



HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 14 March 2024 at 2.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG

Present: Councillors D R W White (Chair), O Vickers (Vice-Chair),
N A Dugmore and S Handley
Co-Optee H Knight

Also Present: Councillor K Middleton (Cabinet Member: Healthy, Safer
& Stronger Communities & Partnerships)

In Attendance: L Noakes (Director: Health & Wellbeing, Telford & Wrekin
Council), N Williams (Associate Director: Primary Care,
Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care Board),
H Onions (Public Health & Civil Resilience Service
Delivery Manager, Telford & Wrekin Council), S Hardwick
(Lead Lawyer: Litigation & Regulatory, Telford & Wrekin
Council), P Starkey (Senior Democracy Officer (Scrutiny),
Telford & Wrekin Council) and S Yarnall (Democracy
Officer (Scrutiny) Telford & Wrekin Council)

Apologies: Councillor L Lewis, G L Offland, S Syrda and J Urey
Co-Optees D Saunders and S Fogell

HAC-31 Declarations of Interest

None.

HAC-32 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Members discussed the possibility of having a regular update on hospital discharge figures that was mentioned at the last meeting. Officers informed Members that this will be considered and they would be updated in due course.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

HAC-33 Update from the Health & Wellbeing Board

The Director: Health & Wellbeing provided an update to the Committee on the work of the Health & Wellbeing Board. Members were informed that the next meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Board was scheduled to take place on 21



March 2024. The agenda included the Annual Public Health report which would be circulated to Members at the end of this meeting. Items for the next Health and Wellbeing Board agenda were discussed including an update on the Alcohol and Drugs Strategy.

Following the formal update, Members asked the following question to the Director of Health & Wellbeing and the Consultant in Public Health.

As part of the drugs and alcohol strategy, had there been an increase in funding and if so, what would the impact be on the service?

The strategy was designed to have a larger focus on alcohol and was currently in its third year of funding. The strategy had also focused on the number of people receiving treatment services, improving outcomes for alcohol and drugs treatment and providing better support for those affected by addiction.

Members discussed that residents had raised concerns with accessing the alcohol and drugs support services, particularly, when trying to get in touch with the support services.

The Director of Health & Wellbeing acknowledged the comments made by the Committee and advised that it would be feedback to the commissioners.

Members discussed different pathways for detoxification and the current waiting times for support.

The Consultant in Public Health informed Members that there was a pathway for detoxification in Stoke which the strategy supported and comments would be feedback to the commissioners.

HAC-34 Update from the JHOSC

The Telford Co-Chair of the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) provided an update to the Committee on the latest work of the JHOSC. This update followed the last meeting of the committee that took place on the 27 February 2024. The meeting focused on urgent and emergency care and preparedness for winter pressures across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin which included an update on the progress of Virtual Wards following its implementation in August 2022. Representatives from the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Integrated Care System and Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust were present at that meeting to speak to Members. However, due to limited representation from external partners at the time of the meeting, an additional meeting of the JHOSC had been arranged to take place on 8 April 2024.



HAC-35 Primary Care Recovery Access Plan

Members received an update from the Associate Director of Primary Care, Integrated Care Board Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, on the NHS recovery plan for Primary Care in the Borough. Members were informed that the slides which formed part of the agenda pack were previously presented to the Telford and Wrekin Health and Wellbeing Board and included the latest figures. Members were informed that the focus for the next quarter was on the self-referral service. These services required input from health professionals to ensure that they were appropriate and the first scheme as part of the recovery plan was the pharmacy first scheme. Members were informed that all community pharmacists were signed up to this service. The scheme was currently in its second month of operation, however, figures were not ready to be reported on, but would be shared with the Committee once available.

Another part of the recovery plan was the digitising of the telephony service for GPs. Members were informed that the plan scheduled for 90% of services to be digitally accessible by the end of March 2024. However, due to technological requirements and delays from practices this had extended to be completed by mid-April 2024. Some of the other improvements detailed in the plan was to increase the workforce in primary care to include paramedics and nurse practitioners. The overall plan was said to improve the quality of services in Telford and Wrekin, to allow for more GP appointments to be available and develop improvements for the future of primary care.

Members posed the following questions:-

Did the system in the NHS allow for patient records to be shared across the system providers?

Across the system, professionals were able to see a summary of a patients records. However, this was not the full record and there was work to upgrade this on a national level.

Members discussed the difficulties around getting a dentist appoint with the NHS and some discussed that there had been cases where residents had to pay for a private dentist due to necessity to see a dentist.

The Associate Director of Primary Care discussed the national recovery plan for dentistry and highlighted that the concerns surrounding dentistry was a national concern. It was suggested that an update could be brought to the Committee.

Members discussed that previously that the majority of community pharmacists in the area were to be largely based in Shropshire and that the process of becoming an independent prescriber was a long process. It was



discussed that following the COVID-19 Pandemic there had been a number of changes in the field of pharmacy such as the types of treatments available and the ways that certain medications were prescribed.

Were there facilities under the planning process for s106 monies to be used for development of primary care facilities and to support existing GPs?

Officers informed Members that this would be reported back to the relevant Planning Officers and if further information was available, this would be provided to the Committee.

Members raised their concerns regarding advertisement of NHS schemes, particularly around primary care and the services in pharmacies, and requested further information be presented at a later meeting.

Officers from the ICB advised that information would be shared with the Committee at a later date.

Residents had raised issues with booking an appointment with a GP, why was this the case?

The Associate Director of Primary Care, ICB, advised Members that concerns would be feedback as patients should be able to see a GP when required.

Were the figures in the published report for both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin?

The figures in the published report covered both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin but the figures included within the report presented at the meeting covered Telford.

Members discussed difficulties with using the NHS app to book appointments and suggested if a facility could be made available to book an appointment with a local GP via the app.

Was the ICB looking at best practice across GP practices, both locally and nationally, to see how the system could be improved in Telford and Wrekin?

The recovery plan looked to address differences across practices in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin to determine the best approach. It was noted that individual practices adopted the best model and that the recovery plan was part of a national model of improvement. It was highlighted that there was a Primary Care Network forum for best practice and knowledge sharing across the region.

Were there any national funding initiatives to support practices?



There was additional funding allocated for the recovery plan under the ICB's budget with additional investment funding for practices based on the services provided. This was closely monitored to track the impact the funding would have.

HAC-36 Work Programme Review

The Democracy Officer (Scrutiny) advised Members that the meeting on 25 April 2024 would be the final meeting of the municipal year. An update on Pharmacy First would be included as part of the work programme and Members would be kept informed of any further updates.

HAC-37 Chair's Update

The Chair thanked Officers from both Telford & Wrekin Council and the ICB for attending. The Chair advised Members that there had been some legislative changes to the way in which Health Scrutiny Committees operate nationally and that a briefing would be arranged to update Members on the changes.

The meeting ended at 3.07 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday 25 April 2024