

Local Members' Interest
N/A

## Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee – 6 July 2020

### District and Borough Health Scrutiny Activity

#### Recommendation

1. That the report be received, and consideration be given to any matters arising from the Health Scrutiny activity being undertaken by the Staffordshire District and Borough Councils, as necessary.

#### Report of the Scrutiny and Support Manager

#### Background

2. The Health and Social Care Act 2001 confers on local authorities with social services functions powers to undertake scrutiny of health matters. The County Council currently have responsibility for social services functions but, to manage health scrutiny more effectively, they have agreed with the eight District/Borough Councils in the County to operate joint working arrangements.
3. Each District/Borough Council has a committee dealing with health scrutiny matters that have a specifically local theme. The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee will continue to deal with matters that impact on the whole or large parts of the County.
4. The following is a summary of the health scrutiny activity which has been undertaken at the District/Borough Council level since the previous meeting of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee.

#### Cannock Chase District Council

5. The District Council have no further update to provide. The previous meeting of their Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee was held on 21 November 2019 and the next meeting is scheduled for 21 July 2020.

#### East Staffordshire Borough Council

6. No response received.

#### Lichfield District Council

7. Lichfield District Council's Community Housing and Health (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee last met on 18 March 2020 at which they considered and approved (i) The Authority's Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 and; (ii) Community Safety Delivery Plan.
8. In addition, the District Council have provided the following information on the production of their Health and Wellbeing Strategy, for the Committee's information:-

*"Lichfield District Council produced its first Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWS) in 2018. It included a commitment to work with the County Council on a Health in All Policies (HIAP) approach and set the following 3 priorities to focus our actions and monitoring on over a two-year period to 2020:-*

- (i) Encourage people of all ages to have more active and healthy lifestyles and take control of their own health and wellbeing;*
- (ii) Support older and vulnerable people in our communities to live and age well and;*
- (iii) Improve workplace health, wellbeing and safety.*

*Each priority was accompanied with a set of objectives and a delivery plan of actions, which is currently under review. The actions have completion timescales up to December 2020, and by summer 2019, nearly three quarters had been completed and are now around 80% complete.*

*A review of the official health and wellbeing indicators shows that while there have been some, relatively minor changes, not enough time has elapsed (less than two years) to determine whether the HWS has had any impact; this is because statistical updates are delayed, often by two or more years.*

*Covid-19 has not had a significant impact on the delivery plan itself as most actions had been achieved prior to this. However, it has resulted in significant changes to the way in which council employees work, and the impact on employee wellbeing is still being monitored. Similarly, impacts from Covid-19 will leave long-standing and as yet undetermined health and wellbeing impacts on the community.*

*The strategy is available at <https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/download/224/health-and-wellbeing-strategy>"*

9. The meeting which was to have been held on 16 June 2020 was postponed owing to the Covid-19 Pandemic. However, their next meeting is scheduled for 15 September 2020.

## **Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council**

10. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's Health, Wellbeing and Partnership's Scrutiny Committee met on 2 March 2020 at which they were updated on matters relating to Bradwell Hospital from those Members who had attended a meeting with North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in January 2020.
11. However, the main item of focus was a discussion about how greater use of parks and open spaces can promote physical and mental wellbeing. Members discussed good practice at existing parks including involving volunteers, how schools and young people could become involved, current provision of outdoor gym equipment and funding opportunities for specific initiatives. The Committee agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group to look at the topic and to narrow the focus into a manageable area for scrutiny.
12. A small group of Members is continuing to investigate the impact of initiatives around Domestic Abuse following the introduction of a new service in 2018.
13. The Committee have agreed that future items will include an update on installation of new CCTV cameras that have been part funded by the Business Improvement District (BID) and an update on Purple Flag status which is an initiative being led by the BID.
14. In respect of their meeting on 1 June 2020, the Chairman writes:-

*"The Minutes were agreed with two corrections on apologies.*

*The one item on the agenda was Coronavirus update and recovery plan.*

*The Chief Executive, Martin Hamilton, advised members that the council had been busy with responding to the pandemic and preparing for recovery. He stated that he had been chairing an Incident management team every morning but now moved to two meetings each week.*

*Considerable effort had gone into protecting the vulnerable, homeless and rough sleeping. A helpline had been set up for vulnerable people which was being manned by staff from J2.*

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, Councillor Maxfield stated that the team had worked incredibly hard to ensure that vulnerable residents were being looked after. Cllr Maxfield stated that the council needed to ensure that people were not being overlooked.

Simon McEnergy Director for Commercial Development and Economic Growth, Stated that since lockdown there had been a concerted effort working with partners to help the vulnerable.

The Council's Partnership Manager, Sarah Moore, advised that the Realise Foundation partners and Support Staffordshire had been excellent and they had direct contact with approximately eight and a half thousand vulnerable people straight away.

Cllr Moffat congratulated the officers of the council and its partners for their work through a difficult period stating that the council had 'done itself proud' In addition, the communities of Newcastle should be applauded for their great spirit.

Mrs Moore agreed that communities and town and parish councils had all stepped up.

Cllr Northcott stated that the council need to be clear with communication that volunteers were still needed.

Mrs Moore stated that the council had not seen any noticeable increase in demand for help in relation to domestic abuse which was fairly static at the present time. However preparations were under way for any potential increase.

Cllr Maxfield stated that she wanted everyone to note any noticeable increases in cases and said that it was heartening to know that the council was keeping an eye on this and that all agencies were working together.

Cllr Gardner stated that the static number in cases could either be down to the reduced stress, for example not having to get their children to school on time and other daily stress factors or it could be , more worryingly that people are just not able to reach out in isolation.

