

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
Virtual Meeting - Online access at 3.00 pm

24 January 2023

Present virtually: Councillor Stuart Carroll (Chairman), Huw Thomas (Vice Chairman), Kevin McDaniel, Tracy Hendren, Anna Richards, Steve Dunn, Nicholas Durman, Councillor David Coppinger and Councillor Donna Stimson

Also in attendance virtually: Councillor Simon Bond, Councillor Amy Tisi, Alex Streeter de Diego, Dan Devitt, Helen Sargeant and Prince Obike

Officers in attendance virtually: Lin Ferguson and Charlotte Littlemore

Part I

323/15 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Tess Scott, Nicholas Durman was attending the meeting as the Healthwatch representative.

Kevin McDaniel informed the Board that Lynne Lidster had also submitted her apologies, he would be covering the Better Care Fund item.

Dan Devitt said that Tracy Daszkiewicz had sent her apologies for being unable to attend the meeting.

Tracy Hendren and Steve Dunn would be late joining the meeting.

324/15 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman declared a personal interest as he worked for the vaccine company Moderna. He was also part of a suicide prevention charity called Battle of Hope. The Chairman declared these personal interests in the spirit of openness and full transparency.

325/15 Minutes and Actions

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2022 were approved as a true and accurate record.

326/15 Priority Focus - Addressing winter pressures through prevention and supporting self-help

Kevin McDaniel, Executive Director of People at RBWM, introduced the item and explained that each Board meeting was focused on a priority focus from the health and wellbeing strategy. In the build up to Christmas, there had been a significant amount of pressure on the health system and it was important to consider how residents could help themselves to relieve this pressure.

Alex Streeter de Diego, Clinical Lead for the Healthier Together programme, set out how the

programme helped to address pressure on the healthcare system and provided a reliable resource for parents and carers to access self-help. The platform was used by multiple providers, healthcare professionals, parents and carers. The main goal of the programme was to empower parents and carers to feel confident providing self-care for their child. An example was the scarlet fever and strep A outbreak, pages were updated quickly to inform parents and carers and provided information on symptoms, when it should be a concern and help should be sought. Alex Streeter de Diego shared analytics data from the healthier together programme with the Board. From this data, it was clear that a significant number of parents and carers had used the programme in December. The programme could be adapted so that content changed depending on common seasonal issues. Links were also made between the programme and social media, when the strep A outbreak occurred Frimley were able to post a video and other helpful information which was clear and easily accessible to those that needed it. There was also an app for the programme which provided further ease of access for parents and carers to use the service.

The Chairman asked how the mental health element of the healthier together programme worked.

Alex Streeter de Diego explained that the mental health pages contained information on conditions along with a crisis area, which provided crisis line contact details and what parents and carers could do at that point for their child. Signposting was also part of the programme and could be used to gain further help from other organisations and schemes.

Anna Richards, Head of Public Health at RBWM, said it was good to hear that the pages could be changed and adapted quickly depending on changing circumstances. She said it would be good to understand the process behind this and how changes could be made.

Alex Streeter de Diego said that the healthier together team could change the webpages, which was done using clinical evidence.

Huw Thomas, Placed based Clinical Lead at RBWM, congratulated the team for their responsiveness to the strep A outbreak towards the end of last year. The programme had been a vital resource to ensure that consistent information was being shared, it was a well respected platform. Huw Thomas encouraged the promotion of the programme as widely as possible.

Lin Ferguson, Director of Children's Services at Achieving for Children, said that most of the staff in the children's services directorate worked with vulnerable children and their families. Most of the work took place in family hubs and early help hubs. There were a range of services in place to support families, a lot of the work involved signposting to vital services and promoting key messages from public health, for example. 148 children in RBWM had received a Christmas gift via a charity in 2022 and there had been a lot of positive feedback received from families. 241 children had attended holiday activities and food programmes over the Christmas break. There had also been an increase in the number of referrals to the school family employment advisor. These examples highlighted the volume of children and young people that the council had been able to reach over the past couple of months.

