



MF BRIEFING

News and information from WCC's Chief Executive

Welcome

August 2019

I've had some really positive feedback about the profiles of the strategic directors I've featured in my last few briefings, which is great. I will be continuing to introduce you to our Leadership Team - which now moves on to our Assistant Directors. So this month I welcome Becky Hale, AD for People Strategy and Commissioning.

Also in this bulletin there's more good news as we progress with our Microsoft roll out ,and I am very pleased to share the sporting achievements of our Corporate Games squad who represented Warwickshire so well earlier this month.

Remember if you have any comments or feedback on anything you read in MF Briefing, or have any suggestions for things you would like me to talk about - please use this [feedback form](#)

Meet Becky

Becky Hale is Assistant Director for People Strategy and Commissioning

I joined Warwickshire County Council Social Services as a Children's Planning Officer in 1999 after finishing my degree at Aston University. I undertook a number of roles in children's planning, performance and commissioning before moving to become lead commissioner for adults with learning disabilities not long after the birth of my first child.

Following the birth of my second child I moved to a role in the charitable sector working for the Royal Mencap Society. This gave me a whole new perspective on commissioning and the challenges of providing high quality and affordable social care - and the joys of navigating the M1 and M6 on a regular basis!

I rejoined Warwickshire County Council in 2013 as Commissioning Service Manager for All Age Disability before becoming the Senior Lead Joint Commissioner for Disabilities across Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council and the 3 Clinical Commissioning Groups in 2016.

Working across the sub-region and within the NHS has provided me with wider exposure and understanding of the system and the challenges and opportunities of integrated commissioning and service delivery. I started my role as Assistant Director for People Strategy and Commissioning in April 2019 and while it has been a very busy first few months I am working with a great team of professionals and am relishing the opportunity to further strengthen our approach to delivering positive outcomes for the people of Warwickshire.



I live in Coventry with my husband Gez and two sons Ethan 12 and Leo 9. They are extremely active boys so I spend my evenings and weekends taking them to, and watching them play, various sporting activities including tennis, hockey, rugby and football. In my free time I like to run (completed my first half marathon this year), listen to music and I have started reading more since my son did a school survey on reading and I realised how little I was doing! I always have a book on the go now. I enjoy socialising with friends and always look forward to my monthly Thursday curry club catch up with my group of lifelong school friends. My favourite thing to do with the family is to go on holidays and mini breaks. We have visited the Lakes, Egypt, Krakow and Menorca in the last year.

My current interest relates to finding out I am in the 1% of the population who have aphantasia which means I am blind in the mind's eye (I have no visual imagery). I do wonder how the 99% of the population are able to concentrate on anything if they can just conjure up images in their mind that they actually see?! The human body is a remarkable thing...

Microsoft 365 update

Since my last update in July we have officially started our roll out of Microsoft 365 with over 50 colleagues in ICT now using Microsoft. This is great news and will provide us with vital information as we plan the wider roll out across the organisation.

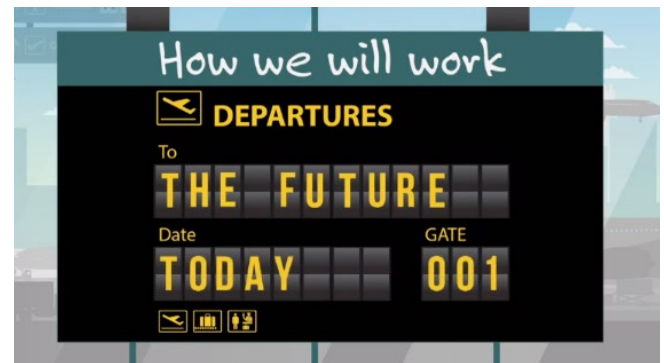
I will be in a position to be able to confirm the roll out timeline in more detail very soon - and we are confident that by October we will all be up and running on Microsoft. Keep an eye out for more information soon.

We are also now getting the support resources in place to ensure you have as smooth an experience as possible. There will be online information and guidance, and we are also getting our network of Change Agents mobilised to enable them to support you.

Our Change Agent network will be a vital resource across the organisation, and I would like to thank all the colleagues who will be taking on this role over the next few weeks.

If you missed the [animation](#) I shared in July's briefing it's still worth having a look. (Have your sound enabled or switch on subtitles)

As I've said before moving to Microsoft is a key enabler to help us become a more agile, flexible and high performing organisation. I know I've been impressed with what Microsoft can offer us - there will be software and tools which you will be familiar with, but there are a whole host of features which you can access which will enhance the way you work. Exciting times ahead!



