

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES - 18 JANUARY 2023**

Present: Councillors Gavin (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Ballsdon, Cresswell, Davies, C Dennis, Ennis, Hoskin, Keane, Khan, Kitchingham, McEwan, O'Connell and Robinson

Apologies: Councillors Mpofu-Coles and Sultan

19. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the invitation of the Chair, members of the Committee spoke to give their condolences and to pay tribute to Ruth Perry who had been the Headteacher of Caversham Primary School and who had sadly passed away.

20. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

21. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The minutes of the following meetings were received:

- Health and Wellbeing Board - 7 October 2022

22. NHS UPDATE - URGENT AND EMERGENCY CARE - BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE AND BERKSHIRE WEST INTEGRATED CARE BOARD (BOB)

Sarah Webster, Executive Director for Berkshire West Place, BOB ICB, gave a presentation and update on local NHS urgent and emergency care pathways over the winter period. It was noted that it had been widely reported in the national press and media that the NHS had experienced its busiest winter on record and it was acknowledge that these pressures had also been felt locally. The presentation covered the following urgent and emergency care pathways:

Primary Care

In relation to primary care, it was noted that activity had remained at similar levels to the previous year up until November 2022. However, During December and early January, demand for appointments had increased, in particular for children due to the concerns around Strep A. There had also been an increase in appointments due to high levels of respiratory illnesses after the Christmas period. The ICB had been able to provide additional funding, through until the end of February, for primary care practices to increase workforce capacity, provide additional appointments and commission clinics to focus on respiratory illness. Work had also been continuing to improve access to primary care by upgrading telephony systems, improving digital accessibility and literacy, communication around the appropriate use of services and increasing referrals to community pharmacies for minor illness. It was further noted that NHS 111 had seen a significant increase in the volume of phone calls. This had resulted in more patients being

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transferred into primary care which contributed towards increased activity. Work had been taking place to implement an enhanced Clinical Assessment Service which was due to go-live to help manage demand on general practice.

Urgent Care Centre

The presentation provided an update on the Urgent Care Centre which had opened on 5 December 2022. The centre, based at the Broad Street Mall, was open 8am until 8pm, 7 days a week. The service provided was GP-led but staffed by a multi-disciplinary health team. The service aimed to reduce Emergency Department (ED) attendances and provide overflow capacity for primary care. The centre had capacity to see up to 100 patients per day, including 50 patients referred by either the ED the at the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH) or by GP practices experiencing high on-the-day demand and a further 50 self-presenting walk-in patients. The service was running well but had not yet reached full capacity, this was partially due to the timings of appointments and due to the fact that the new service was still bedding in. Underutilisation of capacity was being closely monitored and work was taking place to ensure that capacity was fully utilised.

Ambulance Response and Conveyance

The presentation noted that there had been a lot of pressure and publicity nationally on ambulance availability and response times. Locally, over the Christmas period, ambulances had experienced increases in the number of handover delays whereby ambulances had needed to wait for periods of over 30 minutes or 60 minutes. The delays were due to capacity within the RBH ED and also reduced in-hospital flow. The delays had held up emergency pathways and meant that ambulances were unable to be released to attend other calls. To reduce handover delays, the RBH had created a flexible off-loading bay to minimise the amount of time ambulances were required to wait within the ED. Implementation had proved effective and, as of this week, handover delays had been reduced significantly. Work was continuing to maintain this reduction.

Emergency Department Attendances

Attendances at the Emergency Department at the RBH had increased over the winter when compared to the previous few winters. However, the percentage of patients then admitted to hospital had reduced. This was partially due to an increase in the number of patients presenting with minor illness and injuries but was also due to the introduction of new pathways that had been implemented across Berkshire West to improve same-day emergency care which allowed patients to be treated rapidly, on the same day, without the need for them to be admitted into hospital. Work was continuing with key partners to implement more services designed to reduce the number of hospital admissions.

