

READING HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD MINUTES – 7 OCTOBER 2025

Present:

Councillor Rachel Eden (Chair)	Lead Councillor for Education and Public Health, Reading Borough Council (RBC)
Andy Ciecierski	Clinical Director for Caversham Primary Care Network
Karen Cridland	Director for Children, Family & All Age Services, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT)
Councillor Paul Gittings	Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care, RBC
Brian Grady	Director of Education, RBC
Councillor Wendy Griffith	Lead Councillor for Children, RBC
Alice Kunjappy-Clifton	Lead Officer, Healthwatch Reading
Councillor Micky Leng	Deputy Leader, RBC
Matt Pearce	Director of Public Health for Reading and West Berkshire
Katie Prichard-Thomas	Chief Nursing Officer, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust (RBFT)
Ben Riley	Chief Medical Officer, BOB ICB
Rachel Spencer	Chief Executive, Reading Voluntary Action

Also in attendance:

Keith Brown	Chair, West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board
Zoe Campbell	Business Manager, Public Health, RBC
Jamie Evans	Area Director, Healthwatch in Berkshire West
Lara Fromings	Assistant Director for Transformation, Commissioning and Performance, RBC

Apologies:

Colin Hudson	Reading LPA Commander, Thames Valley Police (TVP)
Steve Leonard	West Hub Group Manager, RBFRS
Lara Patel	Executive Director of Children's Services, RBC
Councillor Liz Terry	Leader of the Council, RBC
Melissa Wise	Executive Director – Community & Adult Social Care Services, RBC

9. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10. WEST OF BERKSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS PARTNERSHIP BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Professor Keith Brown submitted a report presenting the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAB) Annual Report for 2023-24. A copy of the SAB's Annual Report was attached at Appendix 1.

The report outlined the role of the SAB and listed the priorities that the SAB had set for the 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 years. The SAB's Annual Report 2023-24 outlined the achievements of the SAB during 2023/24 across the Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham areas and included:

- statistics on the number of safeguarding concerns and enquiries recorded;
- trends identified across the West of Berkshire area;
- details of the risks identified and the actions taken to mitigate them;

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- details of the progress made towards the 2023/24 priorities and achievements through working together;
- highlights from the Voluntary Sector and Healthwatch Sub Group;
- Annual Budget and financial contribution
- summaries of the Safeguarding Adult Reviews conducted by the SAB;
- reflection on areas of success in 2023/24 and areas for improvement;
- further details of the key priorities set by the SAB for 2024/25.

The report stated that one of the areas identified in the annual report for improvement was for the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership to improve its links with Health and Wellbeing Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and Children's Safeguarding Boards. The SAB, in collaboration with the Children's Safeguarding Board, was developing a proposal for all strategic partnerships across the West of Berkshire to adopt a shared protocol which would require each partnership board to provide biannual update reports to the collective strategic partnerships in the area. The protocol aimed to enhance strategic collaboration by promoting:

- Shared situational awareness of safeguarding activities
- Alignment on shared priorities
- Identification of opportunities for collaboration
- Avoidance of duplication
- Stronger collective impact

At the time of writing the report an invitation letter to request Reading Health and Wellbeing Board to sign up to the protocol was being drafted.

Keith Brown addressed the Board on the SAB's priority around embedding a good understanding of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) within the practices of statutory partners, noting that more work was needed to ensure that the Act was understood at all levels, and that it was used in a decision-specific way. He stated that the SAB website had lots of information about and guides on how to use the MCA, which could be shared by partners with their colleagues: <https://sabberkshirewest.co.uk/professionals/practice-guidance/mental-capacity-act-and-dols> He noted that there was no legal definition of "next of kin" and it was suggested that partners needed to consider what contact information they actually needed from individuals and for what purpose, eg "emergency contact in case of illness/death". He also noted that not enough people were arranging for Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) for themselves, suggesting that everyone over 18 should be encouraged to have an LPA for Health & Welfare in case of emergencies or accidents (as well as the more commonly arranged LPA for Property & Finance), rather than people often not considering LPAs until later in life, and that the Health & Wellbeing Board could have a role in this.

He also addressed the Board on the SAB's priority for 2025/26 on preventing financial exploitation of adults with care and support needs, noting that there was a need to raise public awareness of fraud within families and by paid carers. He said that he was keen to get all partner organisations to cooperate on this and work together but that he was having difficulties as Chair of the SAB in engaging with the Community Safety Partnership.

The Board discussed the report and the points made included:

- The learning pages from the Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) were valuable in providing useful information and guidance for partners.

