



Borough of Tamworth

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 January 2020

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee will be held in **Committee Room 1, Marmion House, Lichfield Street, Tamworth, B79 7BZ on Tuesday, 21st January, 2020 at 6.00 pm.** Members of the Committee are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Chief Executive

A G E N D A

NON CONFIDENTIAL

- 1 **Apologies for Absence**
- 2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**
- 3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of Members' interests (personal and/or personal and prejudicial) in any matters which are to be considered at this meeting.

When Members are declaring a personal interest or personal and prejudicial interest in respect of which they have dispensation, they should specify the nature of such interest. Members should leave the room if they have a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of which they do not have a dispensation.

4 Debt Management and Support (Pages 11 - 28)

To receive a Report of the Assistant Director Partnerships and to receive a presentation from Citizens Advice.

5 Update from the Chair

To receive an update from the Chair

6 Councillor training records

To receive an update from the Chair

7 Update on health related matters considered by Staffordshire County Council

To receive an update from County Councillor T Clements

8 Forward Plan

Please see the link to the Forward Plan:

<http://democracy.tamworth.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=120&RD=0&bcr=1>

9 Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan - 2019/2020

a Staffordshire Observatory Data Pack

To consider the Staffordshire Observatory Data Pack – see link to document:

<https://www.staffordshireobservatory.org.uk/documents/District-Borough-Data-Packs/2018/Tamworth-Data-Pack-2018.pdf>

b Review and update the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2019/2020 (Pages 29 - 30)

To consider items for 2019/2020 Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

Access arrangements

If you have any particular access requirements when attending the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01827 709267 or e-mail democratic-services@tamworth.gov.uk. We can then endeavour to ensure that any particular requirements you may have are catered for.

Filming of Meetings

The public part of this meeting may be filmed and broadcast. Please refer to the Council's Protocol on Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Council meetings which can be found [here](#) for further information.

The Protocol requires that no members of the public are to be deliberately filmed. Where possible, an area in the meeting room will be set aside for videoing, this is normally from the front of the public gallery. This aims to allow filming to be carried out whilst minimising the risk of the public being accidentally filmed.

If a member of the public is particularly concerned about accidental filming, please consider the location of any cameras when selecting a seat.

FAQs

For further information about the Council's Committee arrangements please see the FAQ page [here](#)

To Councillors: R Ford, R Claymore, D Box, P Brindley, M J Greatorex, K Norchi, M Oates, R Rogers, J Faulkner and County Councillor T Clements

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
HELD ON 26th NOVEMBER 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor R Ford (Chair), Councillors D Box, P Brindley, K Norchi, R Rogers, J Faulkner and S Goodall

CABINET Councillor S Doyle

The following officers were present: Stephanie Ivey (Partnership Vulnerability Officer) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) R Claymore, M J Greatorex, M Oates and County Councillor T Clements

28 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 15th October 2019 were approved and signed as a true record.

(Moved by Councillor P Brindley and seconded by Councillor K Norchi)

29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

30 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE REPORT

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Community Safety introduced the Partnership Vulnerability Officer who presented the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse Report. This report provided the Committee with one of the bi-annual safeguarding updates it received each year.

The Partnership Vulnerability Officer presented the referral statistics which recorded the numbers of referrals made through the council's reporting procedure from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019, which for that period had remained fairly consistent with previous periods.

An overview was also provided on:

- Stoke and Staffs Safeguarding Children Board – where new working arrangements were reported to be in place, such a district / borough council partnership group had been formed which aimed to share best practice across such councils.
- Staffs and Stoke Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board – where work continued with our partners to support adults who were vulnerable in the local community but who did not meet the threshold for adult safeguarding.
- Safeguarding training – work areas include the assessment of all new / changed job roles within the council following the restructure to ensure appropriate safeguarding training was identified, the ongoing taxi driving training which continued and the work being undertaken by Council Officers in local schools to raise awareness on internet safety, alcohol awareness, anti-bullying and safer strangers and streetwise.
- Current work streams covering Modern Day Slavery, Domestic Abuse Forum, Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions, Vulnerable Adolescent Multi-agency Panels, Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership and Grant Funding.

