

Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 June 2020 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Victoria Holloway (Chair), Shane Ralph (Vice-Chair), Fraser Massey, Sara Muldowney and Elizabeth Rigby

Kim James, Healthwatch Thurrock Representative

Apologies: Councillor Joycelyn Redsell

In attendance: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Ian Wake, Director of Public Health
Tom Abell, Deputy Chief Executive Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust
Les Billingham, Interim Director of Adult Social Care and Community Development
Andy Brogan, Andy Brogan, Executive Chief Operating Officer, Deputy CEO EPUT
Lynnbritt Gale, Associate Director, Community mental health services Mid and South STP
Anthony McKeever, Interim Joint AO for Mid & South Essex CCGs
Mark Tebbs, Deputy Accountable Officer: Thurrock NHS Clinical Commissioning Group
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

The Chair welcomed Members back to the Health and Wellbeing Overview Scrutiny Committee and stated that although there had not been an Annual General Meeting with Members having the opportunity to move around committees the Chair was personally honoured to be able to continue to chair this committee. The Chair continued to state that the committee was a very important part of health and social care in Thurrock and was happy to have the members who she believed contributed to this strong and productive committee.

The Chair made the following tribute to Ian Evans, the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee co-opted member, who sadly died on the 1 June 2020.

“Before starting the meeting people will notice that sadly we are missing an extremely valuable member of the committee. Sadly Ian Evans was recently diagnosed with an aggressive bladder cancer and sadly passed away surrounded by his family on 1 June 2020.

As Chair of this Committee over the years, Ian has attended and been a passionate advocate for so many issues. I knew he was extremely well respected at work, at the council, by everyone he met really however I didn't know about him outside of this. I asked Neil Woodbridge to let me know a bit more about him and he sent such a lovely response I wanted to share it just in case, like me, you didn't know Ian very well.

Ian worked for Thurrock Coalition for the past ten years, a User-Led organisation, and was an extremely passionate advocate for the disabled residents of Thurrock; he worked closely with many local, regional and national organisations. He delivered training, consultations and events to promote equality, human rights and the Social Model of Disability – raising awareness of people's rights, responsibilities, duties and entitlements and to remove physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers that disable people face, empowering others to have choice and control in their lives and the community.

As an independent member of Thurrock's Health and Wellbeing, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, he looked at all the decisions of the Council that related to his areas of expertise and passed comment or suggested amendments.

He occasionally ran local campaigns for issues dear to his heart – for example he organised the community response to Network rails proposal to close the crossing at Grays. Now still open!

Indeed, from leaving Essex University Ian began his legal career at the United Nations in the Hague, followed by a period working for Refugee Migrants Justice in Bedford, representing refugees with asylum applications and appeals, before joining Thurrock Coalition where he built an unrivalled reputation through hard work and diligence, and was admired and respected by many local professionals and residents alike.

Ian was loved by many and made a memorable impact on everyone he met. He was softly spoken with a dry sense of humour, but nothing was ever too much trouble, he was generous with his time and would assist anyone if he possibly could. He proudly promoted equality and independence and worked hard to ensure the local community had a voice; he was a very proud and dignified man, who hated asking for help as he valued his own independence and having control in his own life too.

Ian showed empathy and compassion to everyone. He loved his music, especially jazz music and often went to concerts and the occasional festival; his passion was to play the drums having obtained his first set as a young boy (not good when owning a VW Scirocco as it's a struggle to get a full drum kit inside). He was an enthusiastic member of a local band and would look forward to their practice sessions and jamming with friends.

Although Ian will be sorely missed by his family, friends, work colleagues and many Thurrock residents, his legacy to us all will be the confidence and belief he instilled in the local community - that everyone is equal and valued and their voice should be heard and respected when shaping the Thurrock Community for the future.

He bore the diagnosis with dignity and courage, as was the nature of this remarkable young man, and he will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

The family have chosen a local charity called 'Temple Springs' - Based in the old post-office in Grays. They teach young people how to play music. Amazingly, they set a crowdfunded target of £500 and as of this morning it had achieved £8,700!

A family funeral will take place soon, but a memorial event is planned once lockdown is eased to celebrate Ian's life and achievements and to allow everyone to pay their respects and remember him in their own way with fondness. Details of the event will be shared in the local media in due course.

