

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE O&S COMMITTEE

INFORMAL MEETING

1000 hours on Tuesday, 25 January 2022, On-line

Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Mick Brown (Chair)

Councillors: Debbie Clancy, Mohammed Idrees, Ziaul Islam, Rob Pocock and Paul Tilsley

Also Present:

Gary Kerridge, Research Fellow, University of Warwick

Caroline Nevan, Head of Preparation for Adulthood

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

Ceri Saunders, Acting Group O&S Manager

Dr Justin Varney, Director of Public Health

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chairman advised that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's meeting You Tube site (www.youtube.com/channel/UCT2kT7ZRPFCXq6_5dnVnYlw) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Peter Fowler.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. ACTION NOTES/ISSUES ARISING

(See document No. 1)

The Chairman advised that Members cannot confirm the action notes at an informal meeting, the action notes from the previous meetings together with the issues arising from today will be taken to the next formal meeting of the Committee.

5. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

(See document Nos. 2 and 3)

Dr Justin Varney, Director of Public Health attended for this item and provided Members with an update on Covid. He highlighted that the highest case rates were for 10 – 19 year olds, probably because they test more and are unvaccinated, and there is a long way to go with regards to vaccinations. Also, an increase in deaths happen about a month from when there is a rise in Covid cases.

In discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- It seemed counterintuitive that some outer wards have higher cases of Covid, when they have an older vaccinated population living in them. However, this was because the virus is being spread by primary school children, who are unvaccinated and are taking it into the home. Protection from the vaccination wanes over about 10 weeks, so if the adult was vaccinated early on then they are more likely to catch Covid, as it also about when 'you have your jab'.
- It is common to have a natural immune response to the vaccinations, and paracetamols etc., can help with this.
- Omicron is not massively weaker than the Delta variant, but as more people are vaccinated and boosted, they are less likely to need to go into hospital. It is still a deadly virus to those who haven't been vaccinated.
- The vaccination programme is led by the NHS and the Council provides support, such as having Covid champions etc. They know that about 10% of the population will not have a vaccination whatever is said, similar to them not wanting other medications, and they understand the consequences. However, the vast majority that will not be vaccinated have questions that are specific to them. There are a range of initiatives to assist with this, such as GP practices phoning them to answer their questions and the community Q&A sessions.
- Some people with certain medical conditions will need a fourth dose and they will receive a letter from the hospital informing them of this.
- It was felt that we may need a further version of the vaccine to deal with another variant next winter, alongside the flu vaccine.
- Reference was made to the press article about headteachers being given the power to refuse access to children whose families won't get them tested - to protect everyone else.¹ Dr Varney responded that he didn't think he framed it as well as he might have in the meeting, and he was asking the DfE to help schools navigate this. They are supporting schools and school absences in Birmingham is in line with national levels. The DfE are clear that schools have autonomy, and it is not national policy to exclude children from schools if

¹ <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/give-schools-power-ban-untested-22681937>

they are not testing and following the guidelines. However, there is only a very small number of parents not following the guidelines.

- It was really important that people know that having the vaccine doesn't make you invincible, and therefore we need to keep up with using hand sanitiser or hand washing when we come back into our home, have good ventilation, such as opening a window, and wearing masks where there is a high risk of exposure.
- There are direct and indirect impacts of catching Covid, such as long Covid, and reference was made to a study in America, where it may tip some people into having diabetes. Also, some conditions will have deteriorated whilst on NHS waiting lists and to address this the NHS is re-prioritising and opening up private hospitals etc.
- It is national policy that all NHS staff, health and social care workers, and volunteers working in England who have face-to-face contact with service users, will need to provide evidence that they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless they are medically exempt by 1 April 2022. This is similar to what happened with Care Home staff.

