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**To: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)**

**Date: 14 September 2022**

**Subject: Adult Social Care Customer Experience and Engagement**

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## **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 Providing a positive experience for all people that come into contact with Social Care is something we strive for as a service. The results of surveys of people with care and support needs and their carers which are undertaken as part of the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) for 2021/22 indicate that people are in fact becoming less satisfied with Adult Social Care. However, these surveys are not the only measure through which customer satisfaction is measured.
- 1.2 This report is written to provide Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) with information on the range of mechanisms in place to understand the quality of the experience of people that come into contact with adult social care and how, through the combination of these mechanisms we are able to gain a more rounded view of the quality of our services from a customer perspective.
- 1.3 Recognising this is a challenging area due to the diversity of interactions, and the range of circumstances which require the involvement of Adult Social Care, SB5 is invited to comment and provide suggestions as to what other measures or means of assurance might be appropriate to ensure customer experience is understood and responded to.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) is recommended to:  
Review and comment on the work of Adult Social Care to understand the customer experience and make suggestions and comments as to how this could be improved for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Adult Services in progressing this work.

## **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 Customers should feel confident and have the best experience possible while being supported by Adult Social Care. We are often involved in people's lives at a time of change, crisis, profound trauma, and re-establishing independence. The way we work with people, who are sometimes at their most vulnerable, can have a lasting impact and it can shape and define long term outcomes. On a day-to-day basis we engage with people in receipt of support and their carers through first contact, assessment work, support planning and 'reviews' of care and support and also in the work we do with commissioned provider services and provider quality.

- 3.2 Nationally the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) draws on data from a number of Local authority data collections or returns and provides a measure of how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people. The measures are grouped into four domains which are typically reviewed in terms of movement over time – quality of life, delaying/reducing need for care, experience, and safeguarding adults. ASCOF is used both locally and nationally to inform priorities for care and support, measure progress and strengthen transparency and accountability. Surveying is a source of data for the ASCOF ‘experience’ and takes the form of two national postal surveys administered by the Local Authority which are the annual Adult Social Care Survey and bi-annual Carers Survey. All local authorities must complete these surveys.
- 3.3 The national requirement to undertake the survey of people with care and support or the survey of adult carers in England was suspended for 2020 due to the pressures of COVID-19.
- 3.4 Results of the survey of people with care and support needs (in which there 8 ASCOF measures) in comparison to 2019/20 survey, highlighted there was an improvement in 2 indicators (services make people feel safe and reported quality of life impacted by Adult Social Care), 4 with no significant change (reported quality of life, being in control over daily life, having as much social contact as would like and overall satisfaction with services) and a decline in 2 indicators (general feeling of safety and how easy it is to find information about services).
- 3.5 Results of the survey of carers performance highlighted a decline in all 5 ASCOF performance measures in comparison with 2018/19 survey - proportion of carers having as much social contact as would like, reported quality of life, overall satisfaction with services, being included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for and proportion who find it easy to find information about services. A number of authorities within the region did not meet minimum sample size for their carers surveys and all areas are reporting a significant decline in performance.
- 3.6 These declining results are a cause for concern and arguably we are seeing results that are related to a period of time heavily influenced by the pandemic where people with care and support needs and their carers were heavily impacted. However, these surveys are not the only way in which we seek out an understanding of the quality of customer experience and this report identifies other mechanisms in place to form a more rounded view of customer experience than that provided by annual surveys.

#### **4 Our Adult Social Care Customer Experience and Engagement Approach**

- 4.1 In Adult Social Care we want to ensure that customer experience and engagement is a continuous process, and that we are responsive to the feedback received. Working together leads to better informed decision making, improved experience of people with care and support needs, differing perspectives and the nurturing of better relationships and improved trust in services. To achieve this, we need to encourage people to let us know what it is like to use our services; listen to those experiences; and, where necessary, make changes to improve customer experience. The Annual Report or Local Account is one way we demonstrate what we are doing to engage with and improve customer experience.
- 4.2 It is important to recognise the differences between customer experience and customer engagement. Customer experience describes a customer or carer’s personal knowledge of the quality of care and services they receive. Customer engagement is the process of working with customers, carers and other stakeholders to design and develop services.

- 4.3 Whilst recognising that every day, practitioners are working closely with people to co-design their care and support and address any issues and concerns, there are a range of service wide methods we have in place to understand and engage with customers experience. A number of these had just been launched before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, were then paused and how now being restarted.

## 5 Customer Experience

Measures in place to better understand the customer experience include:

### 5.1 Real time approach to service feedback.

We have developed 'real time' approaches to understanding the experience of those who access our support and to encourage more people to 'get involved'. This is an online survey, consisting of a series of statements from the perspective of the person receiving support and/or their carer i.e., satisfaction with support received and does this support help people feel safe. Completion of the survey is promoted at the 'review' of someone's care and support needs and a link is also available on all customer documents such as assessment, support plans or reviews. The questions asked are aligned to questions in ASCOF surveys, providing an opportunity to compare, to see if any work we are doing in between surveys is improving results from previous surveys alongside being able to address any experience concerns in real time. People are asked to suggest improvements and if they would like to be involved in some way and are invited to receive a copy of our Adult Social Care and carers bulletins. <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/health-social-care-say-getting-involved/getting-involved-adult-social-care>. Since the relaunch of the survey in April 2022 a low number of surveys have been completed (13) however respondents all identify positively when asked regarding their satisfaction with the support received and that this support helps them feel safe.

