

# HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD - 6 September 2022

## MINUTES

Present: Councillors: M Brain, A Burrow, S Gethen, R Long, A Mackenzie, M McCarthy (Chairman) and R Sexton

Councillors G Sleigh and A Wilson joined the meeting remotely.

Officers: Ruth Tennant – Director of Public Health  
Jenny Wood – Director for Adult Care and Support  
Andy Cave – Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Solihull  
Karen Murphy – Assistant Director Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships  
Roger Catley – Strategic Commissioner, Strategy and Planning  
Caroline Potter – Strategic Commissioner: Strategy and Planning  
Julie Cooper – Head of Financial Operations  
Joseph Bright – Democratic Services Officer

### 1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

### 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

There were no questions or deputations.

### 4. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> August 2022 were submitted.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> August be approved as a correct record.

### 5. HEALTHWATCH UPDATE

The Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Solihull presented the report, detailing how Healthwatch was an independent champion for local people, whereby they ensured their views helped shape future health and social care services in the Borough. The following points were highlighted:

- Healthwatch's statutory functions and local governance arrangements were outlined.
- Healthwatch Solihull's achievements for the contractual year 2021-22 were highlighted – this included how they had exceeded all their key performance indicators, particularly for reach.
- Healthwatch's approach to community engagement was detailed, including how it was targeted to the areas of Solihull most likely to experience inequality.

## HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD - 6 September 2022

- There had been significant focus upon Care Home engagement, with visits to 16 separate homes across the Borough over the last 12 months, with a further 10-15 visits scheduled.
- Healthwatch had published two investigation reports over the last year. The first report focused upon improving experiences of support for young people who had self-harmed. The second report considered access to NHS dentistry in Birmingham and Solihull.
- Healthwatch had also produced a follow-up impact report regarding people's experiences of accessing GP services via technology. Members were informed how Healthwatch had worked with Solihull Primary Care Networks to track the changes made as a result of their recommendations.
- It was explained how Healthwatch had identified the following top three priorities for 2022-23:
  1. Use our position on the Birmingham and Solihull ICS to ensure the experiences of local citizens drive the changes needed for improvement.
  2. Improving access to primary care and mental health services.
  3. Ensuring support for those waiting for treatment.
- Healthwatch had also recently prioritised a new topic for investigation, regarding the Urgent Care pathway for Solihull residents.

Members raised the following observations and queries:

- Members welcomed the Care Home engagement undertaken by Healthwatch and queried whether the site visits were announced.
- The Chief Executive Officer detailed they had piloted several care home visits to talk to residents about their experiences, which were announced. This had enabled them to gather valuable feedback from residents and staff, whilst building an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Care Home providers. The advertisement of site visits in advance also allowed engagement with residents' families and carers.
- Members also endorsed the investigation report on improving the experiences of support for young people who had self-harmed. They requested an update on the follow-up impact report for this.
- The Chief Executive Officer detailed how the investigation report had been published in June 2022 and, within three months, they would produce an impact report to assess the changes made as a consequence of their recommendations. Also, as part of the published investigation report there was a commitment towards this from the service providers.
- Members queried what demographic data was collated to help ensure Healthwatch gathered the views of residents more likely to experience health inequalities.
- The Chief Executive Officer detailed how they recorded demographic data when engaging with residents face-to-face, whilst a demographic survey was included as part of their online engagement. Healthwatch Solihull reviewed the demographic data collected upon a quarterly and annual basis, in regards to place, identity and experience.
- The Chief Executive Officer explained how they had recently invested in Power BI, to enable greater data analysis functions, including considering indices of deprivation. There was also ongoing focus upon linking the demographic data collected with the health outcomes people experienced.
- Members queried Healthwatch Solihull's plans to consider cost of living pressures and the impact upon residents' physical and mental health.
- The Chief Executive Officer explained that they reviewed how people accessed health and social care in the wider context of their life and experiences. He also

## HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD - 6 September 2022

explained how, as part of their sharing information and signposting role, there was focus upon linking people to a wider range of services and support, including accessing food banks, as well as financial advice and support services.

- Members highlighted the impact report on people's experiences of accessing GP services via technology and queried whether any future impact assessment reports would be undertaken.
- The Chief Executive Officer explained that, whilst there weren't plans to produce further impact reports on that specific topic, one of the top priorities for Healthwatch during 2022-23 was improving access to primary care. He explained how, as part of their role within the Integrated Care System, they were looking to ensure considerable focus upon primary care access, including ensuring effective communication with the public on this subject.
- Members requested further information on the promotion of volunteering opportunities within Health Solihull and also queried the training provided.
- The Chief Executive Officer detailed how they looked to promote volunteering opportunities through face-to-face engagement, whereby they could outline how it provided people the opportunity to make a difference to their local community. There was also the promotion of volunteering roles via social media. In regards to training, the Chief Executive Officer outlined the role of the Volunteer Co-ordinator, who provided tailored individual support to volunteers, whilst people could also access training opportunities and support via an app.
- It was agreed for information on accessing Healthwatch volunteering opportunities to be shared with the Members.
- In response to a Member query, the Chief Executive Officer confirmed Healthwatch engaged with and represented the views of refugees.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive Officer and Healthwatch Solihull for all the work the organisation had undertaken over the last 12 months. It was welcomed how Healthwatch Solihull had exceeded all of its key performance indicators. The Chairman outlined how the 3 priorities Healthwatch had identified for 2022-23, as outlined above, were reflected in future Health Scrutiny work planning. It was also requested for the key points raised during the discussion were considered by Healthwatch as part of their future work plans.

### **RESOLVED**

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board:

- (i) Noted the progress made by Healthwatch Solihull
- (ii) Requested that the key points raised by Councillors be considered as part of Healthwatch Solihull's future plans.