Discharge and onward care

There had been an increase in the length of time that patients needed to wait in hospital to be discharged once they were ready to leave. This was due to the increased complexity of patient care needs and the availability of appropriate care packages within

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the community. There had been a significant focus on improving the pathways out of hospital to speed-up discharges, including many good examples of partnership working with adult social care. Additional funding of around £1.3 million had also been secured from a national fund of £500 million for the Reading Better Care Fund to invest in services to help patients leave hospital as quickly as possible. Such services included providing care in residents' own homes, step down care in care homes, and provision of complex care packages for those with very high care needs.

At the meeting it was noted that forward planning had started for the winter of 2023/24 and that an update on preparations, produced jointly by the BOB ICB and RBC Adult Services, could be provided at a future meeting of the Committee

Resolved -

- (1) That the presentation be noted;**
- (2) That a copy of the presentation slides be published with the Minutes;**
- (3) That an update, be brought to a future meeting of the Committee outlining the plans for the 2023/24 winter period.**

23. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

The Interim 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 2024 as follows:

- The admissions arrangements for Community Primary Schools in Reading for the 2024/25 school year.
- The coordinated scheme for primary and junior schools for the 2024/25 school year.
- The coordinated scheme for secondary schools for the 2024/25 school year.
- The Relevant Area 2024.
- Maps of the Primary catchment areas.

Copies of the schemes, policies, relevant area and maps were appended to the report at Annexes A, B, C, D and E.

It was noted that the schemes had been amended to reflect the appropriate dates for the 2024/25 school year but that no significant changes had been made, other than to clarify the existing policy relating to disputes between parents. The report also noted that the arrangements for 2024/25 complied with the School Admissions Code 2021.

The Committee discussed the report. During discussions it was noted that an incorrect version of one of the maps (attached at Annex C) had been published with the agenda papers and the Interim Executive Director of Children's Services, Education, Early Help

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and Social Care advised the Committee that a corrected version of the maps would be circulated for assurance. Also, typos and sections of the text would be amended within Annex B prior to the schemes being published.

Resolved -

- (1) That, subject to the Interim Executive Director of Children's Services, Education, Early Help and Social Care making corrections to Annexes B and C, the scheme attached at Annexes A, B and C as the admissions arrangements for 2024/25 for community schools in Reading 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 at Annex D as the local arrangements for complying with the national coordinated secondary admissions procedure for the allocation of secondary school places for 2024/25 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.**

24. AUTISM STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health submitted a report that introduced Reading's All Age Autism Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan for Year 1 2022/23. The following documents were appended to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Reading's All Age Autism Strategy 2022-2026;
- Appendix 2 - Reading's All-Age Autism Action Plan Year 1 2022/23;
- Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment.

The report explained that public and partner engagement had been a core element in developing the Strategy and had involved autistic people, their families and carers, third sector and voluntary organisations and professionals from across Reading. Engagement and coproduction had taken place via interviews, workshops, surveys, forums, existing local groups, targeted outreach to groups and feedback sessions. The insight gathered had been used to inform and shape the strategy, and to test emerging findings, recommendations, priorities, and vision development. Overall, the Council had received views and contributions from 257 people. Contributions from 227 people had been received during the initial development of the Strategy with a further 30 people providing feedback following the public consultation. The findings following the public consultation had been outlined in section 7 of the report.

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As a result of the engagement and feedback, 7 priorities had been developed which were used as the basis for the strategy. These were:

1. Improving awareness, understanding and acceptance of autism;
2. Improving support and access to early years, education and supporting positive transitions and preparing for adulthood;
3. Increasing employment, vocation and training opportunities autistic people;
4. Better lives for autistic people - tackling health and care inequalities and building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care;
5. Housing and supporting independent living;
6. Keeping safe and the criminal justice system;
7. Supporting families and carers of autistic people.

