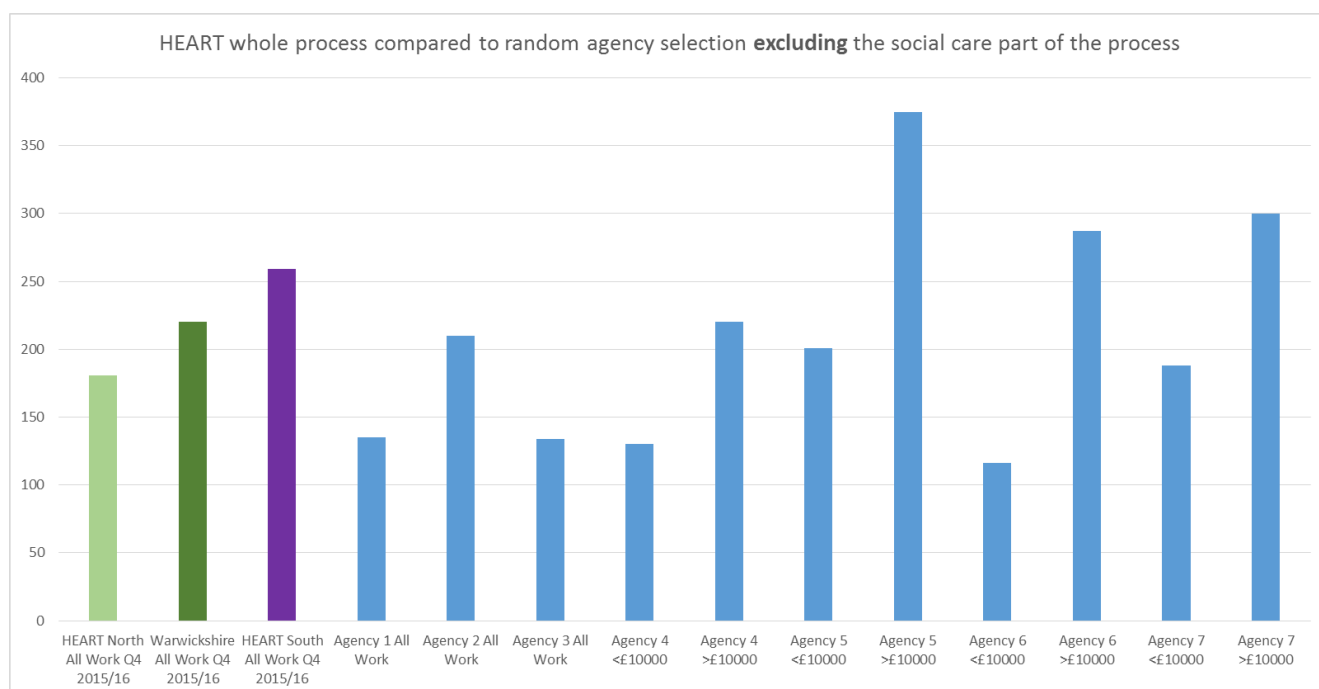
Table 12 a. Benchmarking Information on other Local Authorities – Whole Process



5.3 Table 12a.shows HEART performance compared to a number of unitary authorities responsible for both Housing and Social Care. The chart demonstrates that Warwickshire has developed a system that can perform well when compared to authorities with a structural advantage.

Additionally, in Warwickshire we have achieved an improved service able to continuously improve performance across 6 different local authorities in a two tier structure. This demonstrates the benefits of the integrated approach that has been developed and the shared oversight of the service.

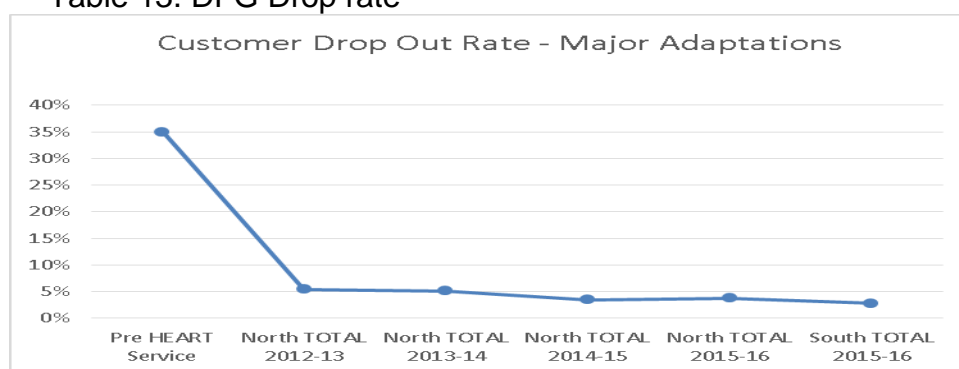
Table12b. HEART Whole Customer Journey vs. Traditional DFG System which Excludes Adult Social Care



Source of Agency information is Foundations.
Identity of LA 1-7 and County not authorised for publication.

5.4 Table 12 b shows HEART performance (i.e. whole customer journey) against authorities that only measure low cost and high cost jobs from the time the agency received the referral. The other authorities have not included the time taken at the front end of the process of the OT assessment within adult social care. Our experience, from the initial review, suggests that the journey through social care is on average 125 days, which needs to be added to the other authorities in the table below.

Table 13. DFG Drop rate



5.5 Not only does a low drop out rate benefit the customer, it benefits the organisations as they do not have such a high amount of waste work.

5.6 Table 14. Customer Outcomes

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Care Act Outcomes	Outcomes applied to HEART	2015-16 Total (3 Quarters)
1. Managing and maintaining nutrition.	Able to prepare drinks/food.	1
2. Maintaining personal hygiene.	Provision of facilities (modified/new). Maximise ability in activities of daily living. Maintaining dignity and respect.	225
3. Managing toilet needs.	Able to use the toilet.	116
4. Being appropriately clothed.	Able to dress /undress.	105
5. Being able to make use of the home safely.	Able to use existing facilities within the property. Able to access principal rooms within the property.	368
6. Maintaining a habitable home environment.	Improved condition of the property. Provide comfort security & safety.	0*
7. Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships.	To reduce isolation, maximise ability. To maximise participation in family roles and work and social activities.	63
8. Accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering	Facilitate working from home.	0*
9. Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport, and recreational facilities or services.	Able to go in/out of property to access home. Garden, community.	0* 27
10. Carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child.	To minimise risk to person, carer or relative.	0*

*The "0" indicates no report functionality at the current time

5.7 Table 15. Average Cost of Major Adaptations

Average Cost of DFG	North	South	Pre Experiment Benchmark
2012-13	£6,422.00	No data	£7,396
2013-14	£6,859.00	No data	£7,396
2014-15	£6,102.00	£7,674.00	£7,396
2015-16 to Q3	£6,085.00	£7,389.00	£7,396

6. Business Requirement

6.1 To deliver the HEART service:**In Scope**

The HEART Service Matrix detailed in Appendix 2, and a shared service agreement between all the councils.

Out of Scope

There is the future opportunity for all or some of the “out of scope” additional or service enhancements to be brought in to scope should circumstances and funding allow.

6.2 The Business case has considered a number of options to deliver the change and realise the benefits. The options considered are:**6.2.1 Revert to Original Service**

This is not considered viable as an option because of:

- The progress over time of becoming an integrated service.
- It is a difficult area to ‘change direction’ in due to the number of stakeholders.
- The positive results to date indicating sustainable improvement progress.
- The development of a Housing Assessment Officer (HAO) role incorporating the skills of an OT Assistant and a Housing caseworker.

6.2.2 Shared Service with a Lead Authority via a contractual arrangement (section 101 (5) Local Government Act 1972)

This is the preferred option as it has:

- Democratic accountability and transparency.
- Joint oversight and equal governance between councils.
- Trusted and well understood approach – already employed between Councils.
- Pooling of control and risks.
- Existing local government financial arrangements and benefits remain in place.
- Empower the Host to act through the Partnership to provide the service. (Sections 101, 111 & 113 of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 19 & 20 of the Local Government Act 2000, and section 1 of the Localism Act 2011).
- Unlikely to present difficulties with the European Union Procurement Regime.

6.2.3 Teckal Company (wholly owned)

This type of arrangement has limited risk transfer and commercial governance, finance rules apply – accounting and taxation.

6.2.4 Charitable Trust

Financial benefits come with charitable status but commercial governance, finance rules apply.

6.2.5 Staff Mutual

Private sector joint venture, commercial governance, finance rules apply but profit drive of the profit sector organisation may create tensions.

6.2.6 Social Enterprise

Transfer to staff mutual Securing but employee leadership can be difficult – without appropriate leadership, the new business will not get off the ground nor prosper if established.

6.3 The Shared Service with a Lead Authority via a contractual arrangement (HEART service) brings additional benefits:

- It is a distinctive way of providing housing solutions which can't be replicated in the voluntary sector
- A key element of not fully outsourcing (e.g. to a voluntary sector agency) is the flexibility for us to change and develop the service as it is within Council's direct control as a pose to outsourced to specified (and potentially inflexible) contract. This model brings freedoms that are not possible in some of the other models.
- Have an in depth awareness and knowledge of local systems, policies and procedures.
- Are familiar with documentation.
- Have established professional relationships with a large number of agencies.
- Have a proven track record of delivering high quality interventions.
- Foster a quality workforce.
- Will provide a maintained, resilient and managed service because there are a number of practitioners with the capabilities and competencies available to cover (back up) as when/needed e.g. annual leave, sickness etc.
- Will ensure services are compliant to the statutory requirements of the Care Act 2014 and Housing & Regeneration Act 1996 through delegation of responsibilities in the shared service agreement.
- Will continue to work towards achieving the Outcomes in WCC One Organisational Plan 2014-18 and District & Borough strategic objectives.
- Will continue to drive the cultural change required to meet future service demands.

7**Objectives and Outcomes of the Proposal****7.1 The objectives of HEART are:**

- Better customer outcomes by improving the customer experience.
- Dispel myths and 'traditional' thinking that Disabled Facilities Grant's take "forever".
- Utilise resources in an effective & efficient manner to deliver a quality co-ordinated service around the customer and carer.
- Promote effective working with in Social Care, Housing and Health.
- Create consistency in practice and ensure adoption of best practice.
- Create a culture that encourages and promotes customer independence, respect & dignity, wellbeing and falls prevention.
- Achieve long term savings by ensuring effective use of resources.

7.2 Existing 'As Is'

The HEART north provision is based in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and is a single line managed team with agreed protocols in place. The south provision is in the project phase but is based within Warwick District Council. There is still commissioned HIA provision outside of the Borough and District Councils with AgeUK and Orbit at the present time.

7.3 To be (proposed)

The proposal is:

Shared Service Specification Statement	
Shared Service Vehicle	Host Authority with potential for Joint Committee.
Governance	Governance Board comprising senior managers from each partner. Single management team.
Host Authority	In principle Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.
Functions to be provided by host	Where possible all organisational and support functions.
Support functions not to be provided by host	Specialist social care legal advice.
Spirit of partnership	Support and shared endeavour to improve and develop – avoid a contractor / commissioner relationship. Include Spirit Agreement or clause within partnership agreement.
Constraints	Each partner will not receive a disproportionate financial risk. WCC staff to be within a single management structure. Joint committee would be delegated the relevant powers from each local authority. Service to deliver options 1 to 6 in the Housing Service Matrix. Option to expand the services within the shared service e.g. from the second page of the Matrix. Need to keep this option open in the agreement. Ability to trade is not important at this stage. Competence and capacity assessment necessary from host organisation.

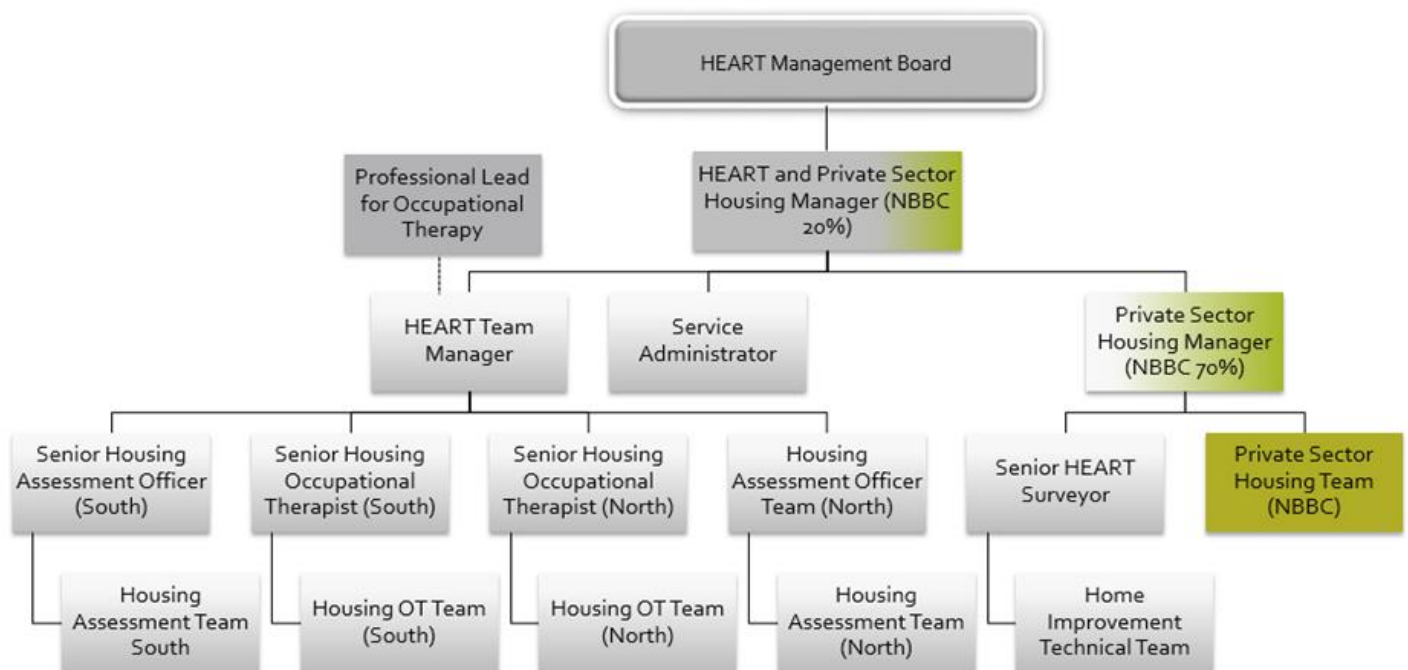
7.4 Governance

The partners have established a Management Board which will be further enhanced with appropriate terms of reference.

1. The Management Board shall consist of the Authorised Representatives of each of the Councils or their authorised substitutes.
2. Receive reports about the performance of the service and Business Plan, Budget, the potential growth of the Shared Service, and any other reports as it may reasonably require from time to time assessing the effectiveness of the Shared Service.
3. Determine and take such action as it considers desirable and necessary to promote the Shared Service and to procure the expansion of the Shared Service where it considers that this would be beneficial.
4. Determine (in accordance with Section 25) any disputes or differences that arise between the Councils concerning the interpretation and effect of any of the provisions of this Agreement.

7.5 HEART Service Structure

The structure of the service has been designed to take in to account a whole of Warwickshire service with teams located within the north and south.



7.6 Human Resources

For staff already employed by one of the 6 organisations in the current services a secondment of 2 years is the preferred and agreed option within the management board. The benefits are:

- Staff retain links with their existing employers.