The Committee sought further clarification on whether there had been any changes to the statistics trends since September, whether there were areas of particular pressures in the service and where additional resources could potentially be applied. One area of focus identified by the Partnership Vulnerability Officer was for vulnerable 17/18 year olds as they leave the childrens' safeguarding framework.

The Committee also sought further clarification on how grant funding had been applied locally to support activities in this arena. It was reported that all successful grant funding applications were reported on the Council's website.

RESOLVED that the report be endorsed.

(Moved by Councillor S Goodall and seconded by Councillor J Faulkner)

31 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair updated the Committee on:

- The impact of the general election on activities which were planned by the six Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups as well as Together We're Better, where certain activities had been postponed.
- The recent full Council decision to approve the Housing Allocations Policy which had been considered at this Committee. The Chair thanked all members for their contributions.

32 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair reported that the recommendations from this Committee to Cabinet on the Priority Service Register item, which were present to Cabinet at its meeting on 17th October 2019.

The Chair reported that Cabinet had resolved that the Council would utilise its social media profiles and other means to encourage those who were eligible, or those who know people who were eligible, to sign up for Priority Service Registers across all sectors. The Chair reported that as the council was exploring which other correspondence could be utilised to raise awareness of these registers, this Committee could be further consulted on the arrangements identified.

33 UPDATE ON HEALTH RELATED MATTERS CONSIDERED BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Committee noted the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee – District / Borough Digest for the meeting on 9th October 2019.

The Chair provided an update to the Committee on the relevant agenda items covered at the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee held on 28 October 2019 and in particular:

- The Maternity, Children and Young People Programme item where consideration had been given to the Maternity Transformation Plan.
- Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) item, where an update was provided to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee on the work undertaken to change the organisational culture and improve services in all areas. It was noted that the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee had asked to be consulted on any proposed changes to the George Bryan Centre, as well as other matters. The Chair further reported that he, and several other members of this Committee, had attended an engagement event on the George Bryan Centre.

34 FORWARD PLAN

No additional items from the Forward Plan were identified for consideration by this Committee.

35 HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY WORK PLAN - 2019/2020

The Committee considered its Work Plan and agreed to update it as follows:

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2019 - 2020	
DATE	SUBJECT
Each meeting	Update on Staffordshire County Council matters
21 January 2020	Problem Debt
21 January 2020	Councillor training records

26 February 2020	A representative from Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – to attend the Committee re mental health services
26 February 2020	Air Quality review
Ongoing	Together We're Better / STP - brief update post close of initial consultation (end date of initial consultation is 25 August 2019)
2 April 2020	Safeguarding Update (Councillor Doyle to attend and Officers)
Xx June 2020	Safeguarding & Partnerships
TBC	Cervical cancer screening
TBC	Staffordshire Talent Match
TBC	Loneliness – Joint Working group with Corporate Scrutiny. Note that SCC considering Isolation.
TBC	Midwifery Care
TBC	Discharge to Assess and End of Life Care
TBC	Mental Health issues in Tamworth
TBC	GCSE Attainment – T&F group formed of Cllrs Ford, Faulkner, Brindley and Claymore
TBC	Invite representative from the following to attend a meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance Service
TBC	Barriers to accessing GP Services in relation to residents with additional needs / Centralisation of some GP Services
Defer to 2020	Invite First Response to attend – (RK)

Upcoming Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings

21 January 2020
26 February 2020
2 April 2020

Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings

Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee

3 February 2020 at 10am

17 March 2020 at 10am

Chair

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TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

DEBT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

PURPOSE

To update the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the corporate approach to managing and supporting residents with problem debt

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Members support the ongoing actions of the Council and Community Safety Partners in supporting residents with problem debt and wider vulnerability

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Benefits Team

The Benefits team aim to process new claims and change of circumstances promptly to reduce any possible anxiety to the claimant and delay. Currently new claims are assessed on average within 15 days and change in circumstances in an average of 6 days. Additionally once a new claim has been decided, an urgent Housing Benefit (HB) payment is issued within 7days to prevent undue financial hardship.

Financial Inclusion is an area that is currently being considered as part of a Corporate Approach to debt management and this is something in which the Benefits Team will be able to provide help to vulnerable persons due to our previous experience carrying out Personal Budgeting Support and Assisted Digital Support for Universal Credit (UC) claimants.

With referrals from the Tamworth Job Centre, Council Tax, Housing and claimants themselves, this proved very successful which saw customers receiving help within an average of 7 days. However DWP withdrew funding for this from April 2019 for all Local Authorities and Citizens Advice has been commissioned to provide a service 'Help to Claim' which includes support from application through to first payment only.

Discretionary Housing Payments are also used to assist most vulnerable. The Benefit Team administer this funding to help those claimants in receipt of HB or UC who need additional financial help towards their rent. This is used to help those struggling to pay their rent due to limitations on their HB or UC such as the Benefit Cap, Under Occupancy charge, restrictions due to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) etc. From these applications any families that are dealing with debt are also referred to the CAB's 'Families in Debt' referral service where they meet the criteria for additional financial assistance or advice.

Recovery of overpaid housing benefit is dealt with sensitively and to each person's individual circumstances as we recognise that customers who may have serious debts owing to other creditors are likely to be under stress. Our Overpayments Policy also states that we will give special consideration to establish the appropriate avenues of recovery and if it is felt that further action would not be appropriate the debt can be written off.

Housing

As part of the Councils response to welfare reform, in particular UC, a corporate project group has been re-set to collaborate, understand and take actions to mitigate the impact. This group is due to refresh its scope and objectives and will assess the business risks – using intelligence and data to promote agile and flexible solutions. The corporate project group includes staff and partners from across the organisation. There remains organisational commitment to:

- Delivering quality services through enhanced digitisation and customer access to DWP and UC as well as wider welfare benefits;
- Developing neighbourhood resilience through tackling illegal and high cost lending and fuel poverty;
- Supporting economic and job prospects through tackling worklessness;
- Preventing homelessness through early help aimed at avoiding eviction across all tenures;
- Supporting the development of a Corporate Debt Strategy.

Key principles of robust income collection include:

- Independent assessment by Rent Income Excellence Network (part of HQN a national benchmarking group for landlord rent collection) endorsing the approach to prevention, education and enforcement around income collection;
- Introduction of Rent Income Analytics tool within orchard to prioritise non-payment and highlight bad debtors;
- Investment in third and voluntary sector of up to £30k. Including the Tamworth Advice Centre for debt advise and income maximisation support and Brighter futures to support tenants with complex and mental health needs;
- Close working with the DWP (as a trusted partner accessing portal) and job centre to collaborate on information sharing – ongoing work with regional lead;
- Supporting 'rent first' campaigns and educational material via a range of tenant groups;
- Officers closely monitoring rent collection levels as well as comparing historic patterns and trends to assess unusual spikes in debt. Whilst arrears are higher, the payment pattern is in fact following the same trend as in previous years.

Council Tax Teams

In terms of Council Tax collection Tamworth is an area with high deprivation which affects the people of Tamworth to a much greater degree when compared to the Berkshire (the case study outlined in the Reducing Death by Suicide By Supporting Those with Problem Debt paper).

Four out of the six Berkshire Authorities have significantly lower deprivation levels than Tamworth. Our collection performance is significantly higher than the two Authorities that are comparable in terms of deprivation levels by approx. 1.5%.

Our current year Council Tax collection is excellent considering the current economic climate. It currently stands at 98% in year collection.

Gross arrears information is attached as Appendix 1 for information - arrears are actively reviewed and the position as per the graph has remained relatively steady over the last 5 years at around £1.7million.

