

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Tuesday 4 April 2023

Present virtually: Councillor Stuart Carroll (Chairman), Councillor David Coppinger, Councillor Donna Stimson, Councillor Sayonara Luxton, Kevin McDaniel, Tracy Hendren, Anna Richards, Steve Dunn and Joanna Dixon

Also in attendance virtually: Councillor Maureen Hunt and Councillor Simon Bond

Officers in attendance virtually: Mark Beeley, Lin Ferguson, Jesal Dhokia, Marc Connor, Tom Adley and Tessa Lindfield

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Alex Tilley, Huw Thomas and Tess Scott. Joanna Dixon was attending as substitute for Tess Scott.

The Chairman informed the Board that he would need to join another meeting at 3.30pm, it was proposed that Councillor Coppinger would be Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

The Chairman declared a personal interest as he worked for the vaccine company Moderna. Councillor Carroll declared this personal interest in the spirit of openness and full transparency.

Minutes and Actions

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Steve Dunn, RBWM Place Convenor at NHS Frimley, said that the Home First scheme, which had been discussed at the last meeting, had gone from strength to strength and had made a massive difference to residents. He commended the team on the excellent work which had taken place.

Housing Update

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: Due to a technical issue, the order of agenda items was changed so that the first item considered was the update on Housing.

Tracy Hendren, Head of Housing, Environmental Health and Trading Standards, introduced the item and said that there were currently 640 cases in the homelessness service. This was still significantly higher than pre-Covid levels and high staff turnover had impacted on the resource capacity of the team. RBWM had recently successful bid for an allocation of the Local Authority Housing Fund from the government which would provide additional homes in the borough, the funding was around £3 million. There were currently 222 households in temporary accommodation, of which 120 were being housed outside of the borough. The first draft plans had been prepared for the refurbishment of John West House, this would allow the council to have a fully supported accommodation based pathway for those on the rough sleeper pathway. A report on the project was due to be considered by Cabinet at the end of the month, after which works would begin. A private sector liaison officer had been recruited, who would work on reducing temporary accommodation while also supporting the 95

households that were part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Payments to host families had been increased from £350 to £500, while the government increase had started from 1st April. An appointment had also been made to a Berkshire wide rough sleeper initiative coordinator, which would allow for a joined-up approach across the six authorities. This post had been funded from the government.

The Chairman asked how the team had been communicating the project on John West House.

Tracy Hendren explained that currently the building was used for limited accommodation options without any support. The building would be refurbished to allow for an additional 16 units while there would be room to provide internal and external medical advice, care and support on site.

Priority Focus - Championing Mental Wellbeing and Reducing Social Isolation

Anna Richards, Head of Public Health, introduced the main theme for the meeting. There were four priority areas in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, with the one being considered at the meeting being championing good mental health and reducing social isolation.

Marc Connor, Public Health Intelligence and Strategy Officer, outlined the governance structure for the Berkshire East Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The steering group had been established and met on six weekly intervals. RBWM was no longer compared within the Berkshire East context, comparisons were now made with the least deprived upper tier authorities, for example Surrey and Bracknell Forest. Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) were a standard statistical geography produced by the Office for National Statistics for the reporting of small area statistics. There were 7 domains considered with an average of 1,500 residents, so the areas were small in size and population. RBWM was comprised of 89 LSOAs and sat within the most affluent decile. However, there were areas of deprivation within the borough. The population was growing and becoming older, there had been increase in 6% since the last census. Considering mental health, 0.7% of people living in RBWM were recorded as having a serious mental health issue, this equated to around 1,200 adults. 9% or 15,000 adults had recorded having depression with their GP. The suicide rate in males was higher, both nationally and locally. However, there was comparatively lower emergency admission rates for intentional self-harm. Marc Connor updated the Board with progress on the mental health topic pack. Data was being collated with input from the Integrated Care Board, data would include information on referrals, waiting lists and the number of services users. Work would be done to explore the gaps, duplications and consider the next steps and recommendations which could be made.

Councillor Carroll had to leave the meeting due to another commitment. Mark Beeley, Principal Democratic Services Officer – Overview and Scrutiny, asked for nominations for Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Councillor Stimson proposed that Councillor Coppinger was Chairman for the remainder of the meeting, this was seconded by Kevin McDaniel.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Councillor Coppinger was elected as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

Councillor Coppinger said that he was always surprised that there were areas of deprivation in a fairly affluent borough. He asked if the level of deprivation had got worse or better over time.

Marc Connor said that compared to other areas, there could be improvements but overall the areas of deprivation in the borough remained the same.

Tessa Lindfield said that the gap between deprived and affluent areas was increasing nationally which was a concerning trend. The JSNA had made significant progress, she asked if there were any ideas on how to use the information which had come out of the JSNA.

Kevin McDaniel, Executive Director of Adults Services and Health, felt that there was an opportunity to work with colleagues on mental health, considering what could be done directly and through community outreach.

Anna Richards agreed that it was important that the data was used, as part of the JSNA focus had been on 0-19 age group. This had been used to form the children's and young people strategic partnership plan. She encouraged residents to visit the JSNA website and explore the data for themselves.