Bereavement Services had been extremely busy and the culture and leisure provision had been severely impacted upon. Mr Hamilton stated that there had been changes made in response to the pandemic. To help with social distancing, the number of mourners allowed to attend services had been reduced to ten. At the crematorium, the length of the service had been shortened. These were both uncomfortable messages to communicate to the bereaved. He was proud of the Council's Bereavement service and how families and the bereaved had been awarded respect and dignity at such a difficult time. Councillor Moffat stated that a number of her electorate had lost loved ones and they had praised how well the situation had been conducted with the changes and with live links for example. People were appreciative of the efforts that had been made.

With regard to Housing, homelessness and rough sleeping, the Council's Head of Housing, Regeneration and Assets, Joanne Halliday, advised members that the Council had stopped doing proactive home inspections during lockdown but residents could submit photographs of any disrepair and repairs. Homelessness and housing issues were being looked at via telephone calls, emails or online.

Help for the disabled had been slightly more difficult as many were shielding. However, a lot of work had been done.

Homelessness and rough sleeping had seen an increase and it had been challenging to find accommodation for rough sleepers. The Open Door charity based in Newcastle had opened up a 7 bedroom unit to help rough sleepers and a Rough Sleeper Outreach Worker had now been appointed.

Councillor Maxfield thanked the staff dealing with homelessness and rough sleeping stating that the service had continued to run at full operation.

Councillor Julie Cooper asked if the number of rough sleepers had increased since the Covid 19 outbreak and Mrs Halliday stated that the number had been consistently higher.

Councillor Holland thanked officers for the report and stated that there had been a lot of success in getting people off the streets.

Head of Leisure and Culture Services, Robert Foster, advised members that J2 had closed on 20 March. Reopening of the centre could commence on the 4 July and guidance was being followed to put plans in place for this.

Cllr Holland asked if officers were confident that Covid-secure measures would be ready and also if the return of staff would leave a shortfall elsewhere.

Mr Foster stated that it was anticipated that the centre would reopen on a phased basis with the pool potentially being the last to open. The gym layout would need to be looked at before reopening and this was being done at present.

The Brampton Museum closed on 19 March and staff were currently concentrating on the digitalisation of its collection.

Mr Hamilton advised Members that throughout the lockdown, play areas within parks had been closed off but the parks themselves had remained open.

The Council's Grounds Maintenance staff had initially been moved to help with recycling and waste collection but as lockdown continued the grounds maintenance had to be stepped back up. Birchenwood and Bathpool Parks had both been closed but they had now been reopened.

Mr Hamilton stated that there had been local issues with fly tipping but these had been dealt with.

Whilst the household waste sites had been closed, staff from the sites had been utilised to remove fly tipping. Now that those workable links had been made they could continue to be used.

Cllr Gardner referred to the Borough's green spaces and how important they had been during lockdown and they needed to be invested in.

*The Chair stated that someone had seen three men in a refuse collection vehicle, shoulder to shoulder and if there was any way to reduce that.*

*Mr Hamilton stated that more cabs had been put on to enable two-men teams, where possible; but three -men teams were still in use but used the same vehicle. 12 extra vehicles had been hired to achieve social distancing, but it had not been possible to achieve it across the board. The staff in question had stated that they were happy to work in 3s as long as they were kept together. The vehicles were deep cleaned daily and were not swapped between teams. Mr Bird added that Newcastle was the only authority in Staffordshire who had taken measures within this service area to achieve social distancing. Cllr Gardner stated that the whole process had been handled brilliantly.*

*Cllr Holland echoed Cllr Gardner's comments and stated it would be interesting to learn more in the future about the lessons learned as a result of the changes made to rough sleeping and vulnerability during the pandemic.*

*The report was received and the Cabinet were requested to bring a report to a future meeting of the committee on lessons learned from decisions made.*

*Cllr Ian Wilkes (Chair)*

## **South Staffordshire District Council**

15. South Staffordshire District Council's Wellbeing Select Committee last met on 4 February 2020 at which they received updates on (i) Primary Care Networks from Laura Bird, Commissioning Manager, Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and; (ii) Breast Screening Provision in South Staffordshire.
16. The meeting which was to have taken place on 7 April 2020 at which they were to have considered (i) NHS Long Term Plan and; (ii) Strategic Commissioning/CCG Update was cancelled owing to the Covid-19 Pandemic. However, their next meeting is scheduled for 4 August 2020.

## **Stafford Borough Council**

17. Stafford Borough Council's Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee last met on 3 March 2020 and considered:-
  - **Flooding** – A verbal update on the deadline for applications for a Government funded Grant scheme to support residents affected by flooding.
  - **Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee** – a report back on the previous meeting of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee held on 3 February 2020
  - **Performance Reporting 2019-20** - a detailed analysis of both the performance and financial monitoring of those services within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee for the quarter 3 period ending 31 December 2019. The report also included the performance monitoring report for those services provided by Freedom Leisure covering the same period.
  - **Work Programme** – a report outlining the Committee's Work Programme for meetings up to March 2021.

18. The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on 8 September 2020.

## **Staffordshire Moorlands District Council**

19. No response received.

## **Tamworth Borough Council**

20. No response received.

## **Appendices/Background papers**

Emails from (i) Lichfield District Council (Christine Lewis and Lucy Robinson) 15 June 2020; (ii) Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (Denise French and Ian Wilkes) 4 March and 16 June 2020 respectively; (iii) South Staffordshire District Council (Mark Jenkinson) 17 June 2020; (iv) Stafford Borough Council (Andrew Bailey) 3 March and 15 June 2020.

Telephone call from Cannock Chase District Council (Councillor Maureen Freeman) 15 June 2020.

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