

Title of report: Overview of signposting and accessibility to services

Meeting: Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: Monday 23 January 2023

Report by: Service Director - Communities and Service Director -Social Care

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards)

Purpose

To present to the committee an overview of the signposting offer to the variety of wellbeing services that are available through the council to improve accessibility within Adult Social Care and Talk Community.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) The committee note the signposting and accessibility to services for our customers and those who are being enabled to support themselves;**
- b) The impact, outcomes and deliverables from Talk Community are noted with discussion on increased reach of signposting across the county;**
- c) A review of the community broker and broker function to be commenced to ensure community opportunities are being maximised for all;**
- d) The community offer is maximised to enrich the lives of people living with learning disabilities and all impairments; and**
- e) Further develop the Talk Community and promotion of community assets within the Primary Care Networks including social care delivery.**

Alternative options

1. Local authorities have a legal duty under the Care Act 2014 to provide robust information, advice and signposting to people who live in its areas to make informed decisions on their wellbeing and services available to them. With this requirement there is no alternative option to provide an offer to the residents of Herefordshire.
2. The committee could choose to include further recommendations to enhance, improve and deliver the offer and accessibility to services.

Key considerations

3. The committee has requested the following key areas to be considered:
4. Access to Council Wellbeing Services – Signposting

To undertake a review of the signposting to the variety of wellbeing services that are available through the council to improve accessibility. Specifically to consider:

- How to target services to people that need them and not just those in the system
- How to improve access to services
- Review of community transport
- Access to health and care for Herefordshire residents living on the border with Wales

Currently the cost of running community transport could lead to more pressure on access to services and how rural communities are able to access some key services.

5. The use of Talk Community Hubs and Social Prescribing

To consider:

- Why and how to reach as many people in the community to show them the resources of Talk Community hubs and ensure their usefulness
- How to unite Talk Community, Social Prescribing and Recovery Colleges.
- How the services can be developed and what is needed to do this?

The use of Talk Community and their hubs to bring communities together for mental health and cohesion. Using social prescribing and other services to link people and communities together. The Talk Community hubs are used for those in rural areas who lack access to Wi-Fi and many other services but these are not always known by the community.

