

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES - 19 JANUARY 2022**

Present: Councillor James (Chair);

Councillors R Williams (Vice-Chair), Carnell, Ennis, Hoskin, Mpofu-Coles, O'Connell, Pearce, Robinson, DP Singh, Sokale, Terry and White

Apologies: Councillors David Absolom and Ballsdon

21. READING ADVICE NETWORK - PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from Richard Harrison, Chair of the Reading Advice Network (RAN) on the work and achievements of the network since its establishment in 2013.

The follow points were noted:

- The RAN aimed to improve the quality of information and advice available in Reading, to make it easier for people to get the advice and information they needed and be a focal point for information and advice services.
- A Quality Standard had been developed with the Council in 2016, which had recently been updated to cover staff and volunteers working from home.
- RAN funded an independent assessor for member organisations to achieve a Quality Standard.
- Two main activities provided were regular advice forums and a peer support group for member CEOs.
- RAN currently had 20 member organisations that provided a wide range of services.
- A booklet detailing information was available and had been provided to councillors. Information in the booklet was updated on an annual basis at the start of the Municipal Year.
- Member organisations included Citizens Advice, Age UK, Communicare, the Welfare Rights Unit and The Mustard Tree.
- Member operations were overseen by volunteer Trustee Boards.
- In the last year members working with nearly 300 paid staff and 650 volunteers had provided information, advice and a wide range of services to nearly 16,000 people. They had also secured over £4 million in additional income for clients.
- Reading Council provided just under £1.7 million funding with a further £2 million secured through other sources.
- Difficulties for members included: the problems and resources required to secure funding; income generating services operating below pre-pandemic levels due to social distancing; increased and complex demands; and staff and volunteer recruitment.
- Members remained committed to supporting those in need in Reading, were trying to set up new services and continued to be a significant part of the solution to problems facing communities in Reading.

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It was suggested that by the Council building closer relationships with RAN and voluntary organisations this would enable better support for people and communities in Reading.

It was noted that organisations such as RAN and other volunteer groups helped make Reading a better town. The dedication and public service of the voluntary sector was commended.

It was noted that demand for support with energy costs was increasing and was expected to increase further during the year.

The Committee thanked Richard for representing the work of the organisations and his presentation.

22. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23. CCG REVIEW OF SAME DAY HEALTHCARE

The Committee received a verbal update from Katie Summers, Berkshire West Vaccination Lead and Director of Place Partnerships, Andy Ciecierski, North & West Reading Locality Clinical Lead and Sanjay Desai, Interim Director of Primary Care, from NHS Berkshire West CCG, on the review of the Reading Walk in Centre, data and information on the vaccination status and GP appointments.

Andy Ciecierski informed the Committee that the Reading Walk in Centre had opened in August 2009 and was commissioned to provide 38,000 appointments per annum. However, prior to COVID the figures visiting the centre had been lower than 38,000 and the future of the centre had been under consideration due to the lower capacity. During COVID the Walk-in service had been suspended, following national guidance for a Triage First model of providing Primary Care. During the continuing pandemic discussions and plans regarding changes to the centre had been put on hold. It was noted that the surgery at the centre was now working as a normal doctor's surgery with an increasing number of registered patients. This had risen steadily from 0 in January 2009, 8200 in January 2018, 9600 in January 2019, 10,300 in January 2020, 10,180 in January 2021 and 11,053 in January 2022. It was noted that there had been an increase in list sizes across central practices in Reading due to increased residential housing and this was expected to further increase in the future.

The appropriate name of the centre was also being considered due to the central location of the practice. Due to organisational changes and pandemic pressures on staff time and workload a decision had been taken to extend the timeframe for making a final decision on the future need for walk-in services in Reading and then to complete the necessary

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procurement of the GP practice service. The current APMS contract has therefore been extended to March 2023. A public consultation would be required to consider the walk-in element of the centre and consideration would also need to be given to how primary care would be undertaken in the future. This could continue to include triage phone calls, online consultations, chat systems and video conferences for patients as during the pandemic. Andy Ciecierski noted that some patients preferred phone consultations due to the convenience and lack of travel requirements. Further discussions would be undertaken regarding the walk-in centre and if this was needed going forward, in line with the future of primary care.