Corporate Games success

Over 1- 4 August 78 members of staff from across the Council came together to compete in the Europe Corporate Games, hosted this year in Coventry on the University of Warwick campus. I had the pleasure of attending the opening ceremony event and I was so proud to see Warwickshire so well represented and it was great to chat to some of our WCC contingent! If you're not aware the Corporate Games is an annual competition of 23 sports ranging from karting to golf, and netball to dragon boat racing . Organisations, large and small take part in the three days of competition, and the WCC team met head-to-head with the likes of Vodafone, Virgin, Coventry City Council and Domino's Pizza.

The event brought together teams of enthusiastic people competing to win medals on behalf of their organisation, some with lots of practice in their chosen sport and others with very limited or no practice at all!

It really was a fantastic effort from all colleagues representing WCC, leading to an incredible fifth place in the medals table - out of 51 teams. The final medal tally for WCC was: 11 gold; 2 silver and 23 bronze.

With this year being the [Coventry and Warwickshire Year of Wellbeing](#), the Games were an excellent opportunity to widen its impact and give staff the chance to get active, have fun, meet others from across the organisation and try something new. Thanks to a super internal recruitment campaign, colleagues from across the council were encouraged to sign up. So the Games provided a really tangible way to unite staff whose paths may never cross.



The feedback received so far from those who took part has been fantastic and in many cases has encouraged people to continue being active, either taking up a new sport or reigniting an old passion.

It is great to hear that this event has had such a positive impact and that the competition may just be the start of a new way to a healthier and happier life for some. There is also plenty of enthusiasm from participants who would love to represent Warwickshire again at future events. You can find out about some of the individual Corporate Games stories here:

[Dragon boat team bring home a medal](#)
[Craig's cycling blog](#)

Thank you to everyone who took part and who came along to cheer on team Warwickshire - you really did us proud.

AskSara launch

Last week saw the launch of the AskSARA website which aims to help people stay well and in their own homes for longer.

The AskSARA website shows people gadgets and solutions that can make life easier for them. From automatic pill dispensers to reminder clocks, personal alarms and general equipment to help make daily activities easier.

ASKSARA has been launched as part of our commitment, through the Warwickshire Cares Better Together programme, to give people better access to Assistive Technology (AT) and to help them focus on their strengths.

The website signposts people to solutions based on their own personal needs and produces an individual report with suggested ideas, based on the answers to some simple, multiple-choice questions. This could reduce their reliance on friends, family and professional carers, and help them to stay well in their own home.

Please do spread the word about AskSARA - to friends, family or anyone you think can potentially benefit from this truly innovative online tool.

Visit the AskSARA Warwickshire website at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/asksara.

Connecting communities conference

A date for your diary for the Autumn. If you're interested in finding out more about the opportunities that exist within WCC to ensure that people and communities in Warwickshire are strong, resilient, self supporting and connected then the Connecting Communities conference may well be of interest.

The conference takes place on Friday 4 October at the Northgate House Conference Centre and is open to all WCC staff. The event will explore how we can work more collaboratively with each other and our local communities to deliver the council's aims and priorities. It will also highlight the significance of building community capacity within Warwickshire as part of the wider transformation agenda

You can find out more information and book a place here: [Connecting Communities 2019](#)

National Inclusion Week

Next month we will be celebrating National Inclusion Week (23-27 September) which will highlight the excellent work taking place across WCC.

We will also be showcasing areas of good practice, so whatever you are doing to create a more inclusive environment, our Equalities Team would love to hear about it - let them know - equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk The team will also be creating Ten Top Tips for Inclusion across WCC, please add your tips [here](#):

More to come in September as we celebrate all things inclusive

Could you be a Listening Mate?

At WCC we really value and support the health and wellbeing of our staff. And I'm pleased to be able to bring you news of a new initiative which will offer a listening ear to colleagues.

Later this year we will launch Listening Mates. Listening Mates, as you can probably guess, will listen and then signpost to further advice and support for colleagues who are concerned about their mental health or those who may have experienced or witnessed discrimination, bullying or harassment at work.

Colleagues who are interested in providing this valuable support to others are invited to attend an information session next month to find out more about what's involved. You can find out more about what being a Listening Mate involves in the latest issue of W4W: [Could you be a Listening Mate](#)

Listening Mate information sessions

Oakfield Park, Rugby -

Monday 9 September, 2F, MR4 at 10.30am, 11.15am, 12.00pm and 12.45pm

Kings House, Bedworth -

Thursday 12 September, 2F, MR18 at 1.30pm and 2.15pm and 3.00pm

Hilary Road, Nuneaton -

Tuesday 17 September, GF, MR6 at 1.30pm and 2.15pm and 3.00pm

Shire Hall, Warwick -

Friday 27 September, Committee Room 2, at 10.30am, 11.15am, 12.00pm and 12.45pm