

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE

A meeting of Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee was held on Tuesday 21 May 2024.

Present: Cllr Marc Besford (Chair), Cllr Nathan Gale (Vice-Chair), Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Susan Scott and Cllr Vanessa Sewell.

Officers: Sarah Bowman-Abouna, Carolyn Nice, Rob Papworth (A,H&W); Darren Boyd and Gary Woods (CS).

Also in attendance: Cllr Tony Riordan; Emma Joyeux (North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board); David Jennings, Patrick Scott and Cllr Pauline Beall (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust).

Apologies: Cllr Stefan Barnes.

ASCH/1/24 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

ASCH/2/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

ASCH/3/24 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes from the Committee meeting held on 19 March 2024. Updates were provided on the following items that were on the agenda:

- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) - Quality Account 2023-2024: NTHFT had recently submitted responses to the Committee's requests for additional information – these would be circulated to Members shortly. In related matters, the Trust was yet to forward its draft Quality Account document – this would be shared with the Committee once received (and would assist in the collation of the Committee's third-party statement for inclusion in the Trust's final published document).
- Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations - Care at Home: Further information in relation to Stockton Riverside College Health and Social Care course uptake / capacity was yet to be received – this would be followed up with relevant officers.

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting on 19 March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ASCH/4/24 Scrutiny Review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care

Consideration was given to the draft final report for the Committee's Scrutiny Review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care. Specific attention was drawn to the following:

- Paragraph 1.7 / 5.3 (page 10 / 45): Expanded to reflect comments made at the informal 'summary of evidence' session in April 2024.
- Recommendations (page 12-13 / 48-49): Streamlined and themed as suggested during the informal 'summary of evidence' session in April 2024.

Regarding the proposed recommendations, Members highlighted the following:

- Recommendation 3 (Councillors be supported in helping with these communication messages as leaders in their communities (as well as their role in raising concerns expressed by the community), and encourage positive feedback as well as concerns (to help share and spread learning and best practice)): It was suggested, and subsequently agreed, to amend the start of this recommendation from 'Councillors' to 'Councillors and local MPs'.
- Recommendation 10 (Relevant health stakeholders be proactive in encouraging involvement of patients in practice Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), aim to ensure these are representative of a practice's patient list demographic, and consider fostering links between the Borough's PPGs to assist in identifying / addressing any access issues): The importance of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) listening to PPG views was also emphasised, something which could be potentially factored into the post-review Action Plan.
- In addition, whilst the issue did not feature during the Committee's review, it was suggested that health authorities may wish to consider their links with local Planning Services functions in terms of new housing developments and the potential impact of these in relation to service demand / pressures.

The Committee approved the content of the draft final report (subject to the identified minor addition to recommendation 3) and was informed that the agreed version would be presented to Cabinet in June 2024. The Chair thanked Members and officers for their contributions throughout the review process.

AGREED that the Scrutiny Review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care final report, including the minor addition, be approved for submission to Cabinet.

ASCH/5/24 CQC / PAMMS Inspection Results - Quarterly Summary (Q4 2023-2024)

Consideration was given to the latest quarterly summary regarding Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections for services operating within the Borough (Appendix 1). Four inspection reports were published during this period (January to March 2024 (inclusive)), with attention drawn to the following Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) contracted providers:

Providers rated 'Requires Improvement' overall (1)

- Willow View Care Home had been upgraded from a previous overall rating of 'Inadequate'. Improvements were, however, still required to address breaches in relation to medication management, infection prevention and control, assessing risk, and good governance.

Discussion ensued on the current situation around Willow View Care Home, with Members expressing disappointment that the 'safe' domain had remained 'inadequate'

despite a six-month gap between the previously published CQC report (12 July 2023) and the last inspection (30 January and 8 February 2024), especially given it was a residential dementia service. The Committee once again noted that this was another case where issues relating to medication had surfaced, and also queried the existing occupancy levels within the setting (an overarching summary of capacity and occupancy was subsequently requested). Responding to Member comments, the SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing confirmed that the Council were engaged on a daily basis with Willow View prior to its latest inspection, had met with owners to make clear its expectations of the service, and had spoken with residents and their families. A further CQC inspection was anticipated around July / August 2024.

