

Margaret Reilly
Healthwatch Worcestershire
The Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Persore
WR10 1PT

5th February 2024

Dear Margaret

RE: Healthwatch Report – Mystery Shopper exercise on ‘Beta’ website

Following on from our previous correspondence earlier in the year, I wanted to provide you with further feedback on the work we are undertaking with the Adult Social Care and more widely across the council to improve accessibility and ‘user journeys’ for our residents through the website.

The accessibility of our website has been a primary focus. We have invited users of assistive technology to come and demonstrate the barriers they were experiencing as well as sought help from Government Digital Service who are our monitoring body to help us address the accessibility issues highlighted. Our website provider is now well versed in screen reader testing and have developed new skills in using NVDA. The council also commissioned a live audit of the website, which was tested with a screen reader and keyboard only. Speakeasy now are actively working with us around our online services and information.

The site has seen some major changes due to this, such as; the inaccessible navigation menu has been removed, breadcrumb navigation has been added and labels are now coded to announce to screen readers amongst other things. This is an ongoing commitment to ensure that what we develop moving forward gets checked and tested by both our web team and website provider.

An internal council digital inclusion group has been formed from across council departments, with the aim of making sure residents and staff have the capability to use the internet to do things that benefit them day to day.

The Adult Front Door has an internal group looking at accessibility into their service. A quarterly adult social care accessibility steering group is also in the process of being formed.

Our web development team have also attended plain English training and an E-Learning package for plain English for all staff is in development and will be available to all council staff imminently.

Workshops for all website content owners within the People directorate have been delivered. This included participants undertaking user journeys to understand more clearly some of the areas for improvement. These areas have or are in the process of being actioned. Public Health web content owners now also undertaking the same approach through workshops and follow up action plans.

We have enclosed a summary of the progress against your considerations and recommendations from last year.

We welcome your continued support and insight as we work through updating and improving our website to ensure it is meeting the needs of residents.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Fitton

Strategic Director of People (DASS)
Worcestershire County Council