However following implementation of a Local Council Tax Reduction scheme in 2013 (with a reduced pot of money), people who were never charged before are due to contribute towards their council tax bills (i.e. 25% liability for those of a working age).

Tamworth has not signed up to, but complies with most of the principles outlined in the Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol.

Our current income and expenditure forms are broadly similar regarding LCTR & housing benefit discretionary award applications. However our assessment of income and expenditure is more robust.

We have guidelines which our staff will use and also that which our Enforcement Agents will adhere to if we deem a resident to be vulnerable.

Vulnerability can be difficult to define. Many people contact us and claim to be vulnerable quite simply because they owe us a debt.

To exempt Council Tax Support recipients from bailiff action altogether would reduce collection levels for ourselves and our preceptors.

The Council Tax team will always look at someone's circumstances sympathetically. If they engage with us we can try to come to a suitable arrangement where recovery does not progress.

Activity Undertaken

We work with our customers as much as we can to help where there are exceptional circumstances, for example:

- extended arrangements,
- entitlement to Local Council Tax Reduction,
- Discretionary Housing Payments and Discretionary relief,
- other discounts,
- referral for debt advice to both local and other organisations etc.

We also work with Brighter Futures in respect of people with complex needs and mental health issues and also Safeguarding where appropriate.

We try as much as we can to engage with our customers and get them to contact us so we can help them within reasonable limits.

At Tamworth we have put additional steps in the process of the recovery of unpaid debt. Whilst we are no longer required to issue a 14 day letter to the debtor prior to passing the case to the Enforcement Agents we continue to do this. Therefore ensuring there is additional communication. This gives a further opportunity for the debt to be paid, the debtor to communicate with us or suitable arrangements to be made.

We adopt income and expenditure statements which we use at recovery stage when engaging with our customers and officers are well trained in assessing affordability. We also send reminders when enforcement arrangements are not paid instead of cases being sent automatically to the Enforcement Agents.

We do consider our actions before a case is sent to the Enforcement Agent, however we have a statutory duty to collect the debt in the most economic and effective manner.

We work with charge payers as far as we are able to assist them in paying their debts and have an active working relationship with the CAB and other long standing organisations within the Borough e.g. Bromford Housing Group, Christians Against Poverty, Tamcan. Providing we have authorisation from the taxpayer we are happy to deal with any representative they should choose to use.

As a result of discussions with Rossendales details are below as to how these cases are dealt with.

“From case receipt to case return, our back office, call centre and EA teams are trained to assess and identify vulnerability utilising the TEXAS and IDEA models. Staff are also trained in handling suicidal disclosures and incorporate the BLAKE model in their handling of such cases. Training has been developed in partnership with the Money Advice Trust and Royal College of Psychiatrists, while our specialist Welfare Support Unit (WSU) is also Samaritan trained and support, signpost and sensitively case manage all customers. Rossendales’ managing director is the IRRV’s subject lead on vulnerability and training in suicidal disclosures and we deliver training to councils nationwide on the most appropriate methods to identify and respond to suicidal disclosures and other vulnerable conditions as part of our safeguarding responsibilities and duty of care”.

Equita our other Enforcement Agents offer a similar service as well.

Partnerships

A specialist financial wellbeing debt and general advice centre – Tamworth Advice Centre – was commissioned in 2017 by the Council to offer specialist and general advice to residents at Marmion House in conjunction with Homelessness teams, Benefits, Council Tax and Partnerships.

The aims of the service are:

- The delivery of an inclusive Financial Well-being, Debt and General Advice Service that is accessible to all through flexible methods of service delivery to accommodate individual client needs.
- An improvement in the health and wellbeing of local people through effective and relevant advice with more clients accessing the service at an earlier stage.
- Maximising joint working with partner agencies to enable a more seamless debt, benefit and generalist advice service to Tamworth residents.
- An increase in the sustainability of all housing tenures in the borough of Tamworth.
- The prevention of homelessness in the borough of Tamworth.
- A reduction in tenancy failure for tenants of the Council due to rent arrears.
- To reduce demand on Tamworth Borough Council Services

The contract was novated to Citizens Advice Mid Mercia in February 2019 and extended until April 2021, during which time the contract services will be reviewed for re-tender.