Helen Sargeant, Director of Adult Services at Optalis, outlined the home first scheme. This supported individuals to go from hospital back to their usual place of residence, to maximise their potential to live the best life that they could. The scheme was utilised by a community and hospital team who provided comprehensive support for the first couple of weeks after a resident left hospital, which ensured that they received the right level of support going forward. The result was that residents would have better outcomes, tailored towards the residents individual needs. As part of the scheme, there was 370 hours of dedicated carer support, additional resource from physiotherapists, live in care packages, an Age Concern supporting pathway, handyman access and an equipment service. The scheme allowed organisations and teams to work together whilst still retaining their separate identities. Decisions were made at the right time for the individual and it ensured that the correct care

was implemented which was tailored to the individual. Outcomes of the scheme were to reduce hospital delays and reduce the time that individuals remained in hospital. This would lead to an improved patient experience and also a reduction in readmission to hospital. The scheme had just started and was being trialled for the next ten weeks to test the model.

Councillor Coppinger felt that this scheme showed what could be achieved when the NHS and RBWM worked closely together.

Steve Dunn, RBWM Place Convenor at NHS Frimley, said that it was a fantastic piece of work, it had been challenging for Frimley over the Christmas period. The council had supported Wexham Park hospital on discharges, the home first initiative was right for residents and allowed patients to get back to their community as soon as possible. He echoed the comments made by Councillor Coppinger.

Councillor Stimson asked if there was anything put in place to stop patients from deteriorating again, once they had re-entered the community.

Kevin McDaniel said it was important to highlight that services were there when residents needed help with statutory care. All residents could undertake the preventive measures which were provided by health colleagues to help prevent deterioration.

327/15 Suicide Prevention Update

Dan Devitt, Senior Public Health Strategist at Reading Borough Council, informed the Board that there were a few transcription errors in the report which had been circulated as part of the agenda, where Reading Borough Council was referenced instead of RBWM. He shared a trigger warning, if anyone was feeling distressed by the topics being discussed he encouraged anyone affected to reach out to those that they felt comfortable talking to or any of the help line numbers which were available. Suicide was an issue nationwide, with over 100,000 deaths occurring since 2000, of which 200 of these were recorded in RBWM. There was a strong link with those that self-harmed and this highlighted the need to link the preventative measures on both areas. The Berkshire suicide strategy had been refreshed and had been agreed in January 2022. An updated Berkshire suicide prevention strategy was now required to address the upcoming new National Strategy later in 2023 which aligned to a new ten year mental health and wellbeing plan. Suicide affected all communities and deprivation was not always a deciding factor, requiring a balanced approach between universal provision and focused work for vulnerable cohorts. Examples included women who had been impacted by domestic abuse, LGBTQI plus people, and children and young people. The refreshed strategy proposed a new partnership structure and Zero Suicide approach to address the changes and challenges. A consultation on the strategy had been launched in December, this was designed to bring together voices from across the spectrum and ensure a community focused response to suicide prevention. There were a number of engagement events taking place over the coming months to help consolidate the strategy.

Charlotte Littlemore, Public Health Programme Officer at RBWM, provided an overview of what suicide prevention looked like in RBWM. There had been an increase from 2020 to 2022 in the number of completed suicides in RBWM. The public health team had shared the updated strategy with members of the Community Safety Partnership for consultation and comments. A report had also been produced by Network Rail which highlighted actions that could be taken at Maidenhead Station. Once the consultation had been completed, the strategy would be brought back to the partnership for approval. The partnership would then take responsibility for delivering the local actions which were part of the strategy.

The Chairman asked how the council could drive towards the zero suicide aspiration.

Dan Devitt said that all suicides were preventable, anything up to 15 minutes of intervention into someone's life at a time of crisis could prevent a suicide. Suicide was not inevitable and

the aim was to prevent all of them, which was the key message.