- Provides a mechanism for multi-agency working.
- The host organisation has no employer liability for the partner organisations employees.
- Staff are able to maintain their HCPC registration requirements including CPD through the established mechanisms set up by WCC. (NB Occupational Therapist is a protected title with the Healthcare Professions Council and registration every two years is mandatory, without this it is illegal to practice as an OT).
- Staff have access to clinical supervision & training without the need to make alternative arrangements within the host organisation.

The staff would be seconded on their existing terms and conditions (unless they were being seconded into an entirely different role), and would be hosted and line managed by NBBC.

The staff would be able to undertake their organisations functions and another authority's functions under the agreement. There are specific provisions in the Local Government Act 1972 (sections 112 and 113) to enable this to happen, so local authorities can create partnerships and shared services with each other and other public bodies, such as NHS bodies.

For those staff not employed by one of the organisations appropriate employment procedures would need to be considered either through a TUPE arrangement or through direct and fixed term employment.

The structure enables other functions to be undertaken should it be required, and has the potential to expand and take on additional services either countywide or at a locality level depending on the different needs of the partners.

7.7 Products and Costs

The HEART Service will provide customers and carers with the advice and information to help them make the right choice, and provide practical help to deliver the right housing solution when they want it. This is detailed in the service matrix Appendix 2.

8 Financial Considerations

8.1 The HEART service will operate with aligned revenue budgets. Partners will continue to act as employers of the staff, who will be working in the shared service and will have:

- a separate cost centre for their shared service staff.
- the net budget for the cost centre will represent each partners general fund cost including the associated on costs.

8.1 The host will:

- Hold the budgets for the pooled parts of the service. This will include the new posts in the structure, and will also contain the hosts' share of the budget.

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- Other authorities will pay to host the contributions determined for this part of the overall service, in a timely fashion to be agreed.
- The host will also pay into this service their contribution.
- The pool cost centre will have a net budget of zero.
- Any overspend / underspend will be subject to the agreed rules on overs and unders.
- Charging between the Host and the Partners for HEART costs - the host will issue quarterly invoice of the agreed contributions to be paid by partners.

8.2 Reporting

All partners will be required to submit a quarterly return of full costs to the host to enable the full picture of the shared service to be brought together. A timetable for the submission of returns will need to be prepared and adhered to, to enable the upwards reporting and management of the service by the project manager and Board.

8.3 Management

All partners will require an officer responsible for authorising and forecasting on spend against the shared service that is incurred in their authority.

This should ideally be the officer who is then sitting on the HEART Board, as this keeps clear lines of accountability.

The board receives monthly reports on the overall financial position, with reasons for variances and recommendations for management action.

The final budget structure and first year budget would form part of that agreement and would make clear exactly which costs resided with which partner and how this translates into contributions on the shared service.

Service Budget

The service budget for HEART is set out in the table below.

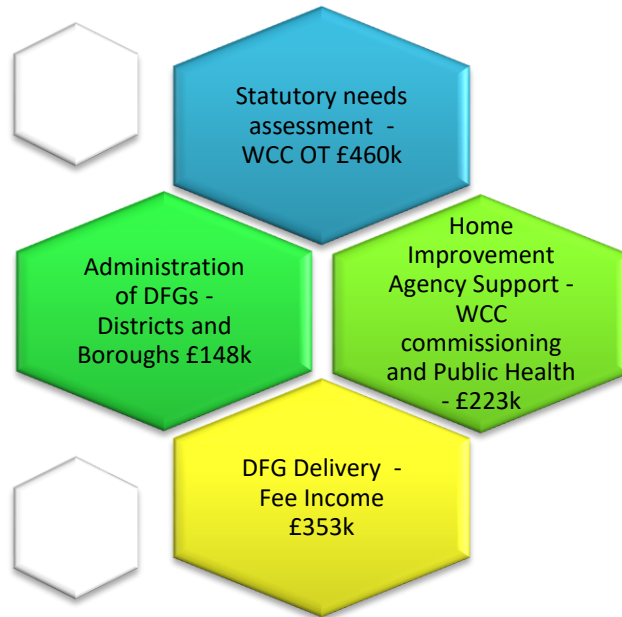
HEART SERVICE BUDGET	2016/17
Staffing	£ 1,024,310
Running Costs - e.g. training / travel etc	£ 33,860
Support Costs	£ 30,000
Sub-Total	£ 1,088,170
Additional Revenue costs of 16/17 additional capital grant	£ 97,073
Total	£ 1,185,243

The 2015/16 cost of these services countywide was £1,122,566. This was based on the DFG for that year, and should be compared with the total cost of HEART before the additional revenue costs for 2016/17 (£1,088,170).

The additional costs for 2016/17 have been added to structure presented in the report to deliver the additional capital which has been agreed through the BCF. The exact utilisation of this revenue will be determined by the HEART Board.

Contributions to HEART

How the budgets fit together:



Partners have agreed that the County will continue to pay for the Occupational Therapy input into the service and to make the same contributions to the home improvement agency aspect of the service. These are countywide allocations. The Districts and Boroughs contributions will be aligned to activity. Initially capital budget will be used as a proxy for activity as it is a good indicator of levels of work.

The capital grant and local capital allocations to be used by the service are as follows:

Council	DFG Capital Grant	Local Capital	Social Care Capital Grant	Total	%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	£ 608,192	£ 191,808	£ 260,012	£ 1,060,012	33%
North Warwickshire	£ 296,156	£ 3,844	£ 123,766	£ 423,766	13%
Rugby	£ 274,508	£ 75,492	£ 109,205	£ 459,205	14%
Stratford	£ 373,165	£ -	£ 144,567	£ 517,732	16%
Warwick	£ 373,058	£ 179,000	£ 155,487	£ 707,545	22%
Total	£ 1,925,079	£ 450,144	£ 793,036	£ 3,168,259	100%

As well as the DFG Capital Grant there is local capital, which is capital resources districts and boroughs have chosen to add to increase the pool of available funding, and half of the Social Care Capital Grant that has been awarded as part of the Better Care Fund. This was formerly a separate grant allocated to Upper Tier authorities. It has now been brought together with the Disabled Facilities Grant in the Better Care Fund. The guidance on this funding is clear that there should be a joint plan between all Better Care Fund partners on its' usage. For 2016/17 it has been agreed that half of the allocation for the Social Capital Fund should be allocated to Disabled Facilities Grants and therefore that is what is included above. Allocations for future years will be subject to further discussions.

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The percentages of overall capital works, are used to allocate the costs of the service for DFG administration (costs which cannot be recouped through fees) to the districts and boroughs.

The funding for the service would therefore be split between partners as follows:

Council	Revenue Contribution	% of contribution	Contribution from Fees (12.5%)	Total
Nuneaton and Bedworth	£ 49,574	33%	£ 132,501	£ 182,076
North Warwickshire	£ 19,819	13%	£ 52,971	£ 72,789
Rugby	£ 21,476	14%	£ 47,401	£ 68,877
Stratford	£ 24,213	16%	£ 32,358	£ 56,571
Warwick	£ 33,090	22%	£ 88,443	£ 121,533
Sub-Total	£ 148,173	100%	£ 353,674	£ 501,847
Warwickshire CC - OT	£ 460,455			£ 460,455
Warwickshire CC - Strat Comm	£ 187,092			£ 187,092
Warwickshire CC - Public Health	£ 35,850			£ 35,850
Total	£ 831,569		£ 353,674	£ 1,185,243

Spend on capital by borough can vary up or down, and the cost of the service to each council would vary with that. Decisions to spend more or less on capital will affect both the staffing levels of the service and the individual allocations.

For example if Authority A increased their capital spending to be 50% of the total capital being utilised, their revenue contribution would also increase to 50%. If additional staffing was needed for the service, this would increase the overall amount being distributed, and therefore would not necessarily result in lower cash contributions from other partners.

Adjustments will be made annually, according to planned activity. The actual splits of activity will be monitored by the board, to ensure that income is being maximised and that resources are in line with activity.

These principles will apply to all years of the agreement, and costs and allocations will vary with activity as set out above.

9. Benefits and Outcomes

9.1 Expected Benefits and Outcomes and KPI's

Expected Benefits and Outcomes	Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)
Promote & maintain independence in a safe and secure home environment: Enabling customers to maximise their potential and live in their chosen home environment by promoting customer independence, choice and control and improved support for informal carers to safely carry out their role.	Customer Outcomes

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Quality service for customers and carers: Right person at the right time with the right solution	Compliments Complaints Customer satisfaction survey
Skilled workforce: Promote and instil behaviours to provide high quality and compassionate interventions. Creates a competent work force that can cope with complex customer / carer needs. Provide learning and development opportunities. Improve staff retention by helping career progression.	Number of staff who gain / maintain competencies. Staff turnover numbers. Sickness levels
Prevention: Preventing hospital or residential admissions, delivering better outcomes and more effective and efficient solutions. Reduce, delay or prevent the need for residential placements. Better housing conditions.	Number of Council & DFG Major Adaptations End to End times for the provision of Major Adaptations Number of Enquires & Assessments Number & types of interventions delivered Drop-out rate WEMWBS mental wellbeing measurement scale Companionship scale Physical Activity measure

10. Risk Assessment (RAIDD)

10.1 Risks (what could happen)

- Limited support for the continuation of the proposed HEART service, which would result in destabilisation of the current service provision.
- Challenge from non-public sector organisations, which are currently providing aspects of the HIA provision, this could result in fragmented service across the county.

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- The reduction in DFG funding which would result in unmet demand and potentially an increase in care packages and residential placements.

10.2 Issues (is happening now)

Concerns about future revenue and capital funding.

10.3 Assumptions

All existing funding sources will be committed to the HEART service.

Resources from non-public sector organisation will transfer into HEART.

10.4 Dependencies

Reliant on support from all Partners Strategic Commissioning, District & Borough councils, Public Health and Adult Social Care & Support.

11. Key Milestones / Time Scales

1. Business case approved by all Partner authorities.(May to July 2016)
2. Shared Service agreement signed. (August 2016)
3. Implementation Plan deployed to continue with HEART (September 2016)
4. Staff consultation within HEART and with the non-public sector organisations (August / September 2016)

12. Decisions**12 Decisions (recommendations)**

1. To acknowledge the achievements and benefits to-date that the HEART service have delivered and its future potential to enable people to live as independently as possible in an accessible, safe and secure home.
2. To deliver the service specification in the Housing matrix with the option of the development of enhanced elements.
3. The service to be hosted by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council who will commission specialist services e.g. legal support from other authorities if required.
4. To incorporate the private sector housing function of Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council into HEART service structure to minimise disruption within the host.
5. To create and sign up to a shared service agreement with the option for Local Authorities to join at a later point.
6. To continue to invest in HEART – WCC, Public Health & 5 District & Borough Councils.
7. To agree a risk sharing and benefits model to ensure the host authority or other authorities do not receive a disproportionate financial risk.



Home Environment
Assessment & Response Team

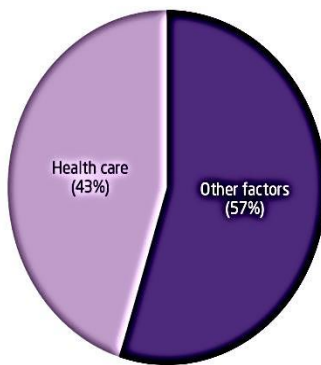
HEART: Helping you Live Independently at Home

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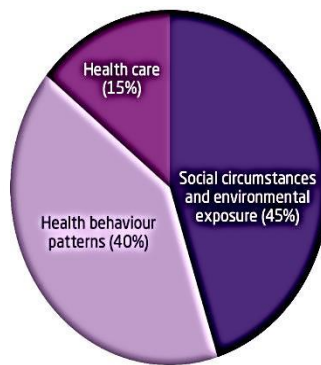
The importance of public health

Our health is determined by our genetics, lifestyle, the health care we receive and our wider economic, physical and social environment. Although estimates vary, the wider environment has the largest impact.

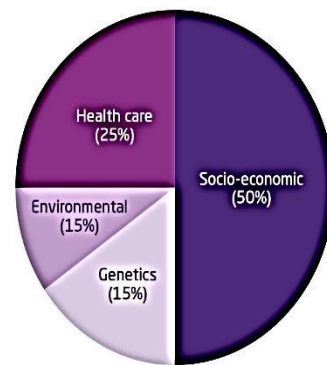
Bunker et al (1995)



McGiniss et al (2002)



Canadian Institute of Advanced Research (2012)



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Appendix 2 HEART Service Matrix

Assessment		Interventions		
Contact Enquiries - what are people accessing the service for?	Specialist Assessment	Information and Advice.	Direct Provision- (includes contracted service)	Supported provision - by an external provider (to the service).
Request type 1. Request for information on adapting property	Section 1 Housing Environment Assessment which consists of: Person's ability to carry out Activities of Daily Living (ADL) skills: Personal care skills (washing and dressing). Preparing and managing food and drinks Accessing and using Facilities in the home (toilet, bed, chair, bath) Mobility around the home surroundings. Carer support	Specialist knowledge provided through: Electronic - webpage Leaflets Verbal Local resources / services	(NET – Care Act 2014 National Eligibility Threshold) Professional Support: Occupational Therapy (strategies and techniques) Technical (building) Activities of Daily Living Equipment - (NET eligible) Assistive Technology Equipment (NET eligible) Minor Adaptations (NET eligible): Grab rails / Stair rails Ramp Door widening Social Housing equipment, adaptations and services e.g. lifeline –eligible and non eligible under NET.	Retail model through Integrated Community Equipment and Support Service (ICESs) Retail model through ICESs
Request type 2. Request for assistance with adapting a property to meet personal needs		Identify & demonstrate ADL equipment and refer to Retail market	Major Adaptations (DFG criteria private and social housing): Level access shower Stair lift Room conversion Property extension Minor Property Works: Minor property repairs & alterations to property Secure gate/entrance Fix leaking pipes Fix guttering Install soy holes /locks/ key safes Major Property Works: Roof repairs Damp proofing Property insulation Install new boiler	Retail model through ICESs Referrals to Social housing and their building contractors Building contractors not procured by the service for bespoke work. Handy person (not procured by service)
Request type 3. Request for financial or practical assistance through the Housing Authorities Housing Assistance Policies covering improvements and repairs to owner occupied housing	Section 2 Housing Environment Conditions - (Category 1 or 2 Hazards) relating to: Temperature and damp Internal pollutants - e.g. Carbon monoxide Space, security and lighting Hygiene and sanitation Slips, trips and falls Safety of services, amenities and structure	Signposting - referral to other specialist services: Welfare rights Citizens Advice Bureau Wheechair service GP Registered Social Landlords (RSL) Relevant local services Schemes or funding to improve housing e.g. energy efficiency schemes.	Visits with customers to social and private housing to determine whether the property will meet their needs. Housing Suitability Report and facilitating housing choices e.g. Extra care Completion of Application form / Support letter Full property inspection and report on housing hazards. Assistance assessment in relation to public funds. Caseworker support to deliver improvements and reduction of hazards.	Building contractors not procured by the service for bespoke work. Private Sector Enforcement Handy person not procured by service. Specialist services
	Section 3 Alternative Accommodation Assessment when there is a need to move home due to section 1 assessment.	Advice on what a house will need to provide to allow an individual to access the main facilities		
	Section 4 Housing Health and Safety Rating System Full House Assessment	Information on housing hazards under the HHRS		
Request type 4. Home Safety Service	Section 5 Home Environment Falls Risk Assessment in relation to the person interacting in their home.	Information on personal and housing hazards when related to an older or disabled person.	Use of procured building contractors. Falls Risk Reduction Action Plan	Handy person not procured by service. Specialist services
Relevant request types 1, 2, 3	Section 6 Financial Assessment in relation to housing needs	Information on the access criteria for housing assistance	Test of resources assessments Identification and referral to benefit providers / assessors. Charity applications and support letters.	