Katie Summers thanked the Council for their support with contacting members of the public during the Vaccination Canvassing exercise. It was noted that 1,189 households had been visited during the exercise from 29 June 2021 to 9 July 2021. Following these, 263 patients had been identified as no longer at the address and had been cleansed from GP lists. It was also noted that 53.1% of households did not respond or answer.

Possible reasons for the differences between GP and Office for National Statistics (ONS) populations were:

- Over-counting in GP practice registers (e.g. ghost patients - students)
- Under-counting in population estimates (e.g. associated with census completion/incorrect estimation of internal migration)
- Different definitions of who counted as 'resident' in the country

The CCG and the Council had identified notable differences especially for men who were in the age groups who were not invited for screening programmes e.g. Leighton Park university area of 25-29 year-olds, possibly ex-students who had moved on, and Kennet Island, 35-39 year-olds as a transient location with social housing.

Following an internal review, the CCG had undertaken actions with GP practices. These had been to check if their registers were more up to date than ONS data and how many patients had not wanted to take up the vaccine appointment. It was reported that most GP practices were contacting people six to seven times and logged non responses which were then reported to the CCG.

A review of individual practices in Berkshire West with regard to list size had identified that data reported between August 2018 to August 2021 across Berkshire West showed an increase of 7% in registers. The CCG Primary Care Team had contacted all the practices identified in the report, as well as the practices where households were registered who had been visited by the canvassing team, to verify lists and to provide assurance that their list maintenance processes follow those defined within the GP contract and FP69 procedures. The outcome of this review had not yet been completed. Many practices had reported that in addition to the regular list maintenance reviews there had been clean ups after the COVID vaccination invites had been sent out.

Regarding the list cleansing exercise for male patients aged 18-44, Berkshire West CCG would be undertaking immigrant checks as part of an extended programme of list

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maintenance, together with a list clean of four practices in Reading which had seen above average growth in male patients aged 18 - 44 registered. The CCG were redeploying CCG staff to Reading practices with high immigrant uptake, to support the registration and COVID vaccination record.

The CCG were also investigating the possibility of commissioning GP practices to undertake audits and were engaging with Primary Care Support England (PCSE) to run a bespoke audit to support list cleaning. It was noted that the initial costs from PCSE were high and NHS England had been requested to support funding as the current costs were not feasible.

Regarding GP appointments, it was noted that currently the CCG held 45 contracts with GP practices. Initially a GP 'call-back' was offered and a ten to fifteen-minute appointment phone call was provided as necessary. It was suggested that for working patients this provided an improvement on having to take time off from work to visit a surgery. Time slots could be accommodated to support patients and appointments offered when they were available. The triage model was currently under review until the guidance from NHS England on the future model was released.

In response to the presentation the following points were noted:

- Issues regarding accessing same day appointments were because primary care services were stretched. Staff had not been increased to support the work being required by GP practices.
- A further report and input into the walk-in centre review were requested by the Committee. If available, further information was requested to be brought to the next meeting for consideration and for the members to feedback and represent the views of the people of Reading.
- It was suggested that, even though the figure of 38,000 walk in appointments had not been met, the 30,000 that did use the centre was a considerable demand for the service and needed serious consideration ahead of any permanent closure.
- Concern was raised regarding the wording around immigrant checks and it was suggested that the terminology meant migrant and transient patients. However, clarity of the terminology would be confirmed.
- KPIs were not used by GPs to consider the effectiveness of phone triage for patients during the pandemic. GPs were able to build a picture of patient health record using records and to evaluate the needs of the patient using that information. It was suggested that appointments did not have to be face-to-face. However, it was recognised that this could be a challenge for some patients.
- In the future there should be an element of choice with regard to face-to-face or virtual appointments.

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- Katie Summers suggested that Reading Advice Network be contacted to provide support for individuals with accessing the digital-first, hybrid model and becoming more digitally literate. It was suggested to link the Reading digital support programme with health services to support people in areas of need.
- In response to problems with accessing appointments at 8am, it was noted that most practices were open from early in the morning to late in the evening. Patients could call anytime during the day and should receive a call back urgently if required. It was understood that some practices had difficulty with the number of patients requiring an urgent on-the-day appointment and different practices ran different models. It was suggested to survey practices to see the models used and discuss at patient participation groups to consider issues.

It was suggested that an additional meeting could take place ahead of the next formal meeting to discuss and scrutinise issues.