## **6. UPDATE ON THE HEALTH INEQUALITIES STRATEGY**

The Director of Public Health presented the report, updating Members on the Health Inequalities Strategy. The following points were highlighted:

- A draft version of the Strategy had previously been presented to the Scrutiny Board and updates had been made to reflect Member input.
- Public engagement on the Strategy had also been held – there had been more than 500 responses, with 25% of responders stating they had a disability. It was outlined how the final Strategy had taken account of this feedback.
- There was significant focus in the Strategy upon ensuring strong links with the recently established Integrated Care System, especially with the ICS Inequalities Board.

## HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD - 6 September 2022

- The Strategy had four priority areas – Maternity and early years, Adulthood and work, Supporting higher risk groups, Healthy places. The Director of Public Health took Members through a number of key pieces of work being undertaken to support the priorities of the Strategy.

The following questions and observations were raised by the Board:

- Members emphasised the importance of public transport links in the Borough, particularly to assist people accessing work and it was noted this had been reflected in the Strategy.
- Members welcomed the development of the Family Hubs programme and queried how this would be linked in with existing family and community networks.
- The Director of Public Health confirmed there was significant focus upon linking the Family Hubs programme with existing family and community networks, as well as facilities. A major emphasis of the programme was also ensuring strong multi-agency collaboration, to embed different ways of working beyond the timescales of the programme funding.
- Members queried whether, as part of the delivery of the Strategy, there could be focus on people with ADHD, especially in regards the support available for them to access employment opportunities. The Director of Public Health confirmed this would be taken into account, emphasising the focus upon ensuring more inclusive support and services for accessing work.
- Members also queried the work undertaken to ensure understanding of the barriers to employment for people with protected characteristics, different health conditions or additional needs. They questioned, in particular, the barriers to employment and services experienced by people with mental health conditions.
- The Director of Public Health detailed how feedback had demonstrated a significant volume of people approaching the Employment and Skills team for support were experiencing poor mental health. She explained how, as a consequence, they were undertaking a piece of work to ensure staff confidence and understanding in helping residents who may have mental health issues. The Director of Public Health detailed how a focus of the Strategy was ensuring effective engagement with communities, to help gain an understanding of their experiences when attempting to access health, social care and wider support services. It was also noted that, as part of the ICS Inequalities Board, there was focus upon the NHS and partner agencies as major local employers and the opportunities this provided.
- Members questioned how the Strategy took into account health inequalities that may be experienced by hard to reach groups in rural areas.
- The Director of Public Health detailed how there was emphasis upon identifying potential micro-pockets of deprivation across the Borough. There was also focus upon using existing community groups and assets to link up with hard to reach groups. The work being undertaken to help address loneliness and social isolation in rural communities was also detailed.

### RESOLVED

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board:

- (i) Noted the update on the Health Inequalities Strategy
- (ii) Requested that the key points raised during this discussion were considered as part of the future delivery of Strategy, especially in regards to support for young people and adults with different health conditions and additional needs accessing training and employment opportunities.

## HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD - 6 September 2022

### 7. ADULT SOCIAL CARE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

The Strategic Commissioner for Reform presented the Health and Adult Social Care Environmental Sustainability Action Plan for 2022-2027. The following points were raised:

- The Plan had been developed to outline Adult Social Care's approach to working together to deliver sustainable services with a low carbon impact in Solihull, as part of the contribution to the Council's intent to protect the environment.
- The Plan had taken into account the implications arising from climate change upon future delivery of health and social care services.
- The Plan was structured around three hearings of Sustainable Service Delivery, Sustainable Commissioning and Sustainable You, with objectives and actions identified.
- Adult Social Care's aspirations for 2027 were highlighted, whilst their achievements so far were outlined – this included the commissioning of an award winning, highly sustainable and efficient A rated care home facility.

Members raised the following questions and points:

- Members welcomed the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan – they queried whether it would be possible for measurable targets to be developed for the key actions set out in the Plan. Members also questioned if benchmarking could be undertaken, to identify the current environmental position of the local Adult Social Care sector, to allow year on year monitoring against the aspirations for 2027.
- The Strategic Commissioner for Reform detailed how they were working with a Corporate Sustainability Officer to benchmark the current environmental position. They were also currently focusing on identifying targets, and the necessary data collection arrangements, to support the delivery of the plan.
- Members queried what areas could be most challenging in achieving environmental sustainability in the Adult Social Care sector. The Strategic Commissioner for Reform detailed how the delivery of Adult Social Care was dependent on support workers travelling to people at home to deliver care. As a consequence, there was emphasis in the Action Plan on piloting and supporting the use of electric and alternatives to car-based travel. The Strategic Commissioner for Strategy and Planning also updated Members on the pilot of electric mopeds for home care providers.
- Members emphasised how it could be challenging recovering community equipment in the Adult Social Care sector and queried how this had been taken into account.
- The Strategic Commissioner for Reform detailed how the environmental and financial sustainability benefits of recovering community equipment was recognised. He detailed the volume of work undertaken by the Community Equipment Service to promote the return of equipment, and help ensure people were aware of how to contact the service.

#### **RESOLVED**

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board:

- (i) Endorsed the aims, objectives and key actions outlined in the Adult Social Care Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.

## **HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD - 6 September 2022**

- (ii) Endorsed the identification of measurable targets for the Adult Social Care Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, to allow the monitoring of outcomes delivered.
- (iii) Endorsed the work being undertaken to benchmark the current environmental position of the local Adult Social Care sector, to allow identification of progress over time.

### **8. HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The latest Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board Work Programme was presented to the Board.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the latest version of the Boards Work Programme be noted.

### **9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The meeting was not open to the public during discussion of the following item because the report contained exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.