

**From:** Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health  
Richard Smith, Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health

**To:** Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee – 28 September 2022

**Subject:** **LOCAL ACCOUNT FOR KENT ADULT SOCIAL CARE (SEPTEMBER 2020 – DECEMBER 2021)**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of report:** None

**Future Pathway of report:** None

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** This report provides the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee with an update on the development of the Local Account for Adult Social Care (September 2020 – December 2021) as well as a summary of engagement and participation activity across the directorate during that timeframe that has helped informed the content of the Local Account. The document is utilised as a tool to provide a short, user-friendly overview of the types of services and support provided and includes contact details and signposting to further information for the public.

**Recommendation:** The Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** the Local Account document– ‘Here for you, how did we do?’ (September 2020 – December 2021).

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Adult Social Care at both a local and national level is currently being delivered against a backdrop of ongoing challenges; including a population that is living longer with associated increasing complex care needs, people wanting better quality and choice, financial constraints and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health and social care. This has highlighted the importance of councils working collaboratively and innovatively to improve performance and outcomes for people and to deliver joint services with the NHS and other partners.
- 1.2 The Local Account, ‘**Here for you, how did we do? September 2020 – December 2021**’, contains highlights from the reporting period and outlines the challenges experienced in Adult Social Care in the delivery of its services and support. This year’s edition includes updates on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the hard work of our workforce, partners and communities, the co-production of key strategies for people in Kent, achievements in the application

of technology to help people stay connected when they may be isolated and an update on social care performance.

- 1.3 It is an important way in which people can challenge and hold us to account. This is the tenth year that it has been developed, with contribution from people who use our service and their carers.

## **2. Development of the Local Account**

- 2.1 An ongoing challenge for all councils is to ensure that the people who draw on care and support continue to be at the centre of the services they interact with. An essential element of this is to actively engage with the people we support, their carers, our partners in health, our wider social care market of voluntary and private sector providers and borough and district councils.
- 2.2 We know that quality care matters to people and there is a strong link between effective engagement/involvement and 'Think Local, Act Personal (TLAP), the 'Making it Real' agenda and sector-led improvement focused on enabling people to have more choice and control to live full and independent lives and achieve outcomes that are important to them.
- 2.3 We also need to ensure that we continue to deliver effective and sustainable adult social care services which meet our statutory requirements under the Care Act, enable people to live a full life in line with our recently updated strategies for adult social care (['Making a difference every day 2022 - 2027'](#) and ['Kent Adult Carers' Strategy 2022 – 2027](#)) and Kent County Council's Strategic Statement – ['Framing Kent's Future – 2022 - 2026'](#).
- 2.4 Based on previous feedback, the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate has understood that by listening to people that access social care and hearing what is important to them, the services offered now, and in the future, can provide more person-centred and joined-up support for individuals, families and local communities. From the Local Account reporting period of September 2020 onwards, the directorate has invested significant time in gathering people's views using a variety of methods over the past two years, and the Local Account continues to be another opportunity to raise awareness of social care across the county, and to encourage conversation and feedback each year.

## **3. Engagement activity to inform the Local Account**

- 3.1 There are several engagement forums, boards, and partnerships already in place across the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate and work has been undertaken to gain insights from these groups to inform the Local Account.
- 3.2 Last year's document was subject to a completely refreshed format which was developed in partnership with people with lived experience, Members and other stakeholders and this will be continued in the coming years. Feedback on the document is sought each year upon publication of the standard version once it is updated on the Kent County Council (KCC) website. It is sent to stakeholders annually along with a letter asking for any comments and views. This was also the case with last year's easy read version, which was published on the council website and the Kent Learning Disability Partnership website together with an easy read cover letter and tailored commentary to encourage additional

feedback. Last year's Local Account was distributed widely and sent to Kent libraries, gateways, clinical commissioning groups, parish councils, to faith organisations, local clubs and societies and patient participation groups to increase awareness and seek feedback, particularly across the health sector and in local communities.

