

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Children's and Adults Health and Wellbeing Policy Development Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	10th June 2024	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Adult Social Care Transfer Evaluation Report	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1: ASC Transfer Evaluation - Strengths and Areas of Improvement		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Bath and North-East Somerset Council (B&NES) and what is now the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon & Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) made a decision not to extend the Integrated Community Services contract with HCRG Care Group for the three-year extension term in May 2022 (Non-extension Decision Ref: E3362). This contractual arrangement expired with HCRG Care Group on 31st March 2024.
- 1.2 Following the non-extension decision, the council completed a detailed options appraisal, and the decision was taken to transfer Adult Social Care (ASC) to B&NES Council (Decision Reference E3393 November 2022). The safe transfer of Adult Social Care Services took place on 1st April 2024 for Adult Social Work (including Direct Payments team) and Adults with Learning Disabilities and their Families Day Services (including Shared Lives, Employment Inclusion and Supported Living) from HCRG Care Group to B&NES Council.
- 1.3 The transfer of ASC services saw a compliment of 237 staff from HCRG Care Group transfer to B&NES. The Adult Social Care Directorate now represents 19.5% of the council's total workforce.

1.4 This report evaluates the key aspects of the transfer of Adult Social Care services back to the council as of 1st April 2024 and provides an overview of the initial evaluation of the effectiveness of the transfer alongside lessons learnt. Appendix 1 details the strengths and areas of improvement identified resulting from the initial evaluation of the ASC transfer project 7 weeks post transfer date of 1st April 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to;

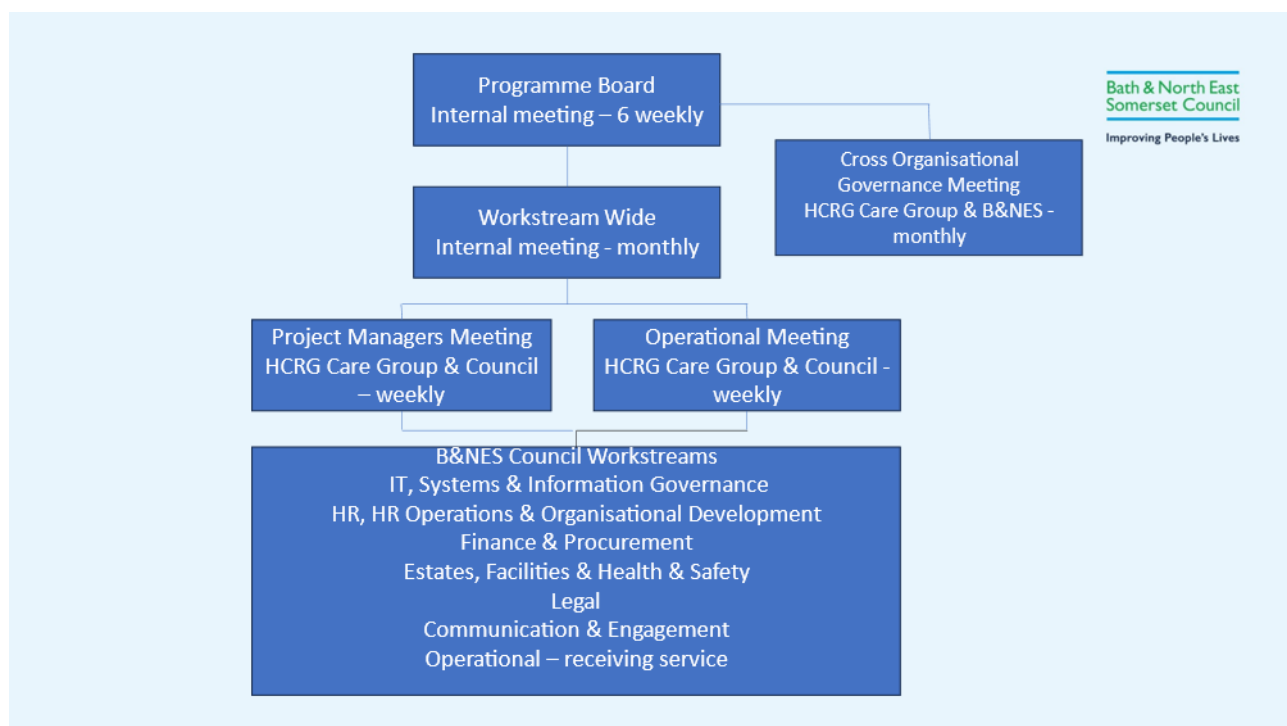
2.1 Note the evaluation of the Adult Social Care transfer of services to B&NES Council on 1st April 2024 and lessons learnt.