The remaining three reports were in relation to non-contracted providers. Focused inspections of the home care / supported living services, Moon Rise 24hr Recruitment Ltd and Avalon Teesside Services, saw them both maintain their overall ratings of 'Good'. Finally, a short notice announced focused inspection of maternity services at The James Cook University Hospital (South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) saw the Trust maintain its overall rating of 'Good' despite maternity provision being rated 'Requires Improvement' due to issues involving staffing levels, environment shortfalls, a lack of action following risk assessments, and inconsistencies around governance arrangements.

Focus turned to the section on Provider Assessment and Market Management Solutions (PAMMS) inspections (Appendix 2), of which there were 15 reports published during this period (January to March 2024 (inclusive)):

- One service, Longlast, had retained its overall rating of 'Excellent'.
- Eight inspections had led to services being given an overall rating of 'Good' – Prioritising People's Lives Ltd maintaining their previous overall rating, with Ingleby Care Home, Victoria House Nursing Home, Highfield (Stockton), Churchview Nursing and Residential Home, Real Life Options – 96 Bishopton Road, Allison House, and Real Life Options – 2 Frederick Street all being upgraded from their previous 'Requires Improvement' outcomes.
- Of the remaining six reports, Five Lamps Home Care (Eldon Street) was downgraded to 'Requires Improvement' from a previous overall rating of 'Good', and Partners4Care Limited, Mandale Care Home, Woodside Grange Care Home (Older People's service only), and Cherry Tree Care Centre were still deemed 'Requires Improvement' following a similar overall rating from their previous inspection. Springwood received its first PAMMS inspection in January 2024 and were subsequently rated as 'Requires Improvement' overall.

Whilst welcoming the improved ratings of several services, the Committee drew its attention to less encouraging features of this latest quarterly update. Shortfalls in maintaining a clean environment at Mandale Care Home were considered inexcusable, and Members supported the decision to give the setting a 'major concerns' quality assurance level based on the latest inspection findings. It was subsequently confirmed that the service currently had a 30% vacancy rate, something which can have an impact in terms of income, staffing levels, and estate investment.

Concerns were expressed around issues involving DBS checks at Springwood and a further example of medication-related shortcomings at Woodside Grange Care Home

(Older People's service only). It was reiterated that the SBC Quality Assurance and Compliance (QuAC) Team worked closely with the North of England Care System Support (NECS) Medication Optimisation Team to continually monitor this high-risk element of provision.

The downgrading of Five Lamps Home Care (Eldon Street) was discussed, with Members seeking information on the immediate steps taken following their latest inspection. Assurance was provided by SBC officers around the formulation and monitoring of the post-inspection Action Plan and the monthly in-person visits from the QuAC Team to check on progress. The Committee expressed concern in relation to the length of time since the last CQC report was published about the service (14 July 2021), and also noted that it had previously been used in emergencies for those coming out of the University Hospital of North Tees as part of the 'Discharge to Assess' process – SBC officers stated that Five Lamps' involvement around the latter was currently under review (their current contract due to expire in October 2024) as part of ongoing work regarding Reablement provision.

Members commented that a number of the inspections within this latest quarterly report to the Committee involved services within the Thornaby area which had been subsequently rated 'requires improvement' overall, and asked if the public had access to the PAMMS inspection findings. SBC officers confirmed that information on local providers was available via the 'Capacity Tracker' website (the link could be shared) and that people considering social care support were directed to the CQC as well as advised to visit services at different times of the day (and unannounced) to gain a fair reflection of how a setting operated. SBC could not recommend a provider / service (instead encouraging people to look at a range of offers) and would continue to work with the regulator to address any identified care which fell short of the required standard.

Referencing the Allison House inspection, Members queried whether it was appropriate for the 'Quality of Management' domain to be deemed 'Good' when shortfalls in staffing had been identified. The QuAC Manager stated that staffing was a matter for the provider rather than the manager of an individual service, and noted the continuing recruitment and retention challenges for both manager and staff roles (that said, the North East was in a better place than other parts of the country). The SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing highlighted the ongoing lobbying for fairer social care funding and the first-ever production of a Skills for Care workforce strategy (due to be released in July 2024), and confirmed, in response to a Member question, that local providers did not have to rely on international recruitment. The Committee reinforced the need for authorities to start properly valuing people who worked within the care sector, particularly in relation to pay.

