

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Officer Decision Record

Decision Maker	Emma Noyce		
Title	Change in service telephone line opening hours		
Date	21 April 2022		
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1. The decision

- 1.1. To change the Coroners Service telephone opening times from 8.30 – 16.00 Monday to Friday to 9.00 – 16.00 Monday to Friday

2. Reason(s) for the decision

- 2.1. Due to the high volume of work, the admin team do not have enough time in the morning to carry out admin tasks before the telephones start ringing with enquiries from families, mortuaries, GPs and the Police
- 2.2. By moving the start time for the telephone service, the team would have 30 – 60 minutes prior to the telephones being active to carry out referral uploads that have come in overnight and update priority cases with documents received overnight
- 2.3. This will provide an improved service to families who call in as updated information will be uploaded to the case records

3. Background to the decision

- 3.1. The admin team who are responsible for handling calls consists of 4 FTE with varying levels of experience
- 3.2. Current active caseload for the service averages 1,400 – all calls regarding active cases will come through the main admin number in the first instance
- 3.3. Average number of new referrals received by the admin team per day is 25
- 3.4. Case referrals that occur over the weekend can often exceed 40

4. Other options considered and rejected

- 4.1. Increase number of admin officers to enable team members to focus on the non-telephone aspects of the role. This is not possible due to the increased costs this would incur
- 4.2. Have provision of call handling to be carried out by Hantsdirect team – not possible due to the nature of the service as access to the database is required to respond to enquires

5. Conflicts of interest:

To record conflicts of interest declared by any Member who was consulted in the process of taking this decision:

5.1. None

6. Dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service

6.1. None

7. Supporting information

- 7.1. Percentage of referrals converting into investigations and inquests has increased from 15% in 19/20 to 23% in 21/22
- 7.2. The percentage of case closed with 100A (requiring no caseworker involvement) has decreased from 52% in 19/20 to 47% in 21/22
- 7.3. Both of these changes have resulted in an increase in the number of telephone enquiries being received
- 7.4. Once a Coroner has decided that further investigation or an inquest need to take place bereaved families are provided with the direct contact information for the Coroners officer who will be requesting the required reports and additional information
- 7.5. The Coroner's Service is contactable through a shared inbox which is monitored between 08:00 – 16:00 Monday - Friday

Approved by:

Emma Noyce
Assistant Director: Culture and Information Services

28 April 2022