

Agenda Item 3

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - COMMUNITY SUB-GROUP

19 OCTOBER 2021

(5.04 pm - 6.29 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Rebecca Lanning (in the Chair), Dave Curtis, Dr Vasa Gnanapragam, Councillor Oonagh Moulton, Councillor Eleanor Stringer and Dr Dagmar Zeuner (Director of Public Health) and Dave Curtis Manager (Health Watch Merton Dr Sy Ganesaratnam, John Rochford(Central London Community Hub Trust) Campbell Flack,(Central London Community Hub Trust) Sarah Wright,(Central London Community Trust NHS) Barry Causer (Head of Strategic Commissioning), Paraic Walker(Communications Officer), Bec Yusuf (Health watch Merton) and Amy Dumitrescu (Democratic Services Manager)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

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Apologies were received from Mark Creelam, Kalu Obuka.and Clarissa Larsen.

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 14th September 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

4 COVID-19 IN MERTON UPDATE (Agenda Item 4)

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The Director of Public Health presented the situation assessment report.

The slides from this presentation are attached to these minutes.

It was asked whether there are any plans for availability of free LFD tests to be ended. The Director of Public Health confirmed that there are currently no such plans

and that the Department of Health have given assurance that free community testing will continue until at least the end of the year and probably next March. It remains important to promote LFD use, establish routines where possible and ensure availability to those who need it most.

The low take up of vaccination in schools was raised and members discussed ways in which greater take up could be encouraged, including discussion of a half-term offer. Schools have been supportive and it was felt important to listen to any concerns parents may have.

Cllr Lanning asked how the booster programme was working. Dr Vasa Gnanpragam confirmed that people do need to wait to be called and will then be able to book their slot via the online booster booking system and said that he was happy to support communications on this.

5 POST COVID SYNDROME - PRESENTATION, Q&A AND DISCUSSION (Agenda Item 5)

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The Head of Strategic Commissioning led a presentation on Post Covid Syndrome (PCS) outlining the range of symptoms experienced, data on prevalence to date and the services available to support people experiencing (PCS).

The slides presented are attached to these minutes.

The Chair thanked the presenters and asked how referrals to the Post Covid Syndrome service work, which it was confirmed are via primary and secondary care across South West London.

The Chair advised that the HWBB Subgroup is concerned with equity and access and wondered whether there is a possibility of other types of referral to help the widest access to services. She was advised that the pathway is set up so the right medical checks take place before referral, but that work is also taking place with Social Prescribers to refer patients, and that there is a commitment to build promotion of the availability of the service. The Chair welcomed any material that could be shared in the community.

John Rochford reported that they have become a vanguard for accessing services and were nearly at capacity. Members discussed the profile of people attending the PCS service and noted that not many appeared to be from more deprived areas of the borough. This is a challenge for the HWBB subgroup and work needs to be done to tackle any shame or disbelief people might be experiencing. It was suggested that the Covid Community Champions network may be able to help with this, and that there is an opportunity for listening and learning to evolve the service offer. Given current infection rates, PCS is expected to become a larger issue over time.

Members agreed there is a need to work with patients on this, rather than 'do to them'; we are all learning and links to wider support services on health and wellbeing can help build a more holistic approach. The input of members on how the service should develop was welcomed and The Head of Strategic Commissioning asked that any comments or suggestion be forwarded to him, there is an opportunity to pick up on any action points at the next meeting of the Wandsworth and Merton PCS steering group.

The Chair asked that this topic be brought back to the next HWBB meeting on 14 December 2021 and thanked all for attending and for contributions made.

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