Our thoughts are with Ian's family."

51. Minutes

Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 5 March 2020 were approved as a correct record.

52. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed to receive an urgent item of business in regards to the Cabinet announcement made on the 17 June 2020 that there would be a £1.5 million reserve for social care. The Chair stated this was the first time that she had heard this mentioned and asked for an update.

Councillor Halden stated an announcement had been made by Cabinet on the 17 June 2020 for an extra £1.5 million into a reserve for social care. This reserve would be designated for exceptional use and needs of social care services. Councillor Halden stated an important message for anyone who are concerned for themselves or concerned about others they should come to the Council for help. In the current situation, the Council social care services were fully operational and still functioning. That additional work was being carried out to ensure the safety of residents in this time and services would be maintained.

The Chair stated that in the last 20 plus years there had been a hugely underfunded social care service and it was known that there was going to a greater demand on services. The Chair questioned how this money could be fed into that and questioned how the Council would deal with the competition of Thurrock's neighbouring boroughs who were paying more to their care workers. Councillor Halden stated that the money put into the reserve was a one hit pot for those services identified by Officers for social care needs of Thurrock residents. Councillor Halden agreed that there needed to be important conversations on the funding of long term social care and gave assurances and commitments to Members that nothing would be proposed until reports had gone through scrutiny. Councillor Halden then extended an invite to the Chair to attend the economic vulnerability task force that had been set up to which the Chair accepted.

53. Declarations of Interests

No interests were declared.

54. Healthwatch

Healthwatch had no matters to raise.

The Chair welcomed Anthony McKeever, the interim Accountable Officer for Mid and South Essex to the meeting and thanked him for his time this evening and asked that he introduced himself and provide members with an update on the work undertaken since he started his role and on the merger of the five Mid and South Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups into one regional Clinical Commissioning Group.

Anthony McKeever stated that he was the interim accountable officer for the five Clinical Commissioning Groups which included Thurrock and was leading the work on the integrated care partnership across the Mid and South Essex and started in this post in March 2020. His first five days was meeting 500 new colleagues and had the opportunity to have a handover with Mandy Ansell and other colleagues. The next five days he was redeploying those 500 so that they could work remotely and then spent time in an incident room under national arrangements to manage the emergencies, linking with officers through the Essex Reliance Forum and working in partnership when dealing with problems such as those with COVID-19.

Councillor Muldowney asked for an update on the mismanagement of funds taken from Thurrock's Clinical Commissioning Group to bail out Peterborough and Cambridge Clinical Commissioning Groups. Councillor Muldowney questioned referred to the services required by Thurrock residents that had been delayed because of this and asked for assurances that the money would now be repaid and this would not happen again. Anthony McKeever agreed to provide a specific update in writing to Members and agreed to pursue the handling of the repayment/debt.

The Chair stated that Thurrock's Clinical Commissioning Group had managed their budgets well and had not overspent which the Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group and Members had been very proud of. In this case Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group had supported another Clinical Commissioning Group that had got into difficulties and questioned now that the merger had taken place would this be the case in the future. The Chair had concerns that although Thurrock would continue to manage their budgets, some other Clinical Commissioning Group may not and may continue to take resources away. Mark Tebbs, Director of Commissioning, NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group stated the Chair had expressed her concerns well and stated that all overpayment and business as usual work had stopped so that the NHS could give all their attention to the COVID-19 crisis. Mark Tebbs addressed members concerns that some services would be delayed in particular the Mental Health Crisis Services. Mark Tebbs confirmed that this

service had now gone live during the COVID-19 crisis and there was now a 365 24/7 day mental health service available through 111.

Before moving onto the next item on the agenda, the Chair thanked everyone on the virtual meeting this evening, the NHS, healthcare workers, social care staff, officers and volunteers. The Chair stated that everyone had worked around the clock, day in and day out, working long hours over the last few months had meant that probably not much sleep had been taken. The Chair expressed her thanks and how grateful she was, as was everyone that had worked so hard to keep Thurrock's residents safe and well during this pandemic.

