

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 JULY 2019 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.35 PM

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Ken Miall (Chairman), Abdul Loyes (Vice-Chairman), Rachel Bishop-Firth, Jenny Cheng, Guy Grandison, Clive Jones, Adrian Mather, Alison Swaddle and Malcolm Richards (substituting Bill Soane)

Others Present

Madeleine Shopland, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist
Graham Ebers, Deputy Chief Executive
Beverley Thompson, Service Manager, Sports & Leisure
Nick Durman, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Bill Soane.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Mather asked whether an explanation of how the Better Care Fund allocation was calculated had been circulated. It was confirmed that it had.

14. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

16. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

17. WOKINGHAM BOROUGH WELLBEING BOARD: REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

The Committee received an update on the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board: Reducing Social Isolation and Loneliness.

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

- Graham Ebers, Deputy Chief Executive, reminded the Committee of the three key themes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, one of which was reducing social isolation and loneliness. Partners were taking a holistic approach to turn this strategy into action.
- Councillor Swaddle asked how the Wellbeing Board would measure how and if social isolation and loneliness was reducing. Graham Ebers commented that it was often a matter of identifying who was lonely. When the Wellbeing Board was updated it would consider outcomes and measurements. However, the action plan was currently still under development.
- In response to a question from Councillor Miall as to which agencies were involved in working to reduce social isolation and loneliness, Graham Ebers indicated that it

was a number of partners including the Council, health, voluntary sector and the Police.

- The Committee discussed the difference between social isolation and loneliness.
- Councillor Bishop-Firth noted that Wokingham library was a hub for groups helping to reduce loneliness and went on to ask what impact possibly moving the library would have on this. Graham Ebers commented that it should not have an impact.
- Beverley Thompson, Service Manager Sports and Leisure, informed the Committee of some of the work of Sports and Leisure to reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Ageing Actively Wokingham had been launched 2 weeks ago. There were 15 peer mentors who would provide support and guidance for older people on a 1-2-1 basis. Referrals could be received from social workers, GPs and others. If the older person lacked confidence to attend an activity offered under the scheme the peer mentor could attend with them and support them.
- By week two, Ageing Actively Wokingham had had 70 people attending sessions. It was hoped that the scheme would continue to expand.
- Leaflets were available in community facilities such as libraries. Councillor Jones suggested that copies also be available in the Town and Parish Council offices.
- A peer mentor could follow up should a person stop attending sessions offered under Ageing Actively Wokingham.
- 72 sessions were offered under the SHINE Over 60's programme.
- There a long term condition gym within Loddon Valley Leisure Centre which offered 6-7 sessions a day. Bulmershe and Carnival Pool leisure centres would also have long term condition gyms in the future.
- Councillor Mather asked about the cost of sessions. Beverley Thompson stated that SHINE activities cost approximately £3 per session. Chair based activities offered under the Ageing Actively Wokingham scheme were often free.
- Councillor Jones asked whether work was being done with the Town and Parish Councils to build up the base of clubs in the Borough. Beverley Thompson emphasised that new clubs could be added to a central database.
- Councillor Jones commented that often those who had been diagnosed with diabetes undertook a health programme but then later slipped back into bad habits. He questioned whether more follow up work could be undertaken. Beverley Thompson indicated that patients were referred for 24 weeks but this could be extended should it be felt that the patient required longer. However, there was not sufficient resources to be able to follow up after several years.
- Activities for those with cardiovascular problems were discussed.
- Councillor Grandison asked what could be done to help those who were lonely but did not wish to seek support. He was informed that the coaches would undergo behaviour change training. However, some people would always choose to be isolated.
- Councillor Swaddle stated that no reference had been made to enabling people to better connect with family and friends by improving transport, by providing additional support to Readibus or Keep Mobile. Graham Ebers indicated that ideas were welcome. Councillor Grandison suggested a discussion take place between officers and Readibus. Graham Ebers emphasised that a number of partners had been written to for information as to how they were and would contribute to the Strategy priorities.
- Beverley Thompson informed the Committee of the Celebrate Age Day event that would be held in Loddon Valley Leisure Centre on 1 October.

RESOLVED: That the update on the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board: Reducing Social Isolation and Loneliness be noted.

18. UPDATE ON WORK OF HEALTHWATCH WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

Nick Durman updated the Committee on the work of Healthwatch Wokingham Borough.

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

- A new part time engagement officer, Jo Dixon, had been appointed. A job description for the Healthwatch Manager post had also been produced.
- The Committee considered the NHS Long Term Plan public engagement report which covered Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West. A Wokingham specific report was being produced from the information provided which would be presented at the Committee's September meeting.
- Councillor Swaddle noted that 69% of respondents had been women and 30% were men and questioned why it was not more representative. Nick Durman commented that more women had stopped to answer questions.
- Nick Durman indicated that Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust produced information regarding the number of children and young people diagnosed with mental health disorders. Councillor Jones asked how Wokingham compared with other neighbouring local authorities.
- Councillor Mather highlighted residents' concerns regarding access to GP appointments. Nick Durman indicated that this was the most common issue raised to Healthwatch across the country. The NHS was considering new ways of working such as using paramedics in surgeries.
- Councillor Bishop-Firth asked if there was a way of measuring how many GP appointments a surgery should be offering dependent on the size of its population. Nick Durman commented that the demographic of the surgery population was also a factor. He reminded Members that GP practices were businesses.
- Councillor Bishop Firth asked what the next steps would be should a school pick up on a young person who was suffering from loneliness and social isolation. Nick Durman referred to the pastoral role of schools. If the child was a carer they should be made aware of the Young Carers Forum for support.
- Councillor Grandison expressed concern regarding difficulties in travelling to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. It was hoped that the greater use of community hubs may help to alleviate issues.
- It was agreed that the dates of the CCG public meetings would be circulated to the Committee.
- It was suggested that the Committee request an update on the work of the CCG and also community hubs.
- Members were shown several video clips regarding the Young Carers Healthwatch event and Parenting Special Children.
- Nick Durman informed Members that Age UK Berkshire had contacted Healthwatch Wokingham Borough to indicate that they had 6 clients who had been told that Wokingham pharmacies would not be able to support them in the provision of nomad packs for their medication. He would be meeting with Age UK Berkshire to discuss this.

RESOLVED: That the update on the work of Healthwatch Wokingham Borough be noted.

19. FORWARD PROGRAMME

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

- In response to a question from Councillor Swaddle, it was suggested that an update on Ambulance response times be scheduled for the Committee's November or January meeting.
- Councillor Mather requested that the Committee be briefed on Adult Social Care and some of the challenges around this area. It was suggested that the relevant Executive Member and Director be invited to provide an update at a future meeting.
- Councillor Jones asked that the Committee be updated on the lymphedema services provided in Berkshire as he had received concerns on this matter from a number of residents.
- It was suggested that CCG be invited to provide an update on their work at the Committee's meeting in September.

RESOLVED: That the forward programme be noted.