

HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 23 June 2021

PRESENT – Councillors Bell (Chair), Bartch, Layton, Lee, McEwan, Newall, Tostevin and Wright

APOLOGIES – Councillor Dr. Chou

ABSENT – Councillor Heslop

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Jill Foggin (Communications Officer, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust), Mark Pickering (NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group), Michelle Thompson (Healthwatch Darlington) and Karen Hawkins (Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery of Primary Care)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Penny Spring (Director of Public Health), Ken Ross (Public Health Principal), Abbie Metcalfe (Business Officer Public Health), Mark Harrison (Public Health Consultant) and Hannah Fay (Democratic Officer)

HH1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

RESOLVED – That Councillor Bell be appointed Chair of this Committee for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

HH2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

RESOLVED – That Councillor Bartch be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

HH3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Michelle Thompson, Healthwatch declared an interest as Lay Member for Patient and Public Involvement, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group.

HH4 TO CONSIDER THE TIMES OF MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22 ON THE DATES AGREED IN THE CALENDAR OF MEETINGS BY CABINET AT MINUTE C97/FEB/21

RESOLVED – That the meetings of this Scrutiny Committee be held at 10.00am for the remainder of the 2021/2022 Municipal Year on the dates, as agreed on the calendar of meetings by Cabinet at Minute C97/Feb/21.

HH5 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY HELD ON 14 APRIL 2021

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 14 April 2021.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 14 April

2021 be approved as a correct record.

HH6 COVID-19 RECOVERY

The Public Health Principal gave a presentation updating Members on the Covid-19 situation in Darlington.

Regarding Test 1 – ‘The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully’, Members were advised that a significant number of the population had received their vaccination and in respect of Test 2 – ‘Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated’, it was reported that whilst daily cases were rising due to the Delta variant, the hospital admissions were not rising exponentially, as seen during wave 1; and this indicated that the vaccines were effective in reducing hospitalisations. Members were informed that there had been no recent deaths in Darlington due to Covid.

Regarding Test 3 – ‘Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS’, Members were advised that whilst bed occupancy had increased slightly, this was not to the same extent as seen in December/January 2021.

In respect of Test 4 – ‘Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern’, it was reported that the Delta variant was the prevalent variant; and that this variant was more transmissible than the Kent variant.

Details were provided of step 3 of the Road Map; and reference was made to the longer term impacts of COVID along with the UK Recovery Strategy. Members were reminded of the importance of Hands, Face, Space, self-isolation and uptake of the vaccine.

Discussion ensued in respect of long covid; Members were advised that the Tees Valley Directors of Public Health were drafting a response in respect of long covid, and an update would be provided at a future meeting; and following questions in respect of flu, covid and other diseases, Members were advised that following the lifting of restrictions, there had been a re-emergence of ‘normal’ diseases such as norovirus; and that Public Health would be undertaking work with colleagues to raise awareness of other diseases, as previously the focus had been on Covid.

RESOLVED – That the Public Health Principal be thanked for his update on the Covid-19 situation in Darlington.

HH7 COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME - UPDATE AND SYNOPSIS

The Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery (Primary and Community Care) gave a presentation (previously circulated) updating Members on the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme and in doing so provided information on the key milestones of the vaccination programme.

It was reported that following a request from NHS England/Improvement (NHS/I) in November 2020 for GP practices to make urgent preparations to contribute to a potential

covid-19 vaccination programme, through an Enhanced Service, Primary Care Networks (PCN) were required to designate one site per PCN grouping to receive the vaccine and consumables; and that Feethams House was identified as a designated site for Darlington PCN.

Members were advised that all 80 practices, which equated to 14 PCNs (working as 13 groupings) across the Tees Valley had signed up to the final published Enhanced Service; that the PCN groupings went live in delivering the vaccination programme in waves, with the first PCN groupings going live on 14 December 2020; two pharmacy sites across Tees were approved to deliver vaccinations; and Darlington PCN went live on the week commencing 4 January 2021.

It was reported that four additional pharmacy sites were approved to deliver vaccinations by NHSE/I and went live on 8 March 2021, with one of those being in Darlington at Cockerton Pharmacy; and two mass vaccination centres went live across the Tees Valley, with Darlington Arena going live on 1 March 2021 and Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough on 22 March 2021.

