

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON 12 JULY 2021 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.05 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Alison Swaddle (Chairman), Jackie Rance (Vice-Chairman), Sam Akhtar, Michael Firmager, Clive Jones and Barrie Patman

Others Present

Phil Cunnington, Deputy Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services
Charles Margetts, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services
Madeleine Shopland, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist
Matt Pope, Director Adult Social Care

11. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Jenny Cheng and Carl Doran.

12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 June 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

15. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

16. UPDATE ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE PRIORITIES FOR 2021-22

Councillor Margetts, the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults Services, took the Committee through the Adult Social Care priorities for the forthcoming year.

During the discussion of this item, the following points were made:

- Care and support Procurement Framework – this had been agreed and would ensure consistent and efficient contract management for the Council's home care and Supported Living providers and also improved choice, quality and control for customers receiving the care.
- Dementia Nursing Home - A new 80+ bed replacement care home in Toutley was planned to meet the demand for places for dementia patients in the Borough. It was hoped that this would be ready by the end of 2023.
- Review of Voluntary Care Sector (VCS) contracts and procurement exercise – this had been underway for some time but had been delayed by Covid. It would provide longer term contracts to voluntary sector providers with key specifications of what was required of them.
- Launch of the first voluntary sector hub - To provide a central hub in Wokingham for co-located VCS organisations to work from, providing residents with a single point of entry into the voluntary sector and direct access to services they offer.

- Specialist Accommodation project (includes accommodation for LD and Mental health clients) - 10 new schemes for 46 residents would be provided over a 2-year period.
- Launch of new Voluntary sector Mental Health Service (MIND) - To provide residents with low to medium level mental health needs through access to advice and support from MIND mental health charity. This had been brought forward to help mitigate against the effects of Covid. MIND Oxfordshire had been commissioned to provide the service.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Councillor Margetts explained that a joint Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy was being produced which identified health and wellbeing priorities for Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire. The Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board was developing a Wokingham strategy which would sit beneath the joint strategy and focus on Wokingham specific actions and priorities.
- Councillor Margetts highlighted several Public Health initiatives.
- Adult Social Care (ASC) Pathway redesign and implementation – A redesign and restructure would support the delivery of the ASC strategy priority, prevent, delay and reduce demand into statutory services and improve outcomes for customers by helping them to maintain their independence. Councillor Margetts highlighted the integrated ‘One Front Door.’
- There would be a continued development and rollout of strength-based working across all teams.
- Autism Strategy – the strategy would set out how the Council would support adults with autism across the Borough and their carers to live healthy, active, and independent lives.
- The department had focused heavily on responding to Covid and as the pandemic continued this could impact on how far the department was able to deliver on its priorities.
- A Member asked why a new dementia facility was being built in the Borough and how residents would benefit. Councillor Margetts commented that the existing facility was in high demand, however it was ageing. The strategy produced two years previously had indicated that more capacity was needed in the area. The new facility would be modern and able to deliver more modern methods of care and support. Those living in the home would receive a high level of care and support. In addition, more capacity would allow more residents in Wokingham Borough who needed dementia care, to remain in the Borough.
- With regards to care contracts, a Member asked if there would be a provision in the new dementia home, for private payers, negating the risk of having to move care homes should their funds deplete. Councillor Margetts stated that people would be assessed as early and accurately as possible. If possible, those facing funding issues, would be worked with. Each situation depended on individual circumstances.
- A Member asked how the voluntary sector and residents would benefit from the review of the voluntary sector contracts and procurements. Councillor Margetts stated that a lot of the voluntary sector had previously been on short term contracts. Consideration had been given as to what areas the Council could well provide services and areas where the voluntary sector could work well. He referred to the MIND service as an example, which had been commissioned to provide a service to fill a gap where there had previously not been sufficient provision. It would help to provide further structure and enable better planning for the voluntary sector and improve partnership working.