APPENDIX 1

Options Assessments and Services		Proposed Interventions		
Enquiry Type	Assessment	Advice & Information	Direct Provision- (includes contracted service)	Supported provision - by an external provider (to the service).
Relevant request types	Service 1 Identify and co-ordinate property move	Information on housing options for older and disable people and practical advice on moving home	Assessment identify housing options for client group.	
1,2,3			Provide practical assistance with moving property for those not able to do so, acting as an 'agent'. ¹	
Relevant request types	Service 2 Housing adaptation design with potential customers e.g. to construction companies.	Information of design criteria for adaptations.	Liaise with customers and designers / architects on design features to suit someone who is self financing adaptation work. Provide information to social and private developers.	
1,2				
Relevant request types	Service 3 Identification and assistance with the marketing of adapted properties in the private sector.	Register and access to adapted properties through working with estate agents and web promotion of adapted properties.	Matching service to allow residents to seek already adapted properties that will meet or contribute to meeting long term needs.	
1,2				
Relevant request types	Service 4 Medical Reviews for Social Housing Applications	N/A – refer to housing options	Assess conditions against allocations policy criteria.	
Relevant request types	Service 5 Providing a pathway for the delivery of facilities for medical equipment at home e.g. dialysis areas, hygienic cleanable treatment areas.	N/A	Work with health services to deliver adaptations for customers who need them to facilitate treatment at home.	
Relevant request types	Service 6 Screening for Health & Well-being: Nutrition - MUST Frailty Cognitive function	N/A refer to specialist web sites.	Assessment, screening, referrals and advice.	

Report of the HEART Management Board

February/October 2020

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides information about the HEART shared service partnership. The partnership was established to better deliver the legal requirements on Borough and District Councils to provide mandatory grants for private housing assistance (Disabled Facilities Grants). Its' aim is to deliver holistic home assessments and interventions to enable applicants to remain independent at home.
- 1.2 The HEART shared service is a legal partnership of the six Councils in Warwickshire. It is delivered by two teams – one in the north and one in the south – with the host authority, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, provides a single line managed staff structure.
- 1.3 The information in this report provides the background to the establishment of the partnership and an update on current performance. It also sets out the HEART Management Board's recommendations for improvements which need to be made in order to deliver a successful service.

Recommendations

- a That the progress to provide one, consistent service to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants for the whole County be noted; and
- b That the findings of the independent review of the service be considered; and
- c That action plan to improve the service be agreed: and
- d That a further independent review by undertaken in March/ April 2021 to provide assurance that the actions to improve the service have been completed: and
- e That the necessity to consider the position of the host in advance of the end of the 5 year contractual term of the shared service partnership in March 2022 be noted.

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2011 an ambitious and challenging collaborative project was proposed for Warwickshire with the aim of creating a new way of delivering grant assisted home improvements and housing adaptations for disabled and older people across Warwickshire.
- 2.2 The project was agreed following a fundamental system review which had shown that the traditional way of delivering services to provide Disabled Facility Grant adaptations was inefficient. This included delays of over 395 days from a customer enquiry to providing an adaptation. Whilst not satisfactory this level of performance was in line with the national picture. In Warwickshire there was a 35% drop out rate as teams struggled to deliver across the organisational barriers of up to 3 organisations in each district and borough locality. Until the review was undertaken there was no comprehensive information which showed how the system was performing.
- 2.3 The aim of the project was to create a new customer focused service delivery model. This would bring together different professions from the many organisations providing the services in Warwickshire, create a new job role and link together existing service within a service model that involved working together to deliver holistic housing assessment and appropriate solutions.

2.4 A Business Case was drafted in 2012 which set out a comprehensive proposal to improve and explore the future delivery of housing adaptations and the range of services provided by Home Improvement Agencies across Warwickshire. Stage 1 was to develop the experimental service in Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire involving the Borough and County Councils. Stage 2 was to roll in Rugby Borough Council area which required the involvement of Orbit Housing Group. Stage 3 was to establish a similar service to south Warwickshire involving the District and Borough Councils as well as Age UK and Warwickshire County Council.

2.5 The proposal was ambitious and challenging because it involved many partners. Staff from all organisations were to be brought together in one service, new systems of work needed to be forged from disparate methods of service provision, it had to deal with a variety of organisational cultures and policies and provide data for two separate IT systems.

3 Partnership Proposal

3.1 In 2016 the Business Case was revised. (*Appendix 1*) It reflected on the experience of the pilots and set out a comprehensive and radical proposal for the service.

3.2 At that time, as part of the pilot experiment, there was a single line managed team for the north of the County with agreed working protocols in place. The service in the south was in the pilot project phase. Age UK and Orbit Housing Group continued to provide Home Improvement Services.

3.3 The new Business Case asserted that following the initial review and the implementation of new ways of working the pilots were showing that the redesign of the customer pathway, using a lean thinking approach, had brought significant improvements. The initial customer contact assessment steps had reduced from 22 to 1 through direct contact to the integrated team, there was a single assessment process, collaborative working had improved, and a range of interventions could be offered to customers requiring assistance. Evidence was shared that showed that the time taken from initial enquiry to the delivery of a solution for the customer had reduced significantly (from an average of 365 days to 138 days) and the drop out rate had reduced.

3.4 The Business Case proposed a shared service vehicle involving the 5 Districts and Boroughs and County Council. There would be a host authority with a distinct role in the partnership for delivery and a Governance Board comprising of senior managers from each partner. Whilst the host would provide the organisational and support functions the spirit of the partnership was to be one of shared endeavor to improve and develop the service.

3.5 The Business Plan promoted the development of one organisation - HEART - the new Home Environment Assessment and Response Team. This organization would create a streamlined, customer focused service delivery model across Warwickshire which would bring different professions together. To do this a new role of 'Housing Assessment Officer' was created to combine case work skills of an Occupational Therapy Assistant and Housing Case Worker. This role, and the necessity for its development, encapsulated the need for the service to have a holistic and tailored approach to meet the needs of customers in order to enable them to live independently.

3.6 The Business Case gave a firm basis and clear direction for the new service. It is underpinned by a legal contract. The shared service contractual agreement was signed by Warwickshire County Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth, North Warwickshire and Rugby in October 2016. In 2017 Warwick and Stratford joined the legal partnership. The contract is for 5 years and set out the terms for the host authority (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) and for the other partners. It includes terms for financial arrangements, a combined staff structure, employment arrangements, use of IT, dealing with complaints and the role of the management board- with the Chair of the board being decided annually. It makes provision for any partner to leave the

partnership if they give 12 months notice. Given its ambition and challenges it also set out a requirement for the management board to conduct a formal review when the arrangements had been in place for 2 years.

4 Development of the Shared Service

4.1 From the Spring of 2017 the partnership acted to build on the early successes of the pilot projects.

- In accordance with the partnership agreement the host appointed a Head of Home Environment Services to lead and manage the service and report to the management board.
- The structure of the team was established using a combination of HR procedures which included a mix of secondments and permanent posts.
- The role of Housing Assessment Officer was novel and created for the Warwickshire model therefore bespoke training was provided for existing staff and newly recruited team members.
- Comprehensive information about the service was developed to be presented to the Board in order to track performance and to allow for service improvements to be developed. The reports expose areas of the service which would have otherwise remained hidden to scrutiny and therefore invite intervention when appropriate.
- The new model demanded a holistic response to a customer's request for assistance. In order to deliver this a joint Financial Assistance Policy was developed and agreed in September 2017. This enabled Assessment Officers to deliver more than Disabled Facilities Grants to ensure that the whole house environment was suitable to promote independence. It also provided for a none means tested grant for urgent, priority cases.
- Noting that part of the delay in delivering adaptations was due to contractors not acting quickly enough a procurement exercise was undertaken to provide a firm contractual framework for quality and delivery for all adaptations.

4.2 The novelty and the ambition of the service was recognised as national good practice by Foundations, the professional body for Home Improvement Agencies, for forging better service methods in the delivery of Disabled Facility Grants and Home Improvement Services generally.

4.3 Recognising its role in enabling residents to remain independent at home the HEART Management Board has become part of the Warwickshire Cares Better Together infrastructure because the services provided can act to improve outcomes for well being. These include reducing non elective admissions to hospital, reducing delayed transfers of care from hospital, reducing permanent admissions to residential and nursing care and help to increase the effectiveness of re-ablement services.

4.4 The most recent performance reports show that demand for HEART services continues to rise – 8% over the last year. Home Safety cases are a significant part of the increase with interventions providing quick solutions for clients. The average time taken to deliver adaptations for adults in the south team is 145 days and 197 in the north team. Customer satisfaction rates are high and the team receive many appreciate comments about the work that they undertake.

4.5 The performance reports show sufficient detail to indicate where there are problems in the system which need addressing. Over the last 12 months there have been significant delays in both teams between the initial assessment and a home visit. This has been due to staff shortages in the team.

5 Improving Performance

- 5.1 The HEART management board has received reports about intransigent matters which are hampering the development and improvement of the service and which need to be addressed. These include a difficult environment for recruitment which is resulting in staff shortages and the limitations of the use of the IT systems used by the team and which are not fit for the purpose of supporting the new service.
- 5.2 There have been difficulties in achieving a settled staff structure with a positive team culture since the shared service was established. Secondment arrangements caused significant problems for managers and staff. Vacancies have impeded the service from the outset of the partnership. This has been exacerbated by staff in the same team having different pay grades and working to different terms and conditions. Recruitment exercises have frequently caused internal churn of staff rather than delivering new staff into the team. Following concerns raised by the Head of Home Environment Services with the Board a meeting with HR Managers in February 2019 discussed how these issues could be addressed.
- 5.3 Unfortunately there has continued to be a high level of vacancies and some long term sickness the team. Using agency staff has only been partly successful in helping to reduce waiting lists for services. Agreed systems of work have been disrupted as a consequence of vacancies and the use of agency staff who are not trained for the Housing Assessment Officer role. Some of these issues have caused pockets of low morale however individuals in the team are committed to providing a good service for customers and where necessary have stepped out of their job role to fill in service gaps caused by vacancies. In doing so the systems of work recommended by the Business Case have been disturbed and now need to be revised and reformed.
- 5.4 The staff structure established for the shared service agreement reflects the level of grant income and customer demand at the time it was agreed. Subsequently Government has increased the level of capital grant income available for adaptations in order to support people to remain independent at home and demand has increased. The Board will make recommendations for the review of the staff structure to support current demand and reduce the time customers wait for the full service but in doing so revenue funding has to be made available to support capital budget spending.
- 5.5 HEART staff input information into two IT systems. This has been the case since its inception. One supports the housing element of the service and the other the social care aspect. The housing IT system is no longer fit for purpose. The County Council has recently implemented a new IT system for social care which is being implemented in HEART. Following an Internal Audit report about data accuracy in performance reports and concerns raised by the Head of Home Environment Services about the staff time taken to input and find data in 2018 the Board commissioned an independent review of data management systems and the production of performance reports from Foundations. A report was presented to the Board at its meeting in February 2019. The report set out some significant issues with data reporting mechanisms and indicated that the IT systems used are not fit for purpose for the HEART service. It also noted a conservative estimate of 5 to 6 days per month used in providing management information and therefore the need to a system which would enable automation was urgent. As well as concerns about data entry the staff have to use two IT systems and not all staff are allowed to use the social care system due to data protection requirements.
- 5.6 As the IT systems have not fully supported the HEART service and cause duplication and inconsistent management data the Board committed to make improvements. This includes implementing a new system to support the HEART service, providing for an agreed joint data security policy to enable all staff to access the systems which reflect service activity and seeking a way of integrating the systems to avoid time being spent in duplicate entry.

5.7 The Government grant funding which supports the delivery of the HEART services has increased over the last 2 years. Each authority receives a designated amount. The grant funding is spent in the designated Borough or District and is not pooled. For Warwickshire the grant funding for 2019/2020 is £4,516,609. This is capital funding and can be used for capital spending only. It does not support revenue funding which is required for staff. Services are allowed to charge a fee for the assistance that is provided to a customer to deliver an adaptation or home improvement. This fee does support the funding of the staff structure. Given the need to enhance the team in order to reduce waiting lists for visits and meet increasing demand the Board will be recommending a review of the fee structure.

6 HEART Shared Service Partnership Review

6.1 In accordance with the HEART shared services agreement an independent review has been undertaken after two years of its implementation.

6.2 The review was conducted by an independent consultant. It considered five key lines of enquiry agreed by the Board:

Leadership and governance and operational management is effective
To include partnership arrangements, governance, the board and reporting.

Data is recorded and counted accurately (operational and strategic level)
To include operational data, trends, understanding system wide and highlighting pressure points.

Processes are optimised
To include the flow through the system and testing process when under pressure and working with partners.

Demand is actively managed
To include performance against priority outcomes, benchmark comparisons, capacity and productivity.

Service offer and capacity is appropriate
To include expenditure and how we compare nationally, capacity in the system and cost benefit analysis of services as well as consistency across the teams. Leadership and governance and operational

A summary of the independent review is included with this report at *Appendix 2*. Its main findings are:

- A lack of staff capacity is a contributory factor in the increasing waiting times customers are experiencing for the service.
- The absence of appropriate IT systems is a factor in demand not being met more efficiently.
- A more flexible system of assessing customer needs and prioritising interventions should be introduced.
- The systems of work in HEART could be more efficient and should be reviewed to provide for better service pathways which are fully implemented by staff and meet customer needs
- In line with the findings of the Foundations report data collection methods and performance reporting should be improved
- The management board reflect on its own role in delivering the HEART service and to ensure that the leadership, governance and operational management is provided in a manner which allows HEART to thrive and meet customer expectations.

APPENDIX 2

The reviewer undertook an options appraisal to include in her final report. Her recommendation is that whilst the difficulties being experienced by the service need to be addressed the underlying premise of HEART with its concept of a holistic, unified service to deliver adaptations in Warwickshire remains the most preferable option.

To respond to the independent review and address matters that have come to the Board's attention over the last 12 months a service improvement plan has been drafted for approval. This includes:

- Specifying and procuring an IT system to support the HEART service and work effectively with the County Council's preferred IT software. Agree a revised privacy statement which will enable all staff to fully utilise both IT systems which are used by the service.
- Review the performance data provided to the Board to ensure the information can be used to give strategic direction for the service
- Updating and revising the staff structure, management structure, how HR policies support the team, where the team is based and how budget provision can support recruitment of additional staff.
- Use budget reserves to increase the staff establishment and recruit dedicated duty officers support customer assessments and release other staff to undertake home visits.
- Review the level of fee charges in order to revise the staff structure and meet current demand
- Appoint an experienced consultant to review and recommend efficiencies in systems of work and in accordance with recommendations update procedures.
- Revise procedures to enable the team to assess the need for urgent action and fast track interventions for customers at an early stage
- Reflecting on the requirements of the shared service agreement and recommending changes where they are needed to enhance governance, leadership and service performance.
- Refresh the Business Case in order to give clear direction for the shared service

The Board is acting promptly where it can to complete actions in the improvement plan however some have financial implications and will require consideration and agreement before they can be completed.

The Board has appointed an experienced consultant to work with the team to provide system improvements which will result in better outcomes for customers. In order to track the actions required to deliver the improvements a plan which will be monitored by the Board has been produced. The current version is attached at *Appendix 3* for information. Whilst this report and the initial action plan were drafted in February 2020 progress was inevitably interrupted by the Government's COVID-19 virus safety requirements. The action plan shows that good progress is now being made by the team with the support of the consultant.

It has been agreed that there will be a further independent review in March/April 2021 to evaluate the Board's achievements in the completion of the improvement plan and to consider whether the performance of the service has improved.

