

## **Health Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 25th June, 2020.**

**Present:-** Councillors A Sandhu (Chair), Ali, Begum, Gahir, Mohammad, Qaseem (from 6.36pm) and Rasib

**Also present under Rule 30:-** Councillor Strutton

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillor Smith and Co-opted Member Colin Pill

### **PART I**

#### **1. Declarations of Interest**

In relation to Agenda Item 6 (Minute No. 6) - Air Quality and Health in Slough - Councillor Gahir declared that he was a Hackney Carriage operator and driver. He took part in the discussion on the item and remained logged in throughout the virtual meeting.

#### **2. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 16th January 2020**

In relation to Minute No. 42 - Adult Social Care Strategy and Budget, Councillor Strutton requested an update on the misuse of the Blue Badge scheme at Council leisure centres. The Director of Adults and Communities agreed to seek further information and provide an update to Councillor Strutton.

#### **Resolved –**

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 be approved as a correct record.
- (b) That the Director of Adults and Communities be requested to provide an update to Councillor Strutton regarding the misuse of the Blue Badge scheme at Council leisure centres.

#### **3. To Ratify the Appointment of the Chair for 2020/21**

**Resolved –** That Councillor A Sandhu be confirmed as the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel for 2020/21.

#### **4. To Ratify the Appointment of the Vice-Chair for 2020/21**

**Resolved –** That Councillor Smith be confirmed as the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel for 2020/21.

#### **5. Member Questions**

None had been received.

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*(Councillor Qaseem joined the meeting)*

### 6. Air Quality and Health in Slough

The Public Health Programme Officer introduced a report regarding the work undertaken by the Public Health and Environmental Quality teams over the past 12 months in relation to air quality in Slough.

Following the conclusion of the presentation, the Chair invited comments and questions from Members.

During the course of the discussion, the following points were raised:

- It was noted that the Council's vehicle fleet was due to be expanded during 2020 to a total of 20, all of which would all be electric. A Member asked how many electric vehicles the Council currently operated and what target had been set to replace the fleet with electric vehicles. It was reported that the Council currently operated five electric vehicles and this would be increasing to 20 over the next few months.
- A Member asked what size of housing development would be required to provide electric vehicle charging points. It was explained that individual residential properties would not be required to provide charging points, but a block of flats would be expected to provide a minimum of 10% provision.
- Referring to section 6.4.3 of the report, it was queried if the Council encouraged staff to park in public car parks or on nearby public highways. It was explained that staff were currently still able to park at Montem Car Park and walk to Observatory House. Council Staff were also able to use Hershel Car Park and there was provision at Hatfield Car Park available for use at a subsidised rate.
- It was noted that a Clean Air Zone Feasibility Study was due to commence imminently, and the total cost of the study would be approximately £100,000. It was asked what the study would entail and how it would be carried out. It was explained that the study would encompass a number of elements, including a transport assessment. It was agreed that additional information regarding the study would be circulated to the Panel.
- It was suggested that the Environmental Strategic Board should seek to engage with the public and voluntary organisations to encourage 'ownership' of the Council's clean air initiatives. It was confirmed that community engagement and co-design would be encouraged and these were vital to the success of the Council's work on air quality, climate change and environmental issues.
- It was asked how data was gathered using the AirTEXT system and how this information was communicated to residents. It was explained that the data was collected through monitoring stations which recorded the prevailing air pollution levels over a 72 hour period and then provided an alert to residents who had signed up to the system. Alerts were provided either via text message, email or telephone. The alerts

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also recommended actions residents should undertake to avoid air pollution.