Tom Addey, Public Health Registrar, updated the Board on the work which had been taking place to tackle loneliness. Loneliness was damaging for residents health and increased the use of public services. It was estimated to increase an individual's risk of premature mortality by 26%, which was comparable to obesity or smoking. Reducing social isolation and loneliness were key priorities in the RBWM Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Corporate Plan. In the residents survey, 12% of adults said that they were lonely often, always or some of the time. This was approximately 15,000 people. It was important to note that social isolation was an objective measure of the number of contacts that people had, looking at the quantity of relationships. Loneliness was subjective, an unwelcome feeling of lack of loss of companionship. This occurred when there was a mismatch between the quantity and quality of social relationships a person had and those that they desired. There was a stigma associated with feeling lonely which prevented some people from reaching out for support. There was no single solution for tackling the issue but there were a number of programmes which helped to alleviate loneliness.

Jesal Dhokia, Partnerships and Community Service Lead, outlined how the council was working with the community to tackle loneliness. The council was looking to take an asset based community development approach to supporting partners to take leadership and action on loneliness. A working group had been established to bring together statutory, voluntary and community organisations to build on the existing assets in the community and develop solutions for residents. The group had four themes:

- Identifying and engaging with people experiencing loneliness.
- Promoting assets that built social connections and addressing barriers to access.
- Building volunteer networks and community connectors.
- Understanding the role of professionals in tackling loneliness.

The council would support organisations to develop and deliver sustainable solutions to these challenges. Community assets would be mapped and promoted to make it easier for residents to be aware of what was available. A shared understanding would look to be developed on the impact of loneliness and build a culture that encouraged strong social relationships. It was the start of this piece of work which was utilising officer time, along with the support of community and voluntary groups in the community.

Councillor Stimson was responsible for climate and biodiversity but she understood that these targets were not achievable without health and wellbeing. People had a need to belong, she was aware of a government scheme proposal where older people could be paid to work part time for a voluntary organisation.

Councillor Luxton commented on the world cafes, which had been run in each ward across the borough. She suggested that a world café for the whole borough could be considered to bring ideas together.

Jesal Dhokia explained that the world cafes had been run based on the response to the Embedding Community Response project. There would be an event held in the summer celebrating all of the work done with the voluntary sector across the borough.

Kevin McDaniel felt that one of the key impacts of the ward world cafes was that issues were explored that were prominent only in that area and were therefore carefully considered.

Anna Richards commented on professionals understanding social isolation. She asked how professionals in different organisations were talking about and de-stigmatising social isolation to improve wellbeing.

Jesal Dhokia said that a skills based programme in collaboration with partners would be run over the summer. Skills of professionals would be utilised to tackle social isolation.

Tom Addey said that a range of professionals were part of the working group, this helped to make them aware of the huge number of community services available.

Steve Dunn felt that the world cafes had been a big success, feedback had been shared with practices and meetings across the local healthcare system. He referenced the 'Just One Thing' BBC podcast which discussed actionable changes that the public could make in their lives.

Anna Richards added that the podcast allowed people to make small changes that could improve their own health and wellbeing. She suggested that this could be incorporated into the working group with the voluntary sector, to make more people aware.

Better Care Fund Update

Kevin McDaniel explained that the Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan for 2022/23 had been approved by NHS England and the Section 75 agreement had now been signed. The Hospital Discharge Grant was added into the BCF in December 2022. The local authority funding had been fully spent on the Home First model and 14 block beds in a nursing home. Planning for 2023/24 was expected from NHS England, local planning for next had almost been completed. The total BCF for 2022/23 was just over £15 million which included the reserve from last year, it was anticipated that there would no reserve carried forward to next year. One advantage of the BCF allocation had been remote monitoring, as part of the Home First model, which had helped to ensure that residents did not slip back into needing hospital admission.

Steve Dunn commented on a personal experience with the Home First model, where his mum had required hospital treatment after breaking her hip. The support provided would help to make her as independent as she was before her fall, showing the effectiveness of the scheme.

Future Meetings Dates

The Board noted that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 11th July.

Councillor Coppinger announced that as he would not be standing for re-election, this would be his last Health and Wellbeing Board. He thanked all Board Members for their work and support over his time as a Councillor.

Kevin McDaniel said that it had been a pleasure to work with Councillor Coppinger, particularly as Cabinet Member for Adult Services.

Councillor Stimson thanked Councillor Coppinger for everything he had done for health and wellbeing in the borough.

Tessa Lindfield shared that Anna Richards would be moving on from RBWM before the next Board meeting. She thanked Anna for all her work and contributions on behalf of the public health team.

Steve Dunn informed the Board that the upcoming Easter weekend was followed by a four day junior doctor strike. Work had been done with partners to ensure that there was sufficient primary care and pharmacy provision in place throughout this time.

Councillor Luxton asked if there was an update on the Sunningdale Health Hub.

Steve Dunn explained that the team were working the project through with the Department for Health, it was hoped that there would be an update in time for the next meeting of the Board.

The meeting, which began at 3.00 pm, finished at 4.20 pm

Chair.....

Date.....