- A Member asked how the new voluntary mental health service provided by MIND would work and how residents would benefit from the service. Councillor Margetts indicated that there had been a gap in this area. MIND would be based in Wokingham and work across the Borough with GPs to help diagnose and support low and medium level mental health needs. MIND had a proven level of delivery in Oxford. Funding had been received for an 18-month programme and would be reviewed for a longer basis, if successful. Many people's mental health had been negatively impacted by Covid which the service would help address.
- A Member questioned how MIND had been selected over other providers and how they had been benchmarked. They were informed that MIND had a very good track record elsewhere, achieved good outcomes and that very positive customer feedback had been received.
- In response to a question about how the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board benefited residents and what input the Board had into the Wellbeing Strategy, Councillor Margetts commented that the Board brought together partners such as the Council, the voluntary sector, and the CCG, to help address residents' health and wellbeing concerns through strategy. Five major priorities had been identified in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Councillor Margetts explained what strength-based working entailed.
- It was confirmed that the specialist accommodation project would provide new high-quality housing. It was a key part of the Learning Disability Strategy and would help support those living with Learning Difficulties, to live within the community.
- With regards to the voluntary sector hub, Councillor Margetts explained that it would be based in Montague House in Wokingham. It would be a central point that people could visit for information. A combined online presence was a longer-term aim. He referred to the Design our Neighbourhood Event held previously which had revealed that there were a lot of services available in the Borough to improve health and wellbeing, but that at the time there had been no central place in which to find information about them all.
- A Member questioned whether the new dementia home would take privately funded residents as opposed to those whose care was funded by the Council. He was informed that there was a need to replace existing facilities and to expand capacity within the Borough for Wokingham residents. The facility would primarily be for those who were being supported by the Council.
- Councillor Margetts was asked whether the Council was working with the Citizens Advice Bureau to deal with the likely ongoing issues around mental health. He commented that the Council was talking regularly with the CAB and other voluntary sector partners. Recently Nick Fellows, from the Wokingham Volunteer Centre, had been added to the Wokingham Wellbeing Board membership to strengthen the voluntary sector voice on this forum.
- A Member noted that an advert had previously been put in the Borough News advising residents of the One Front Door and asked whether further advertising would be carried out about that and the new volunteer hub. Matt Pope stated that advertising was ongoing and that a communication plan was being produced to communicate the hub.
- A Member commented that the CAB were looking to put a mobile unit on the road and questioned whether the Council had been approached to support this and to provide funding. Councillor Margetts commented that the Council had a long-term funding arrangement with the CAB but taking the service out into the community was a very good idea. Matt Pope indicated that the Council was supportive of the proposal and that he would be speaking to the CAB on the matter.

- It was clarified that Suffolk Lodge would be closing. A Member queried how full Fosters was. This information would be provided to the Committee.
- The Chairman requested that the Autism Strategy be scrutinised by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Margetts suggested that he and Matt Pope meet with the Chairman to discuss the appropriate times for matters to come to the Committee. He commented that it would be helpful for the Committee to consider the Wellbeing Strategy.
- In response to a Member question regarding volunteering opportunities, Councillor Margetts commented that Nick Fellows, from the Volunteer Centre was a good point of contact.

RESOLVED: That the Adult Social Care priorities for 2021-22 be noted.

17. HEALTH SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS ACROSS BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE AND BERKSHIRE WEST INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM

Councillor Margetts took the Committee through the report.

During the discussion of this item, the following points were made:

- Government reforms planned to abolish Clinical Commissioning Groups and to replace them with Integrated Care Systems.
- It was proposed that Wokingham join a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading and West Berkshire councils. Councillor Margetts indicated that he did not want to see scrutiny taken away from Wokingham. However, if the Council did not join the Committee, it could still proceed, and Wokingham would then not have a voice on that Committee. The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would meet several times a year to scrutinise matters which specifically affected the whole BOB footprint.
- A toolkit would be used to decide what would be considered by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Each Council would have an input into this and be required to sign off the toolkit.
- The situation was currently in a state of flux as Surrey MPs and councillors had been lobbying that Frimley went into the Surrey ICS as opposed to the Berkshire East ICS. Should Frimley Park go into the Surrey ICS it was possible that Berkshire West would withdraw from the BOB ICS and join Berkshire East in a Berkshire ICS. A decision was awaited from the Secretary of State.
- Members were reminded that the Council was the last of the Councils to sign up to the joint committee. Matt Pope commented that if agreed by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee the proposal to join the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be presented to Council on 22 July. He suggested that should the ICS boundaries be amended that the situation be reviewed.
- In response to a Member question it was clarified the formulation of a joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee was required to be agreed by Full Council.
- Some Members were concerned that local scrutiny would be diluted. Members were reminded of the toolkit that would determine what items would be taken to the joint Committee.
- Councillor Margetts indicated that he had agreed with his counterparts in Reading and West Berkshire that pre meetings would be held to ensure a Berkshire West standpoint.
- The Clerk clarified that Committee members could not be members of the Executive or Audit Committee members. Membership would be politically balanced; one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat.
- In response a Member question regarding whether Frimley Park remained joined up with Wexham Park, Councillor Cunningham indicated that Wexham Park was still part of the Frimley arrangements. Whilst it was on the Buckinghamshire border, it was still some distance from the Borough.

- Members discussed the involvement of Healthwatch with the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1) supports the proposal for a joint health overview and scrutiny committee to consider health issues at the NHS Integrated Care System (ICS) level across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire;
- 2) recommends that Full Council delegate scrutiny of health issues at the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System level to the joint health overview and scrutiny committee; and
- 3) recommends that Full Council approves the terms of reference for the joint health overview and scrutiny committee as set out in Appendix A of this report.
- 4) recommends that Full Council review the situation should the ICS boundaries change in the future.

18. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF HEALTHWATCH WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

The Chairman informed the Committee that the Healthwatch representatives were unable to attend the meeting. Members were asked to send any questions they had regarding the report to the clerk. Members praised the work undertaken by Healthwatch.

19. FORWARD PROGRAMME 2021-22

The Committee considered the forward programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

During the discussion of this item, the following points were made:

- The Chairman would be meeting the Director Adult Social Care and the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services, to further discuss priorities of the year. She suggested that the Committee consider the Autism Strategy at its January or March meetings.

RESOLVED: That the forward programme be noted.