

Health Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Tuesday, 8th September, 2020.

Present:- Councillors Smith (Vice-Chair, in the Chair for the meeting), Ali, Begum, Gahir, Mohammad and Qaseem

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillor Dhaliwal

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor A Sandhu and Rasib

PART I

12. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

13. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 25th June 2020

In relation to Minute No. 4 it was noted that the word 'Vice' should be inserted, so that the resolution read as follows - 'That Councillor Smith be confirmed as the **Vice**-Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel for 2020/21'.

Resolved – That, subject to the amendment detailed above, the minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2020 be approved as a correct record.

14. Member Questions

None had been received.

15. Update on Progress of Disability Task and Finish Group

An update on progress to implement the recommendations of the Disability Task and Finish Group was provided to the Panel.

Members had previously received written updates at the meeting held on 20th November 2019. During the meeting concern had been raised that insufficient progress had been made in the desired time frames. Therefore, it had been agreed that the relevant officers would be requested to attend a future meeting in order to provide further details and respond to queries.

The Chair invited officers present to introduce themselves. In attendance were the Service Lead, Major Infrastructure Projects, the Planning Manager and the Licensing Manager. Concern was raised that a representative from Parking, Highways & Network Management had not been available to join the meeting.

(At this point in the meeting Councillor Gahir declared that he was a Hackney Carriage driver. He remained logged in throughout the virtual meeting)

The Licensing Manager experienced some technical difficulties whilst providing his update. Therefore, Members were invited to submit written

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questions to the Senior Democratic Services Officer and responses would be circulated to the Panel. Members were also asked to submit written questions for the Parking, Highways & Network Management Team and these would be forwarded to the relevant officer.

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

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

- Staffing in the Parking Team had recently been reviewed and the recruitment of an additional engineer would be undertaken imminently. An additional officer was needed to address the backlog of parking schemes requiring completion.
- Discussion took place regarding a scheme to restrict pavement car parking. It was explained that initially, the scheme had been rolled out on a ward by ward basis; however this had proved difficult and the scheme had been put on hold. Subsequently, the Parking Team had reconsidered the strategy and was now looking to implement the scheme across the entire Borough rather than on a piecemeal basis.
- Members were invited to email the Parking Team with any queries relating to particular areas of concern within their wards.

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

Councillor Dhaliwal asked if Slough Railway Station was fully Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant. In response, it was explained that the Station was compliant and Langley Station was in the final stages of completing works to comply with the DDA standard.

Councillor Dhaliwal highlighted the frustrations residents had experienced during the introduction of the experimental parking scheme and urged officers not to repeat the same errors.

The Chair thanked officers in attendance for the updates.

Resolved –

- (a) That the updates be noted.
- (b) That Panel Members be requested to submit any additional questions for the Team Leader, Parking or the Licensing Manager to the Senior Democratic Services Officer.

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16. Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Potential Merger

The Executive Place Managing Director introduced a report that set out the intention of NHS East Berkshire, North East Hampshire & Farnham, and Surrey Health Clinical Commissioning Groups to merge on 1st April 2021.

Feedback from Members was sought regarding the proposal. In particular views on the challenges a merger could effect, and any practical matters that needed to be taken into consideration.

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

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

- It was highlighted that Slough's demographic and 'health profile' was not typical of its neighbouring areas. Reassurance was sought that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the services Slough residents received. In addition, it was queried how the 'patient voice' would be considered within an enlarged Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). In response, it was explained that the governance arrangements recognised the importance of 'place' and services would be built around the needs of the Slough community. The allocation of funding from NHS England would remain unchanged and Slough would retain significant control on how resources were utilised. Engagement with residents and co-design of services would be a central focus. The merger would allow expertise from across the three CCGs to be shared and built on to better deliver services to local residents.
- It was highlighted that most residents were unaware of the structures that made up their local health and care services and it was asked how communities had been consulted on the proposed merger plans. It was explained that the proposal had been communicated through the Integrated Care System Communication Team, however it was acknowledged that a more joined up approach with local authorities needed to be developed.

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

Councillor Dhaliwal asked what tangible benefits the proposed merger would deliver. He raised concern regarding the different demographics of the five areas and queried what impact the merger would have on the provision of services for Slough.

In response the Executive Place Managing Director acknowledged the presence of health inequalities across the Frimley Collaborative and explained that the proposed merger would provide greater value for money as duplication would be reduced. There would be opportunities to use resources and assets more efficiently, centralising some

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functions to be more effective and enabling better access to support and expertise.

The Director of Adults and Communities added that the proposed merger would deliver services focused on locality; whilst also providing the benefits of being part of a larger CCG system.