### 5.2 Learning from complaints

We have a complaints process which includes actions taken to resolve any complaints and the collation of learning actions which can be used to identify any improvement themes. An Adult Social Care complaints report is produced annually and sets out the number of complaints received, outcomes, and those which have been referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. One improvement action has been the introduction of the Internal Investigation Form which captures individual learning from each complaint received, which is then shared with the relevant service areas to then implement any learning going forward. In 2021/22 we received 72 complaints compared to nearly 4 times more compliments (279).

### 5.3 Practice quality assurance framework

We have produced a Practice Quality Assurance Framework which includes a range of methods; audit of case work, observation of practice and to ensure supervision of staff is effective. The Framework aims to support the quality of our practice and ensure we address any issues directly between the practitioner and their supervisor. The audits are completed using online forums and results are also collated and analysed centrally in order to identify any overarching organisational practice issues or trends. 114 audits have been completed so far this year (24% completion rate) with this work providing direct feedback to practitioners on improvements to practice where required.

### 5.4 Senior management 'line of sight'

To enhance this further and ensure senior managers have a 'line of sight' on practice and the experience of people, in 2022/23 senior managers (including the Director of Adult Services) started to receive and feedback on examples of case work and undertake customer interviews. These interviews ask questions such as 'How did you find out about Adult Social Care, how easy was it to get in touch? What was your experience of being contacted and having someone identify any needs for care and support you may have? Anything you would change or improve?'. In the first quarter of 2021/22, 10 case audits were undertaken and 5 customer interviews. Feedback from those interviewed included compliments regarding the practice and satisfaction with support received.

#### 5.5 Adult Social Care annual report

For a number of years, and not paused due to the pandemic we have continued to produce the Adult Social Care annual report. This is strongly influenced by examples of the direct experience of people and results of feedback received are included in the Adult Social Care Annual Report. As a result of previous survey results we have reflected feedback regarding how easy people find information about Adult Social care. We have redesigned and published new public information leaflets and used the feedback and experiences of people to inform a review of our Adult Social Care webpages. Furthermore in 2021/22 we produced a 'Coventry Adult Social Care Offer' which is a clear statement explaining our vision and objectives, aligned to the Council's One Coventry Plan ambitions. This is a way of setting out how we do things in Coventry, what people can expect when they contact us, how they can participate in our work and useful links to information and advice.

## 6 **Customer Engagement**

Measures in place to ensure customer engagement include:

### 6.1 Stakeholder reference group

We have a well-established bi-monthly Adult Social Care Stakeholder meeting where anyone with experience of Adult Social Care is welcome to attend. In the stakeholder group we discuss upcoming developments including social care reforms and seek input into key developments and policies. The group is made up of people receiving support, carers and voluntary sector representatives. Representatives of the group are also invited to join various steering groups to enhance and inform decision making and developments more generally. This is particularly evident in Mental Health Transformation programmes and in the Adult Social Care reforms preparation work currently being undertaken. We recognise that reference groups and steering groups are one form of engagement, but we want to ensure we reach out to all those receiving Adult Social Care who for whatever reason may not be able to participate in such forums. We are using our real time survey to ask people if they want to be involved in a way which suits them and their circumstances.

### 6.2 Recruitment and Training

We invite people with lived experience to deliver training sessions for our staff so they can provide their direct experience and involve people in the recruitment processes for staff working in Adult Social Care. This can be through people being part of a recruitment panel when we are looking to recruit new staff.

### 6.3 Service development

We also want to involve people more in commissioning processes when we are developing new and existing services. Significant engagement of people with lived

experience has informed the proposed development of a dementia Hub in the City and engagement has commenced in relation to re-commissioning of home support services. A new Deafblind communicator guide service is being commissioned which will be developed in partnership with service users.

Work is already planned in response which includes a widescale consultation to inform revised carers strategy and recommissioning processes, continuation of training programmes for staff and wider engagement opportunities such as outreach and community partnership events

## **7 How we use feedback**

7.1 All learning from our customer experience activity is received and analysed by an Operational Performance Group and the Adult Social Care Senior Management Team and used to inform service development. In the next year we are looking to further progress this by;

- Producing and publishing an 'Engagement, Involvement and Co-Production Approach'. This describes our commitments to how we will engage, opportunities to get involved and the principles to engagement i.e., be honest about what can be changed, work with seldom heard groups and explore/address any barriers to involvement.
- Outreach and engagement – taking learning from an engagement exercise regarding the review of the Adult Social webpages, to establish an annual programme of engagement with communities, building on what we know about the profile of people who access Adult Social Care.
- Developing a visible 'you said / we did' approach so we have a way of highlighting to the public the learning and improvement from our all our engagement activities.
- Ensuring engagement with people with lived experience in future commissioning and shaping of services and checking, through provider Quality Assurance work, that service user engagement informs improvements to service provision.

7.2 The approaches described in this paper in respect of customer experience have not generated a body of evidence to draw any firm conclusions from, however, insights gained so far are suggestive of a positive customer experience and we want to continue expanding our engagement with customer experience to ensure we gain a rounded and real time view of the quality of services beyond what is available from annual surveys required for ASCOF indicators.

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