Special mention was given to Longlast for its outstanding inspection results and the amazing group of young people it cared for. It was noted that the more a service appeared to engage with Local Authority initiatives (as Longlast clearly did), the better it seemed to perform.

AGREED that:

- 1) the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Results – Quarterly Summary (Q4 2023-2024) report be noted.

- 2) a summary of overall capacity and current occupancy of the Borough's care homes be provided.

ASCH/6/24 Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations - Day Opportunities for Adults

Consideration was given to the assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Committee's previously completed review of Day Opportunities for Adults. This was the third progress update following the Committee's agreement of the Action Plan in June 2022, with developments in relation to the outstanding agreed actions noted as follows:

- Recommendation 1 (SBC and its relevant partners continue working with people accessing services and their families / carers to understand demand for both traditional building-based day service provision and community-based activities. This should include:):
 - e) Considerations around the potential for assisting with identified transportation needs (e.g. ensuring public / private transport options are accessible and respond to the needs of people who use day opportunities): Examples of Teeswide Dementia Friendly Community Network engagement with local bus companies and the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) were outlined – this included hybrid (face-to-face and virtual) dementia friend sessions for bus drivers and the SBC Community Transport team, the development of a bespoke online dementia friendly session specifically for bus drivers, and TVCA taking the lead on future delivery of 'at-stop information' which included updating the timetable template to ensure users had access to clear and reliable information when travelling by bus, and implementing a consistent posting schedule to ensure they were current.

With reference to the hybrid dementia friend sessions, the Committee asked for details of SBC community bus driver uptake (to be circulated after this meeting).

- f) Changes to the existing budget for SBC in-house and commissioned services: As requested by Members during the previous update in October 2023, a snapshot of the current dashboard involving day opportunities data (Appendix 1) was provided. Since that last update, SBC had looked at the information on cost / activity and feedback from people accessing support – a re-mapping of the available in-house and commissioned services, the nature of each offer, the level of uptake of offer, and the connection with and use of community assets were being considered.

Members welcomed developments in relation to the dashboard and hoped that any future savings which accrued from using this tool could be evidenced.

- Recommendation 3 (SBC Adults and Health and Children's Services directorates reinforce joint-working to identify and support opportunities that are most meaningful to younger people (including a reflection on any updated results from the Disabled Children's Team online survey), and strengthen the dissemination of information about existing services): As requested by Members during the previous update in October 2023, feedback on the November 2023 event was provided, as well as two subsequent events delivered alongside SBC Children's Services on 31 January 2024 and 1 February 2024. A draft Children's and Adults transitions

policy had been produced (engaging the views of young people in the process) – additionally, work with the Stockton Parent Carer Forum had produced a draft ‘information on transitions’ document. This work would now be subsumed by the SBC *Powering Our Future* ‘Transitions’ project.

Officers were praised for the progress around this recommendation, particularly given challenges associated with transition from Children’s to Adult Services which had been highlighted during the Committee’s original review.

- Recommendation 5 (SBC and its relevant health, social care and VCSE partners share and work towards an agreed vision for day opportunities across the Borough through the most appropriate mechanism (existing or new)): Further developments were noted around the Allensway and Community Day Opportunities offers (including improvements to staffing arrangements), identification of more opportunities for collaborative working and better distribution of good practice, the commissioning of a digital social care record system (PCS) to assist both placement and day-to-day management of the SBC in-house offer, and the recommissioning of Ware Street which would fill a need gap in the range of offer available to residents of Stockton-on-Tees and would help long-term planning for individuals with more complex needs. The user engagement forums within SBC day opportunities services had given the Council perspectives on how the services could deliver outcomes in the future, as well as links to other support people felt was important, such as housing.

Evidencing the impact of these developments, officers emphasised that the workforce across day opportunities for people with a learning disability was now less stratified, with a broader set of skills and duties for all roles – this meant personal care and the developmental / enrichment offer was more accessible, with more staff meeting a greater range of needs.

AGREED that:

- 1) the Day Opportunities for Adults progress update be noted, the assessments for progress be confirmed, and the overarching Action Plan approved by the Committee following the original review be signed-off as complete (no further updates required).
- 2) SBC community bus driver uptake of dementia friend sessions be provided.