In relation to time frames, it was explained that during September 2020, the Frimley Collaborative Board would be deliberating whether or not to submit an application to merge. Member GPs would be asked to vote on the proposal in mid September and the deadline for applications to be submitted to NHS England was 30th September 2020. The Executive Place Managing Director agreed to provide an update report to the next Panel meeting.

The Chair thanked the Executive Place Managing Director for the report.

Resolved –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That an update report be provided at the next Health Scrutiny Panel meeting.

17. Situation Report - Verbal Update on COVID-19 in Slough

The Director of Adults and Communities provided the Panel with an overview of the situation in Slough during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Presentation slides were circulated to the Panel that provided information relating to the number of Covid-19 cases in Slough and the impact on Adult Social Care, Slough Children's Services Trust and bereavement services.

In concluding the presentation, the Director of Adults and Communities invited comments and questions from the Panel.

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

- The impact of Covid-19 on people's mental health and wellbeing was discussed. It was explained that social workers, hospitals and locality teams had continued to provide mental health support throughout the lockdown period. There had been a slight increase on service demand; however a more significant increase in demand over the coming months' was anticipated. A range of measures were being planned to prepare for the expected increase in approaches.
- The Council had provided funding support to care homes for Personal Protective Equipment and various infection control items.
- It was noted that the Council had been managing an unprecedented crisis. Good contingency plans had been put in place and areas of

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concern had been effectively managed. Lessons learnt would be used to inform the management of any uptick in Covid cases. To control infection rates and avoid a second peak the key message continued to be 'Hands. Face. Space'.

- The testing site at Montem Centre had been successful, and options to establish mobile testing units were being considered.

The Chair thanked the Director of Adults and Communities for the update.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

18. Slough Local Outbreak Management

The Director of Adults and Communities introduced a report that set out how Slough Borough Council was actively managing the Covid-19 outbreak through implementation of the Local Outbreak Management Plan, in collaboration with public health and local partners.

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

- The Council had new powers under The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations 2020 in prescribed circumstances to give directions (to close or restrict) individual premises, events and public outdoor places to curb the incidence and spread of Covid.
- The Council had established the #OneSlough Community Champions network, which had attracted a high number of residents interested in becoming Champions. The Champion role involved sharing factual information and promoting key communications as widely as possible to residents within the community.
- It was noted that home testing kits could be delivered to a resident's door, allowing them to test themselves without leaving the house. Initially, the availability of home testing kits had been limited, but this had now improved.

The Chair on behalf of the Panel thanked all Council staff for the work undertaken throughout the pandemic.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

19. Slough Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) COVID-19 Project Update

The Public Health Programme Manager introduced a report that provided a comprehensive update on the Slough Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Pilot Project.

Evidence showed that the burden of illness and death due to Covid-19 was not shouldered equally across the population. The risk of dying was higher among those in BAME groups, than for those in white ethnic groups. Given

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the demographic of the Borough, Slough residents were at a higher risk of harms and this had been evident in the patterns of illness to date.

The aim of the BAME Project was to strengthen the ability of individuals and communities to work in partnership with the NHS, the local authority, and public health and voluntary sector organisations to protect themselves from the direct and indirect harms of Covid.

The Chair then invited comments and questions from the Panel.

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

- A Member asked if there was any data to demonstrate the impact of poor housing on health and well-being. It was explained that in high density areas such as Farnham Road and Chalvey there was an increased risk of Covid transmission. Large multigenerational households were also at an increased risk of transmitting the virus to family members.
- Concerns were raised in relation to large groups of people gathering, particularly in religious buildings. A Member queried how the Council was monitoring and enforcing the current legislation restricting social gatherings. It was explained that random spot checking was resource intensive; therefore it would be useful to receive information directly from councillors relating to particular locations or venues of concern. Receipt of local intelligence also strengthened the Local Outbreak Planning.
- It was noted that 'word of mouth' was the most effective mechanism of communicating public health messages, particularly when promoted by community leaders. The #OneSlough Community Champions used a network of residents to promote the latest Covid-19 updates and advice within the community.

The Chair thanked the Public Health Programme Manager for the report.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

20. Health Scrutiny Panel - Work Programme 2020/21

The Policy Insight Analyst explained that an update on the provision of GP surgeries in Slough would be provided at a future meeting.

Further to the discussion under Minute No. 16 - it was agreed that an update on the Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group potential merger would be provided at the next meeting.

Resolved – That subject to the amendment detailed above, the Forward Work Programme, as set out in Appendix A of the report be agreed.

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21. Members' Attendance Record

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

22. Date of Next Meeting - 13th October 2020

Resolved – That the date of the next meeting was confirmed as 13th October 2020.

Chair

(Note: The meeting opened at 6.33 pm and closed at 9.50 pm)

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