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HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
26 JANUARY 2021
(6.15 pm - 8.12 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Rebecca Lanning (in the Chair), Rob Clarke, Mark Creelman, Hannah Doody, Brian Dillon, Dr Vasa Gnanapragam, Chris Lee, Councillor Oonagh Moulton, Dr Mohan Sekeram, Simon Shimmens, Councillor Eleanor Stringer, Dr Karen Worthington and Dr Dagmar Zeuner

IN ATTENDANCE Dave Curtis (Manager Healthwatch Merton), Amy Dumitrescu (Democracy Services), Katie Halter (Climate Change Officer), Clarissa Larsen (Health and Wellbeing Board Partnership Manager), Jane McSherry (Assistant Director of Education) and Farzana Mughal (Democracy Services)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Dr Aditi Shah (CCG West Merton Locality Lead). An apology for lateness was received on behalf of Dr Mohan Sekeram.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th November, 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

4 COVID-19 IN MERTON (SLIDE PRESENTATION) (Agenda Item 4)

The Director of Public Health provided an update in relation to Covid-19 in line with the Situational Awareness Report which members receive weekly. Arising from the presentation, the following points were highlighted:

- The Board acknowledged the challenges including the particular impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities and the latest data relating to the east and west of the borough.
- The number of people taking PCR testing had reduced and this could be due to current lockdown restrictions or that there had been a flurry ahead of the Christmas break. Those with symptoms were still encouraged to get tested and home PCR testing kits are available.
- It was agreed that it would be helpful to have ethnicity data for infection and vaccination rates and noted that this was being developed and might become available.

- It was acknowledged that there was a significant issue of excess deaths indirectly brought about by Covid-19.
- The impact of long-Covid continued to be felt particularly by those in primary care seeing the time it took patients to recover.
- It was stressed that the NHS was still open and that they continue to treat non-Covid priorities including cancer referrals.
- The Director of Environment and Regeneration brought attention to the impact of the pandemic on businesses and the economy and highlighted the affect this had on people's mental health. He outlined the support that was being provided in Merton but warned that there were likely to be longer term employment implications.

5 NHS UPDATE ON COVID-19 (VERBAL PRESENTATION) (Agenda Item 5)

The Executive Director of Merton and Wandsworth CCG provided the Board with an update outlining the next steps on the NHS consultation on integration and continued provision of services, together with details of the vaccination programme.

He explained that the discharge arrangements to the TADDs (Temporary Alternative Discharge Destination), established first in Merton and now elsewhere, that were proceeding well. The Chair of Merton CCG emphasised that the discharge process was very thorough and only takes place where it was safe to do so. The Director of Housing and Communities confirmed this. Merton had worked quickly to get this provision in place and settings were subject to CQC inspection including infection control.

Dr Karen Worthington outlined the massive effort that was underway which had now successfully vaccinated 88% of care home residents. There was now a focus on those over 80s that were housebound and she emphasised that vaccination was not a one off offer and that there is a willingness to respond and support those who have concerns or questions. Webinars and a range of other activities are planned to try to give clear information, particularly with BAME and harder to reach communities, to encourage and provide confidence in take up of the vaccine.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to have further data on vaccinations and that it was important that this data was consistent across partners to ensure clarity.

6 HWBB COMMUNITY SUBGROUP REPORT - ENGAGEMENT WORK PROGRAMME (SLIDE PRESENTATION) (Agenda Item 6)

The Director of Public Health gave an update from the Community Subgroup.

The HWBB was requested to agree that the Community Subgroup continued to meet beyond the end of March for a further six months to September 2021. The Board was also requested that the Subgroup should focus on tackling vaccine hesitancy as a contributory factor to the risk of exacerbation of health inequalities. The Subgroup would also promote clear communications to address misunderstanding or misinformation relating to vaccination and infection control.

Councillor Oonagh Moulton, who is an active Covid Community Champion suggested that it would be helpful to work jointly with faith groups on vaccine communications and Dr Mohan Sekeram said that he had already worked with some faith leaders. Concerns about vaccination were discussed and it was agreed that it was important to listen and take note of issues raised and respond to them.

The Board agreed the proposed extension and focus of the Community Subgroup until September, 2021.

7 MERTON'S CLIMATE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (Agenda Item 7)

The Director of Environment and Regeneration presented the report on Merton's Climate Strategy and Action Plan, outlining the Council's commitment to climate change. Approval was sought from the Board to note and comment on the Strategy and Action Plan and the Climate Change Delivery Plan - Year 1; support delivery of the climate objectives through their partner organisations; and, as resources allow, undertake further short and medium term actions to take forward both the health and climate agendas.

Members were advised that in November 2020 the Council adopted Merton's Climate Strategy and Action Plan, setting out a strategic approach and high level actions to deliver net zero carbon by 2050. It was noted that the Climate Action Group, which would drive delivery, had its inaugural meeting this week.

The co-benefits of action on climate change and the health and wellbeing of communities was discussed, specifically including air quality, diet and active travel. These were recognised as important to patient's health, including impacts on asthma, heart and lung disease, as witnessed in primary care. Poor environment was also seen as a contributory factor to health inequalities.

There was a positive response from all members to develop these co-benefits, with opportunities seen in the way that partners and the community have worked together in response to Covid-19 and particularly the role that children and young people could play with their enthusiasm and knowledge of climate change. The work of the NHS to take action on this was also recognised.

It was agreed to keep a continuing dialogue on climate and health and that progress on the Climate Change Action Plan be reported to the HWBB on annual basis.