

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - COMMUNITY SUB-GROUP
27 JULY 2021
(5.00 pm - 6.55 pm)

PRESENT: Councillor Rebecca Lanning (in the Chair),
Councillor Oonagh Moulton, Councillor Eleanor Stringer, Rob
Clarke, Dr Vasa Gnanapragam, Martin Miranda, Kalu Obuka,
Dr Mohan Sekeram and Dr Dagmar Zeuner

IN
ATTENDANCE: Barry Causer (Public Health Commissioning Manager),
Hetty Crist (Communications Manager, Amy Dumitrescu (Interim
Democracy Services Manager), Julia Groom (Public Health
Consultant), Phil Howell (Assistant Director, Communities and
Housing), Jo Malyon (Dementia Friendly Development Manager
(South) Alzheimer's Society), Mike Procter (South West London
NHS) and Kate Symons (Deputy Director of Primary Care)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence was received on behalf of Mark Creelman and Abi Fafolu. An apology for lateness was received from Dr Mohan Sekeram.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There was no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th May 2021, were agreed as a correct record.

4 COVID 19 UPDATE (Agenda Item 4)

The Director of Public Health provided an update on Covid-19 in Merton, in line with the Situational Awareness report. The update contained the latest data on Covid-19.

Government guidance for testing outlined that all secondary school staff and pupils should take twice-weekly home LFD tests until end of September, when this would be reviewed. All frontline workers were also encouraged to carry out regular testing.

Kate Symons (Deputy Director of Primary Care) and Dr Vasa Gnanapragam provided an update on the vaccination programme. This included the mass sites at Wimbledon FC and Centre Court, supported by the Wilson, the Nelson plus a large number of community outreach sites including pop ups as part of the targeted push or 'Sprint' to 19th July 2021. This effort had been further supported by a rapidly organised two week programme of door knocking in areas of low take up. There was also a call and

recall programme being run by Merton Federation. All supported by a joint targeted communications programme. The effort was not as successful as originally hoped but the programme continued, including planned joint work with community groups and champions. Plans included a booster jab from September 2021 to January 2022 and under 18s who could now be vaccinated.

It was agreed that JvCI guidance advises a gap of eight weeks between the first and second vaccinations, so this should be adhered to, even though there had been incidences of smaller gaps.

Phi Howell (Assistant Director, Communities and Housing) gave a brief update of vaccination among both residents and staff in Merton care homes. Though targets had been achieved, work continued with those homes where vaccinations were still outstanding (towards the 11th November 2021 requirement), as well as working through any challenges to resilience of staff numbers. A stocktake of vaccination within domiciliary care was planned to determine first and second vaccine update.

5 ENGAGEMENT AND INSIGHT WORK (Agenda Item 5)

Barry Causer introduced the presentations on the ongoing programme of community engagement work, to gain insight into the impact of the pandemic and inform communications to support take up of testing and vaccination.

Members received a presentation by Rob Clarke (Chief Executive of Age UK Merton) regarding the impact of COVID-19 on older people and Jo Malyon (Dementia Friendly Development Manager, Alzheimer's Society).

The Subgroup then discussed both presentations and the following key points were made:

More awareness and diagnosis of dementia was needed following lockdown. This was something that this forum, focused on equity rather than 'counting', could help to take forward.

Mental health issues and anxiety were affecting both older people and children and young people. During Covid, intergenerational distance opened up at times so there was some healing to do. There were opportunities for more intergenerational work e.g. the Alzheimer's Society committed to raise this with the Merton Dementia Friendly Communities Coordinator.

The impact of the demands of the pandemic on staff, following the creativity and energy of the initial response, had led to real fatigue.

The importance of rebuilding connections within the community where they had been broken down by Covid. Community engagement was really important in fostering good relationships, including doing things together repeatedly, until the trust would be established.

The opportunity to amplify the insight the group, to help build a culture and ethos for recovery planning of the type of place we want Merton to be. Community voices need to be ongoing partners in the recovery process.

Our social infrastructure, had in some ways, been repurposed to support vaccination; it could now be used more widely to help address issues like dementia, deprivation and mental health as well as continuing with vaccination. Community Champions had a role in helping facilitate this.

The concept of being person-centred in our approach, was key to understanding what was important to individuals. This Subgroup could reflect on the experiences that our communities have had during Covid and promote them priorities for recovery.