

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

15 NOVEMBER 2012

7.15pm-9.50pm

PRESENT: Councillor; Suzanne Evans (Chair), Peter McCabe, Margaret Brierly, Brenda Fraser, Logie Lohendran, Dennis Pearce, Linda Taylor, Greg Udeh.

Co-opted members: Myrtle Agutter, Laura Johnson, Sheila Knight, Barbara Price, Saleem Sheikh,

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Mark Allison, Councillor Linda Kirby, Simon Williams, Director of Community and Housing Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services, Rahat-Ahmed-Man, Head of Commissioning, Karthiga Sivaneson, Project Manager Mark Clenaghan, Service Director Springfield Hospital, South West London Mental Health Trust

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Maurice Groves

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2012 AND 17
SEPTEMBER 2012

The minutes of the previous meetings were agreed

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes

5 GP FUNDING REVIEW

The Chair welcomed Neil Roberts Director of Primary Care to the meeting. He reported that all Primary Care Trust's were asked to review their contracts in 2006. Sutton and Merton did not go through this process at the time, Merton has now developed a redistribution model. This means that although no money is taken out of the funding pot there is no additional investment so there are winners and losers in the process. The Carhill formula is being used which reflects the age, size, and population and factors which impact on workload. Sutton and Merton are in line with other London boroughs. Twenty-four out of twenty six boroughs have signed the new contracts.

A panel member argued that Wimbledon practices have been adversely affected and pointed out that this panel has been asking for information about how practices have

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been affected for quite some time without getting any answers.

Mr Roberts reported that Wimbledon could be adversely affected as the new formula takes levels of deprivation into consideration. The information will be supplied to the panel as requested.

A panel member pointed out that patients and patient groups are concerned about the possible loss of the Vineyard Hill surgery in Wimbledon Park and need to be reassured. Mr Roberts said he would be happy to meet with them to explain that the practice is not set to close, rather contracts are being renegotiated and funding levels revised, they hope to find a compromise with all the practices.

A panel member asked what would happen if the redistribution doesn't work. That we must also ensure we do not forget the prevention agenda was highlighted. It was reported that the NHS Commissioning Board would be responsible to ensure that this process worked.

6 Care Quality Commission

Robert Throw, Compliance Manager was welcomed to the Panel. Mr Throw reported that he has a team of thirteen inspectors covering the area of Merton, Sutton and Croydon with responsibility for about 599 care homes. Panel members were invited to comment on the consultation proposals.

A panel member said there had been some concerns about the inspection process for some care homes, Winterbourne View had highlighted this nationally but there were also some local issues. The consultation document does not address this and CQC are moving from a local to a national model.

Robert Throw reported that all the inspectors live in the boroughs that they inspect and work on a local basis. They regularly take action on care homes of concern.

A panel member highlighted that a witness who met with this panel pointed out that the CQC are not fast enough on picking up issues and if they want results they go to the media. Please reassure this panel that whistle blowers protection is taken seriously.

Robert Throw reported that after the failings at the Winterbourne View care home whistleblowers are taken very seriously, currently 20-30% of CQC inspector's time is taken up following up whistle blowers issues.

The Chair asked how we could improve the working relationship between CQC and this panel. Robert Throw reported that they currently receive lots of information from a wide variety of sources. Mr Throw would be happy to attend Panel meetings when invited.

A panel member expressed concern when CQC reported that they carry out

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inspections once a year. Patterns of care can change for a number of reasons including change of management. Mr Throw said inspections take place once a year as a minimum they will be increased if there are any cause for concern.

A panel member reported that this panel has recommended that there is a Merton Standard for care homes

Robert Throw reported that the CQC will not be re-introducing star ratings for care homes, they can be counter productive if star ratings are relied upon too heavily and if they are not weighted with value for money.

The Chair asked for the CQC to contact this panel if there were any issues of concern in the borough, to which Mr Throw agreed

RESOLVED

That CQC report issues of concern to the Panel and attend meetings as necessary

7 TRANSPORT REVIEW

Simon Williams gave an overview of the position with the transport review. He reported that there will be a report to Cabinet on assisted travel policy which this Panel may also wish to see in due course

Council made the decision about freedom passes earlier this year as we do not have a statutory duty to provide freedom passes to people with mental health problems, however as a result of concerns by this panel it was decided that rather than remove the whole budget there is money to give assistance. The Mental Health Trust has been commissioned to consult on how to implement the decision.

Mark Clenaghan added that we are moving to more targeted provision for travel. We are looking a different ways of travel including cycling.

A panel asked if this money would specifically be for freedom passes or if it will be part of a personal budget. It was reported that it will be part of personal budget however some can still get freedom passes if they have a learning disability, or are not eligible for a driving licence.

Panel members asked how people will be reassessed and informed of the changes, It was reported that people would be informed through a planned approach. There will be advertising with posters and leaflets, care co-ordinators will also meet with and support people. Merton Platform the service users group has been informed of the changes and has already provided some useful feedback.

A panel expressed concern that there may be a misguided view that people with mental health problems have a social worker visit them at home and they do not need to go out or need a freedom pass. Furthermore mental health has yet again been targeted for cuts when the borough already spends less on mental health than

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other areas.

A panel expressed concern about suggestions to encourage people with mental health problems to cycle and would people be given helmets and training.

It was reported that there would be support for people to attend bikeability.

Mark Clenaghan reported that we would be moving from universal to targeted support. It will focus on those who need it for their recovery.

A panel member said that they felt that people with mental health problems were being targeted and were unconvinced that this approach will be effective and will be costly to implement.

Mark Clenaghan reported that there would be not be additional cost implications as care-coordinators are already in regular contact with this group. Transport needs will be considered within a plan of care, on an individual basis using self directed support.

A Panel member pointed out that Merton Transport and Merton Community Transport has not released any savings to date. Councillor Linda Kirby pointed out that the working relationship has improved but costs are going up. She claimed that transport is a difficult area to find solutions, as there is not enough money. Simon Williams pointed out that it would be possible to find savings as we move away from fleet transport.

8 BUSINESS PLAN

Caroline Holland Director of Corporate Services gave an overview of the budget position highlighting that there were additional costs from travel cost and pay inflation. There is a capital programme increase for children due to need for school places, with the rising birth rate this means there is a longer term implication on building costs into capital programme which will impact on revenue.

In response to a question the Director of Corporate Services reported that the current under spend in Adult Social Care is £5.2 million.

A panel member pointed out that it is hard to justify cuts given the high level of underspend and that we must protect front line services.

9 IMPACT OF THE CUTS IN DOMICILLIARY CARE

THIS ITEM WAS EXEMPT FROM PUBLIC DISCUSSION

10 SAFEGUARDING OLDER PEOPLE TASK GROUP – DEPARTMENT

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ACTION PLAN

Simon Williams introduced the report, saying that there had been progress with the agreed recommendations.

On recommendation five a panel member pointed out that people with dementia are not properly diagnosed, 6 out of 10 people are being diagnosed.

Simon Williams reported that the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group has set diagnostic rates to drive up early diagnosis rates, this area has been overlooked by some medics as there has been a belief that little can be done to help them

RESOLVED

That the Panel receive a more detailed update of the action plan and implementation of the recommendations to the next meeting

11 MERTON LINK UPDATE

Barbara Price gave an overview of the current activities within Merton Link.

12 Work Programme 2012-13

Item received