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HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

24 JANUARY 2024

(7.15 pm - 9.50 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Agatha Mary Akyigyina (in the Chair), Councillor Jenifer Gould, Councillor Laxmi Attawar, Councillor Caroline Charles, Councillor Eleanor Cox, Councillor Joan Henry, Councillor Andrew Howard, Councillor Simon McGrath and Councillor Slawek Szczepanski

John Morgan (Executive Director, Adult Social Care, Integrated Care and Public Health), Asad Mushtaq (Executive Director of Finance & Digital), Phil Howell (Assistant Director for Strategy and Improvement) and Graham Terry (Assistant Director Adult Social Care)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

No apologies were received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3 MINUTES (Agenda Item 3)

Panel Members confirmed that these are a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

A Member asked that St Georges return in six months to update on the maternity report (check if we have asked them to return). Scrutiny Officer to add to topic suggestions.

4 BUDGET 2024/25 AND MTFs 2024-28 - CABINET PAPERS 15 JAN (Agenda Item 3a)

Taken with Item 6.

5 SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT (Agenda Item 4)

The report was presented by Aileen Buckton, Independent Chair, MSAB.

Four key priorities in strategy:

- Prevention and early detection

- Building and strengthening connections
- Making safeguarding personal
- Quality assurance

There is a focus on educating residents on where concerns can be sent and building relationships with local communities on all aspects of safeguarding.

Community Adult Safeguarding Champions Network was successfully launched.

In response to questions:

- ASC Board website has list of champions and contact details.
- 850 concerns raised is comparable to size of the Merton borough.
- We are looking at whether we are reaching all the communities in Merton, including the Asian community, so we can ensure we are getting all the referrals that we should.
- Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) role added to Adult Safeguarding and First Response Team. (This is a standalone role to assist with incoming enquiries and work with people who are affected by domestic abuse).
- Action: Aileen Buckton agreed to send out a detailed note about GDPR and how this is operated around in terms of safeguarding and confidentiality.
- There is a national library of SAR's and we take opportunities for learning from them.

6 BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2026 (Agenda Item 5)

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services to introduce the report.

The draft Budget and Business Plan follows on from the first round of budget scrutiny performed in November and includes information on the government provisional settlement and the latest proposals agreed at Cabinet.

Unfortunately the burden of funding vital local services has been passed to taxpayers, however we have been able to identify funds to further invest in some of these services (these are outlined in Cabinet papers) and remain confident this budget is reasonable and sustainable.

The Executive Director for Adult Social Care expanded on the savings in the report.

1. JMC day centre – Proposal is that we rebuild the JMC day centre with 21 supported living spaces above. This will be a saving because we can deflect people from residential care to supported living which will lead to better outcomes for residents.
2. Increasing reablement functions will prevent, reduce, and delay the need for adult social care.

3. Mental Health Brokerage to sit within the Council's Brokerage Team to negotiate the best prices.
4. Recommissioned Home Care providers – new set of providers. The CM2000 system ensures accurate charging.

In response to questions from Panel Members, the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and the Executive Director for Finance and Digital provided further information:

- Inflation is one of the key pressures we are facing.
- Financial Assessments maximise income by checking for eligible benefits.
- ASC 56% of budget – Figures are indicative of most other Local Authorities and social care is a large portion of most other Councils' budgets.
- Benefits of Merton Council undertaking brokerage vs Trust – At Merton we have a skilled and dedicated brokerage team that can find the best placements and negotiate rates, rather than social workers and managers within the trust having to do this. This move will also give us a clearer line of sight in terms of the wider market.
- 2% ASC Precept is vital.
- Fees and Charges – EQIA will be informed by the consultation.
- Redevelopment of the new units of Riverside and JMC – Redevelop building and provide supported living.
- We paid 8.9% more to providers this year because of inflation (We spend around £20m on nursing care).

A Panel Member requested further detail on the capital spend of nearly £10m for Supported Living. Officers confirmed the details will be supplied and presented to the Healthier Communities Panel when available.

The Cabinet Member added that although the new Government funding was announced today, we are far from receiving the funding that we need. We stand to receive £20m less this year than we did in 2010 (Received £93m in 2010. The coming year will see us receive £75m).

7 HOW TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT OF HOSPITAL (Agenda Item 6)

Mark Creelman gave an overview of the broad areas of work for this area.

Access

- Invested in telephone with 75% practices already using Cloud Based Telephony
- Promoting use of NHS App
- Online consultations available at every practice
- Universal Care Plan being rolled out across health services - An NHS service that enables every Londoner to have their care and support wishes digitally shared with healthcare professionals across the capital.

- All practices are on track to enable prospective records access.

Proactive Care

- 869 Care Home Beds covered by 10 practices.
- Lead Practice for each Care Home
- Care Planning and Reviews for all residents • Structured Medication Reviews
- Individual case review (approx. 4000 patients discussed per year)
- Care planning and review

Prevention

- Merton Health & Care Plan 2022 to 2024 - Start Well, Live Well and Age Well.
- Cancer screening
- Social prescribing
- Immunisations
- Mental Health - Work is being undertaken to review the crisis support offer available in SWL.
- Virtual Wards and Hospital at Home
- Community Services

In response to questions, Mark Creelman provided further information:

- Working with GP population to ensure same day access to appointments.
- Feedback is important to us, with regards to those GP practices that still need to get it right, so we can offer them the correct training and support.
- Extended Access Hubs can see your records.
- Breast Cancer screening is delivered by St Georges. MC will pass on discussion re mobile van, the Wilson etc.
- 1st April 2023 – Primary care complaints became managed by ICB.

The Chair thanked Mark Creelman for his attendance.

8 CQC UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)

Phil Howell, Assistant Director of Commissioning, updated the Panel on this work.

The new Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance framework for adult social care came into operation on the 1st of April 2023. The Act places a new duty on the CQC to assess local authorities' delivery of adult social care duties under part 1 of the Care Act 2014.

CQC Assurance is being rolled out nationally across Adult Social Care departments. Five local authorities volunteered to take part in pilot assurance activity in the autumn of 2023. The findings and individual assurance reports of these pilot assessments were published in November.

The department has put itself forward for an LGA Peer Review in preparedness for assurance. This will take place in June 2024.

A CQC inspection could occur at any point over the next 2 years. Over the next 3 months the priorities will include ensuring that a self-assessment report is completed,

an action plan is completed, and the Information return is populated, and any gaps are highlighted and there is a plan in place.

9 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 8)

The work programme was agreed.