

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 17th February, 2022 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr S.J. Masterson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Jib Belbase
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Nem Thapa

22. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th December, 2021 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

23. PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

The Committee welcomed Dr Alice Earl and Dr Louise Payne, Clinical Directors for Farnborough and Aldershot respectively, who were in attendance to report on local primary care services, impacts of the pandemic, future working arrangements and how the Primary Care Networks (PCN) and the Council were working together.

Dr Payne, provided an overview on Primary Care Networks and it was noted that a PCN was a group of doctors' practices working together with other healthcare providers and appropriate organisations to deliver integrated services to residents. It was noted that the Aldershot PCN covered 48,000 patients and Farnborough PCN covered 60,000 patients.

In Aldershot, there were four practices involved in the PCN, Princes Gardens Surgery, The Border Practice, The Cambridge Practice and The Wellington Practice. The executive, and leadership and strategic management structure included, the four Practice Managers alongside the Clinical Director (Dr Payne) and a PCN Manager. Below that, additional roles within the structure included medicine management, mental health and wellbeing, care co-ordination, first contact physio and paramedic practitioners. These roles were provided through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) a fund established to support GP practices to address the needs of their patients.

In response to the pandemic, it was noted that the PCNs had had to suspend contracts on some services to ensure patients were supported throughout. However, some services continued to be provided such as general medical services to patients and screening/immunisation services. Collaborative working had played a part in many responses to the pandemic, including the setting up of the vaccination sites in both towns (99,323 vaccines administered to date), working together across Aldershot and Farnborough PCN's on addressing mental health matters resulting in the recruitment of a care co-ordinator funded through pooled resources, working with the Council and other partners with the aim to reduce health inequalities across the Borough and forging and building on relations within the community, in particular with the Nepali community.

Dr Earl reported on the situation in Farnborough and it was noted that, by offering more digital services throughout the pandemic, patient appointments had risen by 20%. In addition, patients had got used to seeing appropriate specialists under the additional roles scheme to address their needs. With the return to business as usual, it was noted that the PCNs would continue to develop on the experiences learnt during the height of the pandemic. However, it was advised that "return to normal" would require an element of catch up, through the management of patients whose care had been affected by the pandemic. Priority cohorts would also be targeted, with a particular drive around those with mental health issues and learning difficulties, hypertension and diabetes, amongst others. The Committee also noted that each of the six practices within the Farnborough PCN had a Mental Health Support Practitioner working within the practice to help support and improve people's mental health. The care co-ordinator helped to guide people to who was best placed to support their needs, freeing up the doctors to treat those with more complex issues.

The Committee discussed the presentation and raised a number of issues. These included:

- Face to face appointments – it was noted that face to face appointments had not stopped during the pandemic. However, they were not freely available to be booked by patients and were issued via a triage system based on need/demand. Currently 60% of appointments were carried out face to face compared to around 80% before the pandemic. Many patients had embraced the virtual/telephone consultations on offer. Moving forward it was noted that the PCN were using and would continue to use internet/phone-based appointment systems to address capacity issues. Nevertheless, it was considered important to offer choice to patients but not allow them to dictate/demand how they would be seen.
- Patient lists/demand – it was noted that demand outweighed the provision across the Borough, but the PCNs were working with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on the building and projected population plans to address the issue and expand as required moving forward.
- Care Homes – it was noted that care homes had suffered during the height of the pandemic and during May 2020 a local GP had stayed over, at a

particular site, on a number of occasions, to address the needs of extremely unwell patients. Once the vaccination programme had commenced in January 2021, admissions to hospital had reduced and outbreaks had become more contained.

- Cancer patients – it was noted that there had been no backlog in cancer care; throughout the pandemic cancer care had always been a priority, with referral through to diagnosis/commencement of treatment generally being achieved within a four week period.
- Young peoples' mental health – It was noted that schools were starting to work jointly with Mental Health Integrated Care Services to address mental health issues within the education setting. In addition, through the additional roles opportunity, the local PCNs were looking to employ mental health practitioners, but it was noted that there was currently a national shortage of qualified practitioners to fill these roles.

From the Council's perspective, Mr Colver advised that health was now a very important part of the Council's work and suggested that, where the Council was adding value, was working with the PCNs and the CCG on the wider determinants impacting on health.

The Chairman thanked Drs Earl and Payne for their presentation.

24. EDUCATION SERVICES IN RUSHMOOR

The Committee welcomed County Councillor (CC) Roz Chadd, Executive Lead Member for Education and Skills, who was in attendance to provide an update on attainment levels in 2021, prospects for 2022, skills issues/gaps and collaboration with district authorities.