The service receives targeted referrals from

- Tamworth Borough Council – Appropriate Housing Payments Applicants
- Tamworth Borough Council – Council tax and Benefits Teams
- Tamworth Borough Council Homelessness – Budgeting, hardship funding and general debt advice

The commissioning is joint budget of £90,000 per annum

Families in debt is a priority for Staffordshire County Council who have funded £15,000 per year (until September 2020) through the Building Resilient Families Earned Autonomy programme to specifically assist families with debt management problems and the service receives direct referrals from:

- Malachi Family Support Service (Staffs CC)
- Building Resilient Families (Families Intervention Project (FIP)) team (Staffs CC)

Mr David Symcox from Citizens Advice Mid Mercia will update members on the service provided.

Quarter 2 2019-20 report is listed as Appendix 2 and referrals as Appendix 3

Samaritans

Tamworth Samaritans have been awarded an annual grant of £5,000 per year until April 2021 to contribute to core costs to sustain a Tamworth Branch which can then support local outreach activity to the people of Tamworth.

By continuing to have a local branch they are able to provide outreach work raising awareness of their services amongst the residents of Tamworth. They have been very active in the creation of the Tamworth Escalation Project and the need specifically for greater support, resources for the Town and alterations to be made to Tamworth Railway Station. Tamworth Railway Station has been officially listed as a 'hot spot' suicide risk and supporting the Staffordshire County Council Suicide Prevention Strategy, with the help and support from the Arts and Events Team project have been undertaken to involve local groups and change the nature and atmosphere with beneficial effects in people's wellbeing.

The grant has enables The Samaritans to sustain a Tamworth Branch which can then support local outreach activity and develop the local outreach programme by:

- Targeting publicity and awareness raising in TBC's priority wards
- Taking part in 'Safer Nights' events
- Holding a 'pop up' in St Editha's Square the 1st Monday of every month
- Being part of Network Rail National Campaign for Tamworth Railway Station and Network Rails Awareness Day.

Vulnerability concerns and the causal factors remain a priority for the Community Safety Partnership and all agencies also continue to be able to refer any person of concern that they feel would benefit from wider multi agency intervention to the weekly partnership meeting for and action planning.

Where possible the Partnership plans will focus on prevention and early intervention.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Cost of £90,000 per annum can be met from within existing TBC budgets as follows:
GS0406 35167 - Housing Solutions
HR2103 30409 – Tenancy
GS1002 57025 – Partnerships

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

None

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

All actions are taken in accordance with the Council's policies for safeguarding and equality

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Further to a recent paper Reducing death by suicide by supporting those with problem debt by Ann Dally & Richard Tredgett published in June 2019, the Scrutiny Committee requested an update on the approach of Tamworth Borough Council to support residents with problem debt around Council Tax , benefit payments and rent arrears.

This report seeks to outline actions being taken and has updates from Council Tax, Benefits, Neighbourhoods and Partnerships teams working together to support residents to reduce risk factors around problem debt and suicide.

