

Health Policy and Performance Board

Annual Report

April 2020 - March 2021



Well, what can I say about the last year? Except that I don't believe any of us would have thought we would have gone through what we have over the last 12 months.

Like many other sectors of the economy, the Health and Adult Social Care sector has faced unprecedented challenges over the past year because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

As a result of this, like many others, the Board has had to change and adapt to the 'new norm', including new ways of working over the past 12 months in order to continue to effectively discharge its health scrutiny duties.

As a result of the national lockdown in March 2020, we and other Council Policy and Performance Boards had to adjust our work programmes for 2020/21 along with the meetings of the Boards that had been planned and how they were conducted. We were unable to formally meet as a Board at the beginning of the year, however, through the use of technology we were able to reinstate meetings of the Board in August 2020.

The Board's focus of course, over the last year, has been assessing and reviewing the impact that the pandemic has had on Health and Adult Social Care services within the Borough and have received regular update reports on the evolving situation, particularly from colleagues within Public Health. However, this has not meant we have neglected other areas of work and as such have continued to receive and review a huge range of reports, from a range of organisations, to ensure that services continue to be effectively delivered. Areas of work have included review of the National Health reforms and the impact they are going to have locally and the development of the 'Health Hub' with Runcorn Shopping City.

Finally, I would just like to take this opportunity to pass the Board's sincere thanks onto all the dedicated staff and volunteers we have working across the health and social care system in Halton, both from the statutory and non-statutory sector. I have truly been humbled over the last 12 months by the level of dedication shown. Without this level of dedication and the continued hard work of our staff and volunteers, who throughout the pandemic have continued to work in challenging and stressful environments, we certainly would not have been able to continue to deliver quality services and care to the residents of Halton at such a difficult time. Thankyou!!!

Cllr Joan Lowe, Chair

Health Policy and Performance Board Membership and Responsibility

The Board:

Councillor Joan Lowe (Chair)
Councillor Sandra Baker (Vice Chair)
Councillor Mark Dennett
Councillor Lauren Cassidy
Councillor Eddie Dourley
Councillor Pauline Hignett
Councillor June Roberts
Councillor Margaret Ratcliffe
Councillor Pauline Sinnott
Councillor Chris Loftus
Councillor Geoff Zygadlo

During 2020/21, David Wilson was Halton Healthwatch's co-opted representation on the Board and we would like to thank David for his valuable contribution.

The Lead Officer for the Board is Sue Wallace-Bonner, Director of Adult Social Services.

Responsibility:

The primary responsibility of the Board is to focus on the work of the Council and its Partners, in seeking to improve health in the Borough. This is achieved by scrutinising progress against the aims and objectives outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan in relation to the Health priority.

The Board have met five times in 2020/21. Minutes of the meetings can be found on the [Halton Borough Council website](#). It should also be noted that the Board, at each of their meetings, receive and scrutinise the minutes from Halton's Health and Wellbeing Board and monitors work/progress within this area.

This report summarises some of the key pieces of work the Board have been involved in during 2020/21.

GOVERNMENT POLICY- NHS AND SOCIAL CARE REFORM

Care Home Support Plan

On the 14th May 2020, Local Authority Leaders received a letter from Helen Whately MP, Minister of State for Care, in which she asked that all local authorities review or put in place a care home support plan, drawing on local resilience and business continuity plans.

The Board heard from the Director of Adult Social Services how, from the outbreak of the pandemic, extensive work had already been taking place across the health and social care sector in Halton, to ensure our response to the crisis was robust and

effective. In respect to the Care Home sector, this work had already been collated into Halton's overarching Adult Care Home Resilience Plan; this plan was therefore reviewed and updated in light of the letter received.

The Board heard how the plan was being used in conjunction with each Care Home's individual Business Continuity Plan and the overarching Halton Adult Social Care Business Continuity Plan, to ensure that our response to the Pandemic was robust and effective.

NHS111 First

The Board received details of NHS 111 First, which is a National Programme that would be rolled out in all systems by December 2020. The Board heard how this was the point of contact, as well as GP practices, that people went to when experiencing a health issue that was not immediately life threatening. It was noted that Warrington was one of two 'early mover' sites in the North West, which went live with NHS 111 First on 8th September 2020, whilst St Helens would be going live by December 2020, which would then mean the whole of Halton's population would be covered.

Health Reforms

In February 2021, the Board welcomed the Chief Executive and Chair of the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership to discuss the planned national health reforms and the impact that this would have from a national, regional and local level.

Key issues discussed included details that the reforms would allow local authorities to make their own arrangements at a local level and the main forum for this would be Halton's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB), in partnership with other agencies, who would represent the health needs of the local population.

New structures associated with the reforms would come into force from April 2022, so the Board will be following developments closely during the next twelve months.