55. Health and Adult Social Care System COVID-19 Response

Ian Wake, Director of Public Health, started this item by presented a PowerPoint to Members on the latest update on COVID-19 in Thurrock. This provided Members with details in regards to epidemic curve of laboratory confirmed number of cases and when these were reported and ICU Bed occupancy; data on the number of deaths; the impact of lockdown on health and wellbeing; the economics of lockdown; the current situations on positive test results and the R Value; exiting lockdown and future policy implications, Test and Trace and the next steps. This PowerPoint can be found from the following link:

<https://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/documents/b17838/COVID-19%20HOSC%20Presentation%2018th-Jun-2020%2019.00%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=9>

Councillor Ralph questioned whether there was a link between the number of excess deaths compared to the number of general practitioner and hospital appointments that had been cancelled. Ian Wake stated he was unable to answer that question in great detail but there had been an unexplained level of non COVID deaths but this would be known more once analysis of the data had been carried out.

Councillor Ralph questioned whether there was the capability to lockdown one particular area. Ian Wake stated he did not have the answer but potentially there could be powers attributed to local authorities to implement local lockdowns/settings but there was no clarity with Government working on decision frameworks at this time with clarity being available shortly. Ian Wake stated that local lockdowns would be difficult to manage for example identifying where a resident worked on the border and monitoring the transport and infrastructure going through that area.

Councillor Muldowney asked for more detail as to why the excess death rate was around +30-40% above what would be expected from the five year average. Ian Wake said he did not have the answer to that question but more readable data was being issued from the Office of National Statistics. The reasons were unclear but could be down to greater prevalence within the

community, underlining health problems, transmission of settings, ethnicity or deprived areas. That a huge amount of work on the data was required to get those answers.

The Chair questioned what would the practicalities be if a school had an outbreak and staff and pupils were told to isolate for example due to the numbers of teachers sharing a staff room. Ian Wake stated that school's protocol would play an important factor and advice would be set out with details of social distancing within settings such as staff rooms. Schools were currently operating in bubbles, with one bubble having 15 children and one teacher and would remain in their own social bubble. If there was to an outbreak that bubble would isolate on its own.

The Chair questioned how effective Test and Trace was when the news was reporting that a quarter of those identified from the 45,000 people told to self-isolate as a result of track and trace but could not be reached. Ian Wake stated this was one tool with a range of things to do to try and slow the spread.

Councillor Massey stated that Ordnance Survey geographical map of COVID-19 death showed a drop in Thurrock compared to the number of deaths in London and questioned whether this could be due to less density and more green space. Ian Wake stated that he would have expected a higher death rate in London due to the population and density but stated until this crisis was over this may change and was still an ongoing risk for Thurrock and caution must be adhered to at this point.

Councillor Ralph referred to the technical problems the Track and Trace App had experienced and questioned why an App that was already available was not used. Ian Wake stated that information had not been shared with Directors of Public Health.

Roger Harris stated the report covered how the local systems had work with the whole of the Mid and South Essex system responding well and how locally Thurrock should be proud with those responses. Under the Thurrock Integrated Care Partnership umbrella the work carried out was the partnership around organisations, the swift response, over £1 million had gone to the residential care home providers, the care homes protocol had been put in place quickly and the step-down facilities put in place. Roger Harris paid tribute to all Thurrock's partners as the system response had been very strong and also the partnership with the Mid and South Essex had been very good and highlighted that the swift response had saved lives in Thurrock.

Members were referred to the Annexes of the Agenda that provided individual summaries of the key elements from partners and trusts across the Health and Social Care System. The Chair thanked all partners for their contribution and update.

Councillor Muldowney stated how proud she was of residents and volunteers of Thurrock who stepped up to help with providing Personal Protective

Equipment to those that needed it. Councillor Muldowney referred to reports of lack of Personal Protective Equipment and asked for assurances that should there be a second wave there was confidence that this would not be an issue going forward.