- 3.3 Presentations on public involvement and the Local Account have been delivered to the Adult Social Care and Health People's Panel and at the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the previous edition has been shared with Healthwatch Kent.
- 3.4 An adult social care engagement database containing around 2,500 active community stakeholders has continued to be grown along with our public engagement panel - the 'Your Voice Network' that consists of over 100 Kent residents who have expressed a particular interest in adult social care. All contacts within the databases have received a copy of the previous version of the Local Account in the most appropriate format – digital version, easy read, standard edition or plain text requesting people's feedback. The database will be utilised again for the current version.
- 3.5 Where possible (and if appropriate), the Local Account has been distributed electronically each year to increase reach and minimise waste but with the addition of printed copies as deemed practical and appropriate.
- 3.6 The database, which is General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant, has been used to provide suggested adult social care engagement contacts to help gather insights to inform service developments, to encourage engagement with adult social care/wider surveys and to support consultations.
- 3.7 Over the past year, this growing group of contacts (made up of people with lived experience of social care, people who are unpaid carers or those who have a special interest in social care) have had the opportunity to be involved in several projects to help shape social care in Kent. This included a programme of co-production to develop the 'Making a Difference Every Day - Adult Social Care Strategy 2022 – 2027' and initiating a research study to inform the development of the 'Kent Adult Carers' Strategy 2022 – 2027'.
- 3.8 In addition to this, there has been a great deal of activity taking place to enable the person's voice to influence key plans, projects and processes at the early stages of their development. This has been achieved by setting up specific involvement groups, carrying out dedicated co-production workshops and having representatives with lived experience at meetings, events and forums to share their views and contribute ideas. People who draw on care and support have participated regularly in 'Stakeholder Interview Panels' to give their views on the potential candidates being recruited as new staff in the directorate, to ensure that the person's voice is firmly embedded in key processes. Ongoing communications to adult social care staff promoting the importance of feedback from people with lived experience in the work of the directorate have been developed, including features in newsletters and regular web-based updates.
- 3.9 Further examples of hearing and embedding the person's voice, include public participation in technology and digitally focused projects, procurement panels

for new adult social care contracts such as the People's Voice Contract, the review and refresh of the Learning Disability Partnership Board by its own members (facilitated by Learning Disability England and KCC as partners) and ongoing reviews of key documentation including care assessment forms and templates.

- 3.10 Through the establishment of new involvement groups and peer support groups such as the Direct Payment Involvement and Support Group and ongoing facilitation of existing forums such as the People's Panel, Learning Disability Partnership Board and Your Voice Network – as well as the reintroduction of face-to-face engagement opportunities at community locations, links with social care and the public are being increased. There is a continued and increased commitment to putting the person at the heart of decision making and promoting this Local Account as far and wide as possible.

#### **4. Future Publication, Distribution and Feedback**

- 4.2 The final document will be ready for publication in October 2022 and will be distributed as widely as possible to give everyone the chance to read it, challenge our approach, ask questions and feedback their views.
- 4.2 All contacts within the Adult Social Care engagement database (2,500+) will receive a copy in the most appropriate format – digital version, easy read, standard edition, or plain text, requesting their feedback. Where possible, the Local Account will be distributed electronically, but consideration will be taken where individuals or groups of people are likely to have accessibility needs or limited online access.
- 4.3 A limited run of hard copies will be mailed to and displayed at publicly accessible locations, i.e. libraries, gateways and KCC social care offices. Copies will also be distributed face to face by the Stakeholder Engagement Team and other colleagues when undertaking any in-person events and engagement activities.
- 4.4 Although the restrictions of the pandemic have now been lifted, there will continue to be a renewed focus on innovatively addressing the challenges of reaching more people digitally as well connecting with more diverse groups. Other routes will be used to promote and raise awareness of the Local Account which will incorporate an update to the interactive web content already available on the KCC website, use of social media (Twitter, Facebook) and promotion across linked engagement networks.
- 4.5 An easy read version of the Local Account will be developed and posted on the Kent Learning Disability Partnership website together with an easy read cover letter and tailored commentary to encourage feedback. Other accessible versions including a British Sign Language version and text-only version will be created.
- 4.6 There are existing feedback mechanisms in place, including through the KCC website (kent.gov.uk), Twitter, email, post and phone. Feedback from these as well as virtual engagement at forums and other events will continue to be used in the development of the next document. We will also be encouraging people

to register for the 'Your Voice Network' through the digital form on the council website.

- 4.7 People who are accessing adult social care services, carers, the voluntary sector, providers, Members, Healthwatch Kent and staff will continue to be encouraged to play a part in the evaluation and ongoing development of the Local Account.

## 5. Recommendation

5.1. Recommendation: The Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** the Local Account document– 'Here for you, how did we do?' (September 2020 – December 2021).

## 6. Background Documents

None

## 7. Report Author

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