



PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

The sustainability of Local Area Coordination (LAC) in Havering

SLT Lead:

Barbara Nicholls, Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Report Author and contact details:

Claire Monmirelle
Claire.monmirelle@havering.gov.uk

Policy context:

Local Area Coordination supports the Council to deliver against its Corporate Plan 2022-2027 priorities under People: "Things that are important to our Residents".

SUMMARY

People Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee have requested an item on the sustainability of Local Area Coordination (LAC). Specifically:

- How sustainable is LAC?
- Has there been any partnership buy-in?
- If LAC is successful, could it be scaled up to cover the entire Borough?

This report details a short history of Local Area Coordination in Havering and the impact on the lives of residents and communities before addressing the specific questions. Appendix 1 sets out the costs for a staged approach to a full borough roll out of LAC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the contents of the report and consider the feasibility of continuation and expansion of LAC.

REPORT DETAIL

Introduction and background

Local Area Coordination has been operational in Havering for two and a half years. 8 Local Area Coordinators cover three main areas (Harold Hill, Rainham and Collier Row/Havering Park) split into 8 'patches' of 10-12,000 residents. Over 400 people have been 'walked alongside' (supported). The team receive regular introductions from other areas of Havering that are not covered by LAC. Full borough coverage of LAC would enable all residents to benefit.

The concept of Local Area Coordination originated in Western Australia and is now operational in 12 areas across the UK. There is an increasing national interest in it and new teams are emerging. The Local Area Coordination Network provides guidance and support to the Havering team, and the governance sits with a Council-led multi-agency Leadership Group.

Local Area Coordination enables people to:

- Stay strong, safe and connected as contributing citizens
- Find practical, non-service solutions to problems wherever possible
- Build more welcoming, inclusive and supportive communities
- Support system change as a result of real time learning and data
- Prevent or reduce demand for costly services wherever possible
- Build community capacity and resilience, thinking about natural connections/solutions first

Based in the heart of their communities, Local Area Coordinators (LACs) 'walk alongside' people to help them achieve what a 'good life' looks like for them. They work with people on a 1:1 basis, empowering them to get to where they want to be – their vision of a good life. People are circling the system or just giving up because they find things difficult to navigate, this means their issues escalate and they end up in crisis, going into hospital or being evicted from their homes for example, when this did not need to happen. Many residents in Havering live complex lives, often blighted by crisis points. Local Area Coordinators are making a direct impact on the lives of residents, therefore helping to reduce and avoid costs to the statutory system.

In Havering, Housing and mental health issues are the most prevalent reasons for having an LAC walking alongside a resident. Other reasons are linked to physical ill health, domestic violence, debt and money problems, unemployment, isolation, or a sudden change in family circumstances. The team works closely with Housing, Mental Health services, Adult Social Care and Children's Services as well as other in-house services, the NHS, the voluntary and community sector and charitable organisations. LACs also have regular presence at the community hubs.

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Following an 'introduction', (there is no complex referral process or waiting list), LACs are able to 'go straight in' to the person, with their consent, and make a difference immediately. LACs walk alongside people with multiple complex needs and actively help coordinate support and 'services' around a person.

At the end of June 2022, 125 people were identified as having avoided multiple costly service interventions by having a Local Area Coordinator. Cost avoidance estimates were £1.4 million per annum. The team has walked alongside over 400 people.

How sustainable is LAC?

Local Area Coordination in Havering is currently funded by £200k ongoing Better Care Fund (BCF) revenue money in three areas of the borough (8 'patches'). This has been used in 23/24 to fund the service until September 2023. At this stage there is no confirmed funding to sustain the service beyond September 2023.

The 8 Local Area Coordinators are on fixed term contracts and secondments. LAC was part funded from 2020 with different contributions from the CCG (BCF and MH underspend), Transformation, Housing and Public Health and some or all of this funding was provided until March 2023 but has now ceased, leaving the BCF £200k as the only certain funding for 23/24. (See Appendix 1).

Discussions with the Integrated Care Board have been taking place with a business case under consideration for funding from September 2023. This would make the service in its current scope and scale sustainable. Confirmation is anticipated shortly. The council is seeking confirmation as soon as possible as the current employment status of the LACs is based on short term placements into posts. Once long term funding is secured security of employment as LACs can be addressed.