REPORT AUTHOR

Jo Sands, Assistant Director Partnerships

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

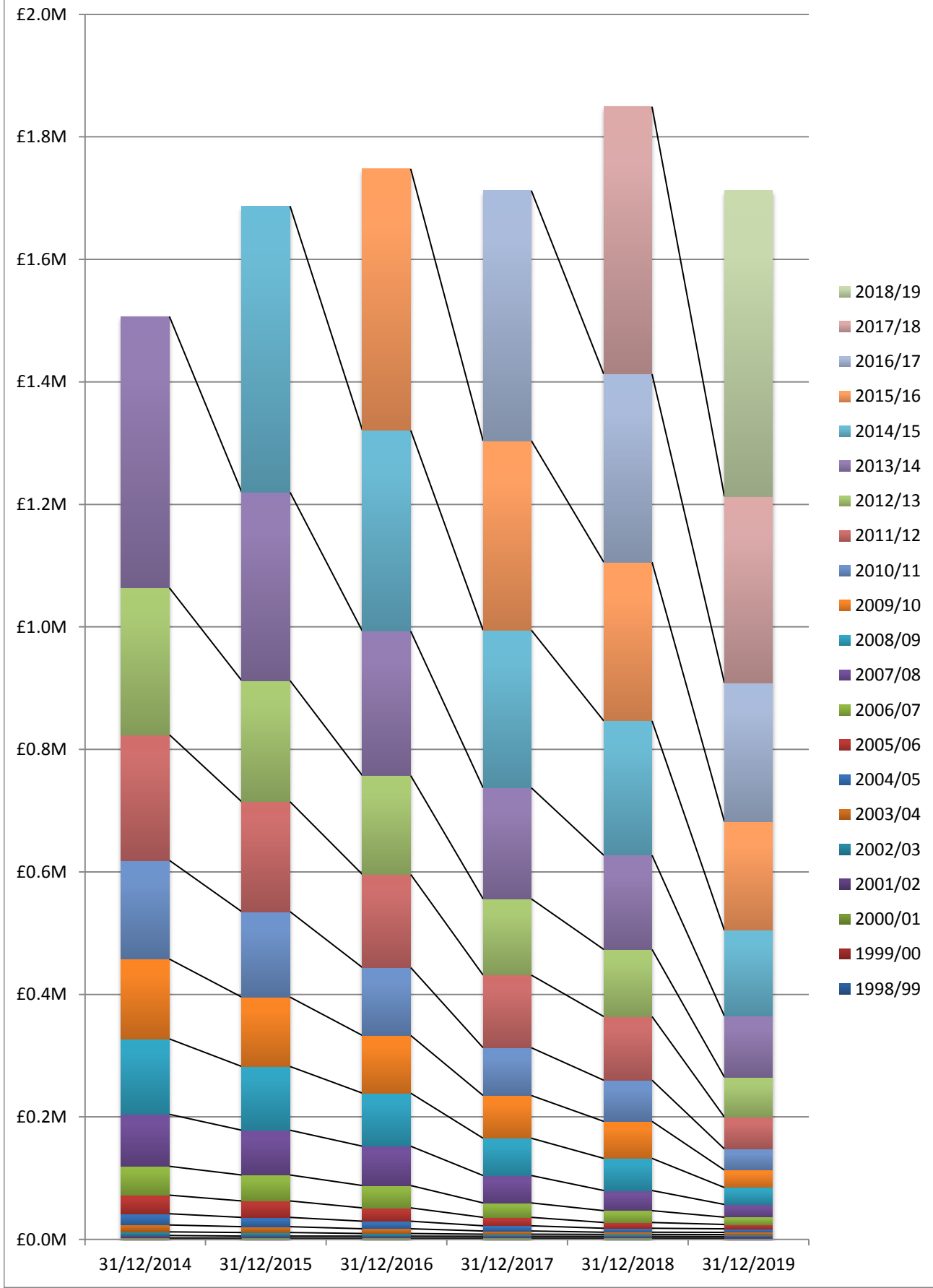
Reducing death by suicide by supporting those with problem debt by Ann Dally & Richard Tredgett published in June 2019

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Council Tax Arrears
Appendix 2 – CAMS TAC Q2report
Appendix 3 – TAC Q2 referrals

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Council Tax Gross Arrears by Year as at 31 December



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Financial Well-Being, Debt & General Advice Service Tamworth Borough Council Quarter 2 2019-20 Report

Overview of Service

Citizens Advice Mid Mercia (Camm) are working together with Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) to assist with the council priorities:

- Living a quality life in Tamworth
- Growing strong together in Tamworth
- Delivering quality services in Tamworth.