Resolved -

- (1) That a report regarding the review of the Reading Walk-in Centre be submitted to the next meeting, for the Committee to be consulted on the future of the centre;
- (2) That information clarifying the definition of the word immigrant be circulated to the Committee;
- (3) That an additional informal meeting be arranged to consider issues regarding the Walk-in Centre and GP appointments.

24. ONE READING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP - EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2021-2023

The Executive Director of Children's Services - Education, Early Help and Social Care, Brighter Futures for Children, submitted a report updating the Committee on the One Reading Children and Young People's (CYP) Partnership Early Help Strategy 2021-2023 and progress against the action plans in the three priority areas of Under 5s, Adolescence and Consistent Approaches to Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.

Kirsten Carr, Strategic Lead, Early Help, Bright Futures for Children, provided a presentation outlining the priorities and progress. The presentation explained that the Under 5s workstream would be the Reading delivery group for Priority 3 of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030. The workstream developed a single action plan which was in draft format and currently with stakeholders for feedback. Work had been undertaken with the Local Government Association to develop a partnership Under 5s Strategy and partners had secured funding for a 5-year programme to upskill staff to identify children with SEND needs. National guidance for Foundation Stage assessment was not yet

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available and practitioners were having difficulty in determining needs of children and if these were related to the impact of COVID or due to special educational needs. With regard to the impact of COVID, Kirsten Carr explained that key action priorities would be to increase two-year olds accessing nursery places, working on speech, language and communication and reducing the non-accidental injuries suffered by unborn and new born babies.

A key priority of the adolescence workstream had been to establish the Young People and Extra Familial Harm Strategy. This included a data review and a series of multi-agency workshops to establish the key priorities. The draft strategy had been shared and signed off by key strategic groups. Action plans were in place and leads were being established.

The Consistent Approaches to Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health workstream had prioritised embedding trauma-informed and restorative approaches across the workforce. There was concern regarding the impact of COVID and the impact on young people's mental health. A free online training package and workforce development network had been established to ensure consistent baseline of knowledge and understanding. The action plan had been aligned with key Berkshire West and Reading strategic groups and plans.

A national Family Hub programme focusing on early help had been launched. This was a continuation of the Supporting Families programme. Early discussions were being undertaken with partners on the feasibility to develop the family hub model in Reading. By using the Supporting Families Programme, two Partnership Outreach Workers and a Hospital Early Help Worker, in partnership with Royal Berkshire Hospital, had been employed.

With regard to the increase in referrals of injuries suffered by unborn and new born babies, it was noted that the partnership response and increase in the numbers accessing early intervention would have had an impact on the figures. The pilot project to prevent school exclusions was funded through the youth offending services with schools to provide family and youth support for young people at risk of exclusion. The parent workshop pilot was delivered through primary mental health workers to support parents with children's worries and anxieties with one-off workshops delivered via schools for parents to attend. Kooth was a website that young people could access at any time with advice and information.

Regarding the Youth Development offer, it was reported that young people had been consulted and a strong network of voluntary organisations were working with young people to provide the best resources available. Consideration was being given to supporting youth workers delivering one to one work and to enable a more visible presence in communities using the Housing Allocations Grant to support youth work in Reading over the next two years.

Resolved - That the update on the One Reading CYP Partnership Early Help Strategy and progress made against priority areas, challenges and new opportunities be noted.

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25. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Executive Director of Children's Services - Education, Early Help and Social Care, Brighter Futures for Children, submitted a report providing an overview of complaints and compliments activity and performance for Children's Social Care for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. A summary of Children's Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2020/21 was attached to the report at Appendix A. Nayana George, Customer Relations and Information Governance Officer, provided an overview to the Committee.

The report stated that over the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 the service had received 70 statutory complaints, which was a 23.9 % decrease compared to the 92 that had been received in 2019/20. Of the 70 complaints received, 13 had been resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by the social care teams. The remaining 57 had progressed to a formal investigation, although three of these had been subsequently withdrawn by the complainant once the investigation had commenced. During the same period a total of 68 compliments had also been received.

Regarding the low uptake of online training it was reported that face-to-face training sessions had been fully attended.

Resolved - That the contents of the report and intended actions to further improve the management of representations, particularly complaints, in children's services in Reading be noted.

26. ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Executive Director of Social Care and Health submitted a report providing an overview of complaints and compliments activity and performance for Adult Social Care for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. A summary of Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2020/21 was attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report stated that over the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 the service had received 17 corporate complaints, which was a 30.8% increase compared to the 19 that had been received in 2020/21, and 71 statutory complaints, which was a 15.5% decrease compared to the 72 that had been received in 2020/21. During the same period a total of 28 compliments had also been received.

The main themes for the period 2020/21 for both corporate and statutory complaints were as follows:

- Quality of Service Provided
- Financial Issues
- Staff Conduct
- Communication

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Members of the public were provided with an opportunity to respond to an investigation report and invited to meet for a further discussion if necessary.

It was noted that complaints were dealt with at the earliest opportunity to prevent further progression and provide improvement in services.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

27. SUMMARY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S WHITE PAPER ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE REFORM

The Executive Director of Social Care and Health submitted a report providing an overview of the new planned reforms for Adult Social Care in England, initially set out by the Government White Paper in December 2021, "People at the Heart of Care: adult social care reform".

It was explained that the White Paper formed part of a suite of reforms concerning health and social care, outlined in 2021. It was noted that some guidance was not yet available. There were three main objectives:

- People have choice, control and support to live independent lives.
- People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support.
- People find adult social care fair and accessible.

The Executive Director noted that she was proud of staff working hard to keep people at home and out of statutory services when possible. The Adult Social Care Performance report would provide further data on this issue at the next ACE Committee meeting.

Reading continued to deliver services against the Care Act 2014 principles including Extra Care provision, technology-enabled care, occupational therapy teams supporting and maximising independence, and direct payments, which would continue through the transformation agenda.

There was concern across local authorities regarding the amount of contributions required by them for care and full details of the requirements had not yet been released. It was noted that this could be a significant cost for authorities and there was concern regarding the amount of income that would be received.

The fair cost of care element ensured decent wages for carers; it was noted that Reading paid the foundation living wage and grant funding was being secured to support costs.

It was expected that an additional paper on health and social care integration would follow the White Paper. However, at this stage there was no indication of when this would be issued.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

28. HOARDING PILOT PROJECT UPDATE FROM SAFEGUARDING TEAM - PRESENTATION

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The Executive Director of Social Care and Health, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding, Quality, Performance & Practice, the Lead Project Officer and the Principal Occupational Therapist provided a presentation on the Hoarding and Self Neglect project being undertaken by the team.

A link to a video on a personal story of hoarding was shared with the Committee: [Keith's story: a personal and touching film about hoarding - YouTube](#).

Since March 2020 a hospital discharge grant had been used to help clear homes and repairs for people before going home from hospital. The Committee were provided with information on hoarding, and the challenges with engaging individuals with hoarding issues.

Aims of the project were to support people with hoarding, self-neglect and longer-term needs, multi-agency working and providing training and support to agencies. Work undertaken included a successful grant application, appointment of a lead project worker, specialist training, reviewing existing services and the drafting of a hoarding and self-neglect protocol. Intended outcomes were to increase access to services, prevention, enabling healthy communities, linking support and supporting greater independence and well-being for individuals.

Resolved - That the presentation be noted and the officers be thanked for the presentation and their work on the project.

29. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

The Executive Director of Children's Services - Education, Early Help and Social Care, Brighter Futures for Children, submitted a report that invited the Committee to agree the determination of school admission arrangements for September 2023 as follows:

- The admissions arrangements for Community Primary Schools in Reading for the school year 2023/24.
- The coordinated scheme for primary and junior schools for the 2023/24 school year.
- The coordinated scheme for secondary schools for the 2023/24 school year.
- The Relevant Areas 2023.
- Maps of the Primary catchment areas.

Copies of the schemes, policies, relevant area and maps were appended to the report.

The report noted that the arrangements for 2023/24 complied with the School Admissions Code 2021.

Resolved -

- (1) **That the scheme attached to the report at Annexes A, B and C as the admissions arrangements for 2023/24 for community schools in Reading**

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and the local arrangements for complying with the national coordinated primary school admission procedures for the allocation of primary school places for residents of Reading Borough be agreed;

- (2) That the scheme attached to the report at Annex D as the local arrangements for complying with the national coordinated secondary admissions procedure for the allocation of secondary school places for 2023/24 for residents of Reading Borough be agreed;
- (3) That the relevant area attached to the report in Annex E which set out the organisations that must be consulted for any admissions arrangements for schools in Reading be agreed.

(The meeting closed at 9.17 pm)