ASCH/7/24 Regional Health Scrutiny Update

Consideration was given to the latest Regional Health Scrutiny Update report summarising developments regarding the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, and the North East Regional Health Scrutiny Committee. Attention was drawn to the following:

- Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: The last meeting was held on 15 March 2024, with items including both the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) and North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) Quality Accounts, and an update on the recent North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) restructure. Regarding the TEWV and NEAS items, third-party statements on behalf of the Committee would be

collated and shared for comment / approval once the Trusts circulated their draft Quality Account documents.

Following a Committee request, an informal briefing on TEWVs use of physical intervention / restraint (a source of previous Member concern) was arranged and took place on 4 March 2024.

As part of the established rotational arrangements, support of the Committee had now transferred to Hartlepool Borough Council for 2024-2025. The first meeting of the new municipal year was still to be confirmed.

Referencing the note regarding the minutes of the December 2023 meeting in relation to the 'Office for Health Improvement & Disparities – Community Water Fluoridation' agenda item, Members sought clarification on the deadline for the ongoing North East water fluoridation consultation. It was thought that the deadline was mid-June 2024, though confirmation would be sought and relayed.

- Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: No further developments regarding this Joint Committee since the previous update in January 2024. In related matters, the NENC ICB guidance on staying well and assisting services during spring, achievements regarding awareness-raising of chronic pain (an issue considered by the SBC Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee in February 2023), and developments around urgent care services across Tees Valley were highlighted.

AGREED that the Regional Health Scrutiny Update report be noted.

ASCH/8/24 Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust: Governors response to latest CQC outcomes

Following the Committee's request in February 2024 that the TEWV Lead Governor should be invited to a future meeting to respond to the latest Care Quality Commission (CQC) findings on the Trust from a Governor perspective, and further to Cabinet changes made at the subsequent Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Annual Meeting, the TEWV Chair (of both the Board of Directors and Council of Governors), as well as the TEWV Managing Director for Durham, Tees Valley and Forensics, were in attendance to provide a response to the latest CQC inspection of the Trust, progress of the Trust's improvement plan, and the role / accountability of its Governors.

Prior to taking Members through a presentation, the TEWV Chair (in the role for around two years now) reminded the Committee of the Trust's 'Big Conversation', a significant engagement initiative that was undertaken following difficult events at the former West Lane Hospital, Middlesbrough site. The results of this consultation had defined a five-year strategic plan which TEWV was presently half-way through. Whilst not yet the finished article, it was stressed that TEWV was not undertaking a process of ticking boxes, but instead sought to fundamentally change the organisation through involvement with patients and their families / carers.

The results of the latest CQC inspection (published in October 2023) were re-iterated, with TEWV recognising and accepting the description of it being a Trust which required improvement (though it was also noted that the Trust was rated 'good' in both the 'effective' and 'caring' domains). Attention then turned to graphics which

compared TEWVs CQC ratings from December 2021 with the current (October 2023) gradings across its 11 service areas. Whilst progress had been made in general (particularly in improving upon the December 2021 'inadequate' ratings for both wards for people with a learning disability or autism and forensic inpatient or secure wards), TEWV acknowledged that there was too much amber ('requires improvement') within the 'safe' domain and assurance was given that an Action Plan was in place to address this.

Further detail was provided in relation to the last CQC inspection of TEWV, with 'positives' and 'areas for improvement' listed. For the former, recognition of the continued good engagement with stakeholders and partners was highlighted (an important factor given that the mental health agenda did not just sit with the Trust), as was evidence of innovative practice (co-creation initiatives, and embedding of the lived experience voice within governance structures which helped shape the delivery of services). In terms of the latter, identified workforce issues had since been addressed through strengthened oversight of daily deployment of staff and successful international recruitment for doctors / nurses (TEWV was also now in the top 10 mental health Trusts nationally for employee retention), there was a new strategy in place for physical health monitoring, and the serious incident backlog (acknowledged as unacceptable) had been cleared following the introduction of the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF). In summary, the CQC had recognised that significant improvements had been made since 2021, and a lot of further work had been done since the publication of the regulator's report in October 2023.

The Committee began its response to the information provided by highlighting its historic concerns that the Trust's Governors were not doing enough to hold the Non-Executive Directors to account, as well as past assurances provided by the now previous Lead Governor back in February 2022. Members were very much aware of the five-year 'journey of change' (which some would say started in 2019, not two-and-a-half years ago), but the last CQC inspection once again raised numerous concerns, particularly in relation to a lack of learning from deaths, hence the request for a collective view from the TEWV Governors. Ultimately, the positivity which was regularly translated by senior Trust personnel needed to filter into improved results on the ground, especially within the CQCs 'safe' domain.

