

London Borough of Islington
Health and Care Scrutiny Committee - Thursday, 29 April 2021

Minutes of the Virtual meeting of the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 29 April 2021 at 7.00 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Gantly (Chair), Chowdhury (Vice-Chair), Clarke, Khondoker and Jeapes

Also Present: **Councillors:** Turan and Lukes

Councillor Osh Gantly in the Chair

245 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM NO. 1)

Councillors Graham, Ismail and Klute

246 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (ITEM NO. 2)

None

247 INTRODUCTIONS (ITEM NO. 3)

The Chair introduced Members and officers to the meeting

248 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM NO. 4)

None

249 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (ITEM NO. 5)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 April 2021 be confirmed and the Chair be authorised to sign them

250 CHAIR'S REPORT (ITEM NO. 6)

The Chair stated that this would be her last meeting as Chair of the Committee, and that she would like to thank the Vice Chair, Councillor Chowdhury, other Members of the Committee, officers and the Executive Members of Health and Social Care, Councillors Turan and Burgess for the help and support she had received, during her 3 previous years as Chair of the Committee

The Chair added that she felt that the Committee had undertaken some excellent work, including the Scrutiny Review on Adult Paid Carers, which would be considered later on in the agenda, and it was important for the Committee to focus on Adult Social Care going forward, in addition to the health work aspects of the Committee

251 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. 7)

The Chair outlined the procedure for Public questions

252 **HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD UPDATE - VERBAL (ITEM NO. 8)**

None

253 **COVID 19 UPDATE (ITEM NO. 9)**

Councillor Sue Lukes, Executive Member Community Safety and Member for Pandemic response was present and accompanied by Jonathan O'Sullivan, Interim Director Public Health and Stephen Taylor and Jon Tomlinson, Adult Social Care

During consideration of the presentation the following main points were made

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- Adult Social Care – work has been underway since mid-December 2020 with local partners, in order to prepare and roll out COVID vaccinations to local residents and care staff. All care home residents have been offered first vaccine, all residents in extra care have been offered first vaccine, all supported living residents offered first vaccine, all residents in commissioned social housing offered first vaccine. Work is taking place to offer second doses to residents in accommodation based settings. Commissioners are continuing to promote vaccinations to front line health and care staff. The Learning Disabilities team is working with local health partners to vaccinate residents with LD in the community, and officers in partnership with local services, to promote access to vaccines for unpaid carers
- Noted that staffing levels have remained generally stable in older people's care homes, mental health and learning disabilities care homes and domiciliary care. Noted that there was an increase in care home residents cases in December/January, but there has been a decrease over mid-February to early April, and four asymptomatic cases were identified recently and these are being monitored. After a period of relative stability from April to November there was an increase in the number of COVID related resident deaths from December 2020 and January 2021, primarily linked to two large outbreaks. No new deaths since start of February
- Public Health - Steady reduction in case rates with around 40 cases per week. Rates are similar to September 2020 levels. No sign at present that the easing of lockdown has led to increased cases
- Testing – rates of symptomatic testing decreased slightly and non – symptomatic LFT in community settings rose significantly in March. Overall community testing rates have reduced over the last 2/3 weeks
- COVID first vaccinations have slowed in the last few weeks in existing cohorts, reflecting the London picture. As of 14 April at least 57000 local people had had their first vaccination, and almost 3000 their second. Vaccinations were having a real time effect in reducing infections and deaths even after the first dose of the vaccine and reduced the risk of transmission
- COVID deaths – 359 deaths mentioned with COVID on death certificate, latest week of data shows no COVID related deaths, and 8 fewer

deaths overall (all causes) compared to the 2015-19 average for the week

- Noted that during the past week Islington had seen the lowest COVID infection rate in London at 10 cases per 100000, hospitalisations were reducing, and there had been no deaths in the borough in the last 4 weeks
- Pop up clinics were being looked at in parts of the borough, however these needed to be linked in with vaccine supply, and work is taking place in this regard. Councillor Lukes stated that these would be targeted at the 6 most deprived wards in the borough initially and Members assistance in engaging the community would be welcomed
- In response to a question it was stated that 80% of Adult Social Care staff had had at least one dose of the vaccination, however this was lower in domiciliary care staff, but this was continuing to increase, and work is taking place with care providers in this regard
- Noted that the Whittington Hospital had been providing other care for patients during the COVID pandemic in relation to other illnesses, and this would continue, and hopefully increase once the pandemic reduces
- In response to a question as to whether the borough were prepared for testing of any variants that may occur, it was stated that a desktop exercise had been carried out to plan for such an eventuality, and how to engage and promote surge testing. At present it appeared that the vaccination gave at least some level of protection against the variants so far identified, and reduces hospitalisations and deaths

The Chair thanked Councillor Lukes and officers for attending

254 PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 3 (ITEM NO. 10)

Councillor Nurullah Turan, Executive Member Health and Social Care was present and was accompanied by Jonathan O’Sullivan, Interim Director of Public Health and Stephen Taylor, Interim Director of Adult Social Care

During consideration of the reports the following main points were made –

- Adult Social Care – noted that many of the Performance indicators were not on target, and this was due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Noted that there had been an additional 300 hospital discharges to deal with, and staff had worked extremely hard in order to cope with this increased demand. It was hoped that a more normal pattern of hospital discharge would take place in future
- Health – Similarly targets had been severely impacted by COVID 19, however new methods of working such as routine calls being dealt with by telephone have proved successful, and lessons learnt could be taken forward. Noted that many drug users had been engaged in accessing services, especially rough sleepers who tended to present with more

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complex problems, however alcohol use had risen during lockdown, but smoking and drug use had reduced

RESOLVED:

That the reports be noted, and consideration of an objective for a deep dive review under related corporate performance proposed for Adult Social Care and Health (to take place over a 12 month period) be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee

The Chair thanked Councillor Turan, Stephen Taylor and Jonathan O'Sullivan for attending

255 SCRUTINY REVIEW ADULT PAID CARERS - FINAL REPORT (ITEM NO. 11)

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations and report be agreed and referred to the Executive for consideration

256 WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22 (ITEM NO.)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

257 VOTE OF THANKS (ITEM NO.)

It was moved by Councillor Jeapes and duly seconded and –

RESOLVED;

That a vote of thanks be accorded to the Chair, Councillor Gantly, and the Vice Chair, Councillor Chowdhury for their services rendered during the current municipal year

MEETING CLOSED AT 8.10 p.m.

Chair