

Information

for County Councillors

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From:	Kim Curry, Interim Director of Adults Social Services and Lead Commissioner Adults and Health, and Mel Lock, Operations Director Adults and Health.
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To:	All County Councillors
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Adults Transformation Programme Update

Demand for adult social care (ASC) services is increasing in Somerset and will continue to rise as the county's older population grows. At the same time our budget is shrinking. Plus the new requirements of the Care Act 2015 and introduction of the national living wage will increase the cost of the service significantly.

The ASC transformation programme has been redesigning the service to make sure that we manage the demand for services and continue to support the most vulnerable people in our communities to stay independent and well for longer.

What has happened in the last five months

- **Information and advice:** We have improved the information and advice we provide so that people can find local groups, products and services to stay healthy and independent for longer. The new Somerset Choices website (www.somersetchoices.org.uk) launched in July and so far there have been over 120,000 page views and 1,000 services are registered on the site.
- **First point of contact:** A team of social workers, occupation therapists and adult social care workers have been based within Somerset Direct since September. The team provide information and advice to customers, signpost people to appropriate services, organise care and

simple equipment that can be arranged over the phone, and respond to queries that require an urgent response. Customers have praised the new adult social care contact team for their speed of response and expressed gratitude for resolving their problems so efficiently. Previously all enquiries had been dealt with by local teams across the county. Introducing an adult social care contact team located in Somerset Direct has meant that urgent queries and issues are dealt with faster. By resolving queries over the phone the contact team has allowed the local teams to focus on seeing the most complex and vulnerable people that need care and support and to complete regular reviews of people's care packages.

- **Local hubs:** We have set up 14 adult social care hubs in local communities. People can book an appointment to speak to an adult social care worker at a local hub about their needs. The hubs mean that workers can see more people in one place, giving people the advice they need quickly and close to where they live. We are looking to roll out more local hubs in 2016 and volunteers from Somerset You Can Do will soon be active in the hubs to signpost people to local groups and demonstrate Somerset Choices to visitors. The hubs are currently in the following locations:

South Somerset Balsam Centre, Wincanton Henhayes Centre, Crewkerne Great Bow Wharf, Langport Milford Community Hall, Yeovil	Taunton Priorswood Community Centre, Taunton Where Centre, Wellington
Mendip Wells Town Hall Crispin Centre, Street Colliers Court Frome	Sedgemoor Victoria Park, Bridgwater Princess Theatre, Burnham-on-Sea Axbridge Surgery
West Somerset Seahorse Centre, Minehead The Sanctuary, Watchet	

- **Hospital discharges:** We have established Health Interface Teams where dedicated social care staff are based in the hospitals. Since this service was introduced in September this has led to much closer working relationships between adult social care staff and hospital staff to ensure people are discharged from hospital at the right time and with the social care services they need. As well as helping to avoid unnecessary admissions to hospital.
- **Safeguarding:** We have set up a central safeguarding service that assesses all safeguarding referrals. The team is helping to make the safeguarding process much more consistent and allows community teams to focus on assessment and reviews. A high profile safeguarding campaign has been running throughout November and December to raise awareness of adult safeguarding issues and encourage people to look for the signs of abuse.

What is happening next:

- Adult social care staff have been through an enormous amount of change and the last couple of months has been a time to reflect and collect feedback on what is working well and what needs to be improved. Senior managers have been visiting staff in local offices to gain feedback and staff representatives from all areas have come together to discuss improvement plans and opportunities to make processes leaner.
- A service review will take place in April 2016 to look at how the new service is working for customers and improvements will be made to refine the new way of working.
- The adult social care contact team will be developed further and the call centre staff need to be fully trained to ask the right questions to manage demand for the service further.
- The volunteer role in local hubs will be developed further and knowledge of community activities and groups needs to grow so that adult social care workers can give the best advice on what support is available locally.
- We will make sure that systems and technology support the service effectively.
- We are exploring integrated health and social care services. We are working with the local NHS and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to explore an 'Outcome Based Commissioning' approach which could see the CCG and providers of health services, hospital and community health services, pooling their budgets and working much more closely to prevent ill health, and not just providing costly treatment to patients after they become ill.

We will keep members updated on developments of the Adults Transformation Programme.

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