The report of the independent reviewer includes reference to some positive case studies. They are included here to indicate the breadth of the HEART service and how it can reach out to meet its customers individual needs.

Case 1 - "Urgent potential hospital discharge case – HEART intervention:

The ward manager contacted the HEART duty desk to discuss an elderly patient. There was concern that mould and damp in the person's home was an infection risk. It would seem that mould had been a long-standing issue in the property and an investigation determined that this was mainly due to condensation (not opening windows).

The Private Sector Housing Manager (RW) instructed that permission should be gained from the customer and access via a key-holder to enter the property. The ward manager obtained these and the customer's key safe number which was given to the HAO.

Following an inspection visit to the home, the HAO has engaged with contractors to look at a preventative solution regarding issues with the flat roof, which is causing the damp problems.

Urgent work will be undertaken so that the customer can be discharged home to a better environment that will reduce the risk of infection and readmission."

Case 2 - "Delayed hospital discharge case – swift HEART intervention resolved issue.

The SM for Integrated Care Services was notified of a delayed hospital discharge patient that OT's had visited her home and discovered issues with her toilet and other faults in the home.

The ambulance crew had isolated the water due to a leaking pipe from the downstairs toilet area and a leak from the upstairs toilet.

The HEART Manager (LP) arranged for a member of the technical team to visit the property to assess the situation with the water. Permission to access the property was gained from the customer.

The customer wanted to be there when HEART arrived so a plan was agreed for her to be discharged to the home address with 2 members of staff from the hospital. It was arranged for a HAO and a plumber from Activate Energy to meet at the property at the same time.

The water leaks were successfully repaired to facilitate discharge."

Appendix 2

HEART Review - Executive Summary

The independent review of the HEART service was commissioned by the HEART Board to provide assurance (to the HEART Board, the Housing Board and wider partners on the Warwickshire Cares Better Together (BCF) Programme) that the HEART service has a robust work programme to deliver improved health and social care outcomes and maximise people's independence in their own homes.

HEART is a partnership service between Warwickshire Councils. The service provides advice and assistance to deliver disabled adaptations and home improvements to keep customer's homes safe, secure and warm. Caseworkers assess needs and housing conditions and provide tailored advice and support on a range of issues including:

- Home equipment and adaptations
- Housing conditions, repairs and safety matters
- Benefits, grants or loans for essential building works

The HEART service with the Disabled Facilities Grant can support the Better Care Fund priorities which can improve the following outcomes:

1. Reduce non-elective admissions
2. Reduce delayed transfers of care
3. Reduce permanent admissions to residential and nursing care
4. Increase the effectiveness of reablement

The Review Process

The review was conducted by an independent consultant and covered what was included in the review outline, scoped by Board, under 5 key lines of enquiry:

1. Demand: current and future
2. Service offer and capability
3. Process
4. Data and information
5. Leadership, governance and operational management

The methodology of the review included a desktop review of all relevant information, data and board papers, plus shadowing at the HEART board and several meetings with HEART staff.

Demand: current and future

The HEART review identified that demand has not been effectively managed, resulting in a waiting list of people waiting for an assessment. Lack of staff capacity has been identified as a contributory factor to the waiting list and funding for additional staff to alleviate this pressure has recently been approved by the HEART board. Staff and stakeholders have fed back, as part of the review, that they are concerned that there are vulnerable people waiting for an assessment.

Staff capacity challenges and the absence of an effective triage system has resulted in the current service not meeting current levels of demand, with a reported average 56 days wait for a home assessment visit.

Referrals to HEART have previously been processed in date order and there was an absence of an effective triage system to help identify and prioritise urgent cases. Duty and triage have been prioritised as urgent business by the HEART Board.

The absence of an appropriate IT system has contributed to demand not being met more efficiently. This has exacerbated the lack of consistency around demand figures reported to the HEART Board and has resulted in not being able to compare performance figures year on year.

Minor adaptations are fast tracked through direct issue because they are non means tested, as part of the Home Safety Grant scheme. More complex customers are required to wait for lengthy periods of time for a home assessment visit. Customers requiring a major adaption face lengthy waiting times, delays in between DFG processes, which can result in cancellations, dropouts and lower DFG completion rates. Without an effective triage process, there is a high risk that the current ways of working are resulting in inequitable access to HEART services.

The review highlighted that there is no evidence of explicit reviews, against the outcomes framework, to verify whether customer needs had been met.

The review highlighted inconsistencies in the way in which the 'drop out' rate had been calculated. Changes to the parameter, had not been agreed by the HEART Board in advanced, resulting in a misplaced confidence in the representation of dropouts.

There is no strategy in place to improve the uptake of adaptations, both DFG eligible and fee-paying individuals.

The hospital discharge grant was identified as an option that can be used to meet demand, a non means tested option to support older or disabled people being discharged from hospital.

Most patients can be discharged safely from hospital without the adaptation in place on a temporary basis but that is not the case if the accommodation needs deep cleaning or decluttering due to the risk to the patient of falls etc.

Opportunities to further explore the use of hospital discharge grants for deep cleaning, hazard removal and urgent home repairs will be explored as part of the service improvement plan.

Service Offer and Capability

The review identified several areas which will enhance the HEART offer, these include:

- Putting the person at the centre with better communication and promoting choice – there is a need to develop better partnerships with health and social care, using strengths-based approaches and good conversations. It is recommended that HEART assessment forms are aligned with this new approach.
- Triage/prioritising - eligibility criteria is deemed unclear and inconsistent, it is recommended that the eligibility criteria for the HEART service is developed in a user-friendly version for customers and staff and volunteers, that illustrate the customer journey. Customers with more complex needs tend to wait longer, due to requiring a home assessment visit by an occupational therapist. There appear to be three sets of customers; self-funders, those assessed and eligible and those assessed and not eligible.
- Strength based approach using good conversations
- Collaborative working with partners e.g. Fire Service
- Better identification of need – through advertising services and use of JSNA insight
- Culture and policy changes - an indication was provided during the review that the HEART service was being used for housing suitability services. This is not a service HEART should be undertaking.

The review identified inconsistencies in approach given to customers and referrers, depending on the member of staff on duty, this also highlights inconsistencies in induction and training.

Stronger links are required with health and social care partners to ensure early identification and efficient management of customers who will benefit most from housing adaptations and interventions.

HEART needs to be promoted more amongst health, social care and the third sector.

It is imperative to improve the customer experience from the first point of contact through to completion.

Early intervention/prevention

Home safety grant – this has grown in success, from 11 orders in 17/18 to 588 orders in 18/19. Further consideration is needed to ensure there is ample staff capacity to process the increasing demand. The HEART board should consider linking Home Safety Grants with the Fire Service/Hospital Liaison. The home safety grant is non means tested and there was some feedback as part of the review that some HEART staff felt this should not be used by people who own their own homes. Training and guidance have now been issued to address this challenge.

A positive example of using the Home Safety Grant has been used to cover the costs of repairing stair lifts for customers when their 5-year guarantee expires.

Staff feedback

Staff fed back that their skills and expertise were not being used efficiently, either they were being asked to do tasks that another staff level could complete, or, they were being allocated customers that should have been supported by a more senior member of the team. It is recommended that staff capacity and skills need reviewing.

Staff also fed back that increased workflow was due to having to use a cumbersome IT system, which if streamlined, would release staff capacity.

The standard operating procedure was reported as not being fit for purpose, going forward it is recommended that both the induction process and standard operating procedure are reviewed and updated.

Recruitment and retention were identified as a challenge for the HEART service, holding vacancies and a delay between recruitment approval from Board and appropriate remedial action. Inconsistent terms and conditions remain a challenge with differences in local arrangements, resulting in inequity across roles.

It has become evident that whilst the ambition of the HACEP project is well intentioned (installing level access showers to customers who had previously had bath lifts, central heating for customer with no central heating and external wall insulation), it may have resulted in an adverse impact on staff capacity to deliver HEART core business, as they were required to spend time on the project, potentially resulting in an inequitable service offer, not based on need.

Process

The current processes at HEART are not optimised to enable flow through the service and this is evident given the number of customers waiting for a home assessment visit. Unclear processes, pathways and a lack of a suitable IT system has left staff feeling unable to work efficiently.

The review identified that a greater strategic oversight is required to develop pathways into HEART and to work more effectively with the third sector to avoid hospital admissions and facilitate hospital discharges.

The review identified a lack of an effective triage system. Referrals into the service are processed in date order, regardless of complexity, resulting in potentially vulnerable complex patients waiting longer than less complex patients. Since the start of the review, this matter has been given urgent attention and appropriate pathways are now being designed/developed.

The review reported concern that the HEART service is hampered by lengthy waiting times, cumbersome processes and unclear pathways. Induction and training is lengthy and the manual/standard operating procedure needs to be reviewed and updated, along with an appropriate ICT infrastructure to support.

Data and Information

The review highlighted that a disproportionate amount of time has been spent on producing figures for performance reports and that these data reports have been assessed as often incorrect, which has resulted in the Board making decisions on incomplete or inaccurate data. Moving forward, data functions need to be improved to ensure consistency and accuracy of performance reporting.

The HEART service does not actively use insight to target preventative services, for example the JSNA data can be used to target interventions or address inequalities.

The review identified that the 'drop out' calculation had been altered, which has resulted in a low percentage being reported. Going forward the HEART Board will need to review and agree the parameters of this calculation to ensure this is reported consistently in the future.

The current IT system and ways in which data is captured is not fit for purpose and there are multiple opportunities for error. The performance report development review, undertaken by Foundations in 2018 highlighted challenges around data extraction from Flare being incorrect and often require rerunning and management time to check their accuracy. A disproportionate amount of time is spent on producing performance report for Board due to the IT system.

The review highlighted that customer outcomes are 'assumed' (based on experience of what adaptations can achieve for customers but moving forward, more customer outcomes can be achieved working in a strengths based approach) via a matrix, rather than established, meaning unvalidated customer outcomes have been reported.

There is little evidence to suggest that data is used proactively to identify trends or forecast demand.

IT would benefit from a case management solution.

Leadership, Governance and Operational Management

The review highlighted perceptions of ineffective leadership from staff, Board members and stakeholders, suggesting this as a reason as to why the service is not fully meeting all of the objectives within the Shared Service Agreement.

Concerns were raised about low staff morale, due to a number of factors.

There should be a renewed focus on staff capacity and the structure required to meet demands.

Stakeholders fed back that the financial position of the service is unclear and greater transparency and accountability about spend is required. In addition, decisions about spending priorities in relation to the reserves is also required.

Outcomes and recommendations from the Performance Report Review carried out by Foundations in December 2018 have not been given adequate leadership focus, in particular the challenge around ICT infrastructure, systems, processes and case management. This delay has resulted in a disproportionate amount of management time being spent entering KPI data and staff are left feeling frustrated that the various IT systems do not support them to work effectively.

The review identified some internal leadership challenges, both in relation to the HOST organisation and the HEART service. More leadership time should be directed towards improving customer pathways, identifying blockages and causes, process mapping and developing a more efficient workflow and IT system. Internal leadership needs to be more present in both north/south office locations.

Staff fed back they do not feel there is a positive culture within the team. There were concerns from staff that there had been a recent investigation, which some staff were involved in giving evidence, however they had not been provided any feedback on the outcome and therefore, lack confidence that the matter had been effectively addressed.

Staff also fed back that their professional opinions and professional requirements/standards were not respected, because some instructions and directives could compromise their professional registration.

The review highlighted the need to produce an up to date, refocused business plan, which reflects the current issues of concern.

Much of the 'project' work has not been formally evaluated, nor sufficient evidence presented to Board to provide a strategic business case for such projects. It is recommended that for the foreseeable future, HEART 'core business', should be the focus of the Board and the staff team.

Since the start of the review, HEART staff have been more regularly consulted and communicated with, and this has been welcomed by the staff team.

The absence of suitable IT system coupled with the standard operating procedure/manual being out of date has resulted in staff feeling ill equipped and not confident in their roles.

Since the initiation of the HEART review, staff have reported an improved relationship with the Director of Housing and Communities.

HEART Board

Momentum is lost between Board meetings and there is a recommendation to increase the frequency of these meetings in order to retain a focus on continuous improvement. There needs to be a stronger strategic oversight and the effectiveness of decisions needs to be regularly monitored. Going forward, the Board should decide on the strategic priorities, agenda and monitor progress of the service improvement plan.

It has been acknowledged by Board members that there is a need for a structural and governance change and moving forward, it is imperative for business cases to be presented to the Board for full consideration and approval, as well as prioritising how reserves are spent. This will also allow for clarification as to whether the objectives of such business cases are aligned to those within the shared partnership agreement.

Financial position

The financial position of the HEART service requires clarity and transparency around underspend, reserves fee income and any surplus that had been agreed to return to partners.

Shared partnership agreement

It is recommended that the shared partnership agreement is reviewed during the improvement plan, to reintroduce some of the key principals and quality assurance.

Objective 1 – integrate housing and occupational therapy services to meet statutory requirements

To support a more effective integration of the service, there needs to be clearer pathways to ensure quality of services, information and advice, access and that better customer experience is achieved.

Staff feedback indicated that the role of OTs within HEART is not fully optimised and the shortage has resulted in delays before allocations or assessment home visits can take place. It is recommended that the capacity of OTs is increased so that statutory requirements are met in a timely manner.

Difficulty in resolving HR challenges around varied terms and conditions and pay needs a renewed focus, this will enhance the integration of housing and OT services.

Objective 2 – maximise customers potential within their homes and improve quality of life

This objective was identified as being partly met, due to pathways and processes requiring simplifying, with a more customer focused approach, in order to support customers meeting their full potential.

Objective 3 – reduce pressure on residential care, hospital and reduce care and support needs

Urgent improvements are required to make HEART a more responsive service as the waiting times for assessment and delays in DFG completion are compromising the aim of reducing pressure on more expensive placements. An analysis of why people drop out of the process may give further insight to improve service provision.

Objective 4 – to be proactive and avoid crisis situations for customers and carers

The review concluded that this objective is compromised because; the lack of an effective triage system to deal with urgent and complex referrals, the waiting list is not effectively managed, processes are not mapped to avoid blockages and joint working with other services that could support are underdeveloped. In order to resolve these complex service challenges, more proactive leadership is required with a renewed focus on customers.

Objective 5&6 – promote health and wellbeing, falls prevention, hypothermia, reducing hazards in the home

More evidence is required about how this objective has been met.

Hoarding has been identified as an increasing demand, however a better understanding around the challenges of this is required. The introduction of the Hospital Liaison Officer project will assist with this. It could also be considered as part of the Home Safety aspect of HEART, providing it is planned and resourced appropriately.

Objective 7 – prevent hospital admissions and facilitate timely hospital discharges

Further work is required to make more frequent use of the hospital discharge grant to avoid readmission.

Objective 8 – develop staff with skills and capabilities to provide intervention and achieve better outcomes for customers

This objective was judged as being partly met. Recent developments since the review, have been made to support improvement of staff performance, such as a renewed focus on induction and training.

Staff recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge, impacting on the service's ability to meet demand.

The quality of staff supervision requires monitoring and consideration needs to be given around who mentors new staff within the service.

Staff have fed back that complex cases are sometimes allocated to the Home Assessment Officers and they do not feel skilled or competent enough to assess or case manage. Improving recruitment and retention of OTs will support a resolution to this, along with the renewed focus on induction and training to upskill and increase confidence of the Home Assessment Officers.

Opportunities to further develop the role of the Hospital Liaison workers to support an improved transition to out of hospital.

The review highlighted outcomes are 'assumed' using a matrix which captures potential outcomes. Practitioners need to be implementing a more strength-based approach with customers which will be more focused on customer outcomes.