Dr Varney also provided Members with an update on the Health and Wellbeing Board. He highlighted that the inequalities review is in its final stages and will be going to the February 2022 Board meeting, and it could then come to Overview and Scrutiny. In addition, they were consulting on the Birmingham Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy: Creating a Bolder, Healthier City.²

In discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- The Integrated Care Systems (ICS) Place Board will be a separate entity, so it is anticipated there will be Health and Wellbeing Board and ICS Place Board, although this may change. Continues to work with ICP (partnership) and ICB which is the Board for the ICS. It was suggested that the Committee might want to invite Anna Hammond, BSol Place Development Director, to a future meeting.
- The annual public health report did look at the first year of Covid and captured the emotional impact of Covid. The next annual public health report is due to go to the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2022, and it can then be shared with Scrutiny. The title of the report is a quote and will be "the year I stopped dancing". It will include information on how we need to position ourselves much more strongly for when the next pandemic hits.

ACTIONS:

- The inequalities review to be shared with Members after it has been to the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting in February 2022.

² <https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/economy/creating-a-bolder-healthier-city/>

- The annual public health report to be shared with Members after it has been to the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2022.
- Anna Hammond, BSol Place Development Director, be invited to a future committee meeting.

6. INTERIM REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD

(See document No 4)

Gary Kerridge, Research Fellow, University of Warwick; Caroline Nevan, Head of Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) were in attendance for this item.

Caroline Nevan introduced the item and Gary Kerridge shared the context of the Exit Study, and the main points included:

- The research has used a case study approach.
- The broad outcomes of the PFA are health, housing, employment, and relationships and are defined by the young people themselves.
- There are challenges as this was a two year proof of concept and sustainability of the PFA should have been looked at earlier. Especially as staff had a two year contract and they may have sought employment elsewhere, taking their knowledge with them.
- It has not been clear what the service does in the context of statutory services.
- How they capture the right information is a challenge.
- Further funding has now been agreed and they may now lose some of the objectives of “shaking things up” as this becomes more mainstream.
- Co-production: The Parent Carer Forum is represented but service users are not included on the decision making forums.
- There is a need to improve communication and marketing of what the PFA does and what the role of the statutory services are, although it is acknowledged this is becoming more aligned.
- There are a lot of opportunities for greater added value, prevention and early intervention. It is really good to see how the PFA could link with the prevention and early intervention strategy, and Caroline Nevan has joined the working group to develop the strategy.
- SEND improvement: Education is not a priority for the PFA but transition into adulthood is, and PFA could take a powerful leading role in SEND improvement.

In discussion, and in response to Members’ questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- The study is being funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) not the Council, and they partnered with Birmingham. They are halfway through the four year research project, and they will be working with

the Council and the Children's Trust. The aim is not to be prescriptive, as this is about generic learning to support innovation more widely.

- Outcomes: the report has been essential as an independent evaluation of the work, and work is ongoing on the findings, for instance the data task group and representation on the Board is in action. They also produce monthly update reports and are aligning services with statutory services.
- How you show innovation is having an impact on young people lives is challenging, as young people transition into adulthood in their own ways and this can happen over a 30 year period and way beyond what you can monitor. Gary Kerridge gave his own lived experience as an example and highlighted that it is very difficult to put timelines, and there has to be an element of faith and belief that it costs less to intervene early, as we are putting in the scaffold for the young people's journey.
- A different kind of leadership is required for innovation and this needs to change, becoming more directive as it develops, with this being constantly assessed and reviewed.
- Birmingham is one of six health studies and it is hoped that at the end of the four year study they will be able to say what works, and they will use the theory of change model used by the DfE.
- The PFA is for 14 years old up to 30 years old as one of the biggest challenges for children in care is that support is given up to the age of 18, unless they have special needs and then it is up to the age of 25.

ACTIONS:

- Chair would like them to report again to a future committee meeting.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document No. 5)

The Chairman advised that all being well the next committee meeting on the 15th February 2022 will be in the BMI, and the following items will be on the agenda:

- Birmingham Sexual Health Services – Umbrella (UHB).
- The tracking report for the Tackling Period Poverty and Raising Period Awareness Inquiry.
- Integrated Care Systems: the role of the Primary Care Networks and the West Birmingham Finance report.

Cllr Rob Pocock requested that the mapped data previously requested regarding the Primary Care Networks is provided.

8. REQUEST(S) FOR ALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

None.

9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

The Chairman advised that as this is an informal meeting the Authority to Act continues from when it was last agreed at a formal meeting.

The meeting ended at 1150 hours.