

## HEALTH POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Health Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 20 February 2024 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Begg, Davidson, Fry, Garner, C. Loftus, L. Nolan and Thornton and D. Wilson, Healthwatch Co-optee

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Goodall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: D. Nolan, L Wilson, K. Bazley, I. Onyia, J. Gallagher and D O'Connor

Also in attendance: None

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

*Action*

#### HEA32 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 having been circulated were signed as a correct record.

#### HEA33 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

#### HEA34 HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES

The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board's meeting held on 11 October 2023 were submitted to the Board for information.

#### HEA35 THE CORPORATE PLAN - THE BIG CONVERSATION ANALYSIS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Board received a report from the Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which gave an update on 'The Big Conversation', since it was presented at the last meeting in November 2023.

The consultation closed on 30 November 2023. The report outlined the engagement results of the consultation, broken down into age groups and presented the methods used and areas the consultation had reached, which included many stakeholders and partners.

It was reported that there was a high level of agreement to the suggested themes within the consultation. It was evident however that the addition of a 6<sup>th</sup> theme was required to encompass areas such as: environment, open and green spaces and the protection of these, litter, overgrowth and weeds, regeneration, business, economy, growth support and town centres, housing and supported living. It was proposed that these would come under '*Place and Community*'.

All Elected Members of the Council had been emailed to advise of the qualifying statements devised for each priority/theme. These were made available to the public, employees and residents, who were given the opportunity to provide feedback on these statements, which set out what each priority would aim to achieve over the next 5 years. The public consultation was open from 19 January to 26 January and was shared via social media and drop-in sessions in the libraries and Direct Links in Runcorn and Widnes.

Following finalisation of the Plan it would go to Executive Board for approval and then Council, and launched in April 2024.

One Member commented that the number of responses received in total from the survey was disappointing, especially from the business community. It was noted that the survey was the second most popular survey carried out in the history of Halton Council, the first being the Mersey Gateway. It was recognised that it was difficult to encourage people to engage with such projects and they could not be forced to participate.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) that the report be noted; and
- 2) that the Health PPB continues to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan.

## HEA36 EMPLOYER STANDARDS HEALTH CHECK SURVEY 2022

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adults, which provided information on Halton's results from the Employer Standards Health Check Survey, that was conducted at a national level between October 2022 and January 2023.

It was noted that The Health Check Survey was co-ordinated nationally by the Local Government Association (LGA) and was part of The Standards for Employers of Social Workers, which were refreshed in the Autumn of 2020.

The report outlined the eight standards being asked about in the Survey and presented a summary of results, found in appendix 1. The key headlines from the survey were received in Summer 2023 and were presented in paragraph 3.9 of the report. It was noted that immediate action was taken to address the main areas of concern, as highlighted in the report.

The following information was provided in response to Members questions:

- Most Social Workers were in a Trade Union – in respect of the survey, this was anonymised using a link within the survey;
- The moderate outcome for 'supervision' was due to staff shortages but this is now resolved and all staff now receive the required supervision;
- The recruitment process had improved, now taking between 6-8 weeks;
- 65% of student Social Workers stayed in Halton and overall, most Social Workers liked working in Halton;
- Remote working was rare now, with most staff preferring to be in a supportive office environment; and
- The use of agency workers had reduced – there were a couple in the Mental Health Team and two others working on specific projects.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

## HEA37 HEALTH INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board received a report from the Director of Public Health, which gave a summary of the evidence

provided as part of the scrutiny review of health inequalities in Halton. This included the conclusions of the Scrutiny Group Members and their recommendations to the Board.

The full Scrutiny Review report, *Health Inequalities – Findings and Recommendations*, was appended to the report.

It was noted that overall, the scrutiny review provided Members with the opportunity to gain an understanding of the definition of health inequalities and how these were measured, including Halton's position regionally and nationally. They also investigated the drivers of health inequalities and the outcomes of these. Consideration was also given to good practice, pressures and emerging issues in Halton, including barriers and enablers to access specific provisions.

The Director's report also proposed several options as potential areas for scrutiny for 2024, these were discussed. The Board agreed that option one, *A Focus on Community (non-GP) NHS Services* would be the topic for 2024. A topic brief would be developed and shared with the Board in due course.

The consensus of the Board was that they enjoyed being part of the Health Inequalities scrutiny review and found all meetings productive and interesting. They considered this to be due to the work carried out by Officers, and wished to record their thanks to the Director of Public Health and all Officers who contributed, particularly to Emma Bragger. The Chair reiterated this and thanked all Members of the Board involved, which led to the success of the review.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) approve the *Health Inequalities – Findings and Recommendations Scrutiny Review* report; and
- 2) agree that the scrutiny topic for 2024 will be *A Focus on Community (non-GP) NHS Services*.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

#### HEA38 SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY

The Board considered a report from the Director of Public Health, which gave an overview of work taking place to reduce suicides at a local, regional and national level.