The delivery of an inclusive Financial Well-being, Debt and General Advice Service that is accessible to all through flexible methods of service delivery for an improvement in the health and well-being of local people through effective advice.

Overview of the quarter

Following the staffing challenges faced in Q1 we are pleased that the generalist and debt caseworker has had an impact on the number of clients helped at face-to-face appointments. We have helped fewer people via a 'simple query' or signposting but have been able to offer more face-to-face support instead. The volunteers who are supporting the debt and generalist service have continued to assist in seeing clients as well as answering the line for those calling through from reception.

Of the 5 new volunteers that joined the Tamworth office in Q1 we have 3 remaining (others left due to ill health/employment). These volunteers are training and working through our training packs, observing interviews and answering the calls coming through from reception. We hope to recruit more volunteers in the coming months and using the local library in Tamworth as a base from which to do this.

As previously discussed we ask local clients to contact our local advice line number at CAMM, 0300 330 9002 in order to make appointments as well as accessing us via the internal phones from reception. In addition to this, we have installed 2 advice line phones in our Tamworth office to increase the number of clients we can help. The telephone system used by Citizens Advice has its limitations and therefore we cannot presently count all clients who have been helped, especially those who call using a mobile. We are working with Citizens Advice to see if there is a way around this.

The new pull up has arrived and is currently situated in reception along with a new designed leaflet, which provides updated information regarding service provision. We hope that these leaflets are used when referrals are made to Tamworth Advice Centre, this may help clients understand our service and our independence and reduce the number of no shows.

Clients failing to turn up to their appointments continues to affect the service. We do call clients prior to appointment to remind them of their appointment time and to provide opportunity for them to cancel.

The issue regarding case recording has been resolved and all staff and volunteers have received refresher training on recording debts and outcomes. The positive impact the training has had is reflected in the report, in particular the improved recording of client's outcomes and debts.

Satisfaction Surveys

Given to clients following advice with the following results:

95% said they found it easy or very easy to access the service.

100% said they were happy or very happy with the information and advice they had received.

100% said they were happy or very happy overall, with the service they received.

'Kay has been very approachable and dealt with our case with sympathy'

'I found Merleena very helpful would never have been able to fill the form by myself very grateful nice lady'

'very helpful understanding and patient'

Digital inclusion

We now have a volunteer coming into Tamworth twice a month delivering digital inclusion. As well as assisting clients to get online safely and with confidence, we are also able to empower individuals to complete basic forms online.

Volunteers

We have had two new volunteers join the team in this quarter. One started but the second volunteer changed their mind due to personal circumstances. Our Volunteer Support Mentor is continuing to recruit into Tamworth Advice Centre on a rolling basis and will be in the library on 29th October.

Case study

Clients are a couple with 2 teenage children. They are in full and part time employment. They have a 5 year Assured Shorthold Tenancy from 24/10/2016 from Waterloo Housing Association; this followed a 1-year probationary tenancy. Clients advised that they moved to this property after contacting Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) to move to a 3-bed property as their children got older. Their home is a privately owned property acquired by Waterloo Housing Association to rent out to people in 2014.

Clients received a letter dated 13/6/2018 to advise end of their lease on 10/3/2019 and Waterloo were working with TBC to secure alternative property. Clients have now received a section 21 Notice seeking possession on form 6A dated 2/4/2019 to give possession by 02/06/2019 and were referred to us for an affordability check and to look at the Sect 21 Notice and check its validity. We advised client that it was unclear why Waterloo had issued them with a s21 notice as this would not be valid as they are still within their 5 year fixed term agreement. We checked the Tenancy Agreement to confirm also that there was no break clause either. The housing association would only be able to use a s8 notice and rely on grounds for breach of the tenancy agreement, of which there appeared to be nothing.