20/10/2020

HEART Improvement Plan Summary	Start Date	End Date	Latest Status
Case Backlog from Covid			
Identify the Current Backlog - Complete	27/07/2020	28/08/2020	COMPLETE - new weekly reporting routines developed - further development work in progress
FLARE Data Cleansing	28/08/2020	30/10/2020	Ongoing activity, using the new data reporting routines.
Identify Urgent Cases	28/09/2020	30/10/2020	Ongoing activity, Triage Trial being implemented looking to see how the cases can be flagged on the Civica FLARE system so that urgent cases can be identified and reported on more easily.
Backlog Recovery Plan	28/09/2020	02/01/2021	This is dependent upon several issues, but mainly staffing levels within the team. Recruitment currently underway. A large number of cases have been impacted by Covid-19, due to non-availability of contractors/ limited access to homes etc.
Systems and Processes			
New Housing Assistance Management Software to Replace the CIVICA FLARE System.	21/09/2020	30/06/2021	Planning has started - Business case being developed for board on the 12/11/2020 - Option to go with the CIVIC CX Software already procured by Nuneaton Bedworth Borough Council - Timescales and Costs still to be worked up with suppliers and partners
Staff and Team Communications to be reviewed and enhanced where required - Complete	03/08/2020	17/09/2020	COMPLETE - 121 meetings set every 6 weeks, Team meetings set up on a regular basis. Occupational Therapists / Housing Assessment Officers / Housing Improvement Officer champions confirmed. Meeting held on the 14/10/2020 to discuss the role with the champions.
Conduct a 3Q's Staff Analysis to identify current issues that impact upon the service - Complete	26/08/2020	21/09/2020	COMPLETE - findings published and being used alongside the initial review to inform the continuous improvement activity - biggest issue being the need for a new software solution
Develop an appropriate priority Triage process for the HEART service.	01/09/2020	27/11/2020	Draft Procedure developed - Trial to be conducted in October and November. Staff Training and Reporting process being developed. See also 1.3 above for reporting.
MOSAIC (Warwickshire County Council's Social Care System) - Non - WCC Staff to start using MOSAIC for HEART client assessments	21/09/2020	27/11/2020	Staff meetings held week beginning 5/10/2020 to get full team feedback - Results confirm the move to MOSAIC use by the Non-WCC staff - Implementation plan to be developed by a working group.
Development of the Performance Reporting Process for HEART	31/08/2020	31/12/2020	Work in progress - Draft PowerBi dashboard report is now in development - will include backlog reporting, Budget reporting, run charts and trends etc.
Customer Satisfaction Survey - Feedback volume and it's use	01/09/2020	30/10/2020	Review the customer satisfaction survey taking in to account the DFG best practice guidance. Look at moving to 100% customer surveys instead of the current 20%
Improve Customer access to HEART service details	01/09/2020	30/10/2020	Working on getting "SARA" added to the HEART website in a prominent place, including a link through to relevant WCC web page. Helpful links pages to be added to the HEART web site.
Staffing			
Staff Vacancies	26/08/2020	30/11/2020	Current Vacancies - 2 x Duty Officers - 3 x Housing Assessment Officers, 1 x Housing Improvement Officer - Recruitment currently under way with the first interviews, week beginning 12/10/2020
Improvement Project Support Staff	26/08/2020	30/11/2020	Manager has submitted job profile to Human Resources for review. Back-fill will be required to support the new software implementation.
Relaunch the HR group to support the HR protocols across the partners to ensure agreement adhered to:	01/09/2020	31/03/2021	Timings to be reviewed and advised.
Promote the HEART Service	TBA	TBA	On Hold at present, Whilst Service capacity is reinstated

Title of Committee Overview and Scrutiny
Date of meeting 9th February 2021

Title: Noise Complaints

Lead Officer: Andrew Hill (Safer Communities Manager)

Portfolio Holder: Judith Falp

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: No

Included within the Forward Plan: No

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: None

Final Decision: n/a

Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	29/01/2021	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	29/01/2021	Marianne Rolfe
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer		
Finance		
Portfolio Holder(s)	29/01/2021	Judith Falp

Update on Noise Complaints

1.0 Background

1.1 Warwick Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a briefing note in relation to noise in December 2020 and requested a further update. This briefing note will provide an update and it has also been agreed that a report will be presented to the Committee later in the year.

1.2 The previous briefing note detailed the legislation used and what the Council are legally required to undertake, as follows

"The Council's duty

What the law says in terms of investigation requirements of local authorities under the EPA 1990:

- "...it shall be the duty of every local authority to cause its area to be inspected from time to time to detect any statutory nuisances which ought to be dealt with under section 80 below and, where a complaint of a statutory nuisance is made to it by a person living within its area, to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to investigate the complaint."
- When satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists or is likely to occur or recur, to serve an abatement notice on the person responsible."

1.3 The note also discussed routine and current Covid service delivery, with complaint numbers and performance indicators also detailed. It is clear that none of this has changed and the team is still stretched. The final part of the note detailed the steps being taken to mitigate the restrictions and pressures on the service (which were detailed in the note).

2.0 Update

2.1 The following is an update on those steps with additional supplementary information as well.

What is being done to mitigate this?

- We have offered the existing vacancy currently held in the team to a candidate interviewed on 12/11/20. The starting date of the new post holder will be confirmed in due course and following their acceptance.
- This applicant is an internal applicant and if accepted this will result in an additional vacancy. This new vacancy places further pressure on the start of the nuisance investigation process and support services for the entire team so needs to be carefully managed.
Update – Both posts are filled and commenced at the start of February.
- We have begun the recruitment process for an additional temporary post to help support the team through this period of increased workloads.
Update – Recruitment to this post was unsuccessful and it requires re-advertisement.
- Risk Assessments are continually being reviewed in light of the Covid-19 risks. The current draft is under discussion with Public Health in addition to internal health and safety colleagues.
Update – Risk Assessments are regularly reviewed, but have not altered in relation to officers undertaking home visits.
- Work is ongoing with HR regarding vulnerable members of staff and the specific controls for their protection.
Update – The necessary controls are still in place.
- We are in the process of trialling a Noise monitoring app for smart phones which will gather recordings in a manner that provides information which can be used to digitise noise diaries and replace the suspended use of the Matron noise monitoring equipment. Should this trial be successful have funding allocated to purchase the application for a full year in order to robustly trial it across the two service areas.
Update – Officers now have access to a test account and are actively trialling the App. In the week beginning 8th February, the trial is set to be expanded to Councillors involved with the Project Advisory Board and some

high priority complainants. The trial is set for 6 weeks and to date is on schedule and promoting positive feedback from the Officers involved.

- Complainants are still required to co-operate with the investigation, providing witness statements and attending in court if required.
Update – This is still necessary, however, it is hoped that the use of the Noise App will assist complainants to engage and provide appropriate evidence.
- Officers are continuing to conduct visits to assess noise levels from safe locations (gardens/roads) but if safe to do so and following a dynamic Risk assessment may be able to enter a property for a limited time if it is covid safe, a questionnaire has been devised for officers to use when considering personal safety and the safety of the house holders.
Update – This precautionary approach is still appropriate to protect officers catching Covid from, or spreading Covid to, our service customers.
- The Standard Operating Procedure between HCP & Housing for dealing with Noise complainants remains in progress. The speed of development remains reliant on capacity of both services.
Update – This is still in progress. Officers from Housing will also be encouraged to review the use of the App to assess if it can assist them with complaint resolution.
- All complaints are assessed on a case by case basis in order to identify if there are any alternative actions available to assist in resolving the complaint.
Update – All options for complaint resolution are always considered.

2.2 Supplementary update

- An experienced Safer Communities Manager has been appointed on a six-month contract to assist with the strategic leadership of the team and to review practices and ensure a robust trial of the Noise App is completed.
- A preliminary review of procedures and practices has commenced and a joint project with the Council's Transformation team is underway. The aim is to improve the complaint procedure for officers and residents by streamlining and modernising it.
- The established "Night Noise Service" is still not operating and will be further reviewed at a later date.

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny
Committee

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web: www.warwickdc.gov.uk

our ref: PT
your ref:

4 February 2021

9 February 2021 Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting

Dear Members,

Following the publication of the agenda, please find enclosed the *Step Back Review Task & Finish Group on the Council's response to Covid 19* report with its appendices. This was initially appended to Agenda Item 4 – Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from Executive. However, given its prominence and the fact that it includes several appendices of its own, I have included it as an additional item.

The report is accompanied by some appendices, some of which are confidential, as below:

The applicable paragraphs of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, are:

Appendix Numbers	Paragraph Numbers	Reason
Appendix 2	1	Information relating to an individual
Appendix 2	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
Appendices 2, 3a, 3b, 3c, 7, 8 and 9	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Appendix One - Summary of findings & recommended actions

Confidential Appendix Two - A timetable of actions on the People and Communications theme

Confidential Appendices Three a, b&c - The results of Manager, Staff and member surveys on the Council's response

Appendix Four - The Vision document that was provided to the leadership Coordination Group

Appendix Five - A report on the work of the Shielding Hub

Appendix Six - The Organisational Recovery template we used to assess which staff would return to Riverside House and how we would support those that continue to work at home

Confidential Appendix Seven - The economic recovery plan was something that SMT started working on from April

Confidential Appendix Eight - The shielding hub stand up plan is indicative of the planning that was being envisaged in Sept/Oct and will now, no doubt, be revisited following confirmation of the lockdown plans by Parliament this week

Confidential Appendix Nine – Summary of SMT responses to Task and Finish Group's remit

Appendix Ten – CMT feedback on the proposed recommendations

Do not hesitate to contact us should you require further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia Tuckwell
Civic & Committee Services Manager

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
09/02/2021

Title: Step Back Review Task & Finish Group on the Council's response to Covid 19

Lead Officer: Bill Hunt

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Andrew Day

Public report / ~~Confidential report~~

Wards of the District directly affected: N/A

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: No

Included within the Forward Plan: No

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: No -

Final Decision: No, the scrutiny Committee will need to consider if they wish to recommend any further action to the Executive.

Accessibility Checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive		Bill Hunt - author
Heads of Service		Tracy Dolphin, Rose Winship, Mike Snow, Steve Partner, Marianne Rolfe, Julie Lewis, Philip Clarke, Lisa Barker, David Elkington
CMT	18 01 21	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt, Dave Barber
Section 151 Officer	18 01 21	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	18 01 21	Andrew Jones
Finance	18 01 21	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	25 01 21	Andrew Day

1. Summary

- 1.1. The report brings forward the work of the Step Back Review Task & Finish Group of the Council's response to Covid 19 pandemic undertaken by Councillors Ashford, Alix Dearing, Jacques, Kohler, Milton and Nicholls.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee:
 - 2.1.1 note the findings of the Step Back Review Group;
 - 2.1.2 endorse the recommendations set out at Appendix 1;
 - 2.1.3 note the comments of the Corporate Management Team set out at Appendix 10;
 - 2.1.4 agree to present the recommendations to Executive for their consideration and response.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1. At the August meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee it appointed 6 Councillors to undertake a Step Back Review to consider the Council's response to Covid19 based on the following five principals:
 - (i) Initial response to move council from HQ based to working from home
 - (ii) liaising and working with other authorities
 - (iii) Change in service delivery (for example green bins)
 - (iv) communications to the wider community
 - (v) how the business of the Council (as opposed to day to day services) was managed, specifically on how decisions made during the hiatus were open to scrutiny.
- 3.2. The intention was to complete this review as swiftly as possible to identify any potential learning for this Council in the way it responded in case either a local or national lockdown occurred. This was an ambitious timescale based on the demands upon officers both still responding to the pandemic and tentatively returning services back to normal recognising the significant change in cultural/working practices of the Council with most officers now working from home.
- 3.3. Officers collated feedback from across the Council on the work that had been undertaken during the first national lockdown, based upon the five themes. These are set out in appendices 2 to 9 of this report. The information was then shared with the review Group of Councillors, less Councillor Ashford who did not participate due to personal circumstances at the time.
- 3.4. The Group met on Monday 2 November 2020 to review the information and from this came to the conclusions and recommendations as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

4. Policy Framework

4.1. Fit for the Future (FFF)

- 4.1.1. The FFF Strategy has 3 strands, People, Services and Money, and each has an external and internal element to it, the details of which can be found [on](#)

[the Council's website](#). The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

4.2. **FFF Strands**

4.2.1 External impacts of proposal(s)

People - Health, Homes, Communities – The proposed action in respect of communications effectiveness will help the Council to identify any areas for improvement in ensuring that communities are engaged not just if an event like this is repeated but all work from the Council.

Services - Green, Clean, Safe – The action in respect of reviewing emergency planning and the connections with this council and external partners will help the service to become more resilient in the face of a future event and therefore helping to make communities safer.

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment – No impact.

5.2.1 Internal impacts of the proposal(s)

People - Effective Staff – The review provides key recommendations regarding training & support, internal communications and the IT estate. Combined the outcomes of these will enable staff to be more effective within their roles.

Services - Maintain or Improve Services – The overall aim of the proposed strategic reviews are to help improve services for the wider community.

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term –Through the proposed strategic reviews it is possible that savings may be identified, for example through the use of shared assets or infrastructure, to assist the financial position of the Council.

4.3. **Supporting Strategies**

4.3.1. This report does not directly impact on any of the supporting strategies of Fit for the Future.

4.4. **Changes to Existing Policies**

4.4.1. This report does not bring forward any changes to any existing Council Policies.

4.5. **Impact Assessments**

4.5.1. There are no impacts identified as a result of this report.

5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1. The report and recommendations do not directly impact on the budget framework or the Council.

6. Risks

- 6.1. The overriding risk associated with the report is not acting on the proposed recommendations. These present an opportunity for the Council to be more resilient and further improve. The failure to take these forward in essence could result in a backward step for the Council as it would fail to recognise both the opportunity presented and the resultant impact of not reviewing the areas identified.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1. No alternative proposal have been considered to the recommendations as these were developed through discussion based on the evidence provided to the Working Party. The Committee could amend or dismiss these recommendations but this then moves the risks identified above to issues which would need to be addressed.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Detailed below are a list of the appendices to the report:

Appendix One - Summary of findings & recommended actions

Appendix Two - A timetable of actions on the People and Communications theme

Appendix Three - The results of Manager, Staff and member surveys on the Council's response

Appendix Four- The Vision document that was provided to the leadership Coordination Group

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Appendix Nine – Summary of SMT responses to Task and Finish Group's remit

Appendix Ten – CMT feedback on the proposed recommendations

**Covid-19 Step back review – Task & Finish Group
Summary of findings & recommended actions**

The aim of the review is not to analyse or comment on all the decisions made up to this point but to allow debate around a number of issues that have been highlighted by the response of the Council to emerging events since February 2020.