The report explained that the Strategy and Action Plan would be delivered through the Autism Partnership Board (APB), which would report to the Health & Wellbeing Board to ensure that the Strategy remained a priority and was owned by all partner agencies. Each of the seven priority areas would have a responsible partner agency to lead on that particular element of the Action Plan to make sure that actions were achievable and made a difference to Reading's autistic residents. The Autism Partnership Board would be expected to submit an annual report to the Health and Wellbeing Board each Summer on the progress made towards implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan, including successes and any issues encountered during the year.

At the meeting it was noted that a reference group consisting of autistic residents, voluntary sector organisations and relevant partner agencies would be developed to feed into and inform the Autism Partnership Board to advise the Board on relevant aspects of service delivery and to ensure continued engagement with Reading's autistic community.

At the meeting the Chair suggested that an annual update report should also be submitted to the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee to allow the Committee to maintain oversight of the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan.

Resolved -

- (1) That the findings of the public consultation on Reading's All Age Autism Strategy 2022-2026 be noted;**
- (2) That Reading's All Age Autism Strategy 2022-2026 and Action Plan Year 1 2022/23 be agreed;**
- (3) That delivery and oversight of the Strategy and Action Plan be delegated to the Autism Partnership Board;**
- (4) That the Autism Partnership Board submit an Annual Report to the Health & Wellbeing Board each Summer updating on the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan;**

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- (5) That an annual report be submitted to the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee updating on the implementation of the Strategy and on the progress made towards achieving the objectives and actions detailed in the Action Plan.

25. STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE - PREPARATION FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE ASSURANCE

Jo Lappin, Assistant Director for Safeguarding, Quality, Performance & Practice, gave a presentation providing information on the Striving for Excellence project and the preparations made for assurance of the Council's Adult Social Care functions by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The presentation explained that the Health and Care Act 2022 gave the CQC new regulatory powers to undertake independent assessments of local authorities' delivery of regulated care functions as set out in Part 1 of the Care Act 2014.

The CQC assurance process would look for evidence that local authorities were meeting their Care Act 2014 responsibilities, including looking for evidence that risks had been identified and were being managed and that improvement plans were being delivered and were effective. The CQC would use a range of methods to gather evidence and conduct the assurance process. It was expected that assessments, which would begin from April 2023, would move away from physical inspections being the only method for making judgements and would also rely on the analysis of various data sources that measured quality, risk and performance utilising indicators such as ombudsman judgements, statutory returns and benchmarking which would be done virtually. It was anticipated that the CQC would publish its ratings for individual Councils after a national baseline had been established.

In September 2022 the CQC had published a Draft Local Authority Assessment Framework which outlined the CQC's approach and explained that local authorities would be assessed against four key themes, each with several quality statements mapped to them. The four key themes were:

1. How Local Authorities **work with people** - assessing needs (including for carers), supporting people to live healthier lives, prevention, wellbeing, information, and advice;
2. How Local Authorities **provide support** - market shaping, commissioning workforce equality, integration and partnership working;
3. How Local Authorities **ensure safety within the system** - safeguarding, safe system and continuity of care;
4. **Leadership** - wider culture, strategic planning, learning, improvement, innovation, governance, management and sustainability.

The presentation noted that, in December 2022, the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) had published 'Getting

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Ready for Assurance: A Guide to Support the Development of Your Adult Social Care Self-Assessment', which had been designed to enable local authorities to complete an objective, honest and authentic self-assessment process. It had been agreed that the Council would utilise this approach to prepare for CQC assurance. The Council's preparations and the resulting improvement journey had been given the project name 'Striving for Excellence'. Striving for Excellence aimed not only to prepare the Council for CQC assessment but to also drive improvement more generally across Council services.

Work had commenced to complete the self-assessment process which would help to determine strengths and to identify risks to delivery. This would inform an improvement plan which would need to be robustly monitored and managed to ensure its effectiveness. This process would provide the assurance that CQC would be seeking via their assessment.

