

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH, WELLBEING & SOCIAL CARE

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing & Social Care 's meeting held on Thursday, 2 December 2021 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Jason Fazackarley (in the Chair)

Councillors Lewis Gosling
 Kirsty Mellor
 Jeanette Smith

6. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

7. Declarations of interest

Councillor Smith declared an interest as she is in paid employment for the Hampshire branch of Unison.

8. Informal Inspection of Regulated Services

Andy Biddle, Director of Adult Care, introduced the report.

In response to questions from members, Mr Biddle explained that inspections were suspended during Covid. The challenge in the first six months of Covid was ensuring infection control and prevention. Although remote monitoring is possible visits are more effective. Visits resumed around April 2021 and although Covid vaccinations were not mandatory then for care home staff it was agreed that informal inspectors would have lateral flow tests. Care homes have been much discussed during Covid so there is plenty of informal intelligence.

With regard to key learning from inspections, the process mirrors that of the CQC. A report is shared with the registered manager who has an individual discussion with the Head of Service for regulated services to agree an action plan. Recommendations return to the senior management team to ensure the feedback loop is closed and identified actions are signed off.

Mr Biddle acknowledged there are pressures and challenges in the residential care workforce locally but they are not as severe currently as in domiciliary care. Adult Social Care (ASC) tries to use all the government grants it receives in consultation with the residential and domiciliary sectors. ASC tries to support the sector by sharing information and resources, for example, the council's communications resources and materials on mandatory vaccination were shared as providers may not have the same resources and infrastructure. Materials from public health colleagues are also shared. For its own staff, ASC has corporate resources such as a Staff Wellbeing Co-

ordinator and ran an ASC Wellbeing Week in the summer. The Wellbeing Week included webinars, instant tips and details of who staff can talk to if they are not feeling great. It is planned to run another in the spring. All staff have a monthly or two-monthly supervision meeting with their line manager, any wellbeing needs can be identified at these sessions. Annual appraisals identify training and development needs. Staff can also approach their manager at other times. If any staff feel unable to talk to their manager there are alternative arrangements in place.

Councillor Fazackarley said if members wanted more information on the items discussed or matters relevant to the portfolio they were welcome to contact officers.

The Cabinet Member noted the report.

9. Adult Social Care Annual Complaints Report

Andy Biddle, Director of Adult Care, introduced the report, noting that a draft response to the second of the two complaints referred to the Ombudsman had just been received. Mr Biddle will let members know how ASC is acting on the recommendations.

Members congratulated ASC on the low number of complaints in view of the number of ASC clients, particularly when complaints could be expected to be higher because of Covid. Finance is a source of complaints and Mr Biddle acknowledged that ASC could always do more to clarify that social care is not free to prevent misunderstandings. A survey in a recent White Paper on adult social care showed that 47% people think it is free at the point of use. People may only come into contact for the first time with social care when they are in crisis, which is a very difficult time to discuss charging. As a result of complaints ASC tries to respond by telephone or by visiting in person to discuss charging as people prefer a more personal approach. The service is always happy to have feedback.

The Cabinet Member noted the report.

10. Substance Misuse Treatment and Support Services Re-tender

Alan Knobel, Development Manager - Public Health, introduced the report, noting that longer contracts are preferred as they provide stability.

In response to questions from members about drug paraphernalia being left in public places, Mr Knobel acknowledged more could be done, for example, there could be more needle bins in public places if premises were willing to have them. The Central Library has a needle bin. Officers could speak to landlords to see if they could provide secure bins (metal ones that can be attached to walls). Mr Knobel said he would remind pharmacies to ask for returns.

The substance misuse pathway works closely with the homelessness pathway. The level of housing support ranges from high to low and replicates

the level of treatment. In housing with a higher level of support chaos and challenges are expected but as treatment progresses tolerance of drug use decreases. The two pathways should complement each other and work in parallel. When someone suffers a relapse then it can be difficult trying to avoid an eviction while preventing behaviour negatively impacting on other residents. Evictions will always be avoided where possible.

The Cabinet Member thanked Mr Knobel for the detailed report and noted it.

11. Covid-19 Intelligence Update

Matthew Gummerson, Strategic Lead for Intelligence, gave a presentation on the latest Covid-19 data and intelligence. Low rates of vaccination uptake usually correspond to areas of deprivation though the low rate in the Gunwharf area is probably because many properties are second homes.

In response to questions from members, Mr Gummerson said the Director of Public Health could probably give a fuller answer about provision of lateral flow test kits in the north of the city. However, tests are available from pharmacies for all localities. Testing sites have reduced in the city but the one in the Sainsbury's car park is hopefully suitable for all.

With regard to support for schools and QA Hospital in view of increasing Covid cases, Mr Gummerson said that Public Health have regular meetings with schools and daily contact with the Education team. Local and national support is made available to them.

Mr Biddle outlined the situation at QA. Although the vaccination programme has changed the picture with regard to Covid patients any extra pressure is difficult in winter. There is currently significant pressure with staffing and ambulance queues. Hampshire County Council is involved in regular communication with NHS Trusts and CCGs as two-thirds of patients are from outside Portsmouth. There are daily "huddles" on occupancy and the pressure to increase discharges. There is an extra focus this winter on preventing unnecessary admissions. Measures to reduce pressure on the Emergency Department (ED) include:

- Clinicians at the "front door" who assess whether someone should be admitted to the ED or can be treated more suitably elsewhere.
- Clinicians assessing if someone can be treated on the same day as an alternative to admission.
- "Upstreaming" looks at the causes of using ambulances to see how to prevent calls to the ambulance service and subsequent admissions.
- Care homes can use Telehealth, a 24/7 connection to clinicians so, for example, if a nurse has concerns about a resident they can use video technology to consult a clinician which may prevent admission. However, anyone who needs admitting, will be.
- The clinical assessment service can conduct medical reviews for people in their own homes who may be at risk of admission.

As well as expediting discharges the focus this winter is to prevent unnecessary admissions as it is better for people and services to have the right care at home than go to the ED or QA.

Councillor Fazackarley had met the CCG yesterday and noted there were a wide range of important issues such as ambulances, staff pressures and dentistry to be discussed before the Integrated Care System starts in April. He would extend invitations to further meetings to the opposition spokespeople.

The Cabinet Member noted the report.

The meeting concluded at 10.56 am.

Councillor Jason Fazackarley
Chair