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HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
17 JUNE 2019
(7.15 pm - 8.40 pm)

PRESENT   Councillors Councillor Peter McCabe (in the Chair),
                 Councillor Stephen Crowe, Councillor Rebecca Lanning,
                 Councillor Nigel Benbow, Councillor Pauline Cowper,
                 Councillor Mary Curtin and Di Griffin

                 Stella Akintan (Democratic Services Officer), Daniel Butler
                 (Senior Principal Public Health Officer), Hannah Doody (Director
                 of Community and Housing) and John Morgan (Assistant
                 Director, Adult Social Care)

1   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dave Ward and Councillor Carl Quilliam and copted member Saleem Sheikh. Councillor Joan Henry and Councillor Hina Bokhari attended as a substitutes.

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 record of the meeting

4   PRIMARY CARE NETWORK DEVELOPMENT (Agenda Item 4)

The Director for Transforming Primary Care gave an overview of the report highlighting   the new GP contract marks a significant shift in primary care services. Practices are working together to improve services for patients, there will be additional funding for each network.

In regards to GP workforce challenges; It was reported that there is funding to help with the GP network, social prescribing has reduced GP workload. An IPSOS Survey found that Merton is performing reasonably well on GP access, GP appointments, and choice and appointment time above national figures while satisfaction is one point below. In regards to succession planning Merton is higher than England average. The challenge in Merton is to retain GPs once they have finished their training.

Panel members asked how they are supporting the workforce and making the profession more attractive for young people. The Director of Transforming Primary Care reported that they support staff development, provide good commissioning

through Merton Health and Care Together. There is numerous free training including a clinical leadership course, the Primary Care Networks should help to reduce GP workloads to make it more attractive, the integrated approach will help to make it a good career.

Panel members asked how planning for GP retirement impacts upon health inequalities in east of the borough and if older GPs are situated within specific areas or surgeries. It was reported that this is taken into consideration when making commissioning decisions in the East and West of the borough. Primary Care Networks will take ownership of resilience. GP federations has a locum bank who can be used in the short term.

5   PREVENTING LONELINESS TASK GROUP UPDATE (Agenda Item 5)

The officer reported that this Panel asked for an update following the scrutiny review in 2018. He gave an overview of the report and highlighted the action that had taken place.

A Panel member asked how older people from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community are being engaged. It was reported that more people within this group are lonely because lack of wider social networks. The Public Health Team have performance Indicators on engaging BAME communities and increasing the number of befrienders.

A panel member expressed disappointment that Friends in St Helier was not mentioned in the report as they are one of the biggest community groups in the borough.

A panel member asked how sustainable these projects will be as they tend to dissolve within a short period of time. It was reported that they will run for the next twelve months and then will be reviewed.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and the Environment reported that they re-commissioned befriending in the last year and increased the number of lunch clubs over the winter period. As a befriender, the Cabinet member encouraged all councillors to sign up as it is a valuable service.

6   REDUCING THE RISK OF PROVIDER FAILURE (Agenda Item 6)

The Assistant Director for Adult Social Care gave an overview of the report highlighting early intervention work with Providers to reduce risk of failure.

The Panel asked if providers are checked for financial sustainability and if a traffic light system is in place to understand levels of risk. The Assistant Director of Social Care reported that the council carry out checks before the contract is awarded and conduct due diligence.

The Director of Community and Housing reported that the council holds individual contracts with providers and the Care Quality Commission regulates the services. It

is critical that the quality monitoring of council and CQC regulatory monitoring work together.

A panel member asked if providers come forward if their service is facing challenges. The Director of Community and Housing reported that a Provider did require improvements and worked well with the council and managed to improve over 6-8 months. There is a duty under the Care Act if a Provider fails the council has a duty to step in and run the organisation.

7   TRANSITIONS FROM CHILDREN'S TO ADULT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN
        WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY TASK GROUP -
        FINAL REPORT (Agenda Item 7)

The Task Group Chair, Councillor Rebecca Lanning, gave an overview of the report highlighting the background to the work of the review.

The chair thanked the task group for the work

A Panel member thanked the task group chair for the work as it helped them the to reflect on their own experience through the education system

The Panel asked if there are employers willing to take people on after a pilot scheme, why the review focusses on opportunities in libraries and value of travel training.

The task group chair reported that libraries presented opportunities to build on the voluntary sector base which already exists at Merton. This approach could influence other areas with best practice.

It was reported that the Department of Transport used to provide funding for travel training and when this money stopped Merton continued to provide the service as they recognised the value of the service

8   WORK PROGRAMME 2019-2020 (Agenda Item 8)

The draft work programme was agreed

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