To provide an accurate picture, the self-assessment team would need to be informed by the experiences of service users, carers, professionals working in adult social care and other partners. All assertions would need to be evidenced with appropriate documentation with the greatest weight given to experience and outcomes. To ensure ownership and transparency the self-assessment would need to include evidence of formal endorsement from those with the responsibility for delivering local priorities and plans and key contributors, including the Council Leader; Chief Executive; Lead Member for Adult Social Care; Director of Social Care and Health; Director of Public Health; Safeguarding Adults Board chair; senior health colleague; Care Provider(s); a VCS representative; service user and carer representatives.

The presentation noted some of the learning that had arisen following the CQC testing its proposed assessment methodology at two test and learn sites during the summer of 2022 and summarised some of the findings of The Kings Fund research that had also been carried out during the summer.

The presentation listed some of the project's achievements. These included:

- A Project Manager resource being identified and allocated;
- The securing of Delivery Fund resources;
- The completion of an initial self-assessment to establish baselines and agree priorities - the self-assessment was being updated to bring it in line with the guidance published by the LGA and ADAS in December 2022 (see above);
- Procurement of a repository system called Tri-X to provide a centralised place to store policies and procedures;
- Drafting of a strategy for consulting with service users;
- Attendance at Peer Comparator Group sessions with Medway and Portsmouth councils;
- Formation of a Steering Group, governance process/delivery channels.

The presentation concluded by suggesting that an update could be brought back to the Committee in May 2023 to provide further information on the outcome of the self-assessment and subsequent improvement journey.

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Resolved -

- (1) That the presentation be noted;
- (2) That an update be brought to the next ACE Committee meeting providing information on the outcome of the self-assessment and subsequent improvement journey.

26. BERKS WEST SAB (SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD) ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

The Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health submitted a report introducing the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report for 2021/22. A copy of the Annual Report was attached at Appendix 1. The Annual Report included:

- An introduction to the work of the West of Berkshire SAB - including its structure, vision, purpose and membership;
- Details of the number of adult safeguarding concerns recorded within the West of Berkshire area in 2021-22;
- A summary of the safeguarding trends identified across the area in 2021/22;
- A summary of the risks identified and mitigated against during 2021/22;
- Details of the achievements made against the key priorities set for 2021/22;
- Case summaries for the six Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) conducted by the Board during 2021/22; and
- Details of the key priorities set by the SAB for 2022/23, including the 2022/23 Business Plan.

The report noted that the Council was one of the local authorities that had contributed to the Annual Report, along with West Berkshire and Wokingham. A link to Reading's contribution, which had been reviewed by the Committee at the meeting on 19 October 2022 (Minute 13 refers), was provided within the report.

The report went on to highlight the priorities set by the West of Berkshire SAB for 2022/23. The four priorities were:

- **Priority 1:** To expand on learning regarding self-neglect: to offer the partnership resources to support them to achieve effective outcomes for individuals that self-neglect;
- **Priority 2:** To seek assurance that the quality of health and social care services delivered in the West of Berkshire or those commissioned out of area for West of Berkshire residents is monitored effectively and there is a proportionate response to concerns;
- **Priority 3:** The SAB to review its Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) process, in order to ensure that it is timely and good value for money;
- **Priority 4:** The SAB will continue to carry out business as usual tasks in order to comply with statutory duties.

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The report detailed how Reading Borough Council would respond to and support the delivery of the SAB's priorities and listed the priorities that the Council would use internally to achieve this. Delivery of the Council's own priorities would be monitored via a Delivery Plan overseen by the Safeguarding Development Group.

The Chair concluded the meeting by expressing gratitude and thanks, on behalf of the Committee and Council, for the hard work of the Assistant Director for Safeguarding, Quality, Performance & Practice who would shortly be leaving the organisation.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Berkshire West Safeguarding Board Annual Report for 2021/22 be noted;**
- (2) That Reading Borough Council's contribution to the Berkshire West Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2021/22, as reviewed by the Committee on 19 October 2022, be noted.**

(The meeting closed at 8.01 pm)