Having reviewed the documentation provided by officers, as set out in appendices Two to Nine, the Task & Finish Group's findings can be summarised as follows:

1. The workforce responded to the crisis in an exemplary manner and the goodwill built up by years of good working relationships between management, unions and members helped the Council through unprecedented times;
2. The Council's response to the pandemic was innovative and effective, moving from a largely office based organisation to an effectively home working one within a fortnight, maintaining key services and deploying staff to new activities such as the Shielding Hub at short notice;
3. The Council's response did, however, require changes to front line service delivery, reflecting both the changing Government guidance and legislation and locally based risk assessments, for example, the temporary suspension of green bin collection, the closure of Riverside House for a face to face reception function, revised arrangements for home visits based on risk assessments, changes to the methodology used to monitor and assess noise nuisance;
4. There were significant technological challenges due to the IT estate in use at the time of national lockdown, but the work to securely overcome these challenges was commendable;
5. The move from physical to remote public Committee meetings, under regulations that are in place until 7 May 2020, due to them being broadcast live and recordings made available had a positive effect on democratic involvement;
6. However, concerns of a general fatigue across the workforce and 'wear and tear' on individual managers and staff who have been working at high levels of effort for a prolonged period are now becoming more evident;
7. The pandemic demonstrated both the strengths and weaknesses of the Council's previous emergency and business continuity planning. Previous emergency planning around SARS proved to still be relevant, communication and continuity arrangements worked well and the cross-organisation structures to which the Council is intrinsically linked, such as the Local Resilience Forum, proved effective. Despite this planning the scenario of a move out of Riverside House, without some staff being redeployed to alternative buildings had never been envisaged, requiring a range of decisions to be made within a short space of time.
8. The inclusive approach to governance in taking the urgent decisions by the Chief Executive under delegated authority, and the creation of the Leadership Co-ordinating Group to support this and use a broader range of talent across the Council should be welcomed and recognised as good practice for responding to such an emergency, recovery and eventual return to a new way of life.

Based on the above findings the Group has six recommendations as it believes that it is timely and appropriate for the following areas to be explored:

Recommendation One

A strategic review of the Council's ICT infrastructure and the hardware and software deployed to staff groups. This should include, but not be limited to, consideration of whether the ICT solutions deployed by the Council provide the greatest possible future resilience in the context of:

- the Local Government Re-organisation agenda including the commitment to closer working with Stratford District Council;
- the need for effective, secure and legislatively compliant communications with a range of external organisations; and
- the need to support effective and flexible working by staff.

Recommendation Two

A strategic review of the future shape of the Council and whether alternative models provide greater future resilience in the context of:

- the Council's post-pandemic financial situation;
- the Local Government Re-organisation agenda including the commitment to closer working with Stratford District Council;
- member aspirations on service delivery;
- any emerging trends in how the public wishes to access public services;
- maximising the Council's ability to display innovation and enterprise

Recommendation Three

A review of how the Council is training and supporting its managerial staff to operate effectively in the context of the changed working environment, including but not limited to:

- The new physical working environment for most staff;
- The use of revised technology;
- The effectiveness of the operation of teams;
- The effectiveness of internal communication to and from individual members of staff
- The effectiveness of internal communication between officers and Members
- The monitoring of, and support to, individuals to protect their health and well-being

Recommendation Four

A review of the effectiveness of the Council's external communications, focusing on, but not limited to:

- An evaluation of outcomes as opposed to outputs, analysing feedback from residents, community organisations and external bodies on the tone, content and relevance of communications;
- The potential for any increased use of councillors to promote activities and disseminate information;
- The information provided on the Council's website, particularly in regard to community organisations; and

- The effectiveness of the Council's use of social media platforms.

Recommendation Five

A review of emergency planning and the structures, internal and external to support it and whether these can be made more resilient, adaptable or effective.

Recommendation Six

A review of the Council's operational arrangements for front-line service provision through home visits, other face to face contacts and telephone and electronic means of communication focusing on, but not limited to:

- The implications on service delivery of the Local Government Re-organisation agenda, the commitment to closer working with Stratford District Council including shared heads of service and alignment of Portfolio areas;
- An assessment of any changes to service provision required by any such alignment;
- A review of priorities for service delivery in the context of the Council's post-pandemic financial situation, member aspirations and emerging trends in public aspirations;
- The impact of the Council's commitment to digital transformation;
- An assessment of any temporary or permanent health and safety considerations as a result of pandemic or post-pandemic guidance or requirements

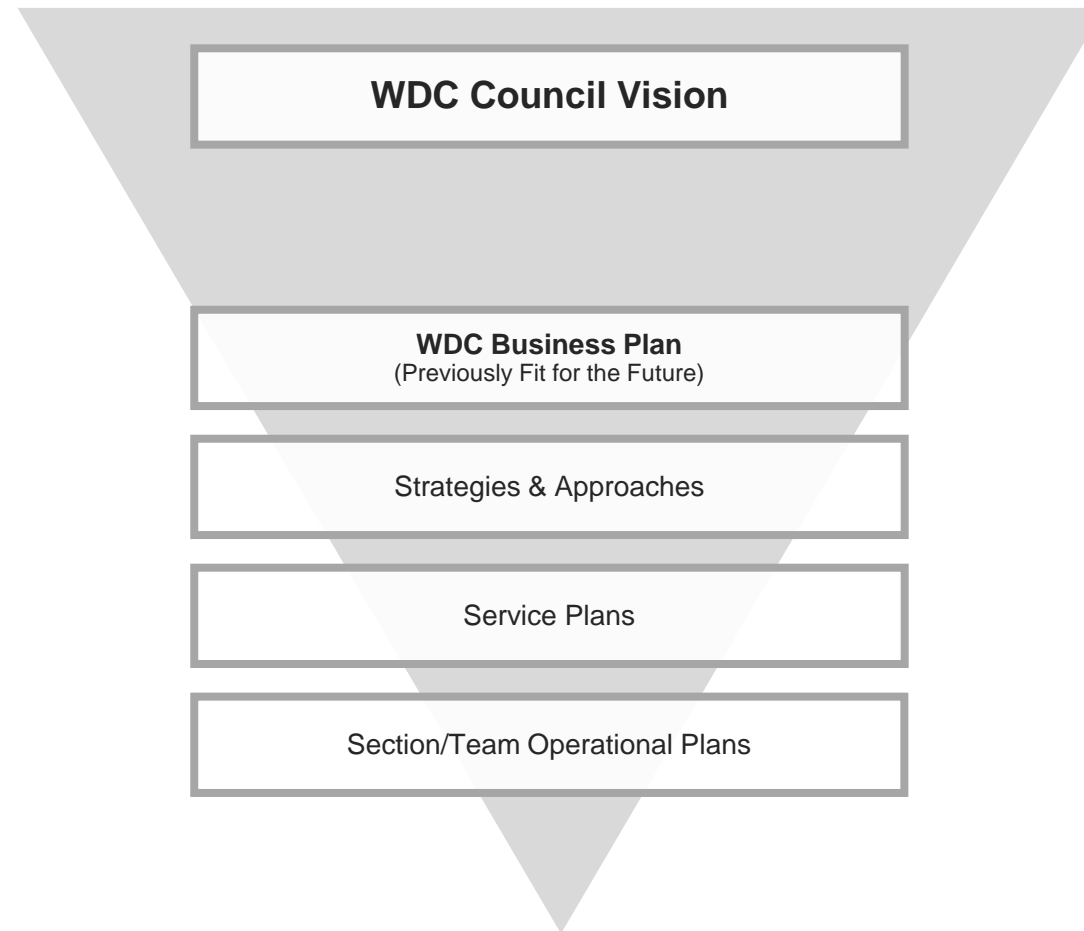
CMT response to the draft Task & Finish Group recommendations

Recommendation	Response	Indicative timescale
<p>One - A strategic review of the Council's ICT infrastructure and the hardware and software deployed to staff groups. This should include, but not be limited to, consideration of whether the ICT solutions deployed by the Council provide the greatest possible future resilience in the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Local Government Re-organisation agenda including the commitment to closer working with Stratford District Council; the need for effective, secure and legislatively compliant communications with a range of external organisations; and the need to support effective and flexible working by staff. 	<p>Agreed in principle subject to any decision by the Executive</p> <p>David Elkington is now in post as shared Head of ICT across both Warwick and Stratford Councils. This will be one of the priorities for David and will overlap with his overriding priority of examining what is required to enable us to decant from Riverside House (and potentially Stratford from Elizabeth House). David needs to firstly understand our current position/arrangements before bringing forward any recommendations.</p>	<p>Noting that in effect we only have David 2.5 days per week, and that he will need a minimum of 3 months (c. 25 WDC working days) to try and get a full picture of our situation it is unlikely that any recommendations would come forward before May-June 2021.</p>
<p>Two - A strategic review of the future shape of the Council and whether alternative models provide greater future resilience in the context of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Council's post-pandemic financial situation; the Local Government Re-organisation agenda including the commitment to closer working with Stratford District Council; member aspirations on service delivery; any emerging trends in how the public wishes to access public services; 	<p>Agreed in principle subject to any decision by the Executive</p> <p>The Council has currently agreed to share Heads of Service posts with Stratford District Council where they are, or become vacant and these arrangements are already in place or proposed for Neighbourhood Services, ICT, Finance and Assets.</p> <p>The scope and timetable for any further review will be determined by the Council's response to the business case report for the creation of a 'super-district'</p>	<p>TBA</p>

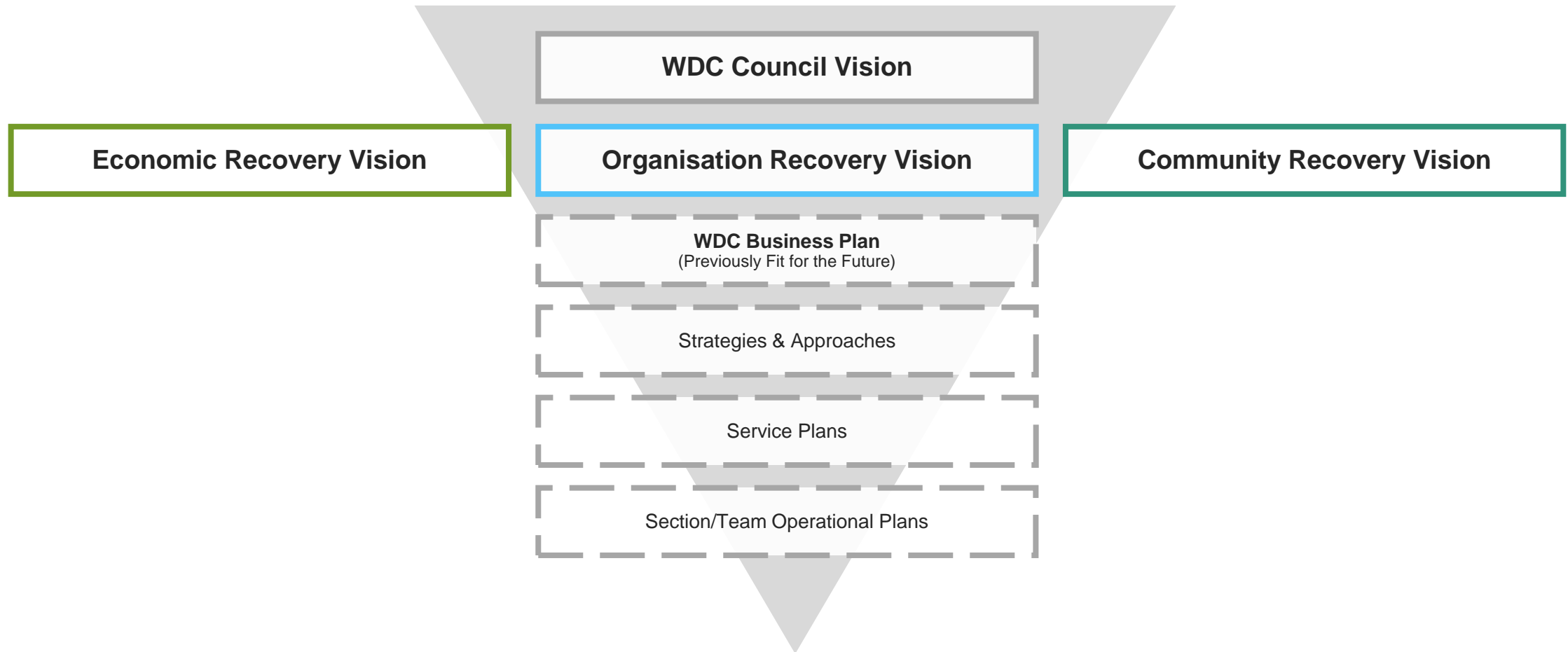
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximising the Council's ability to display innovation and enterprise 		
<p>Three - A review of how the Council is training and supporting its managerial staff to operate effectively in the context of the changed working environment, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new physical working environment for most staff; • The use of revised technology; • The effectiveness of the operation of teams; • The effectiveness of internal communication to and from individual members of staff • The effectiveness of internal communication between officers and Members • The monitoring of, and support to, individuals to protect their health and well-being 	<p>Revised working arrangements have already implemented after agreement with Unions and are deemed to be effective. Whilst these can be kept under review the need for a separate specific review is queried.</p>	
<p>Four - A review of the effectiveness of the Council's external communications, focusing on, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation of outcomes as opposed to outputs, analysing feedback from residents, community organisations and external bodies on the tone, content and relevance of communications; • The potential for any increased use of councillors to promote activities and disseminate information; • The information provided on the Council's website, particularly in regard to community organisations; and 	<p>Agreed in principle</p> <p>Subject to any decision by Executive the Communications Manager can be tasked with producing a report for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to report back on these issues and make any recommendations as appropriate.</p>	<p>Add to O&S Workplan for July 2021</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effectiveness of the Council's use of social media platforms. 		
<p>Five - A review of emergency planning and the structures, internal and external to support it and whether these can be made more resilient, adaptable or effective.</p>	<p>Agreed in principle subject to any decision by the Executive</p> <p>The current review of working arrangements within the Health & Community Protection service area, as agreed in the budget report of December 2020 will include these elements.</p>	<p>Initial proposals for CMT consideration Feb 2021</p> <p>Recommendations to Employment and/or Executive April 2021</p>
<p>Six - A review of the Council's operational arrangements for front-line service provision through home visits, other face to face contacts and telephone and electronic means of communication focusing on, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the implications on service delivery of the Local Government Re-organisation agenda, the commitment to closer working with Stratford District Council including shared heads of service and alignment of Portfolio areas; any changes to service provision required by any such alignment; a review of priorities for service delivery in the context of the Council's post-pandemic financial situation, member aspirations and emerging trends in public aspirations; the Council's commitment to digital transformation; any temporary or permanent health and safety considerations as a result of pandemic or post-pandemic guidance or requirements 	<p>All changes made to service delivery provision have been made in response to Government lockdown or tiering rules and associated guidance and/or risk assessments conducted in line with that guidance which also take into account the Council's duty of care to all of its employees and the particular need to ensure those individuals in the highest risk groups are safely protected.</p> <p>A separate mechanism is in place following questions posed at Council to inform councillors of what changes have been made to allow debate within the political groups and the consideration of a further 'political' debate.</p> <p>It is not clear what the requirement would be for officers to undertake any review in advance of that debate.</p>	