The Chairman highlighted that data showed those close to someone who had committed suicide were at an increased risk of a suicide attempt themselves. He asked what was being done in the strategy on this cohort of people.

Dan Devitt said postvention, specialist post suicide support, was now widely available. There were a range of resources which could be accessed to help support this cohort, this included support from Amparo and Papyrus.

Lin Ferguson said it was good to see the profile of suicide prevention being raised. There had been 16 suicides in RBWM in 2022, she asked if these were all adults or if there were any cases involving young people.

Charlotte Littlemore was unable to confirm the details of the data publicly but a deep dive review into the data would be happening. Age characteristics would be considered as part of the review and brought back to partners across the system to implement any learnings.

Councillor Stimson asked if the team would be going to schools and community groups to discuss the signs of suicide and how intervention could play a vital role in preventing suicide.

Dan Devitt highlighted that it would require very careful messaging in the context of promoting public mental health and wellbeing in a non-traumatising or distressing manner. He would be happy to discuss future opportunities with Councillor Stimson and the public health team.

328/15 Covid-19 response to enquiry update

Carolyn Richardson, Service Manager – Joint Emergency Planning Unit, gave an update on the Covid 19 enquiry. This was a national review into the pandemic and would consider the response to the pandemic up until June 2022, with the hope of lessons being learned for future pandemics should they occur. There would be three main modules to the enquiry; resilience and preparedness, core UK decision making and impact on healthcare systems. A number of other modules would also form part of the enquiry, for example on children and young people and vaccine treatment. The Local Government Association would be responding to the enquiry from the perspective of the council, using data which had been sourced from local authorities across the country.

Steve Dunn asked if the RBWM experience of the pandemic had been summarised as part of the enquiry.

Carolyn Richardson said a review had been done at the halfway point of the pandemic, a review had also been undertaken by the Thames Valley Resilience Forum. She could share the feedback from these reviews with the Board.

ACTION – Carolyn Richardson to share any feedback on the experience of RBWM with Members of the Board.

329/15 Better Care Fund

Kevin McDaniel shared an update on the Better Care Fund. The care fund plan for 2022/23 had been approved by NHS England, with the next step being to sign off for the S75 pooled budget agreement. The hospital discharge fund had been added to the Better Care Fund and this money had been committed to supporting the home first scheme, which had been discussed earlier in the meeting. The Better Care Fund totalled £13.6 million, in addition to over £2 million of reserves which had been carried from the previous year. It was projected

that the total fund would be spent over the course of the year.

Steve Dunn said it would be useful to have an idea of what the Better Care Fund was being spent on.

ACTION – Breakdown of the Better Care Fund spend to be shared with Members of the Board.

330/15 Housing Update

Tracy Hendren, Head of Housing, Environmental Health and Trading Standards at RBWM, provided an update. On housing options, demand had been consistently high and was at a similar level to what it had been throughout the pandemic. The team were currently dealing with 586 cases which included households which the team were trying to prevent from coming homeless. On rough sleeping, the council had triggered its severe weather emergency protocol which meant that anyone on the street would have accommodation provided. The protocol would end shortly but the team would be working with all affected to prevent rough sleepers returning to the street. Work was being done with the RBWM Property Company to refurbish John West House, which would enable additional bed spaces and support to be provided moving forward. The number of households in temporary accommodation was relatively stable but was still too high, a current total of 232 households. RBWM had increased payments to those on the homes for Ukraine scheme, from £350 to £500 to recognise the rise in the cost of living. These payments would continue until March 2023 until the government funding started. A disabled facilities grant policy had been drafted, this would go out to consultation before going through the Cabinet process for adoption. The new allocations process was currently being drafted and there would be a couple of changes to the policy.

331/15 Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the Board would take place on Tuesday 4th April 2023 at 3pm.

The meeting, which began at 3.00 pm, ended at 4.35 pm

CHAIR.....

DATE.....