2.2 Feedback to officers any areas of consideration and learning for future transfer projects.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 From the outset of the ASC transfer project, the commitment to ensuring a safe transfer of services with minimal disruption to service users was paramount and underpinned decision making. This has been achieved through robust project management and complimented by strong partnership and collaborative working between B&NES and HCRG Care Group.

3.2 ASC Transfer Programme Governance Structure and Assurance Reporting



3.2.1 A robust project governance framework was implemented to manage the ASC transfer of services with a dedicated Programme Board, which met every six weeks and was chaired by the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS). Over the duration of the transfer project there have been regular progress assurance reports to Cabinet, Scrutiny Panel, Corporate Management Team, Senior Leadership Team as well as monthly briefings with the Lead Member.

3.3 Project Workstreams

3.3.1 Positioned below the Programme Board were a number of workstream groups that met monthly to mobilise the transfer of services, these were dedicated meetings for each corporate service supporting the safe transfer of services. The monthly workstream wide meeting was created to increase representatives' understanding of the complex interdependences across all workstreams, map key milestones and record workstream risks. Output and updates from these multiple workstream groups on were presented at the Programme Board.

3.3.2 Weekly operational meetings were held with the Assistant Director Operations, this supported agile decision making to manage and mitigate any operational risks identified over the course of the project period. This approach has been instrumental to ensuring a safe transfer of services on 1st April 2024 with limited disruption to the transferring workforce and service users. The Assistant Director Strategy, Transformation and Governance was instrumental in the design of the programme and oversaw the governance and implementation of the safe transfer.

3.4 Collaboration with HCRG Care Group

3.4.1 ASC have over the last 4 years undertaken 2 other transfer projects from HCRG Care Group (Safeguarding Team and Community Resource Centres & Extra Care). The learning from these projects was considered in the scoping phase of the ASC transfer project and established a strong foundation long before mobilisation started.

3.4.2 Due to the size and complexity of the programme for B&NES, the same project manager who had led the two previous transfer projects was specifically deployed to lead the project management. This built confidence early in the project for both B&NES and HCRG Care Group. The Assistant Director Strategy, Transformation and Governance provided strategic leadership over the project transfer, as part of the wider Community Services Transformation programme. This collaborative approach has delivered a safe and well managed transfer with minimal disruption to service users and the transferring workforce.

3.4.3 Through the project transfer there were joint meetings between B&NES and HCRG Care Group project managers to channel and manage the vast and critical exchange of information between organisations. Meetings held with HCRG Care Group Operations Senior Manger enabled transferring services to be represented and ensured that the council obtained first hand operational information to facilitate a safe transfer.

3.4.4 The cross-organisational meeting which was attended by the ASC Leadership Team and senior management team from HCRG Care Group was used as a joint escalation platform to mitigate and address any emerging issues for each organisation. The proactive approach adopted by B&NES and HCRG Care Group ensured a jointly owned and collaborative approach to the effective management of the transfer for both organisations.

3.5 Audit – Level 4 Substantial Assurance

3.5.1 An audit of the Adult Social Care Transfer - Governance and Programme Management was undertaken as part of the 2023/24 annual audit plan. The outcome of the audit was Level 4 Substantial Assurance (October 2023).

3.5.2 The key findings and conclusion of the audit report stated ‘that the overall governance and programme management arrangements in place for ASC transfer are robust and comprehensive. The programme is supported with key evidential documentation and records which are of a high standard, well organised and presented. The auditor was able to fully trace and track key projects tasks/ decisions, progress and the current risks. The project team have committed to project management excellence by reflecting on past experiences and identifying areas for improvement’.

3.6 Service Users

3.6.1 As of 2nd April 2024 (1st April was a bank holiday) service delivery has been maintained and business as usual activity has continued to ensure all service users continue to receive the support and care expected. Since transfer, we have not experienced an increase in complaints and there have been no examples of service users or individuals not being able to access adult social care.

3.6.2 Prior to transfer, service users who were in receipt of an active service received a letter from HCRG Care Group, with input from B&NES, to advise about the change in provider as of 1st April 2024. The key message was to reassure service users that staff working in the services would also transfer and therefore individuals would continue to see the same people and receive the same level of care and support with no change to service delivery.

