

Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 3 March 2022 at. 6.00 p.m.

Walsall Town Hall, Walsall Council.

Committee Members Present

Councillor Hussain (Chair)
Councillor Cooper (Vice- Chair)
Councillor Coughlan
Councillor Ditta
Councillor Gandham
Councillor Murphy
Councillor Rasab
Councillor Samra
Councillor Sears

Portfolio Holders Present

Councillor K. Pedley	Adult Social Care
Councillor S. Craddock	Health and Wellbeing
Councillor G. Perry	Deputy Leader and Resilient Communities

Officers

Mrs K. Allward	Executive Director Social Care for Adults
Dave Hamilton	Interim Director Adult Social Care
Geraint Griffiths-Dale	Walsall Managing Director, Black Country and West Birmingham CCG
Paul Gordon	Director, Resilient Communities
Sarah Oakley	Voluntary and Community Sector Lead
N. Gough	Democratic Services Officer, Walsall Council

Community Centre Representatives

Jan Davies	Chair of Walsall Community Network
Eleanor Boycott	Chief Executive Officer Bloxwich Community Partnership
Susan Evans	Manor Farm Community Association
Sureya Ajaz	Mind Kind
Dianna Southall	Old Hall peoples Partnership
Gail Johnston	Making Connections Service

82/21

Apologies

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Johal, Councillor Waters and Councillor Robertson.

83/21

Substitutions

Councillor Samra substituted on behalf of Councillor Johal for the duration of the meeting.

84/21

Declarations of Interest and party whip

Councillor Craddock declared an interest in item 7, as the Chair of Brownhills Community Association – with no financial interest. The Centre Manager was in attendance to present to the Committee.

Councillor K. Pedley declared an interest in item 7, as the Chair of Pelsall Community Association – with no financial interest.

Councillor Coughlan declared an interest in item 7, as the Chair of Willenhall Chart – with no financial interest.

85/21

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting that took place on 20 January 2022 were discussed.

Resolved

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

86/21

Impact of Resilient Communities

The Director (Resilient Communities) presented the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed). The report described the positive impact of the resilient communities' model on adult social care. The model was by the community sector and provided individuals with an improved quality of life, keeping individuals well, for longer. Making Connections Walsall was the key prescribing model, the infrastructure for this had been developed by Public Health, and was key to delivering services during the Covid19 pandemic.

A selection of mature organisations had collaborated to form the Walsall Community Network. The Chair of this network addressed the Committee to describe how the network had helped residents. Members were assured that all organisations within the network adhered to quality standards. There was capacity to do more with improved infrastructure and core funding. Lottery funding had assisted to provide services during the pandemic and Council funding had assisted the network to reset the model. It was stressed that the role of community organisations had been diversified, and the national lockdown had enabled organisations to support lonely and isolated residents.

A Member asked how the outcomes achieved during the pandemic would be built on, and how best practice would be shared. The Chair of the Walsall Community Network stated that smaller organisations would be supported to progress and this would widen the partnership.

The Chief Executive Officer of Bloxwich Community Partnership spoke to Committee to describe the work carried out by the Partnership, and

stressed that the organisation was good at responding quickly to the needs of the community. Work done during the Covid-19 lockdown was described – a swift response had ensured that the local community was served, this included food delivery, access to medication, telephone befriending calls, contact with shielding residents and provision of well-being packs.

The representative of Manor Farm Community Association informed the Committee that community organisations were competent at sharing information to residents. The quality assurance in all aspects of the groups work was described. It was acknowledged that community organisations were working well together, individuals with complex issues were identified and referred to relevant organisations.

The representative from Mind kind informed Members that the organisation was a wellbeing service made up of specialist mental health professionals. Lottery funding had allowed the organisation to respond to the pandemic. A facility operating from Profit Street provided engagement activities to the community with the focus on ensuring that the hub would be open for the community in the summer to provide an extended range of classes. There was currently a waiting list for classes, which evidenced the need for such a facility.

The representative of Old Hall Peoples Partnership reinforced that partnership working across the whole of the sector, council and adult social care had been very effective at providing a good service to the community. The growth of the network was stressed, and Officers were thanked for the opportunity provided to organisations.

