

Agenda Item 3

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HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

7 FEBRUARY 2023

(7.15 pm - 9.18 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Agatha Mary Akyigyina (in the Chair), Councillor Jenifer Gould, Councillor Laxmi Attawar, Councillor Max Austin, Councillor Caroline Charles, Councillor Eleanor Cox, Councillor Simon McGrath, Councillor Slawek Szczepanski and Councillor Martin Whelton

Councillor Peter McCabe, Cabinet Member for(Adult Social Care and Health)

Stella Akintan (Scrutiny Officer), John Morgan (Executive Director, Adult Social Care, Integrated Care and Public Health), Dr Dagmar Zeuner (Director, Public Health) and Daniel Butler (Senior Principal Public Health Officer)(Mike Procter Director of Transformation, NHS South West London,) Vanessa Ford Chief Executive South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Diane Griffin, Co-opted Member.

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

4 IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH (Agenda Item 4)

The Chief Executive of South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust gave an overview of the report.

A panel member asked what can be done to help communities, the Chief Executive said building resilience in communities will be important.

A panel member asked about support in Merton for those with eating disorders and what is the role of the Wilson Heath Centre. The Chief Executive said there is treatment for children and adults, there are hubs at the Wilson and intensive outreach to reduce inpatient facilities. There is support at both mental and physical health facilities.

A panel member said 18 weeks is a long time to wait for treatment. The Chief Executive said waiting times are agreed nationally and there are not enough resources to treat people more quickly.

A panel member asked about proposals for £140m savings in local health services and the impact on mental health. The Chief Executive said they work as part of the Integrated Care Partnership, levelling up money means mental health money is protected, there is a significant challenge in saving healthcare monies.

A panel member asked for more information about how the £140m savings will be made, it was agreed this will be requested for a future meeting.

A panel member asked how they are working with voluntary sector and addressing the cost-of-living crisis. The Chief Executive said there has been engagement with the voluntary sector through the South West London Strategy with seven hundred responses so far and further rounds of consultation to take place. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis in mental health has begun but further impacts are expected.

A panel member asked where people go to get help with their mental health. The Chief Executive said we need to build community resilience, reduce stigma, and increase numbers of mental health aid workers who are trained to sign post people.

A panel member thanked the Chief Executive for their work on Galpin's Road and asked if the Trust is filling vacancies by recruiting from abroad. The Chief Executive said they are redesigning the workforce, planning for skills, utilising new roles such as nursing associates. There is a campaign for special registered doctors from abroad.

A panel member asked about planned savings within the mental health trust, where will savings be made and how will this impact Merton residents. The Chief Executive said there are significant challenges in South West London. There is a £6 million savings required. Mental health investment standards will be made next year this will provide further detail.

RESOLVED

The Chief Executive was thanked for her report

5 LONG COVID - SERVICE UPDATE (Agenda Item 5)

The Director of Transformation gave an overview of the report
In response to questions, it was reported that:

There is not a significant variation in Long Covid across London

Services for people with Long Covid will be available over the long term and they are being promoted in the community to encourage people to seek support.

There are differences between referral rates amongst GPs because of the general nature of symptoms which may not have been attributed to Long Covid.

Money for Long Covid services have been allocated from central government

The Director of Public Health said we are still learning about Long Covid and data is new, research is taking place to enable further understanding.

RESOLVED

The Director of Transformation was thanked for his report.

6 SUICIDE PREVENTION UPDATE (Agenda Item 6)

The Senior Public Health Principal gave an overview of the report highlighting this is a sensitive subject and each statistic represents a person's life and bereaved families.

A panel member asked if the Online Safety Bill can support suicide prevention.

The Senior Public Health Principal said dialogue with young people is helpful and pro-suicide sites is a risk factor so any legislation will support the agenda. The Chief Executive of the South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust said constant access to social media and talking around self harm can exacerbate these issues.

A panel member asked what support is available to parents. The Senior Public Health Principal said there is bereavement and peer support.

A panel member asked if gambling has an impact. The Senior Public Health Principal said it is a risk factor which relates to suicide.

The Director of Public Health said Thrive London undertake preventative work on a range of areas including suicide, responses to contextual crisis such as Ukraine war. There is a Good Thinking app which provides mental health support.

RESOLVED

The Senior Public Health Principal was thanked for his report.

7 CABINET MEMBER PRIORITIES - VERBAL UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health gave a presentation setting out his priorities.

RESOLVED

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for the update

8 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 8)

The work programme was noted