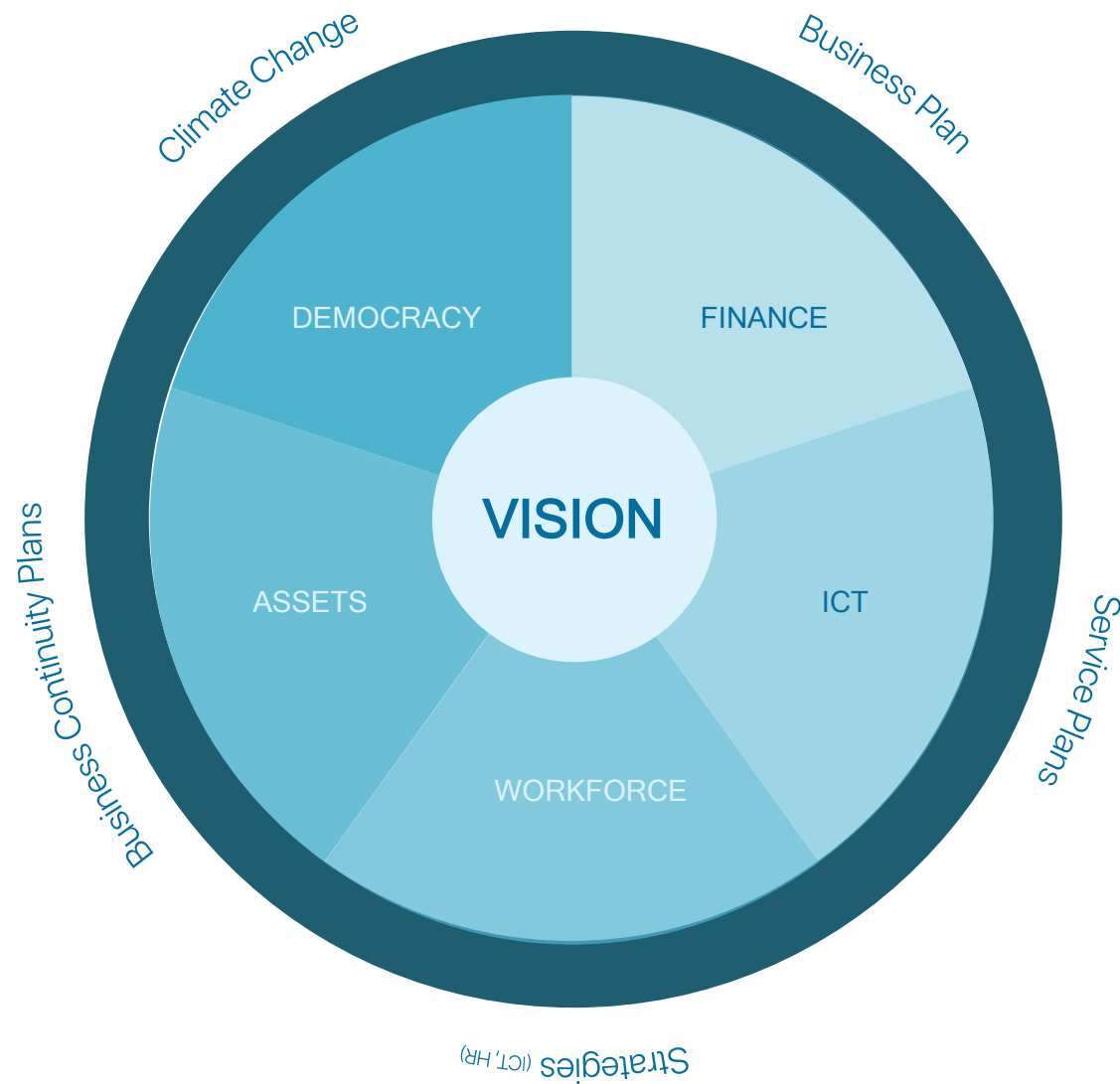
Normal Business Hierarchy of Forward Planning



COVID Recovery Hierarchy of Forward Planning



Organisational Recovery



Organisational Recovery Vision:

Learning from our pandemic experiences-

An organisation which ensures customer service is at the forefront of what we do, moving at pace to be agile and responsive, with easy accessible and effective services, staffed by competent professionals who work with flexible processes and procedures to deliver organisational requirements and are supported in their individual needs (health, safety and wellbeing).

Goals:

Climate change, decentralised working arrangements and within existing budget constraints are givens

Assets are used to:

- Collaborative spaces
- Front interface
- Equipment and infrastructure hubs
- Mapped network of touch downs spaces

Workforce are:

- Agile and adaptable
- Safety & health is important
- Recognition of the importance of social glue

ICT is used to:

- Support & transforming service delivery
- Allow agile working
- The right equipment to do the role/task.
- Allow customers to self serve

The full organisation plan is defined in terms of short, medium and long term actions. Whilst this only covers the period to April 2021, the vision describes a future possibly 5 years in advance. The current situation makes planning all action cover this period difficult and therefore it is accepted that the plan will need to be regularly reviewed.

Economic Recovery



Community Recovery





WARWICK DISTRICT SHIELDING HUB

the Experience



See the Shielding Hub in action by watching a video at www.warwickdc.gov.uk/shieldinghub



Welcome



People often say that Local Government is too slow to do things; involves lots of bureaucracy; and yet in responding to the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown staff at Warwick District Council, Warwickshire County Council and the other Borough and District Councils created a new service to deliver food and other essential supplies from nothing in a matter of days.

The word for it – amazing! How about that Amazing Local Government?

**Chris Elliott,
Chief Executive
Warwick District Council**



When help was needed by the most vulnerable in our community, our extraordinary team of council officers stepped-up, without question of hesitation to create and efficiently operate vital Shielding Hubs. In perhaps the finest hour for this Council; these selfless acts of love, large and small, demonstrated the very finest qualities of first-rate local government. Putting our residents first has always been at the heart of our service, but never before has our efforts to make Warwick District a 'great place to live, work and visit' been more telling than in the outstanding response given by our brilliant officers in the first weeks of this pandemic.

**Andrew Day,
Leader, Warwick District Council**

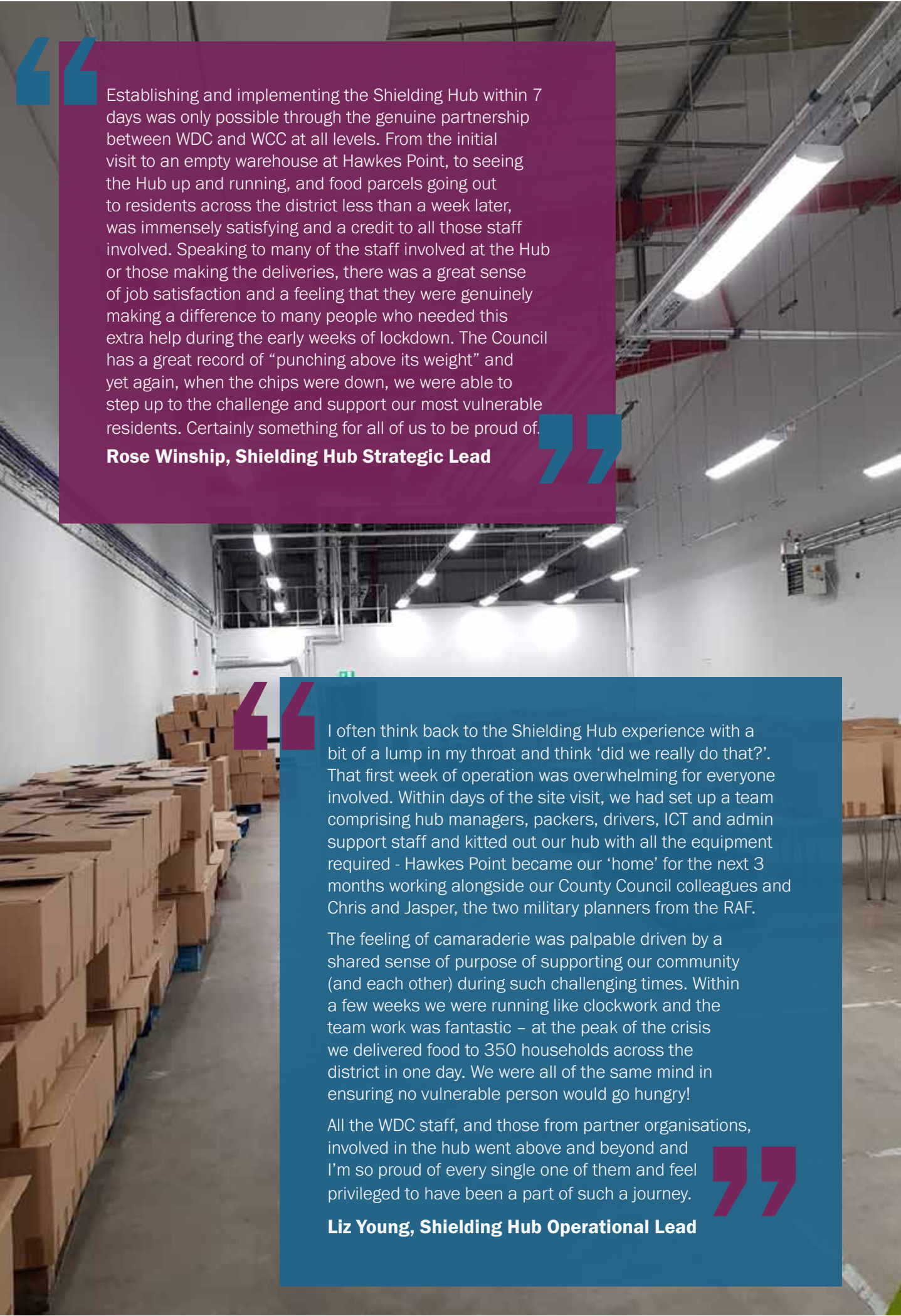
Hub Leads

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, Warwick District Council (WDC) recognised the need to set up a shielding hub to help residents in the district with food deliveries, prescription pickups and further support. Within just one week the hub was up and running, in partnership with Warwickshire County Council (WCC). As the weeks went on we developed a great routine, packing boxes alongside the WCC Team on a Monday and delivering to the residents in the district on a Tuesday, with emergency deliveries throughout the rest of the week, including weekends. The shielding hubs operated for a total of 15 weeks and helped a huge number of residents with various needs.

“ I was astonished that the Hubs were set up so quickly. A building was needed, staff and volunteers to run it had to be identified and food deliveries had to be organised and health and safety practices put in place for the Hub to be ready to start on what was already becoming a great need. A good working partnership was needed to achieve this and that is what happened. Residents needed support with both food and other issues and this was all provided. I was so proud of all the staff and volunteers, many doing different tasks than normal, who worked tirelessly to make the Shielding Hub work, whilst still undertaking some of their normal roles.

**Councillor Judith Falp,
Portfolio for Health &
Community Protection** ”





Establishing and implementing the Shielding Hub within 7 days was only possible through the genuine partnership between WDC and WCC at all levels. From the initial visit to an empty warehouse at Hawkes Point, to seeing the Hub up and running, and food parcels going out to residents across the district less than a week later, was immensely satisfying and a credit to all those staff involved. Speaking to many of the staff involved at the Hub or those making the deliveries, there was a great sense of job satisfaction and a feeling that they were genuinely making a difference to many people who needed this extra help during the early weeks of lockdown. The Council has a great record of “punching above its weight” and yet again, when the chips were down, we were able to step up to the challenge and support our most vulnerable residents. Certainly something for all of us to be proud of.

Rose Winship, Shielding Hub Strategic Lead

I often think back to the Shielding Hub experience with a bit of a lump in my throat and think ‘did we really do that?’. That first week of operation was overwhelming for everyone involved. Within days of the site visit, we had set up a team comprising hub managers, packers, drivers, ICT and admin support staff and kitted out our hub with all the equipment required - Hawkes Point became our ‘home’ for the next 3 months working alongside our County Council colleagues and Chris and Jasper, the two military planners from the RAF.

The feeling of camaraderie was palpable driven by a shared sense of purpose of supporting our community (and each other) during such challenging times. Within a few weeks we were running like clockwork and the team work was fantastic – at the peak of the crisis we delivered food to 350 households across the district in one day. We were all of the same mind in ensuring no vulnerable person would go hungry!

All the WDC staff, and those from partner organisations, involved in the hub went above and beyond and I’m so proud of every single one of them and feel privileged to have been a part of such a journey.

Liz Young, Shielding Hub Operational Lead

Community Support

A total of
2,204
**FOOD BOXES
DELIVERED**
within the
Warwick District.



3377
**PRESCRIPTIONS
AND DOCTORS'
APPOINTMENTS**



1420
**RECEIVED FINANCIAL
AND SOCIAL SUPPORT
FROM WDC**



109
**EMERGENCY HOUSING
REPAIRS**



2040
**RECEIVED MENTAL
HEALTH SUPPORT**
within the Warwick district



924
**WARWICK DISTRICT
RESIDENTS WERE HELPED**



**The Shielding Hubs started on Monday 30 March
and operated for 15 weeks until Monday 13 July.**

6
WARWICKSHIRE
SUPPORT HUBS



HUBS OPERATED
for
15 weeks



Over
5,000
PHONE CALLS
to Warwickshire County Council hotline



10,500
FOOD PARCELS PACKED
by Warwickshire County Council



Over
11,000
WELLBEING
PHONECALLS
to vulnerable residents



500
VOLUNTEERS WORKING
WITH WCC



The Support Team

The Shielding Hub Support Team were tasked with following up on all calls made to the 0800 Hotline / WDC Contact Centre. This involved clarifying what additional support those residents asked to shield may require. Staff involved in undertaking the follow up work felt that they were doing their bit to support the pandemic effort. The response from residents was overwhelmingly grateful with them feeling appreciative of the calls and as one resident said; 'Thanks for going over above and beyond the call of duty to provide assistance' while another local resident rang to say thanks for the food parcel; 'I get a food hamper from Harrods as a Christmas present and the food parcel received from the Shielding Hub was by far superior'. It seems to me the follow up calls uncovered the extent of how lonely and isolated some people are in the District and at times it was difficult to get off the phone as we were probably the only person that some had spoken to all day. Although in the early days it was extremely stressful as you felt such a burden of responsibility to ensure the support was provided, it was an extremely rewarding piece of work and I would like to particularly mention the COVID Support Group made up of volunteers. Without their support it would have been difficult to provide the timely support that local residents required and I would like to give a BIG THANK YOU to them.

WDC Shielding Hub Support Team including Berni Allen, Jo Dagg, Kath Bannister, Meg Smith, Stephen Falp and Harry Saysell

Just wanted to say thank you on behalf of my Mum for the Shielding Hub food parcels. My mum was placed on the shielding list due to her age and the fact that she suffers with Asthma and C.O.P.D. As a family we were very worried about having any contact with her as myself and my husband were still out working in the community so we had to limit any grocery handovers to reduce the risk to her. Having those food parcels was a god send and very much appreciated.

“ We feel extraordinarily privileged to have received the food parcels delivered to our door. Due to an illness I have a reduced immune system causing me to be housebound. My wife and I (82 and 81 years old) would like to express our thanks to all those who took part in the hard work of packing and delivering the food parcels. ”



“ I would like to extend our family's heartfelt thanks for the parcel you delivered to our parents, on Myton Road, earlier this week. It really helped them practically and emotionally. We are very grateful. ”

Hub Managers


The Warwick District Shielding Hub would not have been able to run so smoothly without the Hub Managers giving up their time and working together to ensure the smooth running of the hub team. They dealt with the day to day operations, packing of boxes, loading of cars, delivering boxes, phone calls to residents and much more to ensure that everyone worked well together to help the District.



Working at the Shielding Hub was a fantastic experience for me. In a time of national crisis, it was great to come together with colleagues and partners to deliver much needed support to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. I had the privilege of speaking to so many wonderful residents across the district, some had lost loved ones or had no family network to support them. What struck me was their resilience to keep going and this certainly inspired me and fellow colleagues to keep delivering a first class service for them.


I feel really proud to have been part of WDC's response to COVID, the team at the Hub worked incredibly hard and I hope we were able to bring some comfort to our residents during a terrible time.

**Jon Barnett,
Hub Manager**



Working at the Shielding Hub was an incredible experience. To be a part of something that made a difference and put WDC in a positive light gives me immense pride and professional satisfaction. Walking out into the car park on the morning of the 350 deliveries and seeing an abundance of willing drivers and vans ready to deliver these parcels, all looking at me and waiting for their instruction was as daunting as it was challenging. It is something that I will remember for a long time. The team of volunteers were incredible and always willing to help. No task was too small or unachievable, they all knew their roles and would go about their tasks with dedicated professionalism. Seeing people pulling together for one cause “to help the residents of Warwick District” was amazing and shows the dedication and sense of community spirit of all the people involved. It was very refreshing to speak to residents or their relatives who were so grateful for what we were doing. The sheer joy, appreciation and gratitude that was relayed down the phone felt amazing. It was a pleasure to work with all of my colleagues that volunteered at the hub during its time of operation, I have built sound working relationships with colleagues from WDC that I didn’t know, as well as WCC staff.