- It was highlighted that vehicle pollution was a major contributor to air pollution in Slough. It was asked what could be done to reduce vehicle congestion in Slough. In response, it was explained that there were a number of initiatives that could be implemented to mitigate vehicle pollution, including establishing Low Emission Zones, encouraging less use of vehicles and the uptake of alternative modes of transport such as walking and cycling. The public health approach encouraged behavioural change; whilst the implementation of Clean Air Zones and charges for entering these designated areas would deter vehicles from travelling through the borough.
- A Member asked if the Clean Air Day planned to take place on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 would still be going ahead. It was explained that the day had originally been scheduled to take place in June 2020, however due to the Covid-19 pandemic the event had been postponed until October 2020. If the October event was cancelled, a localised Slough Clean Air Day would be arranged.
- In relation to air quality, a Member asked what futures plans there were to improve pollution level in Slough in order to protect the health of residents. It was explained that monitoring was undertaken continually and year-on-year there had been an improvement to the air quality in Slough. Implementation of targeted schemes and strategies would assist improvement; however, the reduction of car use and the greater use of sustainable modes of travel were the most effective ways of improving air quality. One of the programmes within the Low Emissions Strategy was to improve the cycle infrastructure in Slough.
- It was asked if GPs utilised the AirTEXT system. It was explained that AirTEXT had been linked to clinical referral pathways and work was underway with the Clinical Commissioning Group to explore the possibility of automatically signing residents with long-term health conditions up to the AirTEXT alert system. Further work to resolve issues in relation to data sharing needed to be undertaken. Over the next few months the Public Health Team would be working to improve links between AirTEXT and primary health care providers.
- A Member asked when the Urban Tree Challenge Project would commence. It was reported that the project had begun and the Council's web page provided full details in relation to the initiative. A Member requested that details of the number of trees planted in each ward be provided to the Panel.

The Chair then invited Councillor Strutton to address the Panel under Rule 30.

Councillor Strutton expressed disappointment that the Clean Air Zones would not include the M4, A4 and Junction 7. He suggested that the digital displays located at each junction be used to raise awareness of the air quality in Slough. He highlighted that the air quality rating was currently 'moderate' and this was during the lockdown period whilst there were fewer aeroplanes operating. He asked if bus lanes would be used as 'green highways' open for all zero emission vehicles to travel on. He raised concern regarding the level

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of traffic congestion and the movement of large vehicles travelling through Slough.

In response, it was explained that it was not necessary to designate an entire area as a Clean Air Zone; rather the designation of a small section off each junction would deter vehicles travelling through the area. As part of the Clean Air Zone Feasibility Study further work would be undertaken to understand the impact of the proposals on traffic flows and air quality. With regard to air quality monitoring, it was explained that monitoring was carried out across the borough and Annex D of the report set out all of the monitoring locations throughout Slough. In relation to the operation of aeroplanes from Heathrow, it was reported that the Public Health Team had submitted comments relating to health impacts, as part of the Council's response to the consultation on the expansion of the airport.

The Chair thanked the Public Health Programme Officer and the Technical Officer – Air Quality and Noise for the update.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the Public Health Programme Officer and Technical Officer - Air Quality and Noise, be requested to circulate responses to the outstanding queries raised, as detailed above.
- (c) That the Panel endorsed the following objectives set out in the report and agreed that these would be reviewed annually:
  - Promote modal shift at all possible opportunities
  - Protect residents with long term health conditions through AirText
  - Encourage residents to consider the shift away from diesel
  - Establish an 'Environmental Strategic Board' to drive the Council's work on air quality, climate change and environmental issues.

## **7. Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report**

The Director of Adults and Communities introduced a report that presented the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and an overview of the safeguarding activities that had taken place during the period April 2018 to March 2019.

The Safeguarding Partnership Manager was then invited to provide the Panel with a summary of key points within the Annual Report.

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It was explained that during the course of 2018/19 and in anticipation of the new Working Together guidance from the Department for Education, statutory partners in Slough had established the Slough Safeguarding Leaders Group.

The Group had overseen the establishment of the Slough Safeguarding Partnership which combined the responsibilities of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and of the Slough Adult Safeguarding Board into a broader based partnership. The new arrangement recognised that safeguarding concerns spanned both of these service areas, and were best carried out, strategically and operationally, by promoting shared understanding and strategies to manage complex issues.

New quality assurance arrangements had been put in place to monitor performance and the collective impact of all partner agencies. New independent scrutiny arrangements had recently been established, including the appointment of an Independent Chair. The role of Chair would provide independent challenge and scrutiny of the partnership arrangements.

The Director of Adults and Communities then provided a summary of the activities undertaken over the last few months. It was reported that there had been a 17% increase in the number of contacts made from January to June 2019 compared to those made during January to June 2020. There had been a 54% increase in the number of Section 42 enquiries (relating to abuse or neglect of an adult) during the same period. In the first three weeks of June 2020 there had been a significant increase of contacts made; the reasons for this were currently unclear. In addition, there had been a significant increase in the number of safeguarding referrals made. The number of hospital referrals had increased and there had been a small increase in the number of police contacts. There had been a slight decrease in the number of referrals from the ambulance service. Data indicated that there had not been an increase in any particular safeguarding area; rather there had been an overall increase in the number of cases reported.

The Chair then invited comments and questions from Members.