We contacted Waterloo Housing and spoke to a Housing Officer and were advised that these tenants and some other families were housed in an agreement with TBC to house TBC residents in privately owned properties, where the lease is now expiring. Waterloo advised that they would like to speak with someone at Tamworth BC regarding these families and we were able to contact Daniel and Sue in Housing

for ongoing further assistance in this matter. We understand they are now speaking with Waterloo to sort out this matter.

We have now advised our clients of what is happening and hope to be updated by them and Tamworth BC shortly.

CASE STUDY 2 IN MARCH 2019 – UPDATE MAY 2019

We advised you of the issues our housing association client was facing in Case Study 2 in March 2019 and felt that you would be interested in an update. Following on from the issues, she was facing regarding the DWP admitting to numerous errors in her claims and admitting they had made a mistake advising her to stop her claim for UC.

Clients Housing Assoc did apply for Possession and we assisted her with her Court Papers and submitted information letters etc to show that we had contacted the HA to supply evidence of the issues and complaint made to DWP. The Judge agreed to adjourn the Hearing.

We then assisted client in to receive a backdated claim of her missing Housing costs.

We contacted DWP escalation department to prompt them to get this matter sorted and were assisted by a Complaint Resolution Team Manager who pushed the issue through on our behalf

This has resulted in 1 years housing costs being paid to Clarion Housing of approximately £5.5K and £337.21 pcm ongoing.

Our client is 'over the moon' (her words) and stated she would not have been able to do this without our help and feared she would lose her home.

Case study debt and generalist

Client is a single 52-year old woman living on her own in private rented property which costs £525 per month. Our client works 14 hours per week and is in receipt of £570 per month wages, she cannot work more hours due to her suffering from anxiety and depression and is stressed because she is having problems making her contractual rental payments as her benefit income leaves her with a shortfall of £272 rent to have to fin. As client is on limited income this is a real struggle for her to find, client also has council tax arrears of £500.

We put in a discretionary housing payment (DHP) for the client alongside a letter explaining our client's health and vulnerability issues. The client was originally refused this as she has made an application for DHP before, but following liaison with the housing officer and having further explained how concerned we were for the

client's mental health and stress regarding the short fall of rent, this is now being looked at again.

DHP was awarded to the client at £50 per week for the next 12 weeks giving our client £600 towards her rent shortfall; the council are also considering writing off the £500 council tax debt from the section 13a discretionary council tax payment. Client has now received support from her doctor and is considering making a claim for PIP with our help to maximise her income. Our client felt much better having sought our advice and support.

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Advice Issues Recorded

Type of advice delivered	Q1 Total	July	August	September	Q2 Total
Benefits & tax credits	152	57	64	90	211
Benefits Universal Credit	188	12	5	10	27
Consumer goods & services	8	1	0	3	4
Debt	131	33	63	163	259
Discrimination	0	0	3	2	5
Education	0	0	0	0	0
Employment	7	12	3	7	22
Financial services & capability	13	9	7	4	20
Health & community care	3	1	0	1	2
Housing	75	8	15	13	36
Immigration & asylum	0	0	0	3	3
Legal	1	2	3	12	17
Other	2	0	1	2	3
Relationships & family	5	7	15	1	23
Tax	2	1	3	2	6
Travel & transport	1	0	6	3	9
Utilities & communications	1	5	3	8	16
Total	589	148	191	324	663

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Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2019 - 2020	
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TBC	Discharge to Assess and End of Life Care
TBC	Mental Health issues in Tamworth
TBC	GCSE Attainment – T&F group formed of Cllrs Ford, Faulkner, Brindley and Claymore
TBC	Invite representative from the following to attend a meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance Service
TBC	Barriers to accessing GP Services in relation to residents with additional needs / Centralisation of some GP Services
Defer to 2020	Invite First Response to attend – (RK)

Upcoming Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings
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21 January 2020 26 February 2020 2 April 2020

Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings
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Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee

3 February 2020 at 10am 17 March 2020 at 10am
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