

Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 21 February 2023 at. 6.00 p.m.

Conference room 2, Walsall Council.

Committee Members Present

Councillor K. Hussain (Chair)
Councillor V. Waters (Vice-Chair)
Councillor K. Sears
Councillor R. Worrall
Councillor R. Martin
Councillor R.K. Mehmi
Councillor P. Smith

Portfolio Holder – Adult Social Care

Councillor K. Pedley

Portfolio Holder – Health and Wellbeing

Councillor G. Flint

Officers

Walsall Council

K. Allward	Executive Director for Adult Social Care
S. Gunther	Director for Public Health
E. Higdon	Senior Public Health Development Manager
J. Thompson	Democratic Services Officer

Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB)

G. Griffiths - Dale	Walsall Managing Director
Dr. N. Sahota	Representative from Modality

Walsall Healthcare Trust and Wolverhampton Hospital Trust

Professor D. Loughton	Chief Executive of Walsall Healthcare Trust and Wolverhampton Hospital Trust
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51/22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: G. Clarke, W. Rasab and L Rattigan.

52/22 Substitutions

There were no substitutions for this meeting.

53/22 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest or party whip for the duration of the meeting.

54/22 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no agenda items requiring the exclusion of the public.

55/22 Minutes

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 19 January 2023 was submitted [annexed].

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 January 2023, a copy previously been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

56/22 Primary Care Access

The Chair invited the Walsall Managing Director from the Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB) to introduce the report to the Committee. The Walsall Managing Director introduced Dr. N. Sahota from Modality who worked at the Harden/Blakenall GP Practice. Dr Sahota went through a presentation for the Committee [see annexed].

At the end of the presentation Members asked a series of questions on plans for the Harden/Blakenall GP Practice and access to GP practices across the Borough. The responses to these questions included:

- The planned reopening of the closed Blakenall site was scheduled for the second week of March, however, this was subject to the NHS IT system being installed and being ready to use;
- Access to GPs was a national issue and not just an issue in Blakenall;
- Modality were planning to implement a new telephone system which would be linked to an online booking system to allow patients to book an appointment;
- This new system would hopefully improve access to patients as it had been implemented at two other practices which had shown improvements since using it;
- This new telephone system would allow patients the option to a call back instead of having to wait in a queue to speak to a receptionist, this method was called a queue buster;
- There was still an issue with the 8am rush for appointments each morning;

- The reason for the difficulty in patients getting an appointment was partly due to the problems in recruiting clinical staff;
- Modality did offer appointments to patients who attended the practice in person in the mornings, however, the demand for appointments outstripped the supply and thus appointments could not be offered at practices at all times;
- The Walsall Managing Director was not aware of any plans to contract out the NHS 111 service however, a briefing on the service could be provided to the Committee;
- The Harden/Blakenall GP Practice was aiming to become a teaching practice and this would help with the recruitment and retention of staff;
- It was important that patients informed the practice of the issues they were experiencing and to raise complaints where necessary;
- Staff have customer care training and staff are encouraged to report staff who do not follow customer care properly;
- There was currently not enough capacity to offer later appointment dates and staff were burnt out trying to meet current demand in the system;
- Receptionist were provided with basic first aid training;
- A certain number of appointments were blocked off for same day appointments however the demand for appointments still outstripped supply;
- The new triage system should enable receptionists to be able to make appointments based on the need and vulnerability of patients;
- It was accepted that there was a lot of variation in the system and that this caused problems for patients.

Resolved

That the Committee note the presentation provided by Modality.

57/22 Teen Pregnancy

The Senior Public Health Development Manager presented a presentation provided to the Committee [see annexed].

At the end of the presentation Members asked a series of questions on the topic, the responses from officers included:

- The Council and partners were carrying out work to help children and young people who were not in school, those who had experienced domestic violence or other trauma or were experiencing mental health issues;