The Chair referred to a Panorama Programme entitled “Has the Government failed the NHS” which had named Thurrock’s local trust and had reference to lists of items that had been delivered to a number of hospitals and questioned the reasons for there to be a lack of Personal Protective Equipment, what was being carried out to fix it and how sure staff could be assured that there was sufficient Personal Protective Equipment now. Tom Abell thanked all those that had contributed and stated that the Government took control of all supplies of Personal Protective Equipment and organised the distribution which was based on the calculation of need. That this was not an order system, the hospital received a certain amount of products but in some cases there was not sufficient of some items. Tom Abell stated the hospital had been supported by local communities, the hospital had looked at different alternatives such as a suitable substitute for a gown. The hospital also worked with local businesses who had stock available and donations. That there had not been any shortage of Personal Protective Equipment at Basildon but very tight on some days. There was confidence that stock levels were now way in excess and would be best placed if a second wave happened.

The Chair questioned whether this was the same process for care homes. Roger Harris stated they had different arrangements with each provider had their own source of suppliers, MHCLG deliveries and from system and mutual aid which had been organised locally. Roger Harris stated that although it had got very tight no supplies had ran out and supplies were now more regular and more reliable. Roger Harris also stated that the guidelines had changed and had got tighter over the last couple of months as more was known about the pandemic.

Councillor Muldowney asked for reassurance that following the COVID-19 crisis the Mayfield Ward would return from Brentwood hospital into its normal unit in Thurrock hospital and questioned whether the specialist equipment would also be placed. The Chair agreed with Councillor Muldowney’s question and if time had allowed this item would have been brought to the committee for scrutiny. Anthony McKeever stated that all the moves that took place during the COVID-19 crisis were essential and temporary and it would be the intention for services to be re-established back to local level. The Chair thanked Anthony McKeever for his comments and stated that it was important that Thurrock services stayed in Thurrock.

Tania Sitch stated that equipment that was old and no longer required had been disposed of, with other equipment being stored and new equipment purchased. That the move from Thurrock to Brentwood hospital had been a challenge undertaken within a quick timeframe and Brentwood had received compliments on how exceptional the service had been.

At 9.15pm the Chair called Standing Orders.

Councillor Ralph thanked Kristina Jackson and her team for the all hard work undertaken within the community undertaken during the COVID-19 crisis. Councillor Ralph also thanked those involved with the work undertaken within care homes in the borough they had done an amazing job. Councillor Ralph asked for clarification on the number of deaths in care homes during this time compared to other years. Les Billingham stated there had sadly been 35 deaths of people who had been in care homes of which six had died in the care home with the others unfortunately had passed away in hospital. The figure was being recorded this way to help identify whether a second outbreak would occur that could potentially run through care homes. Les Billingham stated that this was how the figures were being recorded across the country. Ian Wake stated there had been an increase of non-COVID-19 deaths in care homes over this period when compared over a five year average. Ian Wake agreed to take the action point away for clarify.

Councillor Ralph stated in regard to mental health what more could have been done in the community as there was now a backlog seeking help and questioned whether lack of early intervention had impacted more cases into hospitals. Andy Brogan stated that there had been a lack of demand but that further down the line this may have an impact on services and had concerns that people were not accessing these services. Mark Tebbs stated that monitoring had identified a drop in IAP services but services such as 1-2-1 or group therapy were up and running and capable but the demand had not been there. That demand had started to pick up again and it was noted that referrals for key workers were now being received and although temporary the aim would be for the services to be accessed as at previous levels.

Councillor Ralph raised his concern that once the restrictions of COVID-19 had lifted the services may not be able to cope with the demand of mental health referrals. The Chair stated that the mental health of residents and NHS staff would need massive support as did domestic violence and sexual abuse victims and questioned the Portfolio Holder for Health how he had intervened to ensure that these services would now have the resources to manage when we come out of lockdown. Councillor Mayes stated that mental health and the fewer number of referrals had been a concern, he reported that a Deep Dive Report on focusing on status of mental health would be undertaken with a recommendation to set up a working partner taskforce to focus on mental health in its own right. Working with partners and the workforce to look at how the service was working and what support could be provided. Councillor Mayes stated that this report would be presented at the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2020 and to also look at the financial implications when the restrictions of lockdown had been lifted to monitor the referrals and need if there were to be another spike.