Members continued to reflect on developments in the aftermath of events at West Lane Hospital and noted that TEWV performance was still declining post-2019 (resulting in the Trust being served a warning notice by the regulator in mid-2021). TEWV had changed its Board and Chair in recent years, yet the CQC still rated it 'requires improvement', and the Committee felt a lingering sense of the Trust waiting for an issue to be highlighted before doing anything about it and, in essence, firefighting one problem before another emerged. Other concerns were outlined, including reported historic criticism that Governors were not listened to, a lack of detail / data provided to back-up claims of improvement, and NHS staff survey results where many measures appeared to fall below the median for benchmarked Trusts. A lot of people relied on TEWVs services, and assurance was needed around the effectiveness of the Governors and their collective ability to hold relevant parties, and themselves, to account.

The TEWV Chair stated that he did not agree with a number of the Member observations made and that the Trust was aiming to be balanced and reflect the positive change that the CQC had found when last inspecting services. No mental health Trust in England had been rated above 'requires improvement' in the last two

years, a situation which may indicate the nature of increasing numbers of people requiring help and greater acuity of those wanting to access it. From a Council of Governors perspective, the group had come a long way and had played its part in improving the offer (e.g. highlighting the number of lost calls in relation to the crisis line).

TEWVs backlog of serious incidents requiring investigation was probed, with Members noting that this continued until it was highlighted by the regulator. The Trust representatives reiterated that this was untenable, and that criticism of the Trust for not getting its act together 18 months-two years ago was valid. Attempts to tackle this in partnership with other NHS colleagues had been made, though challenges around staffing and the demand for mental health support had inhibited progress. However, the fact that the backlog had now been addressed (involving the dedication of a lot of professionals' time) demonstrated the increased 'grip' of the Board.

The Committee expressed deep concern around the state of children's mental health and sought confirmation that services for young people would be prioritised. The TEWV Chair gave assurance that much was already being done to address the mental health needs of children and young people, and that such provision would certainly be central to the organisation's focus of attention. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) was also echoing concerns regarding waiting lists, something which TEWV had already started to reduce following its work on iThrive (model to support children and young people to access mental health services).

Looking ahead to the Trust's next CQC inspection, Members asked what reassurance could be given that those areas requiring improvement would be upgraded to reflect provision that was deemed 'good'. The TEWV Chair stated that no guarantees could be provided since it was the regulator's view that would determine the ratings, but did highlight the increased number of 'good' domains compared to the end of 2021. That said, improving TEWVs 'safe' domain ratings was now a real focus, and the Trust would be happy to provide data to back-up evidence of progress where requested.

Members acknowledged that the TEWV Chair had come into the role during a time when the Trust was grappling with significant legacy issues, and expressed their hope that both he and the Governors were strong enough to hold the Board to account over its performance. Decisions to call TEWV in to address the Committee were not taken lightly, but there was a strong desire to see improvement (in staff satisfaction as well as in the delivery of services).

SBCs recently appointed TEWV Governor (the new Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care) was also in attendance and gave assurance to the Committee that Trust-related information would be shared whenever it could be. Emphasising the need to move on from the previous SBC representative, Members responded by urging the new TEWV Governor to make a positive impact in the role and commended the recent circulation of the Trust's carers newsletter. Clarity was also requested around the origins of the decision to appoint a Cabinet Member as a TEWV Governor and how that should be taken.

Concluding this item, the Committee Chair thanked the TEWV representatives for their attendance / information, and for responding to comments / questions.

AGREED that:

- 1) the information submitted by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) be noted.
- 2) confirmation be provided around the origins of the decision to appoint a Cabinet Member as a TEWV Governor and how that should be taken.

ASCH/9/24 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2024-2025

Chair's Update

The Chair had no further updates.

Work Programme 2024-2025

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme. The next meeting was due to take place on 18 June 2024 where the SBC Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023-2024 (recently considered by Cabinet) would be presented. Also scheduled were two briefings, the first on the Borough's new Care and Health Innovation Zone, and the second on the Council's preparations for the anticipated forthcoming CQC inspection of its social care services.

AGREED that the Chair's Update and Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Work Programme 2024-2025 be noted.