3.7 Staff Engagement

3.7.1 Throughout the duration of the project, regular briefing sessions were held with the transferring staff. These were mainly face-to-face and provided a platform for HCRG Care Group staff to raise questions, receive project updates and follow presentations from B&NES on specific areas of interest requested by the transferring staff. Topics covered included pensions, terms & conditions, IT, training and development as well as health safety and wellbeing. These sessions created an opportunity for ‘getting to know each other’ as well as being able to effectively plan the welcome and induction of the transferring workforce to the council. These engagement events were jointly planned and hosted between HCRG Care Group and the council; the sessions were well attended and all questions raised in the sessions were followed up with written responses in a timely manner.

3.2.7 Trade Union representatives were involved in a designated briefing session at an early stage in the transfer and attended a series of meetings with managers from HCRG Care Group and the B&NES transfer project team in the months leading up to transfer. These meetings provided key information and resolved queries as they arose.

3.8 Induction

3.8.1 Initial feedback received from transferred staff is that they felt welcomed and well supported in the first weeks since transfer. Highlights noted have been the execution of the IT equipment rollout, quality of the equipment and onsite support during the initial two weeks. The creation of the buddy system for managers and the daily operational huddle meetings have also been noted as positive in resolving early operational issues. The induction and training programme developed for the transferring staff has been well received and the next steps will be to formally gather further feedback from staff about their experience of the transfer as well as working with the organisational development colleagues to evaluate the training uptake. Both evaluations will be undertaken in the coming months and will be formally reported to the ASC Transfer Assurance Programme Board.

3.8.2 The council leaders were delighted to welcome the Adult Social Care teams to the council. Will Godfrey, Suzanne Westhead and Cllr Alison Born the Lead Member Adult Services have visited the newly transferred teams. This has been well received by staff groups who valued the early opportunity to engage directly with senior leaders and the Lead Member to showcase the services, highlight opportunities and reinforce the bringing together of ASC services at B&NES.

3.8.3 The Assistant Director Operations has commenced meeting with transferred teams to proactively ascertain their views on current service delivery and better understand what is working well and what needs to be improved to continue to best meet the needs of service users. So far, four teams have engaged in this process and a common theme in the feedback from staff is the need to review the experience for B&NES residents from first contact with ASC through to receiving commissioned services from Adult Social Care. The feedback gathered from the staff teams will be used to inform future proposals on the new target operating model for Adult Social Care to deliver the right outcomes for B&NES service users.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Health and Care Act 2022 gave Care Quality Commission (CQC) new powers to assess how local authorities meet their duties under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. CQC inspection will assess the performance of Local Authorities to assure CQC and the Department of Health and Social Care about the quality of care in the area and consider any improvements that are required.

4.2 B&NES received notification of CQC inspection on 15th April and the first stage of the process was completed by the deadline of 3rd May. The first stage was an information return to CQC which covers 38 different information topics (approx. 180 items of evidence) including a Self Assessment report. The second stage of the inspection will be a site visit, ASC is awaiting a date from CQC. The regulator has advised they will give 6-8 weeks notification of the date before they will undertake the site visit.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 The total projected cost of ASC mobilisation to 31st March 2025 is £2.28m, which is £1.165m less than original commitment against the adult social care

reserve, giving a higher balance for funding service pressures and investment into social care improvement.

Spend	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Revenue	£324, 932	£1,014,886	£597,173	£1,936,992
Capital	£0	£343,000	£0	£343,000
Total Project Spend	£324, 932	£1,357,886	£597,173	£2,279,992
Cumulative Spend	£324, 932	£1,682,818	£2,279,992	

5.2 The table below outlines the resource commitment across the council as part of the safe transfer of staff from HCRG Care Group.