The representative of the Making Connections Service described the service provided to residents in need of help - this included referrals to specialist help. Older Person Services were provided as drop in sessions, along with befriending services. The provision under this model would be developed for under 50's in the future. A Member suggested that activities for both older and younger residents were run together and Members were reassured that intergeneration work was underway and more was planned for the future.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair and Members thanked all organisations presented for their hard work during the pandemic.

A Member asked what could be done to encourage residents to resume activities now restrictions had been removed, to ensure their wellbeing. Members were informed that work was ongoing to resolve this through resetting of services. In response to a question from a member of the Public a discussion was held on engagement with local Elected Members and Park Hall community association.

The Portfolio Holder (Resilient Communities) addressed the Committee to describe the leadership within the community that had led to the effective response to the pandemic to help individuals within communities. The trust placed in community organisations had allowed support to residents to be delivered effectively and in an agile way. The emerging work of community

organisations could help to alleviate the pressure on adult social care, and smaller groups could be supported through the community network.

A Member of the Public asked if Walsall had a resilience forum which was responsible for responding to emergency situations. The Portfolio Holder (Resilient Communities') confirmed that there was a resilience forum, and during the pandemic it had met regularly.

The Portfolio Holder addressed the Committee to describe the difficulty in measuring the impact of resilient communities', however he stressed that this model met individual's physical, psychological and social needs. It was noted that throughout the pandemic the demand on adult social care rose by 400%. The resilient communities' model provided preventative care, and there were further opportunities posed by this model. The intention was for individuals to remain connected to the people and places that matter to them, with their quality of life continuing to be enhanced. The Portfolio Holder (Health and Wellbeing) paid credit to the work of the community associations.

The Chair thanked all organisations that had carried out great work during the pandemic.

Resolved

That the Impact of Resilient Communities report be noted.

87/21

Primary Care Access Update

The Managing Director (Black Country and West Birmingham CCG) spoke to the presentation and highlighted the salient points (annexed).

The Committee were informed that since February 2021 the CCG had achieved its pre-covid levels of GP appointments (2019). In December 2021, Walsall practices completed 15.8% more appointments than in December 2019 (140,006 compared to 120,857). In addition to this GPs were also delivering vaccination appointments. Data presented within the report indicated a consistent increase in the number of appointments/patients seen with 66.7% of Walsall appointments were face to face.

The Black Country and West Birmingham CCG received a total allocation of £6.2m from the Government to meet demand over winter, this was split across a range of schemes with 78% devoted to place based schemes.

A Member questioned if the additional funding had helped to restore the number of GP appointments. The Managing Director stated that an additional 14,000 appointments would be delivered through the extra funding.

The Managing Director was asked if there had been an improvement in those practices who were not delivering sufficient face to face appointments. The Committee was informed that improvement had

been seen, and targeted work was being done to ensuring that practices had restored access to pre-pandemic levels.

A Member asked if the number of face to face appointments had increased, Members were informed by the Managing Director, that around two thirds of appointments were face to face and one third of appointments were conducted by telephone and video, these levels had been stable for around six to nine months. It was suggested that there had been an improvement at targeting face to face appointment to those who needed it, positive feedback had been received by some individuals in relation to the digital offer of appointments. In response to challenge by a Member, the Managing Director stated that investment had been made in telephone systems and consideration was being given to the creation of a centralised telephone system..

The following questions were raised, and it was agreed that these would be circulated outside of the meeting:

1. How has A&E demand been impacted by GP capacity and availability.
2. Are weekend appointment available to help meet GP backlogs?

The Executive Director stated that Walsall Healthcare Trust had performed better than most acute trusts in relation to Accident and Emergency performance and particularly ambulance offloads. The Executive Director explained that during the winter there had been extended primary care hours.

88/21

Areas of Focus

Members reviewed the areas of focus proposed for the committee.

Resolved

The areas of focus was agreed.

89/21

Date of the next meeting: 21 April 2022.

Termination of Meeting

The meeting terminated at 7.40 p.m.

Chair:

Date:.....