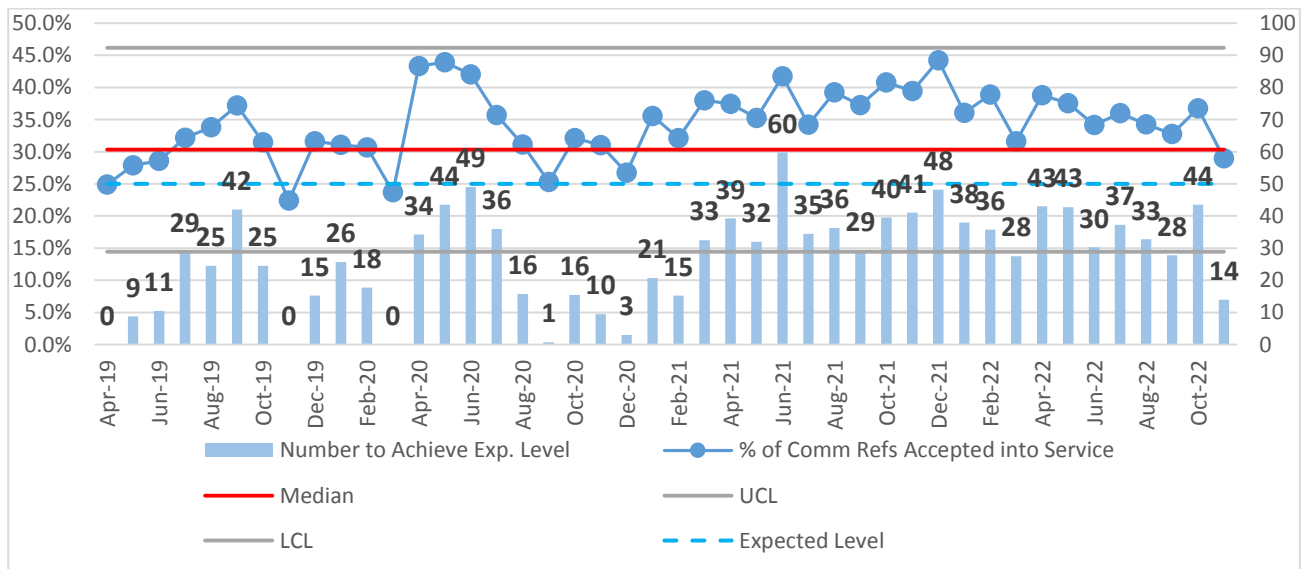
Community impact

6. Local authorities have a legal duty under the Care Act 2014 to support people who live within its boundaries including ensuring that people:
 - Receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs
 - Can get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support
 - Have a range of provision of high quality appropriate services to choose from.

Local authorities have to consider various factors such as:

- What services, facilities and resources are already available in the area (for example local voluntary and community groups), and how these might help local people
- Identifying people in the local area who might have care and support needs that are not being met
- Identifying carers in the area who might have support needs that are not being met

7. The Care Act 2014 set out that in undertaking this role, local authorities need to work with their communities and provide or arrange services that help to keep people well and independent. This should include identifying the local support and resources already available, and helping people to access them. Since its inception Talk Community has been developed to work across all parts of the council, with other agencies and partners including the NHS to develop untapped potential and to identify what exists in Herefordshire to support and maximise independence, support and enable prevention, promote equality of opportunity and facilitate social and health inclusion for all people living in Herefordshire.
8. The table below illustrates the conversion rates from newly processed community referrals by the Social Care Advice and Referral team (ART). Pre-covid (Pre 2020). The general indicative percentage of referrals received that would require a full Care Act Assessment was considered to be approximately 25%. It should be noted however that the graph below would have included referrals from hospital prior to March 2020. Currently referral conversion rates recorded in November 2022 (excluding clients accessing Discharge to assess were 29% meaning 71% of contacts making contact with our service had the opportunity of signposting advice and guidance. This does not include people who are discharged from hospital.



9. The Community and Wellbeing services entry points to the council are open to individual members of the public to source information, advice and guidance for themselves, for their family and for vulnerable adults of concern within a community. With pressures on NHS and Social care services through increased demand at a time when the NHS and social care service providers are experiencing on-going recruitment and retention challenges, it is more vital than ever to strengthen and support the wider offer from communities. The Adult Services Advice and Referral team is set up to deliver effective and timely signposting to preventative and enabling services and ensuring a range of routine advice, referrals and signposting. Examples include referrals and signposting for financial advice and guidance, support from a range of veteran services, connecting individuals to domestic violence support, information on accessing telecare and prevent and predict technology, personal care aids and equipment, home safety

checks, mental health advice, access to OT assessments. The above graph shows the importance of skilled, knowledgeable social care workers in ensuring that information to support people to make the right decisions for themselves and their families is provided in a timely, accessible way.

The following table illustrates how since utilising the strengths based approach, alongside the expanding Talk Community resources, has we believe enabled us to manage demand on formal services. It should be emphasised that strengths based practice is not about cutting services, it is about supporting individuals and families to source solutions from community resources.

**Community Wellbeing Activity data - spot placements only
2018-19 through to 2022-23**

Service	Age Category	Budget	Previous y/end
TOTAL	18-64	1118	1106
22-23 Dec figure	65-74	273	255
	75-84	399	372
	85+	554	540
	Total	2344	2273
	TOTAL	18-64	1123
21-22	65-74	291	288
	75-84	443	418
	85+	638	605
	Total	2495	2418
	TOTAL	18-64	1171
20-21	65-74	309	309
	75-84	418	420
	85+	620	579
	Total	2518	2428
	TOTAL	18-64	1212
19-20	65-74	357	346
	75-84	461	468
	85+	614	599
	Total	2644	2607

How to improve access to services

10. Community wellbeing is currently reviewing and renewing our transformation agenda to improve access to Herefordshire's full breadth of resources and services. Plans are in place to further develop the social care footprint within the Primary Care Networks with initiatives to develop an integrated adult safeguarding team aligned to the Social Care Advice and Referral Team (ART).
11. The Director of Community Wellbeing has instigated a review (commencing January 2023) of brokerage services including the community broker service and its interface and functions within social care, Primary Care Networks and associated services such as Social Prescribing). Social care delivery is developing opportunities to have a presence where possible in community hubs alongside our key partners in health and the community sector. Social Care and Commissioning are joining forces with Talk Community to explore new opportunities for people with support needs in their own neighbourhoods to access enriching activities which would prevent the need

for long journeys to services which are not connected to their own aspirations or their own community.

12. The transformation agenda which embraces technology and digitally conversant means of communication is key to development of customer services. This links into the transformation programme being delivered by PwC across the Council and will be a key enabler for our population.
13. Community Wellbeing is looking to develop initiatives to commission and harness the capacity in the community to support formal services by providing crucial support to individuals and families so that formal care services can focus on direct care. We have case studies that demonstrate that Herefordshire communities are our greatest asset and when empowered and supported to do so communities can and do provide the very best outcomes for those in their communities that are in most need.
14. In July 2022, social care delivery undertook a review of the social care strength based approach. Workshops were held where the views of all social care staff were recorded to take forward as part of the transformation agenda for Community Wellbeing. Ensuring that social care teams are engaging with our citizens in their communities, knowing the communities and working closely with neighbourhood teams was one of the strongest themes from the workshops. Taking this aspiration and ensuring this is now part of the transformation agenda is a priority for developing in 2022/23.
15. Adult social care survey 21/22 Key Indicators below demonstrate what we are capable of achieving but also demonstrate where we cannot be complacent as demand for services continues to rise. Rates of admissions to nursing home admissions for long term placements started to increase in 2021/22 and so far this year this trend has not abated. People living in care homes of course are part of our community too and the experience of those living and working in care settings are richly supported where there is community involvement. Avoiding premature admissions to care settings by supporting people to stay healthy, active and engaged in community life for as long as possible is crucial. How quality of life and whether a person feels safe depends not only on their experience of the health and social care they receive but on factors such as belonging, employment, inclusion, financial confidence, equality, access to opportunity, transport, living in a safe and welcoming neighbourhood and so on. Talk Community has a key role in taking forward this agenda.
16. The table below are the results of the 2021/22 Adult social care survey of people who use social care services.

Adult Social Care Survey	2019/20 HC Indicator	2021/22 HC Indicator	2019/20 National Indicator	2019/20 West Midlands Indicator	HC Trend compared to 2019/20
(1A) Social care-related quality of life	19.8	19.7			
(1B) The proportion of people who use services who have control over their daily life	81.1%	84.5%	77.4%	76.5%	↑
(111) The proportion of people who use services who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like	51.1%	43.2%	45.9%	46.0%	↓

(1J) Adjusted Social care-related quality of life – impact of Adult Social Care services

(3A) Overall satisfaction of people who use service with their care and support	68.0%	68.1%	64.2%	64.4%	↑
(3D1) The proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information about services	70.0%	67.8%	61.1%	61.1%	↓
(4A) The proportion of people who use services who feel safe	73.6%	73.8%	70.2%	71.7%	↑
(4B) The proportion of people who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure	90.2%	89.2%	86.8%	86.9%	↓
Response Rate	43.0%	42.0%			

Herefordshire residents living on the Welsh border or neighbouring English border

- Residents wherever they live, whether in the city, town or rural setting or on the border of Wales have an equal right to health and care services despite some of the additional challenges which can occur if their registered GP practice is in Wales. Those living on the border between Herefordshire who pay Council Tax to Herefordshire Council have equal right to services from Herefordshire Council and social care services is no different. Developments with regards to people accessing Wye Valley Hospital who live in Powys mean that there is now a Powys social work presence in the integrated discharge team. Powys joins key partnership meetings involving health and discharge planning as a further example of working together. Community wellbeing social care operations is also liaising with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and bordering local authorities to ensure a clear pathway for people admitted to hospital in bordering counties to facilitate a clear discharge and access to community hospitals, reablement including bedded reablement on discharge back to Herefordshire.

Wider access to information and Talk Community

- Talk Community is the strategic delivery vehicle for the community ambition of the Herefordshire County Plan 2020-2024 to improve the sustainability, connectivity and wellbeing of our county by strengthening our communities.
- It is the council’s strategic approach to prevention, enabling people to get the assistance they need and managing demand for more specialist services. It conveys an aspiration and culture which prioritises prevention, innovates and intervenes at the earliest possible point to make independence and wellbeing inevitable. The key message and vision of Talk Community articulates an ambition and culture which innovates brings together people in Herefordshire to connect people to their communities under three main principles:
 - How can I help myself?
 - How can I help my community?
 - How can my community help me?
- Talk Community has been evolving and developing for two years and is becoming better known and more routinely used and identifiable as a route to information and community support. The

scope of Talk Community has aligned to parts of the council such as Children’s Services and provides an approach that is fundamental to the council’s delivery and prevention agenda. It has complemented prevention activities taking place for different groups within communities, including children and young people where early help activity is already taking place. The scope enables all ages, cross-directorate opportunities with the key ethos and aims of Talk Community being threaded through all that we do and provides an overarching framework for joint working.

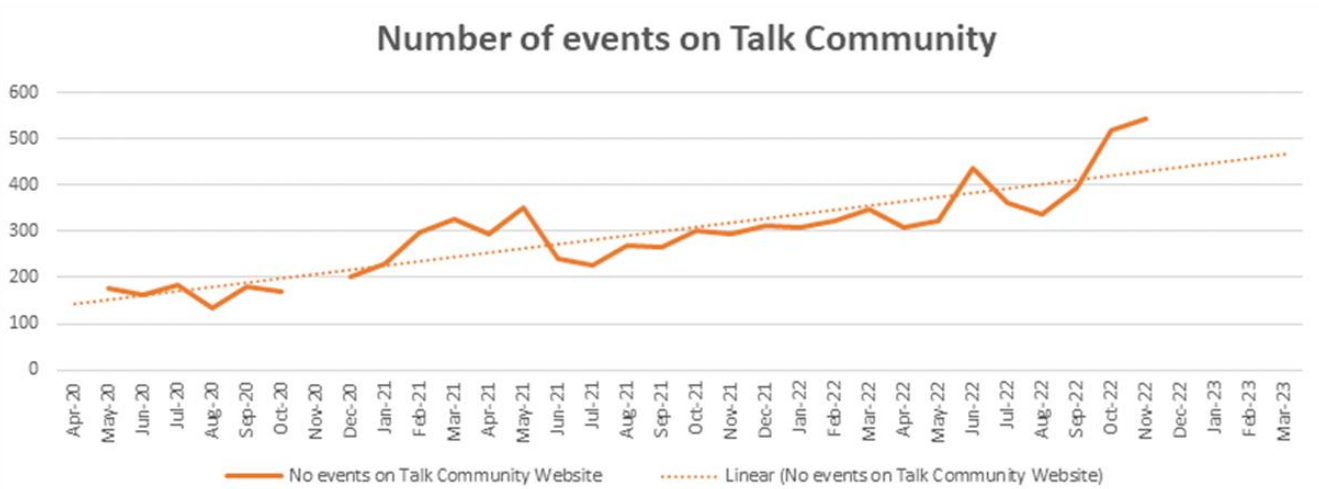
Whilst Talk Community is a proactive, preventative approach it also has a strategic operational function with team’s providing support in the following areas:

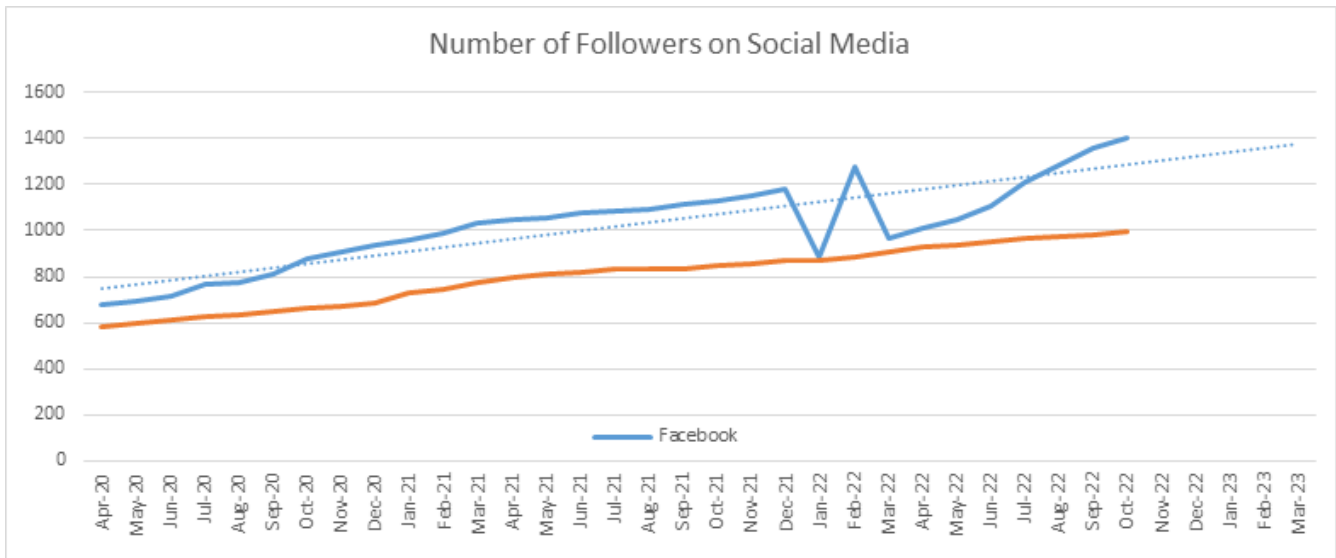
- Social care front door to the council (ART) which provides information, advice and signposting for the whole council and has delivered added value during Covid and with the cost of living crisis
- Engagement and digital support to enhance the online offer for Talk Community, social media presence and community engagement events
- Talk Community Development Officers that provide advice, support and guidance to community organisations and to build community assets and infrastructure
- Health and wellbeing trainers for direct delivery on behavioural change and support
- Community brokerage function that is pivotal to supporting Adult Social Care with community opportunities in care planning and assessments.

In addition to this Talk Community has a programme of work that has delivered on a number of key projects and deliverables, please see appendix one for more details, including:

- 67 Talk Community hubs across the county which are led by the community and provide trained volunteers and staff on the directory to provide information, advice and signposting
- 200% increase on hits to TC website over the past 12 months and a substantial increase in reach across the social media platform
- 2,700 children provided with free activities and meals through the Government funded scheme under the Holiday Activity programme and this continues to grow
- 550 people provided with debt and financial management support with over £880k of debt

The graph below shows the increase in events and visibility of the Talk Community website:





21. Talk Community hubs have been evolving over the past 18 months with 67 currently in place across the county, these hubs are in the community and led by the community. To launch the hubs they can receive up to £2,500 for infrastructure to support the delivery of the hub and they also work closely with the Talk Community Development Officer for within the Primary Care Network.
22. The Talk Community team have collated data on the hubs to understand footfall, activities and impact, and although this is difficult to monitor particularly as the relationship with the Council is collaborative rather than a traditional commissioned, the information shows a high level of activity. The information received from approximately 70% of the hubs. It would also suggest that some hubs are utilised more than others, which would be expected. Appendix one provides further details to the below data:
 - 300 people a week visiting across the hubs
 - 617 volunteers working for the hubs
 - 95 other agencies working with the hubs
23. The next stage of the hubs is currently being scoped and Talk Community are working collaboratively with the hubs to understand the need, demand and community level of engagement to consider whether further growth is needed or a focus on particular vulnerabilities. In addition, the Talk Community team lead monthly/bi-monthly Primary Care Network meeting with the hubs, community and statutory organisations to facilitate networking opportunities and collaborative working. These meetings also feed into and align with the successful Community Partnership meetings that are held bi-monthly and led by Healthwatch, HVOSS and Talk Community, providing a platform to bring together the statutory and community/voluntary and faith sector.
24. Talk Community and Social Prescribing work closely together on a number of projects and agenda to support the population and improve wellbeing and there is evident working with the wellbeing trainers. With the evolving landscape of the Primary Care Networks and the Integrated Care System the health system are developing further roles in the community to keep people safe and well at home. These roles and functions are varied and to ensure there is maximum impact across the system a review is being undertaken on the community capacity roles to consider future working arrangements and opportunities.
25. Through the Talk Community approach more innovative and enriching activities can be provided via the community to support those most in need, this has been explored previously but the plan

for the next stage in delivery will be to focus on these areas to enhance and improve the offer available.

Environmental impact

26. The development of this project has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance. Where possible information, advice and signposting can be accessed online to reduce carbon footprint and the impact on the environment.
27. The Talk Community and Adult Social Care teams are mostly also aligned to the Primary Care footprint to work closely with health and community organisations and to provide services at a local level, which also reduces the impact on the environment.

Equality duty

28. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
29. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. All of the services we provide will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and the delivery of services has due regard for the Equality Duty.

Resource implications

30. The costs of the work of the committee will have to be met from existing resources available.
31. The delivery of the offer and services outcomes achieved will support the medium term financial strategy and the future transformation programme for the directorate and the Council needs to ensure that a community paradigm shift is undertaken to further enable people to support themselves through timely and robust information, advice and signposting. This will support reduced reliance on formal services so ensuring services are delivered to those most in need.

Legal implications

32. The committee's role is to discharge the council's statutory scrutiny powers to review and scrutinise relevant matters before it. Amongst many other things, the Care Act places clear statutory duties and responsibilities to provide good quality information in order to promote an individual's wellbeing.

Risk management

33. There are no risks associated in considering the outcomes and recommendations, however there are risks in delivery of the services.

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Community resource – if there is insufficient resource in the community to deliver or meet the needs of the residents	Working collaboratively across sectors to reduce duplication where possible and maximise opportunities
Funding available to community organisations – if there is insufficient funding available then community organisations will not be able to provide support.	Range of funding opportunities will be considered to support the sector.
Recruitment and Retention – if there is insufficient staff to meet our duties or to support the community offer people will be unsupported.	Range of initiatives – both agency led and through working collaboratively across all sectors to promote Herefordshire as a wonderful place to live, work and bring up our families
Duplication of initiatives across organisations – if we do not collaborate and join up our resources where possible there is a risk of a fragmented approach	Looking to all opportunities to develop a sector wide response with the individual and communities needs at the centre.

34. If the recommendations are approved then the risks will be managed at a service and directorate level and monitored via the directorate risk register.

Consultees

35. The Corporate Director for Community Wellbeing

Appendices

Appendix One – Talk Community Scrutiny Update

Background papers

None