The report provided ONS data on suicides at all

levels; gave information on the *Local Suicide Prevention Action Plan*; and described key actions and successes which included work taking place at a regional level, where Halton contributed to and benefitted from. Regionally, there was the *Cheshire and Merseyside Suicide prevention Strategy and Action Plan*, and the *Beyond Children and Young People Transformation Programme*. The *National Suicide Prevention Strategy* and its areas of focus were also presented.

Following the presentation the following was discussed:

- Mental health risk assessments in the workplace – Halton has a workplace offer for staff as individuals and in the workplace. This offer is also available to all Elected Members;
- Mental Health Services for young people in Halton – these included CAMHS, a 24-hour crisis team (which offered signposting to other services); an educational psychology team as well as mental health support staff in schools; and there were areas of the voluntary sector that offered support;
- Children accessing the internet at school using phones and accessing harmful content – this was recognised as a huge problem and added to teacher pressures as well. A piece of work was taking place with secondary schools and colleges on what to do in a mental health crisis. Schools were also informed of 'Ripple' a browser extension for the internet, which had been installed by Riverside College;
- People with autism were also at a higher risk of suicide compared to the general population;
- The numbers of suicides amongst children in care and care leavers in Halton were too low to see any trends. However, Manchester University did have evidence on the risk factors for these groups; the Officer would send the link to Members after the meeting;
- Prevention training for staff, volunteer groups and people in the community – this was available and information would be sent following the meeting;
- The importance of mental health education and training for schools staff was important;
- One Member's comments relating to the CAMHS service for young people would be passed to the ICB; and
- Recognition that some suicide victims were unknown to agencies as they did not present themselves to seek mental health support.

Members welcomed the information and the good work being carried out using the Suicide Prevention Strategy.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Director of Public Health

#### HEA39 RESPITE CARE POLICY

The Board considered a report from the Executive Director of Adult Services, which presented the newly developed *Respite Care for Adults with Care and Support Needs and their Carers Policy* – this was appended to the report.

It was noted that this Policy had been developed further to previous reports that had been brought to the Health PPB regarding respite care provision within Adult Social Care. The report outlined the reasons for the development of the Policy and the involvement of a working group that was established to do this.

Officers explained the purpose of the leaflet (appendix one of the Policy) for adults with care and support needs and their carers, which was also developed. This was clearer and more user-friendly than the previous shared care voucher process. It had also received positive feedback from the carers' group during its development.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) endorse the Respite Policy for implementation within Adult Social Care.

#### HEA40 UTILISATION OF MENTAL HEALTH BEDS

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Board.

#### HEA41 ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMMISSIONING STRATEGY 2023-26

The Board was presented with the *Adult Social Care Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support 2023 – 2026*.

The Commissioning Strategy for Care and Support outlined the Council's commissioning intentions over the next three years, which would aim to support residents and unpaid carers and their families, to have access to the right

services, information, advice and guidance in order to make good decisions about the care and support they needed.

It was stated that ten Commissioning Principles had been identified which would underpin the work being done; a commissioning cycle framework had been established; several Commissioning Priorities/Intentions had been set and an associated Delivery Plan was in place.

The report outlined the Commissioning Intentions, which had been categorized into 6 priorities, to provide focus in aiming to support the key challenges locally and to adhere to those duties required under the Care Act 2014.

Priority 4 Housing was highlighted by Members who queried whether the Council was working with Halton Housing Trust (HHT). It was reported that a piece of work was currently underway regarding the Housing Strategy and adults and older people with special needs, such as learning disabilities and autism, formed a part of this. The Council did work with HHT in relation to this group and the 'own front door' model was an aspiration for them. It was recognised that a mix of care and support models would be needed for an aging population that was also living longer.

RESOLVED: That the report and appendix be noted.

#### HEA42 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS QUARTER 3 2023/24

The Board received the Performance Management Reports for quarter three of 2023/24.

Members were advised that the report introduced, through the submission of a structured thematic performance report, the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health in quarter three of 2023-24. This included a description of factors, which were affecting the service.

The Board was requested to consider the progress and performance information; raise any questions or points for clarification; and highlight any areas of interest or concern for reporting at future meetings of the Board.

It was noted that the adoption of the new Corporate Plan in April would be reflected in the performance monitoring, although all metrics that currently exist would remain.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management report for quarter three of 2023/24 be received.

*As this was the final meeting of 2023-24, the Chair thanked everyone for their valuable contributions and support throughout the year.*

*Meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.*