During the course of the discussion, the following points were raised:

- A Member asked how the Independent Chair had been appointed, who they were accountable to and if the post was remunerated. It was explained that the appointment had been made by the Safeguarding Partnership and the post was accountable to SBC's Chief Executive. The Chair was remunerated for their time and the role was jointly funded by the member agencies of the Safeguarding Partnership. It was felt that the appointment of an Independent Chair would result in better outcomes and overall would be most cost effective. The leadership of the Partnership now sat with the statutory bodies rather than an Independent Chair.
- Referring to information provided on page 62 of the report titled 'Objective in 2018/19 Improving Identification of Risk to the Individual and Management of That Risk Referral Rates' it was noted that in

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2014-15, 466 concerns had been received, the number of enquiries raised was 90 and the conversion rate 19%; whereas in 2018-19 significantly more concerns (1486) and enquires (229) had been raised, however this had resulted in a lower conversion rate (15%). Clarification was sought regarding the figures presented. It was explained that in 2014-15 the data had been monitored monthly, whereas this information was now monitored weekly. Measures were now in place to ensure the right referrals were made to the correct agency and continual monitoring was undertaken. It was explained that if the data indicated a high volume of contacts and a low volume of safeguarding it was clear inappropriate referrals were being made. The higher the conversion rate meant that the professionals were making referrals to the correct agency. It was crucial that training and communication with the professional agencies was undertaken to ensure the systems worked as intended.

- In relation to Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, a Member asked under what circumstances applications for deprivation of liberty were refused and what alternative options were available if an application failed to be granted. It was explained that the deprivation of liberty safeguards were put in place to protect people. Deprivation of liberty was a formal legal process that required an application to the Council and approval by a doctor. If not granted, alternative safeguarding options would be suggested.
- Referring to the information provided relating to 'Improving Identification of Risk to the Individual and Management of That Risk' it was noted that the safeguarding data would be cross referenced with information held by the voluntary sector, Thames Valley Police and the Safer Slough Partnership to gain a wider understanding of the scope and types of abuse occurring in Slough. It was asked if this task had been completed. It was reported that the end of year data had not yet been ratified, but it was anticipated that the creation of a multi-agency risk tool would alter the figures. The figures would be ratified by the end of July 2020.

The Chair then invited Councillor Strutton to address the Panel under Rule 30.

Councillor Strutton noted that a web link provided in Appendix A of the report did not work and requested that a functioning link be circulated to Members.

Councillor Strutton asked how many serious case reviews had been undertaken in the last three years and what areas these related to. In view of the increased number of referrals arising from the Covid-19 lockdown, he requested further details regarding the type of abuse being reported. In addition, he asked for information about the number of contacts and enquiries over the last three years from people living in supported housing where abuse had come from new or existing residents.

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The Safeguarding Partnership Manager reported that there had been three adult safeguarding reviews undertaken in the last three years and they had all involved similar themes: self neglect; and inappropriate sharing of information. It was explained that it was currently too soon to provide a summary of the types of safeguarding cases being reported during the lockdown period. It was agreed that information relating to abuse cases in supported housing would be sought and a written response forwarded to the Panel.

The Chair thanked the Director of Adults and Communities and the Safeguarding Partnership Manager for the report.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the Director of Director Adults and Communities be requested to circulate responses to the outstanding questions raised as detailed above.
- (c) That the Safeguarding Partnership Manager be requested to circulate the web link to the Panel.

## **8. Adult Social Care Local Account 2018-19**

The Director of Adults and Communities introduced a report that presented the draft Adult Social Care Local Account 2018-19 for the Panel's information.

The Local Account provided a summary of the activity and work that had taken place in Slough's Adult Social Care services over the period April 2018 to March 2019.

**Resolved –** That the report be noted.

## **9. Health Scrutiny Panel - Work Programme 2020/21**

It was requested that provision of GP surgeries in Slough be included as a topic in the work programme.

### **Resolved –**

- (a) That Members agree to email the Policy Insight Analyst with suggested review topics for inclusion in the work programme.
- (b) That the provision of GP surgeries in Slough be considered as a topic for inclusion in the work programme.

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### **10. Members' Attendance Record 2020/21**

**Resolved** - That the details of the Members' Attendance Record be noted.

### **11. Date of Next Meeting - 8th September 2020**

**Resolved** – That the date of the next meeting was confirmed as 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Chair

(Note: The meeting opened at 6.30pm and closed at 8.12 pm)