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- There was currently a Dying Well project in Reading, and the issues raised about LPAs for Health & Wellbeing and Property & Finance could also be linked into that project.
- There was a lack of training on and understanding of the MCA within organisations and it would be good to widen that out.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That partners look in their individual organisations at the best way to ask for “next of kin” information, depending on what was actually needed;
- (3) That partners flag up in their organisations the availability of training and information on the MCA on the SAB website and cascade the information as appropriate;
- (4) That Councillor Eden speak to Councillor Gittings and Alice Kunjappy-Clifton about how best to engage locally on encouraging residents to arrange LPAs for both Health & Wellbeing and Property & Finance, well in advance of any crisis;
- (5) That Councillor Eden speak to Councillor colleagues about Community Safety Partnership engagement with the SAB around raising awareness of financial exploitation of adults with care and support needs.

11. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Matt Pearce submitted a report presenting the Director of Public Health’s Annual Report for 2025, on “Setting the Foundations for Lifelong Health”, which was attached at Appendix 1.

The Annual Report set out the health of infants and parents in Reading and the challenges they faced, alongside the work and achievements made in giving children the best opportunities for good health, both now and in the future. The report provided an overview of the health and wellbeing status of parents and children during infancy (0-5 years), highlighting areas where Reading benchmarked well, and areas that needed attention. The report set out several recommendations for the Health and Wellbeing Board and partner agencies to consider, outlining how public health and the wider system could improve the health and wellbeing of Reading infants and reduce health inequalities. The high-level recommendations were based on evidence of what worked to reduce health inequalities:

- 1 Invest in parent support programmes
- 2 Increase uptake of healthy start vouchers
- 3 Ensure the successful implementation of family hubs
- 4 Improve oral health
- 5 Empower families to plan for pregnancy
- 6 Improve vaccination uptake
- 7 Adopt a whole system approach to trauma-informed practice
- 8 Become a ‘child-friendly’ Borough
- 9 Develop a health promotion programme for early years settings
- 10 Better data and information sharing across agencies
- 11 Have a high-performing Healthy Child Programme

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The report stated that the recommendations would need to be delivered through a whole-system approach, with a focus on joint working across organisations.

The report stated that, since work on the Annual Report had commenced, the Government had announced a series of policy measures through their Giving Every Child the Best Start in Life Strategy that would, in part, support the implementation of the recommendations set out in the report.

Matt Pearce said that the One Reading Children and Young People's Partnership would be considering the Annual Report and its recommendations to see what they would mean in practice.

It was noted that members of the Health and Wellbeing Board were holding a private workshop following the public meeting to discuss the Board's future priorities, and this report would provide useful information to feed into that discussion.

It was suggested that information from the Annual Report should be communicated to the wider community, as well as to professionals, including perhaps an easy-read accessible version, availability in other languages, and a video.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That the members of the Board share the DPH Annual Report 2025 within their respective organisations and networks to consider the recommendations contained within it;
- (3) That Matt Pearce look at ways to communicate the information in the DPH Annual Report in a helpful and meaningful way to the wider community.

12. READING'S PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2025-28

Further to Minute 40 of the meeting held on 17 January 2025, Zoe Campbell submitted a report seeking approval from the Health & Wellbeing Board for the Reading Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) 2025-2028, to cover the period from 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2028. The Reading Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028 was appended to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the Health and Wellbeing Board had a statutory responsibility to refresh the PNA and to publish it on the Council's website by 1 October 2025. The purpose of the PNA was to assess the need for pharmaceutical services in the Reading area, to publish a statement of that assessment and to establish whether there were any gaps in provision. The PNA would be used to inform the decision-making process regarding applications for new pharmacies and could also be used to inform commissioning of services that may be provided within pharmacies such as those funded by the NHS and local authorities.

A Consultant, Healthy Dialogues, had been appointed to prepare the PNA, reporting to a local Task and Finish Group of key stakeholders. The process had been overseen by a Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Steering Group. The process had included:

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- A review of the current and future demographics and health needs of the Reading population.
- A survey of Reading patients and the public on their use and expectations of pharmaceutical services and an equality impact assessment.
- An assessment of the commissioned Essential, Advanced, Enhanced and Locally Commissioned services and services delivered by dispensing GPs in Reading.

A consultation draft of the PNA had been published for formal consultation between 14 May and 13 July 2025. Responses to the consultation had been considered by the task group and steering group before final production of the PNA.

The report highlighted the PNA's findings that Reading was well served in relation to the number and location of pharmacies, with good access to necessary and other relevant services, with no gaps in the current and future provision of these services identified. It noted that there were 27 pharmacies, supported by one dispensing appliance contractor and one distance selling pharmacy located within Reading, along with six community pharmacies located in neighbouring authorities within a mile of Reading's border.

Resolved -

That the final Reading Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-2028 be formally approved by the Health & Wellbeing Board.

13. BOB ICB UPDATE BRIEFING

The Board received a briefing note from the BOB Integrated Care Board, as at September 2025.

The report covered the following areas:

- BOB ICB Board meetings
- BOB ICB Transition Programme
- Resident Doctors Industrial Action
- Community Equipment Provider Change
- Winter Vaccines Support
- Reducing Medicines Waste Campaign

Resolved - That the report be noted.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and closed at 2.58 pm)

CHAIR:.....**DATE:** 18/3/26