Members were advised that following an update to the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme 2020/21 Enhanced Service Specification, covering phase 2 cohorts 10-12 (ages 18-49) in March 2021, Darlington PCN opted out of vaccinating cohorts 10-12 in light of the availability of the mass vaccination centre in Darlington; and Firthmoor Community Centre Community Pharmacy was proposed as an additional pharmacy site, and went live on 10 June 2021, delivering the Pfizer vaccine.

In relation to vaccination uptake, Members were advised that as at 10 June 2021, 74.0 per cent of the eligible population had received their first dose, 53.4 per cent of the eligible population had received their second dose and it was anticipated that all second doses would be administered by the end of August.

Details were provided of the partnership working of the PCN, in particular the twice weekly stakeholder meetings that were established; the support from the Local Authority and volunteers in the delivery of the vaccination programme; and the work undertaken to provide vaccinations to residents in the community.

Members were advised of the ongoing actions and response, in particular the exit planning, vaccine supply and Phase 3 planning in respect of a booster programme. It was also reported that a National Enhanced Service was in development in relation to the identification of patients with long covid; and that long covid assessment clinics were in place for GP's to refer patients to.

Discussion ensued in respect of the work being undertaken to encourage vaccination uptake; Members were reminded that the vaccination was not mandatory; and that by encouraging the majority to receive the vaccine, that herd immunity could be achieved to protect those that weren't able to or chose not to have the vaccine; and Members requested figures for vaccination uptake in each ward in Darlington.

RESOLVED – That the Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Delivery (Primary and

Community Care) be thanked for her informative and interesting presentation.

HH8 NHS TEES VALLEY CCG FINANCIAL CHALLENGES AND IMPACT ON SERVICES

The Chief Finance Officer, NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) gave a presentation (previously circulated) updating Members on the NHS Tees Valley CCG Financial Challenges and Impact on Services.

It was reported that the CCG operated at three levels, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, Tees Valley Integrated Care Partnership which included Tees Valley CCG, and Tees Valley CCG; that for the Tees Valley, system envelopes were set at Tees Valley Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) level; and the CCG was operating financially across three levels.

Details were provided of the Tees Valley CCG allocations (including relevant system funding that the CCG holds as the lead for the ICP) for the 6 months to 30 September 2021; and the proposed budgets for the same period were outlined.

It was reported that the CCG plan showed a £4.297m deficit for the 6 months to end of September and included delivery of relevant financial targets; that expected QIPP efficiencies were included within the plan for the first half of the year of £2.306m (0.37% of CCG allocations); and details were provided of the overall Tees Valley ICP position and delivery of a £0.4m surplus required to support the wider ICS.

RESOLVED – That the Chief Financial Officer be thanked for his interesting and informative presentation.

HH9 STRIDE AND ACCESS TEAM

The Group Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) updating Members on the mobilisation of the new STRIDE (Support, Treatment, Recovery in Darlington through Empowerment) Service and updating Members on the new ACCESS (Assertive Community Connection and Engagement Support Service) Team.

It was reported that STRIDE, the new substance misuse service provided by We Are With You, became operational on 17 August 2020; the available treatment options were outlined; and details were provided of the service model (also previously circulated).

Reference was made to the impact of the COVID-19 lockdowns on services in terms of engagement with partners and organisations in the Borough; and that the service continued to provide support and treatment to those who needed it throughout both lockdowns.

It was reported that the ACCESS team, which would be established from mid-July, would deliver an intensive programme to improve the experience and outcomes for offenders in Darlington; and that this team had been grant funded for a period of 12 months from additional PHE monies.

Following a question in respect of the location of the service in the town centre, Members

were advised that by operating from the town centre, the service was visible and accessible to residents requiring help and support; enabled residents to get well in their own community; and that the service would operate from various settings within the community and would not be confined to the two sites in the town centre.

Discussion ensued in respect of the funding for the ACCESS Team; and details provided of the delays to certain aspects of the services due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular the quasi residential rehab in Darlington.

RESOLVED – (a) That the update on STRIDE be noted.

(b) That the new ACCESS team be welcomed.

HH10 WORK PROGRAMME

The Group Director of Operations submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the Municipal Year 2021/22 and to consider any additional areas to be included.

Discussion ensued on the current work programme and Members were advised that an update on West Park Hospital would be brought to the next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee. It was also suggested that an item be included on the impact of COVID on mental health.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme be updated to reflect the decisions of this Scrutiny Committee.

HH11 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Members noted that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled for 16 September 2021.

RESOLVED – That Members look forward to receiving an update on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board at a future meeting of Scrutiny Committee.