

Agenda Item 3

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HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2 SEPTEMBER 2020

(7.15 pm - 8.50 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Councillor Peter McCabe (in the Chair), Councillor Nigel Benbow, Councillor Pauline Cowper, Councillor Mary Curtin, Councillor Jenifer Gould, Councillor Dave Ward Councillor Oonagh Moulton, Councillor Joan Henry and Di Griffin

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Mark Allison, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, James Blythe. Locality Executive Director, Merton and Wandsworth SW London CCG, John Morgan (Assistant Director, Adult Social Care) and Dr Dagmar Zeuner (Director, Public Health) Stella Akintan (Scrutiny Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Thomas Barlow Councillor Rebecca Lanning and Co-opted Member Saleem Sheikh. Councillor Oonagh Moulton and Councillor Joan Henry attended as substitutes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4 UPDATE ON COVID-19 - NHS SOUTH WEST LONDON CCG - VERBAL UPDATE. (Agenda Item 4)

The Locality Executive Director said during the COVID-19 Pandemic the NHS went into a command and control model working as part of NHS England. This resulted in a central control room in daily communication with health partners. Focus now is on recovery and return to normal levels of healthcare for non-covid patients, and preparing for winter and a possible second wave. COVID-19 has led to innovation in a number of areas and the NHS want to ensure that the learning is embedded across all services

A programme of work on planned care was paused and there has been a backlog of surgery. Hospitals are reviewing waiting lists and aiming to get patients into services as quickly as possible. There are now different standards on infection prevention and control to ensure it is COVID-19 compliant.

Work is taking place to prepare intensive care for a possible second wave. The aim is to maintain capacity for elective patients. The CCG are working with St George's to create elective care capacity.

Cancer referrals dropped by 80% during the height of the Pandemic. Patients are presenting with more advanced symptoms and services are aiming to get diagnosis and treatment as quickly as possible. The CCG worked closely with the mental health Trust in July, as there has been increased mental health challenges due to COVID-19. There has been increased investment in psychological therapy services to support people.

Primary care faced huge challenges as well as great innovations during the pandemic. Workforce challenges are significant and the CCG are working with practices to support communities. During COVID-19 this resulted in Practices working in collaboration.

A Panel member asked about the impact on children's preventative health such as vaccines. The Locality Executive Director said they are working with Practices to ensure there are capture measures in place. There are other impacts on children such as those who are vulnerable and have complex needs. Some of those services have fallen away and the CCG working with schools and partners to ensure they are restored.

A panel member asked about the flu vaccination programme highlighting that the Boots Pharmacy have begun advertising which is key to preparing for the winter. It is was asked how community champions are contributing to sharing key messages around Covid-19. The Locality Executive Director said they are in discussion with Practices about flu vaccines, they will be arriving soon and there will be advertising campaigns. The CCG will use community champions as part of the community prescribing network.

A Panel member asked about the progress with the backlog of cancer patients and those with other treatments pending and what preparations are being put in place for a second wave. The Locality Executive Director said they aim to get to 90 percent of historical levels by the end of the year, will share information on trajectories when they are confirmed. There has been learning from the first wave, and a better understanding of how to use sites.

A panel member asked if we need a Centre for the rehabilitation for covid patients The Locality Executive Director said this is unlikely because they will need a range of services as well as home services. There is also lack of clarity about the evidence of re-infection risk. It will be important to see how the models of rehabilitation will evolve.

A panel member asked when the command and control unit would be disbanded and power handed back to local authorities. The Locality Executive Director said this will be a phased process, some has been handed back but there is some high level and regional co-ordination. Local control will be restored over a period of time.

A Panel member asked how much additional expenditure has been incurred and if CCG's have been provided with extra money by central government. The Locality Executive Director said they been have been logging Merton spend and have been fully recompensed. Normal NHS financial Spend has been suspended

A Panel member asked how COVID has affected people from BAME communities and what plans are being put in place to address any issues. The Locality Executive Director said people from BAME communities were disproportionately affected in death and hospital admissions. There are clinical, physiological issues, long term conditions and socio economic factors contributing to this. The CCG are working with general practice to identify risk and there is also a project to support people with diabetes. Statutory services can only go so far, the Health and Wellbeing Board Community sub-group will play an important role . The CCG are also working with mosques and temples to identify those at risk. The NHS has indicted it will ensure services do not marginalise those who face health inequalities.

The Chair asked the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to provide an update on costs of COVID-19 to the council. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance said the government has provided funding for health service deficits but not costs incurred by the local authorities. The Assistant Director for Adult Social Care said the council can claim COVID-19 related expenses from the CCG. The Locality Executive Director said the CCG has made all possible funding available as they are aware of the challenges.

5 COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS IN SOUTH WEST LONDON - VERBAL UPDATE (Agenda Item 5)

The Locality Executive Director said the merger took place on 1st April 2020 there is a borough committee for Merton. There are meetings with other boroughs and it is the main forum for agreeing the response to the pandemic

6 UPDATE ON COVID-19 - - MERTON COMMUNITY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT (Agenda Item 6)

The Assistant Director for Adult Social Care said at the start of the pandemic there has been a focus on hospital discharges to enable flows to continue given the numbers of COVID-19 patients. The department along with the rest of London/UK had to deal the with the challenges of sourcing personal protective equipment (PPE) and had to provide a wraparound service for those who were shielding in Merton. Day centres were closed in line with government guidance around social distancing with only one day centre remaining open for people with complex learning disabilities.

The Director of Public Health said councils have produced outbreak control plans – to monitor rates of new COVID-19 infection rates. A new Health and Wellbeing Board Community Sub group has been established. The aim is to bring the community and voluntary sector together to share important messages on tackling the spread of COVID-19.

Panel members asked about the development of the track and trace process, including when will the new test and trace app be rolled out and if it will work locally.

The Director of Public Health said it is being piloted in the aim of this is to see how the app can complement the rest of the system.

A Panel member noted that fewer people are wearing face masks and asked what can be done to re-educate people. The Director of Public Health said she will pass concerns to the environmental health team and the chamber of commerce. It is important that we all become role models, to help make mask wearing a norm.

A Panel member said the lockdown had a terrible effect on older people in the borough, lots of people are very depressed. We need to get people into groups again. The Assistant Director of Adult Social Care said people's lives have been upended. The council have been contacting people who attended day centres and setting up small socially distanced groups. It was also reported that the council are working with mental health colleagues, planning for people with mental health problems as a result of the pandemic.

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What support to vulnerable communities if they do not use technology. The Assistant Director for Adult Social Care said My Merton was utilised to get the message out around community hubs and what it could offer. The voluntary sector was utilized to reach groups; local communities set up Mutual Aid to provide support to neighbours in communities.

A Panel member asked if the council will urge the government for more testing in care homes and teachers. The Director of Public Health said the national strategy is for more testing capacity, there is more demand than supply. Public health helps to prioritise those who are symptomatic. There are high risk groups, will be working with NHS partners and aim to increase testing in care homes amongst staff and residents.

RESOLVED

The Chair thanked staff and volunteers for all their efforts to protect communities

7 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 7)

The work programme was noted.