- The focus needed to be on making sure that young people had ambitions, thereby contributing towards reducing teen pregnancy;
- The Teen and Toddler Programme was still being run by the Walsall Healthcare Trust with input from partners such as schools and the Council and ran in the school holidays. The Teens and Toddler Programme supported pupils identified as vulnerable to teen pregnancy and was offered to girls and boys in schools with high levels of teen pregnancy and also to individual young people known to the Teenage Pregnancy Service;
- Young People under the care of social services received support around education, raising aspirations and mental health. The aim of increasing their aspiration and confidence was to help them to resist the pressure to feel that parenthood was their only option. In addition, a multi-agency approach was needed to help Walsall reduce its teenage pregnancy rate;
- The demographic data showed that teen pregnancy rates were higher in children with a European background;
- All schools taught sex education under the national curriculum, but an additional focus was needed on priority areas of the Borough;
- It was recognised that, having a child put pressure on even stable relationships;
- The Council was not the only organisation who funded work around teen pregnancy. A whole system approach was needed to support vulnerable young people;
- There were second time teen pregnancies figures within the Borough and these figures could be supplied to the Committee.

Both the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing and the Chair of the Committee thanked the public health team for their work on teen pregnancy.

Resolved

- 1. That the Committee recognise that teenage pregnancy reduction could not be tackled by one organisation alone and to support the strong partnership of key organisations who were needed to implement a successful integrated strategy.**
- 2. That the Committee note the report on Teen Pregnancy.**

Note: Councillor Worrall left the meeting after this item.

58/22 Childhood Obesity

The Director for Public Health went through a presentation with the Committee [see annexed].

Note: Councillor Martin left the meeting during the presentation.

A Member asked whether there was a correlation between deprived areas and the amount of obesity. The Director for Public Health responded that there was a correlation between deprived areas and the levels of obesity, and this was consistent with figures from across the Country.

In response to a question from a Member on schemes the Council were running to help encourage children to exercise the Director for Public Health responded that the Council was running a number of schemes including the Beat the Streets Programme.

In response to a Members question the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing stated that he was supportive of allotment scheme. The schemes helped children to understand where food came from and encouraged them to eat healthier foods. The Council would be seeking to expand the scheme seen in Rushall to other parts of the Borough in the future.

In response to a question on how planning policy could be used to help control the amount of fast-food businesses in the Borough the Director for Public Health informed the Committee that in the development of the Walsall Plan there would be an opportunity to include wellbeing as a key consideration within planning policy.

Responding to questions on food and physical education in schools, the Director for Public Health informed the Committee that the Council ran programmes with schools, such as Food for Life, to help teach children about healthy eating and further work was being planned to help target this support. Additionally, physical education was ringfenced in junior schools.

The Executive Director for Adult Social Care added that from a survey of Council employees the majority of the employees found that their work life balance was better now that they had the option to work from home and this improved their eating habits and that they had more time to exercise. The Chief Executive of Walsall Healthcare Trust and Wolverhampton Hospital Trust added that as employers the Council and the Walsall Manor Hospital NHS Hospital Trust should be supporting employees with online exercise classes.

Resolved

- 1. That the Committee recognise that childhood obesity reduction cannot be tackled by one organisation alone and that a strong partnership of key organisations is needed to implement a successful integrated wider system solution including within and outside the Borough.**
- 2. That the Committee note the report on Childhood Obesity.**

59/22 Procurement of Adult Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services across the West Midlands – Consultation

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and explained to the Committee that this consultation had been sent by NHS England and they had invited Members to make a comment on the procurement process. In addition, the Committee was informed that feedback and comments could be given to the Democratic Services Officer to be passed onto the NHS by the end of March 2023.

There were no questions on this item.

Resolved

- 1. That the Committee note the report.**

60/22 Recommendation Tracker

The Democratic Services Officer informed the Committee that as the minutes of the previous meeting had been approved by the Committee, they would be sent to the Integrated Care Board as requested at the last meeting. In addition, The Cabinet would be presented with a report on the 22 March 2023 based on the recommendation made by the Committee at its meeting on the 19 January 2023, in relation to the concerns raised by the Committee on the levels of debt owed by the ICB.

Resolved

That the Recommendation Tracker be noted.

61/22 Areas of Focus

The Democratic Service Officer informed the Committee of the four planned items for the next meeting of the Committee. The four items scheduled for the next meeting were as follows:

- Access to GP Services – Update on telephone system
- Dentistry Service Provision
- Update on the Walsall Walk-in-Centre and Emergency Department
- Care Quality Commission Inspection Readiness

Resolved

That the Areas of Focus be noted.

62/22 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on the 8 April 2023.

The meeting terminated at 20:22p.m.

Signed:

Date: