

Scrutiny Review 2021/22: Topic Brief

Scrutiny topic:	Recommendations of the NWADASS report 'The impact of Covid-19 on People with Care and Support Needs, their Families, Carers and Communities'
Officer lead:	Sue Wallace-Bonner, Director of Adult Social Services
Start date:	March 2021
Target PPB meeting:	June 2021

Topic description and scope:

The scrutiny topic will focus on the outcomes from the ***'North West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NWADASS) Elected Member Commission: The impact of Covid-19 on People with Care and Support Needs, their Families, Carers and Communities'***¹ with a view to making recommendations for Halton.

The Elected Member Social Care Commission was established as part of a North West ADASS approach to learning lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, the role of The Commission was to investigate the impact of the pandemic on people and communities in the North West and what lessons could be learnt for further waves of infection and future service design.

The Commission investigated the following question:

"What has been the impact of the pandemic on people who use adult social care services, their families and our communities and what does this tell us about the role our communities should play in supporting people to live independently at home?"

Why this topic was chosen:

The NWADASS Elected Member Commission was established to investigate the impact of Covid-19 on adults aged 18+, their families and communities and what this tells us about the role communities play in supporting people to live independently at home.

The report of the Commission provides a broad account of what was learned through eye-witness accounts from people/organisations and it identifies lessons learned. Recommendations are made for councils that look beyond the pandemic at how the learning can shape future service design.

The Commission's report will be scrutinised in order to consider how Halton will implement the recommendations.

Key outputs and outcomes sought:

The topic group will consider the recommendations set out in the report in order to determine implementation at a local level. The report recommendations for councils are summarised below (the NWADASS report should be consulted for full details):

¹ The full report and additional information regarding the commission can be found on the NWADASS website; <https://www.nwadass.org.uk/elected-member-social-care-commission>

- Councils should say a public ‘thank you’ to adult social care and support services (commissioned and voluntary) and unpaid carers for their hard work and sacrifices during the pandemic and beyond;
- Councils should take active steps to build the capacity of the community and voluntary sector to provide health, care and wellbeing services (the report details six suggestions in relation to this);
- Councils should strengthen the wellbeing support available to informal/unpaid carers (there are three suggestions sitting under this point);
- Councils should seek to substantially increase the use of direct payments, making them quick and easy to obtain, and allowing for much greater flexibility for people in how they can be used;
- Councils should use their place-based leadership role to facilitate communication with and across organisations helping vulnerable and isolated people
- Councils should build upon the new capacity for volunteering in the community (which people have demonstrated during the pandemic) to create stronger preventative and community solutions;
- Councils and other organisations should accept that digital becomes one of the primary mechanisms for service delivery in the future (there are four suggestions sitting under this recommendation);
- Councils can provide more local leadership and should collaborate with care home providers and relatives to design approaches to safe visiting in care homes which allows visiting to take place safely and in line with government guidance and the NWADASS statement on visiting
- Councils should work with providers and people who use services to redesign day services and to shape the market to allow for greater choice, flexibility and accessibility for people.

Following full consideration of the recommendations, an Action Plan will be developed to ensure that they are implemented locally, as appropriate.

Which of Halton’s 5 strategic priorities this topic addresses and the key objectives and improvement targets it will help to achieve:

This topic contributes to the ‘Healthy Halton’ priority within the Council’s Corporate Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan

A Healthy Halton: To improve the health and wellbeing of Halton people so they live longer, healthier and happier lives.

Halton Strategic Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy

A Healthy Halton: To create a healthier community and work to promote wellbeing and a positive experience of life with good health, not simply an absence of disease, and offer opportunities for people to take responsibility for their health with the necessary support available.

Nature of expected/desired PPB input:

Member-led scrutiny review of the NWADASS report, particularly the recommendations made for councils and consideration of how these could be implemented locally.

Preferred mode of operation:

- Desk-top review of the NWADASS report;
- Meetings/discussions with relevant officers from within the council and partner organisations;
- Review of current service provision in areas outlined within the recommendations in order to identify gaps and develop action plan for improvement.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB chair:		Date:	
Officer lead:		Date:	