The Chair stated that funding was essential for domestic violence and sexual abuse and asked for reassurance from the Portfolio Holder for Health that services would have financial support going forward. Councillor Mayes agreed and confirmed that resources and funding would be available. Andy Brogan stated the focus on mental health had raised the profile but the major

challenge could be further down the line. That long term investment and a cost delivery plan with the Clinical Commissioning Group would be put in place. The Chair stated that it was vital that services locally received everything they needed. Mark Tebbs stated that a national bid was in process for domestic violence and sexual abuse and worked had been undertaken with SERICC to get that bid. That the outcome was not known at this time but would continue to chase. Mark Tebbs confirmed that transformation plans were up and running and back on track. The Chair stated that Members would be looking for that reassurance that those services were in place.

Councillor Ralph questioned whether there was funding available for male domestic abuse victims and was the closest shelter in East Ham. The Chair stated that services were available to support both female and male domestic abuse victims. Ian Wake agreed to take the action point away for further clarity.

The Chair questioned how much money had been received from the Government and how much of that money had gone into the social care. Roger Harris stated there had been two tranches of funding from the Government which had not been ring-fenced with the Thurrock allocation being £9 million which had to support businesses, support social adult care and a whole range of services. That £1.5 million had been paid as resilience payments to care homes. That all hospital discharges since the 19 March had been paid for by Health as part of the accelerated discharge programme and would continue at least to the end of July but the long term plan was still unknown. The Council had received significant financial support with around £9 million in cash.

The Chair questioned why the General Practitioner service would cease from Orsett and although the Chair was mindful the hospital would close it had to be right time to move services out at the right time. Tom Abell stated that a change of operations would be undertaken and further details would be known over the next couple of weeks. Mark Tebbs stated that this was a temporary trial to provide a general practitioner service essentially for the winter pressures. Monitoring the Minor Injuries Unit had shown numbers had decreased and a decision had been made to increase the general practitioner presence into the hubs. The hubs would provide weekend and out of hour primary care services.

RESOLVED

That the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted and commented on the contents of this report which sets out the response of the Health, VCS and Adult Social Care systems in relation to the challenges faced during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

56. Progress Update on Major Health and Adult Social Care Projects

Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults Housing and Health, referred Members to the agenda which detailed the current status of the four

Integrated Medical Centres and the work continuing on the 21st century residential care at Whiteacre/Dikes Wood.

Tom Abell, Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust, stated that COVID-19 had significantly shifted the way services operated and could not go back to the way that it was. The COVID-19 pandemic had given them the opportunity to review the services and therefore service models were being prepared with more services being moved to Orsett. The Chair agreed that local services should be kept in Thurrock and that Thurrock residents would want to see this.

Tania Sitch, North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT), and Les Billingham, Assistant Director Adult Social Care, updated Members on the key wider transformation projects as referred to in the agenda that supported the Council's place based support model, provided services within the community and had been tailored towards those needs.

The Chair thanked Officers for the update and requested that an update be provided at a future committee to identify what the Council would change and how it would adopt in doing so.

Councillor Ralph raised his concern on the proposed parking arrangements at the Corringham Integrated Medical Centre due to the close proximity of the school. Councillor Ralph questioned whether the Integrated Medical Centre would be fit for purpose based on the area and the services needed and also questioned why there was a rush to have this facility ready when there was no plans to close Orsett Hospital. Tania Sitch stated that each Integrated Medical Centre would have different services and these would be presented to Members. A Stakeholder Group would be set up to include residents, school, highways and transport to which Councillor Ralph would be more than welcome to attend or to meet Councillor Ralph separately to discuss his concerns. Tom Abell stated that services had come out of Basildon Hospital into Orsett over a number of years and confirmed that Orsett would not close until the four Integrated Medical Centres were open.

Councillor Muldowney highlighted that the Council's Consultation Portal would probably be the main channel of consultation to engage with residents going forward but had received feedback that the consultation portal was not easy to use. Les Billingham thanked Councillor Muldowney for the useful information and would direct to the appropriate team.

Councillor Ralph questioned whether the Orsett Hospital Task and Finish Group should be reinstated. The Chair reminded Members that the decision had been made to incorporate this item back into the scrutiny of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and commented on the report.

57. Work Programme

Members discussed the work programme.

The Chair requested a report to be presented at the 3 September 2020 committee in regards to the Mayfield Ward moving from Thurrock Hospital to Brentwood.

The Chair requested a report to be presented at the 3 September 2020 committee in regards to the COVID-19 Response.

The meeting finished at 10.06 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

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Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**