Ian Rourke, Hub Manager



It was a great and rewarding experience to be working at the Shielding hub. At first it was all surreal with no traffic on the roads and staff all with masks, aprons and gloves but we developed a great system with the pickers, the drivers and the Rangers all being very friendly and there to help every week which was fantastic. It was nice to be doing a job that was being appreciated by the public and to be able to work with new members of staff that I hadn’t worked with before, it was like a big family.

Stuart Murrow, Hub Manager

WDC Staff Volunteers

An incredible number of staff across the Council gave up time to work at the Shielding Hub while also carrying on with their normal workload. Whether:

- doing shifts at the shielding hub
- phoning residents who needed extra support
- packing the food boxes
- loading cars and vans
- delivering food boxes across the District

It was great to see staff from all our service areas getting to know each other and working well as a team.

David Guilding and **Dave Anderton** did a great job of organizing the staff rota to make sure we had enough packers and drivers each week. Our admin team, including **Velda Downes**, **Jess Goldie** and **Rob Lawson**, did an amazing job phoning up vulnerable residents to see how we could help.

Thank you to all of the staff who volunteered their time.

I found that the experience of delivering the food and essential supplies from the hub tremendously emotional. A great sense of achievement and gratitude to be a part of the team. I personally got more from this, than the District's residents received from us. I visited so many types of people, young and old; people with families or more importantly those alone who would've only had my contact probably that week. Spending 5 or 10 minutes with each chatting, and many thanking me and the team, even giving gorgeous home baked cookies and cake for the team, truly was a humbling experience which brought tears to your eyes.

I delivered to all kinds of people and properties, even a canal barge, and it felt like we were together, working towards a brighter future. 'I would gladly do it again, but I hope that I never have to.'

Ian Yeomans



To support the food hub I volunteered to pack and deliver parcels to vulnerable individuals in the community. The organisation was excellent and I always knew what was expected. It was a very humbling experience delivering food parcels to those who, without this life line, would have been very isolated. All those I delivered to were really grateful and on occasions they were very emotional with the kindness and support shown. I delivered three weeks running to a very elderly lady on the fourth floor, with very complex medical issues, and I was always exhausted when arriving at her door due to all the stairs, but the expression on her face when she opened the door melted my heart and made it all worth while. I was very proud to work for WDC and to be able to offer this service and the team spirit, made it rewarding and fun.

Sue Sweeney



I really enjoyed supporting the hub delivering food parcels to the vulnerable residents in Warwick District. It was a strange feeling when it came to an end, one of relief that we weren't needed but also sad that we wouldn't see the amazing residents we have. It gave you a focus in the midst of a very challenging time. The whole process evolved from the tentative steps of the first session where we collected our own chilled items and vegetables for delivery to the next few weeks when amazing teams packed the cars for you and even knew how many boxes and chiller boxes would fit in each car! It really was team work and the best bit was getting to know colleagues who you may have spoken to but never met. My 16-year-old son volunteered to work with me and I hope this has given him an insight into the district and how organisations can work together to support the residents. He certainly had a good workout carrying the boxes up flights of stairs!

I would volunteer again in a heartbeat; it was very emotional at times but also satisfying to know you made a very small difference to someone's life.

Ann Hill

Warwickshire County Council

A network of six Warwickshire support hubs, at county and district and borough level, was quickly established in March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 crisis. Their purpose was to provide food and essential household items to individuals identified as clinically extremely vulnerable to the virus who were asked to 'shield' themselves by isolating during the peak of the pandemic.

WCC's distribution hub was co-located with WDC's satellite hub. It was operated by reassigned officers from the county and district councils and supported by local volunteers and two military planners who offered invaluable logistics support.

There was a lot involved in the process from end to end involving selection and set-up at the sites, equipping them for food storage, setting up systems for packing and safe delivery to residents. Council staff and volunteers kept the sites running and were responsible for making the deliveries with Fire and Rescue and the Local Pharmacy Committee supporting with delivery of medicines or in situations where people may need extra help.

Over the 15 weeks that the hub was in operation over 10,500 parcels, containing perishable and store cupboard food and household items, were packed and distributed with around 1,300 going out across the county each week at the height of the operation.

Supporting the activity at the distribution hubs was a newly established dedicated contact point that people who felt isolated without support were urged to call. From March to July 2020 the hotline handled around 15,000 calls and referred people in need to various forms of practical and emotional support from across the public and voluntary and community sectors.

It has been a rewarding project to be part of and I'm proud of what has been achieved. There were many challenges along the way and everyone rose to them to ensure vulnerable people were supported.

Overall, the experience has shown the strength of working together - community capacity, resilience and shared understanding have all increased as a result. The feedback from residents was overwhelming and it was humbling to be involved in a project that truly helped people stay safe and connected in a time of crisis.

The hubs are no longer operational but our work is not complete. Attention is now focused on a plan for serving vulnerable residents in the event of a second wave of the pandemic or potential local lockdowns.

Charles Barlow, Hub Lead WCC





IT Case Study

In a complex crisis, everyone wants to play their part in making a difference. This case study shines a light on the rapid development of our Shielding Hub Food database and portal which underpinned the success of the food distribution service to our most vulnerable citizens.

WDC were mobilised on the 25 March and, just ten days later, our developer had a minimum viable product (MVP) that tamed the numerous and seemingly ever changing data sources to produce a basic delivery report for the distribution team.

Using the agile development methodology, we constantly iterated on the MVP over the next eight weeks. These thirty iterations expanded the solution to meet the growing needs of the food distribution service, including:

- Fully automated imports of the numerous data spreadsheets
 - Cleaning the data to ensure accurate citizen, address and contact details
 - Coping with numerous changes of the Central Government data schemas
 - Flagging up special dietary requirements
 - Creating accurate food box and delivery driver reports
 - Management reports for Warwickshire County Council and WDC
 - And a portal used by our Shielding Hub hotline team to handle local citizen food requests and delivery requirements
- Virtual meetings with show and tells
 - Central Government webinars joined and liaison with other local authorities to better understand and shape the solution's requirements
 - Given such as small project team, it's amazing how much we achieved, in so little time, with so much pressure and with an ever changing specification:
 - Before the basic solution was in place, staff at the delivery hub were spending around two hours a day making sense of the data they received. At that stage the data consisted of around 100 records.
 - By automating the data imports we shaved the time down to five minutes per spreadsheet.
 - We imported over 130 spreadsheets in total (and by the end there were more than 2800 records per spreadsheet) so that's a saving of at least 31 working days!
 - Over a ten-week period, we invested a total of 424 hours on this project (of which 236 were spent coding the solution)

While it's hard to capture the intensity of this development experience, let's just say that it was exhilarating, frustrating, exhausting and tremendously satisfying in almost equal measure!

These days, just about everything that WDC needs to achieve will rely on a contribution from ICT Services. As this case study shows, we can even play our part in providing food, a basic human need.

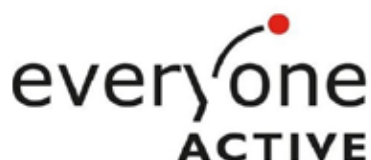
Tass Smith on behalf of the Shielding Hub (Food) Solution Team

With the lockdown restrictions in place, our small team made use of various tools to aid our virtual collaboration.

These included:

- Our group chat which thrummed with activity
- A Trello board that captured user stories, enhancements, bugs and their progress through to completion

Community Volunteers



“Everyone Active were keen to be involved with the delivery of food parcels around Warwick District as this is a key part of the Company ethos of being involved with the local community. The General Manager of Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre helped every Tuesday helping those who were vulnerable or were unable to get to the shops themselves”

Gary Titford,
Everyone Active



“As soon as Lockdown was announced by the government, I reached out to Andrew Day at WDC to volunteer our services for delivery of food and medicines to those shielding at home and the most vulnerable in our region.

Our offer was to help wherever possible using the Team at Electric Zoo and our fleet of Electric Cars with zero emission.

We were requested to report to the Shielding Hub where we assisted the Council team by receiving food parcels, with a list of names and addresses addresses, and made deliveries across the region.

We were extremely pleased to play our part in the WDC Shielding Hub, and would like to thank you, your team and WDC for allowing us to help those in need during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Lash Saranna, Electric Zoo

We would also like to say a big thank the local residents Covid Support Groups in Warwick, Leamington and Kenilworth for all of their work with us and also to family members of WDC staff who joined us for packing and delivering of food parcels.



Checklist for Managers/Staff as part of Organisational Recovery.

Following on from the Staff and Manager Surveys, we now wish to gain further information as to the Health and Wellbeing of staff as well as an understanding of practical elements such as IT equipment.

Please therefore discuss the Organisational Recovery Checklist below with **all members** of your team. This can take the form of:

- A guided conversation/discussion, including going into some areas in more depth
- A quicker conversation (where these elements have already been discussed and you are aware of the information)
- Sending the Checklist to members of your team in the first instance and then following up with those who have raised issues that you were not aware of or where answers may need exploring further

After the Checklist has been done, please summarise the information for your area formation and pass to your Line Manager to enable this to be collated for your Service Area by **Friday 3 July 2020**.

In doing the above, please ensure that you include the following:

As part of our Organisational Recovery to establish the new 'normal' if you can continue to work from home, you should do so and we will support you to make that happen. We will aim to resolve any issues relating to your health and well-being as well as your working environment/ICT. However, this is just the first step in this process and as will be aware, not something that can be done without due consideration.

Firstly, I need to give you a 'picture' of what the office environment will look like in the short term to help manage your expectations:

- *With an emphasis on homeworking, the number of staff in an office location at any one time will be limited. We expect potentially less than a third of staff will have their base at Riverside House or other locations.*
- *Social distancing will be in place at all times*
- *Cleaning your own areas will be imperative to ensuring hygiene standards are met, (we are reviewing access to cleaning materials)*
- *The layout of the offices including desks, docking stations, and screens will reflect the more limited number of staff. Hot-desking will no longer be part of the ways of working due to hygiene standards, and fixed desks will be the 'normal'. Other examples such as lockers and coat racks will not be in use, and you will be expected to keep your belongings with you at all times.*
- *Even if you are in the office, face to face contact will be discouraged and Video-conferencing/phone will be the default even if both parties are in the office.*
- *Physical meetings should only take place when the business requires it or there is no alternative.*

- *If it is essential to use a meeting room, which must be booked in advance, then enough space should be allocated to adhere to Social Distancing e.g. seating arrangements, and no refreshments should be provided*
- *All visitors will need to be escorted in and out whilst retaining Social Distancing*
- *No changing rooms or showers will be in use*
- *Face coverings are allowed but will not be provided by the Council*
- *All desk equipment/stationary will be used only by you at your own desk*
- *Food and drink should be consumed at your own desk not in any communal areas, there will be no access to water coolers and limited access (through social distancing) to kitchen areas with social distancing guidelines in place.*

Please now complete the Checklist below:

Organisational Recovery Checklist

Name	
Team	
Service Area	
Name of Line Manager	
Date Checklist completed	

All Staff - Please answer questions 3 – 7 in black below

Then, either answer questions in **blue** or **red** as follows:

a) Can you do your job at home **Yes/No?**

*If the answer is **Yes**, then please answer the questions highlighted in **blue***

*If the answer is **No** go to section **(b)***

b) Does your job mean that you have to work from a WDC building - **Yes/No?** or Does physical/health and well-being concerns (that we are unable to overcome) prevent you? *If the answer is **yes** to either of these, then please answer the questions highlighted in **red***

Question	Yes	No	Comments
Health and Well-being			
1 Has working from home affected your health and well-being? 1.1 What have been the positives? 1.2 What have been the challenges? 1.3 Do you envisage this changing short term/long term? 1.4 Do you perceive this would change if you were able to work in another WDC location/office (based on the changes that have affected the work environment due to COVID)			
2 Has there been an impact from other(s) in your household on your ability to work effectively at home? 2.1 Has there been an impact on others of you working from home?			
3 Do you have other responsibilities e.g. school children/caring responsibilities? 3.1 How can we support you with these?			
4 Are you able to support your health and well-being by e.g. exercise, talking/meeting people, skills, training?			
5 Do you have any underlying health conditions that we need to be aware of? 5.1 Have you been referred to Occupational Health for these conditions within the last 6 months? (if not, then we may ask you to attend an Occ Health appointment shortly)			
6 Are you shielding?/living with someone who is shielding?			
7 Is there anything else we can do to support you?			
Physical			
8 Will you need to use public transport to get to an office location/out to work? 8.1 Are there alternatives e.g. cycling?			
9 Can you go straight to your work location (if off site) from home?			
10 Your start/end time may need to be altered (due to social distancing), will this have an impact on you?			

IT/Security			
<p>11 What equipment are you using to work from home ?</p> <p>WDC Laptop WDC Desk equipment Personal equipment</p> <p>Is this suitable for the long term ? Yes/No</p>			
12 Are you able to take regular breaks?			
<p>13 Are you able to work in an environment where privacy of discussing and displaying confidential and personal data is protected?</p> <p>13.1 If so, are you able to work confidentially?</p>			
14 For any personal electrical equipment, you are using at home, are the plugs undamaged, appear correctly wired and in good condition, the wire is firmly gripped in the plug, the equipment is in good condition, there is no damage to the wires/leads, there is no burn marks or evidence of overheating and leads/cables are not trailing around your work area? (Ensuring electrical equipment is switched off first before any detailed look)			
15 If you cannot work from home and need to work from an office have you informed IT to ensure your configuration is correct?			
Detailed ICT info re Computer /Screen / Connectivity (information to be collated for ICT)			
16 Does your screen provide a stable image which is flicker-free?			
17 Can you adjust the brightness and contrast to suit your working environment and so you can clearly see written characters against the background?			
18 Can you position the screen to suit your needs and make it a suitable height for you?			
19 Can you work in an area where the screen is free of reflections and glare that may cause discomfort?			
20 Do you need the organisation to provide you with additional screens? How many?			
21 Do you need the organisation to provide you with a docking station for a laptop? Or stand?			
22 Does your broadband speed/connectivity enable you to work consistently?			
23 Telephony. If you are a high volume telephone user what equipment do you have to support your work e.g. Telephone, headset? Soft phone?			
24 Do you need the organisation to provide you with a separate keyboard ?			
25 Can you work in a space to give you sufficient space between the front of the keyboard and the edge of the work surface to provide and/arm support (50mm)?			

26 Are you working at a matt surface to avoid reflective glare?			
27 Can you see all of the key symbols adequately during normal use?			
The Work Surface/Chair			
28 Do you have sufficient space to allow you to work comfortably?			
29 Do you have a suitable work surface to work on? If not do you require a table or alternative?			
30 Is your chair stable and does it allow easy freedom of movement? Do you require a more suitable chair?			
31 Can you adjust your chair to find a comfortable seating position?			
32 If the answers to the 4 questions above are 'No' how could these be improved?			
Ambience			
33 Is the ambience suitable for working from home? i.e. Noise, Humidity, Temperature, Lighting?			
Other Considerations			
34 Do you have / do you envisage any additional costs as a result of working from home?			
35 Do you have/do you envisage any savings as a result of working from home?			

Thank you for taking part in this Checklist.

The results will be provided to ICT, Assets and Workforce Steering Groups to review and analyse the results as part of our next steps.