CC Chadd, gave an overview of the primary schools in the Borough, of which there were 30, four of which were academies. In relation to the OFSTED ratings, 83% rated as "good" locally compared to 85% nationally and 43% were rated "outstanding" compared to 21% nationally. Four schools "required improvements", one of which was an academy, the three maintained schools were being supported by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and it was hoped that each would achieve a "good" OFSTED rating when next reviewed. It was noted that no schools were rated "inadequate" in the Borough.

With regard to the attainment levels in the primary schools, it was noted that no formal examinations had taken place during the pandemic, however key stages (KS) 1&2 levels were strong in comparison to national data. Across Hampshire, Rushmoor had outperformed all districts with the exception of Hart and Winchester at KS1&2 in 2019.

With regard to the secondary schools, it was noted that there were three secondaries and one all through school. Fernhill was currently receiving support as the last OFSTED rating had been "requires improvement". A lot of work had been put in by the school and HCC officers and the school were currently awaiting another

inspection where they hoped to gain a “good” rating. In 2020, Alderwood, the local all through school, had achieved a “good” OFSTED rating alongside Cove and Wavell schools.

The attainment levels in the secondary schools was noted and it was advised that an improvement had been realised between the 2018 and 2019 results. The pass rate of grade 4 or above for English and Maths had been 58% compared to the national average of 63%. Attainment 8, which is used to measure how well children were doing at KS4, was currently at 4.2 compared to a 4.6 national average.

The Committee reviewed the specialist school provision in the Borough, which included Samuel Cody, Henry Tyndale and Rowhill Schools. It was noted that Samuel Cody, which achieved a “good” rating from OFSTED in 2017, was due to expand in September 2022, offering an additional 90 places over a phased three year period. The school supported children with moderate learning disabilities. Henry Tyndale, the specialist school for children aged 2-19 with more complex learning disabilities had 155 pupils and had achieved an “outstanding” OFSTED rating in 2016. The Henry Tyndale early years setting operated out of Cherrywood School under a joint headship with shared knowledge and expertise. Rowhill School was the setting for the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). PRU catered for secondary aged children who had been permanently excluded, were at risk of exclusion, were medically unwell or suffered from high levels of emotional needs. It was advised that referrals could be made from Rushmoor, Hart and East Hampshire. The unit offered intensive short term interventions to help pupils return to mainstream schooling. The most recent OFSTED report in 2018 had considered the school “good”.

The Committee was advised of the mental health support provision in schools. It was noted that mental health issues in young people had increased during the pandemic and, to help address the rising issues, an initiative had been implemented to provide mental health support teams within schools. HCC had been successful in the bidding process for Rushmoor and secured funds to recruit mental health professionals to work within the Borough’s schools although recruitment had been a challenge. It was noted that currently there was a team based in one school in the Borough which supported other schools through engagement with pupils and headteachers. It was also advised that schools could use their funding to engage outside organisations to address mental health issues within their settings through various methods such as plays and workshops.

The Committee discussed the wider impacts of the pandemic and noted that the focus for curriculum catch up within schools was primarily on the transition years (Years 2-3 and 6-7). It was also noted that HCC continued to advise schools to follow Department of Education guidelines on COVID measures, where appropriate.

It was explained that HCC continued to look for additional provision for Special Educational Needs (SEN) settings and it was noted that a consultation was underway for a satellite provision at Park Primary for Henry Tyndale. An autism unit at Pinewood Infants which would follow through to Guillemont Junior School.

The Committee noted what Rushmoor could do to support schools and skills within the Borough. CC Chadd recommended that Rushmoor could join the newly

established Hampshire Regeneration and Growth Partnership, encourage staff and councillors to take up roles as school governors and ensure local businesses engage with the community by offering apprenticeships which could now be supported by the HCC apprenticeship levy.

CC Chadd also gave an overview of Children's Services. It was noted that Children's Services had seen a 15-20% increase in initial contact since the start of the pandemic, this however had not been reflected in the numbers of children moving into care, which had remained static. In response to a query, it was advised that a social worker's workload depended on experience. With regard to Children's Homes it was noted that only one had been closed during the pandemic with a small number of children being moved around to ensure safety. In addition, there was a national push on the recruitment of foster carers which were in short supply across the country.

The Committee discussed the presentation and in response to a query regarding home learning during the pandemic it was indicated that as children from deprived areas had generally been in school during the pandemic it was felt that it had been children from middle income families, who may be time poor, that had suffered more. As teachers understood best what pupils needed most, intervention would be led by them. Further queries regarded children crossing borders to attend school in some areas, it was advised that this was balanced with similar numbers coming into Rushmoor to attend school from adjoining counties. It was explained that SEN schools had no catchment areas and could be attended by pupils from outside the Borough.

The Chairman thanked CC Chadd for her presentation and stated that the Committee would welcome an update following the 2022 examinations on attainment levels in Rushmoor's schools.

25. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee **NOTED** the current Work Plan.

A request was made for a report on performance data for the Property Services team within the Council at a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
