

Agenda Item 3

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - COMMUNITY SUB-GROUP
25 MAY 2021

(5.00 pm - 6.36 pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Councillor Rebecca Lanning (in the Chair), Councillor Oonagh Moulton, Councillor Eleanor Stringer, Mark Creelman (left the meeting at 18:00), Dave Curtis, Abi Fafolu, Dr Vasa Gnanapragam, Martin Miranda (present from 17:54), Kalu Obuka, Dr Mohan Sekeram and Dr Dagmar Zeuner

IN ATTENDANCE: Barry Causer (Public Health Commissioning Manager), Hetty Crist (Communications Manager), Krishna Chapriba (Democratic Services Officer), John Dimmer (Head of Policy Strategy and Partnerships), Paula Jewes (Merton Mencap), Clarissa Larsen (Health and Wellbeing Board Partnership Manager), Farzana Karamat-Mughal (Democratic Services Officer), Hannah Neale (Programme Director, BAME Voice), Andrew Whittington (Chief Executive of Merton Mencap) and Evereth Willis (Equalities and Community Cohesion Manager).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Rob Clarke. An apology for lateness was received on behalf of Martin Miranda and Mark Creelman advised that he would need to leave early due to another meeting.

The Chair welcomed Hannah Neale, Andrew Whittington and Paula Jewes to the meeting.

2 DECLARATION 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 12th January 2021, were agreed as a correct record.

4 COVID-19 UPDATE - (SLIDES ATTACHED) (Agenda Item 4)

The Director of Public Health provided an update on COVID-19 in Merton, outlining the latest data cases, testing and vaccination. The number of cases with regards to the variants were highlighted.

In the ensuing discussion, Members the following points were highlighted:

- People, including school aged children, were still encouraged to complete regular lateral flow tests.
- Positive work, being done to promote vaccination in the community was acknowledged.

Dr Vasa Gnanapragam expressed his thanks to everyone involved, in particularly, health care workers for their hard work in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

5 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF ENGAGEMENT AND INSIGHT WORK (Agenda Item 5)

The Head of Strategic Commissioning (Public Health) outlined the programme of engagement and insight work, involving residents and the voluntary and community sectors. The work was intended to help understand the impact of Covid-19 on communities across the borough, to help inform both the reach and effectiveness of communications and to build individual and community resilience.

6 BAME VOICE (SLIDES ATTACHED) (Agenda Item 5a)

Hannah Neale introduced the Merton Covid-19 Resilience Programme Report which had been published and circulated to members of the Subgroup prior to the meeting. She provided a presentation on the methodology, findings and recommendations of the work of BAME Voice. She described some of the insights gained into the lived experience of people from BAME communities across Merton, with a focus on those most affected by both COVID-19 and structural inequalities.

The COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in a devastating time for many and the consequences are being felt deeply in BAME communities. Actions were recommended to address both this and structural inequality and racism which people experience.

Members welcomed the presentation and discussed how the recommendations be taken forward, acted upon and embedded in future planning and policy. Furthermore, on behalf of the Sub-Group, the Chair extended her thanks to Hannah Neale for her presentation and the hard work over the last months with the community.

7 MERTON MENCAP (SLIDES ATTACHED) (Agenda Item 5b)

Andrew Whittington and Paula Jewes presented the Merton Mencap Public Health Engagement Report, which had been published and circulated to members of the Subgroup prior to the meeting. They outlined the engagement work for Public Health in Merton and thanked Merton's Public Health team for their support in the critical work provided in the last months.

Merton Mencap is a charity which supports young people and adults with learning disabilities and autism. It was noted that Covid-19 has had a significant direct impact on these communities, as well as, a further and substantial impact on the carers of people with learning disabilities. The presentation outlined the methodology of the work together with some of the key findings and recommendations of the report.

The Sub-Group welcomed the insight work and discussed how the recommendations can be acted upon and be embedded as part of partners' work going forward. Furthermore, on behalf of the Sub-Group, the Chair extended her thanks to Andrew Whittington and Paula Jewes for their presentation and all their efforts over the last months.

8 NEXT STEPS AND LOMP OPPORTUNITIES (SLIDES ATTACHED) (Agenda Item 6)

Dagmar Zeuner briefly set out next steps. In the short-term, as part of work on COVID resilience, in continuing to help protect and support communities, including as part of the key priorities of the LOMP. In the medium and longer-term for partners to have a clear focus on reducing structural inequalities as part of the recovery programme, strategies and plans..

The Sub-Group then discussed taking forward the insight and recommendations of both reports. Key points included:

- findings from this and other work will be embedded into the new LBM Equalities Strategy;
- insight and co-production presents an opportunity to change the way we work - including through the ICS and Merton Health and Care Together;
- the theme of the divide between east and west Merton – people want east Merton to be a place they can feel proud of;
- LOMP presents an opportunistic way to take actions forward, but insight needs to also feed into and help form plans for longer-term recovery;
- the work 'speaks the truth' to us, giving an authentic voice to experiences;
- community cohesion is in all our interests – point that BAME people make up a significant proportion of those working in the NHS;
- assets across Merton are huge – we need to grow what we have in a sustainable way;
- trust is still a barrier – need to build trust between GP practices and their patients;

- engagement can be an intervention in itself and this work has in itself helped build understanding and resilience in communities;
- further work is underway through Your Merton – LBM’s largest ever community engagement programme. Understand need to value voluntary sector contributions and pay for them;
- culture is key to our behaviour. As younger people come of age it can be hard to navigate a way forward. There is no ‘tick box’ for many ethnicities and there is a need to respond to individual needs, listening to people in different ways, settings and languages;
- welcome the significant learning on the resilience and assets within the carer community;
- work to address the dangers of a digital divide is important across all groups.

It was agreed that the Sub-Group members need to hold themselves and each other to account and that progress would be tracked in future meetings.

Hetty Crist (Communications Manager) informed members that a Vaccine Equity Comms Plan was being drafted, to sit alongside the Merton Vaccine Equity Plan, which would be shared with members following the meeting. The Comms Plan outlined the key messages for each target audience, as discussed in the joint Comms Vaccine Working Group, and based on several surveys carried out locally.