5.2.1 Table One: IT Resources

Resource	Volume
IT & Equipment	Laptop Handover 141 Mobile Telephone Handover 182 Delivery of the following work from home equipment: 45 Monitors, 53 Mice/Keyboard & 42 Laptop Risers Created 235 network accounts
Payroll run	Payroll run for 232 (not including 3 multiple employees, 1 maternity & 1 sabbatical) Staff payroll totalling: Gross £452631.67 and Net £361314.74

5.2.3 Table Two: Staff Induction Training (completion figures at end of April 2024, the next monitoring of induction training completion rate will take place at the end of May)

Course	Format	Number Completed
Cyber Security	eLearning	85
GDPR	eLearning	51
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	eLearning	83
Corporate Induction	Instructor Led	68
Customer Complaints for staff	Instructor Led	49
* Customer Complaints for Managers	Instructor Led	5
Learning Zone Overview	Instructor Led	64
Clear Review	Instructor Led	59
Basic First Aid	Instructor Led	25
Infection Control	Instructor Led	18
Booking Spaces, Rooms and associated technology	Instructor Led	36

*This is based on the group of 15 managers only

5.3 Continuation of Programme One Board (ASC Transfer Assurance) for 6 months post transfer to maintain oversight and assurance of transferred services. This meeting will continue to be chaired by the Director of Adult Social Services with representation from the Assistant Director Operations, Assistant Director Strategy, Transformation and Governance, transfer project team as well as corporate services colleagues from Business Change Hub, HR and finance.

5.4 A Business Transfer Agreement (BTA) was drawn up between both parties. This legal document was enacted so each party was clear on organisational liabilities and risks prior and post transfer. The BTA is also a record of all transferring assets, both physical and non-physical, with details of processes and responsibilities for each element.

5.5 From a pay perspective the April pay run went smoothly. B&NES HR colleagues diligently worked through some data queries relating to the TUPE data received early March 2024 (28 days prior to transfer) in the post transfer pay run period. This ensured that all 237 transferees were paid on time and accurately in accordance with the formal data we had been given from HCRG Care Group. The relevant HR teams continue to review and respond to specific queries around individual pay and terms and conditions which we continue to work with HCRG Care Group to resolve. We have completed the review of the information that has been sent informing us of each individual's pay and terms and conditions, and there is a route for people to query or challenge where they disagree with the terms and conditions applied.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The suite of project documentation contained an agile project risk register with an associated mitigation strategy and a risk owner responsible for managing and escalating if required. The register was monitored and reviewed regularly at Programme Board and was reviewed by the Lead Member, reported to the Corporate Risk Group and Corporate Management Team. Each workstream had its own risk management framework which fed into the overarching project risk register and this was reported at the Programme Board for oversight and monitoring.

6.2 As part of the continued oversight and assurance, post transfer the ASC Transfer risk register has been updated to reflect risks post 1st April 2024 and will be maintained for a minimum of 6 months. This has also included an update to the ASC Risk Register and Corporate Risk Register in relation to the transfer.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 The Equality Impact Assessment is included in Community Services Transformation Programme – Preferred delivery options for 2024/25 and 2025/26 Decision Reference E3489. No specific EIA issues have been raised because of the impact assessment carried out for the proposed transfer of services from HCRG Care Group to B&NES due to the service delivery model not changing at the point of transfer and no change to the service offered to B&NES residents.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 No negative impacts are expected to result from the transfer of ASC services back to B&NES Council on climate change. The continued service delivery arrangements are comparable to the previous service provision for Adult Social Care services delivered by HCRG Care Group.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 A full options appraisal was undertaken prior to the decision taken in November 2022 to transfer ASC services back to the council from HCRG Care Group. This is detailed in Decision Reference E3393.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 There has been extensive collaborative consultation between the council and HCRG Care Group throughout the delivery of the ASC transfer.
- 10.2 The council has proactively engaged, informed and consulted with council Trade Union representatives on a monthly basis from November 2022 up until the point of transfer and additional funding for Trade Union facilities time was built into the mobilisation costings to support the transfer programme.
- 10.3 Following a council enquiry requesting the detail of the HCRG Care Group employee representatives, in accordance with TUPE Regulation 13 and 14, HCRG Care Group made arrangements to elect employee representatives and reached agreement for council Trade Union representatives to attend the joint formal consultation meeting as part of the November 2023 staff briefing session.
- 10.4 The ASC Senior Leadership Team alongside HR colleagues will continue to engage with Trade Unions through the monthly Corporate Trade Union meeting to resolve any issues for staff in relation to the transfer and TUPE in line with council policy and procedure.

Contact person	Suzanne Westhead, Director Adult Social Services
Background papers	Decision to transfer Adult Social Care (ASC) to B&NES Council (Decision Reference E3393) and Community Services Transformation Programme – Preferred delivery options for 2024/25 and 2025/26 (Decision Reference E3489)
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