The Havering Place Based Partnership is working as a collective and is undertaking a mapping exercise across the borough to identify all community based frontline support for residents. This Havering based 'integrated care co-ordinating and social prescribing network' incorporates Local Area Coordination, Social prescribing and health co-ordination.

Has there been any partnership buy-in?

LAC has benefited from excellent partnership buy-in, including funding from council departments such as Housing and Public Health. As Appendix 1 shows, the council has also invested transformation funding since its inception. However the council's current financial position is such that for 2023/24, there is no current funding from departments. The benefits of LAC are well recognised by partners both in and outside the council, so where possible it will be considered in future financial years. Council officers wish to extend thanks to the Integrated Care Board for their support through the LAC Leadership Group and funding. Council departments will continue to review the financial position of directorates through 2023/24, as it is completely understood that LAC supports vulnerable people in a

unique way, and this results in cost avoidance to statutory services. Further work will be undertaken to better understand the cost avoidance benefits to system partners.

If LAC is successful, could it be scaled up to cover the entire Borough?

There is growing evidence of the success of LAC. There is latent demand from people in the borough who live in areas not covered by the current scope of the service. If funding could be secured, then LAC could be scaled up to cover the entire borough. Appendix 1 indicates the costs and profile of what would be needed to scale up. Maintaining the service as is will be important to ensure that if and when the opportunity to scale up does come then we can build on an existing provision that has built learning and understanding of how to deliver a LAC service.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

The Local Area Coordination pilot has been running since 2021 and has been funded through CCG Funding, Better Care Funding, Public Health contributions, Housing contributions and Transformation funding. The breakdown of this is shown in appendix 1. The funding was agreed for the pilot period and no funding beyond 2022/2023 is yet agreed. Discussions with the Integrated Care Board have taken place and verbal reassurance has been given that additional funding will be available to continue funding the service. If additional funding is not secured, then the pilot will not continue. There is currently funding available to continue running the service until September 2023.

Local area Co-ordinators avoid costly service interventions and the cost avoidance savings that have been achieved as at June 2022 are estimated to be £1.4 million, these cost avoidance savings are attributable to both the Local Authority and to Health. If Local Area Co-ordination was to cease, then this could potentially cause increased costs to other Local Authority Services and to Health Services.

The estimated costs of rolling local area co-ordinators out to the entire Borough are shown in appendix 1. A full business case would need to be reviewed before any increased roll out is undertaken.

Legal implications and risks:

The work of LACs does not appear to be based on any specific statutory duty but is an innovative way of addressing the community's needs as a whole and has potential benefits for the community and the public authorities contributing to this to reduce spend by taking preventative measures.

Section 2 Care Act 2014 imposes a duty on the local authority to take appropriate steps to prevent or delay the development of needs for care and support of adults in its area, and it is possible that some of the outcomes of the work of LACs will assist in compliance with this duty.

In respect of any activity not covered by s 2 Care Act then s 1 Localism Act 2011 provides a general enabling power for the Authority to do anything any individual can do.

The extension of existing contracts will need to be undertaken in accordance with the terms of each contract with legal or procurement advice as necessary.

Human Resources implications and risks:

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

Equalities implications and risks:

LAC forms part of the Council's commitment to the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services that improve the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants. The equalities and social implications set out in this report are positive, in that it will enable LACs to continue walking alongside Havering residents. The majority of the residents supported by an LAC have protected characteristics in age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

Monthly monitoring is in place to assess how the Local Area Coordination service meets the needs of all residents, in particular those from ethnic minority communities and people with disabilities.

An EA has not yet been completed and will be carried out in the next development phase to take account of the changing demographics with Havering and how the Local Area Coordination team are actively responding to this.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

LACs walk alongside residents experiencing difficulties and challenges in their lives, supporting them to build on their own strengths and use community resources. The team uses very few resources, instead maximising the use of existing community based assets.

In line with the Havering Climate Change Action Plan (HCCAP), the direct support that Local Area Coordinators provide include:

- Outdoor and forest walks and meeting people outside
- The promotion of and involvement in litter picking and other local community environmental activities

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- Making full use of schemes that provide recycled white goods and used household items and clothes.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[LAC Network](#)

[Havering Local Area Coordinators | The London Borough Of Havering](#)