SERVICES

Intermediate Care Service in Halton

In February 2021, the Board was provided with an update on Halton's Intermediate Care (IC) Services Review and progress towards the development of a new model for Intermediate Care in the Borough.

The Board received a summary of the recommendations/issues in relation to IC services in Halton resulting from the IC review conducted in 2019.

Members were advised that following this an action plan was developed with a system wide oversight group and various work streams commenced, including work on reviewing the IC criteria and associated pathways and a case for change in respect to a future model for the delivery of IC services in Halton. It was noted that this work was paused in March 2020 due to the Coronavirus Pandemic but then in November 2020 work recommenced. An overview of the new IC model was provided, particularly with reference to the benefits of the Urgent Care Single Point of Access and the Community Rapid Response Service.

Homelessness Service

In August, the Board received a report which provided an update on the homelessness service provision and activity during the pandemic. It was reported that on 26 March 2020 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government issued guidance to all local authorities, designed to ensure that everyone known to be rough sleeping, or those deemed to be at imminent risk of rough sleeping, would be offered accommodation. It was highlighted that the new COVID-19 guidance required local authorities to accommodate all clients, regardless of 'priority need' status.

The report provided detail on Halton's response to homelessness during the pandemic and outlined future service development, agency engagement and continued activity towards reducing homelessness within the Borough.

Halton Haven Hospice

NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) provided details to the Board on the changes to the service at the Hospice. The changes included the suspension of the specialist Consultant Palliative Care Led Service and the move to a Nurse Led Service for a period. The Board also noted the work that was taking place to ensure that this change was continuously reviewed and monitored through the contractual governance arrangements, to ensure that it was fit for purpose.

Halton's Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs)

The Board has continued to monitor the development of the Halton's Urgent Care Centres to ensure that they were fully operational and designated as UTC's by the beginning of October 2020.

Members received details on the progress made to date of both UTC's, information on the core set of standards for UTCs, the areas they covered and on the clinical system developments that were in place across the Runcorn and Widnes UTC's.

Members continue to monitor developments and associated performance of these valuable local resources.

Adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Service

The Board received an update on the Adult ADHD Service following the closure of the service by North West Boroughs Community Health NHS Foundation Trust in November 2019. The report provided the background to the service and advised Members that unfortunately the primary option for the future delivery of the service was no longer viable, so a secondary option was being explored with an alternative provider. NHS Halton CCG would continue to keep the Board informed of developments.

'Health Hub' – Runcorn Shopping City

In November 2020, the Board received details on the creation of a 'Health Hub', delivering some outpatient hospital services from Runcorn Shopping City.

It was reported that a partnership between Warrington & Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Halton Borough Council and the Liverpool City Region had developed a plan to utilise unused retail space in Runcorn Shipping City to deliver a number of clinical services. The report outlined the context, the progress made to date

and described the next steps with regard to undertaking a patient, public and staff pre-engagement and consultation exercise to consider the proposal and detail within the plans.

Halton Hospital and Wellbeing Campus

Also in November, the Board considered a report which provided an overview of progress to date of the plans for new hospital developments in Warrington and Halton and sought support from the Board to continue to progress the plans for the Halton Hospital site redevelopment and to ensure the provision of hospital services in a modern fit for purpose estate.

The need for modernisation and reconfiguration on both the Warrington and Halton sites was reiterated. This included the provision of a new hospital for Warrington and the completion of the development of a hospital and wellbeing campus on the Halton site.

The Board would continue to watch these development closely.

Winter Planning

The Board welcomed details of Mid Mersey winter planning arrangements that had been developed to ensure that high quality, safe and timely health and social care services could continue to be provided during the winter period, in addition to being able to continue to effectively respond to the Pandemic.

Safeguarding

Members received information on the significant and sustained impact Covid-19 had had on the care home and domiciliary care sectors, for both residents and staff. It was noted that a Care Home Resilience Group had been established, chaired by the Director for Adult Social Care, which had been overseeing work undertaken by all partners within the Borough in relation to care homes.

Stroke Service

In September 2020, the Board received an update on the status of the realignment of stroke services across the Mid-Mersey health economy. It was noted that previous reports to the Board had outlined that the reconfiguration of stroke services between St Helens and Warrington Hospitals had begun in 2018 and was completed by end of the same year. Details were provided on the pathways and processes of the service since the realignment and the Board welcomed the news that the work was now complete and the pathways etc. were working well and the relationship between the two acute trusts and the community stroke service remained strong.

Transforming Domiciliary Care (TDC)

An update was provided to Members regarding the TDC Programme since it commenced in 2016 which aims to improve the provision and quality of domiciliary care commissioned by Halton Borough Council. A Programme Board was established in 2018 and in 2019 the original programme of work was reviewed and updated following consultation with key stakeholders.

It was noted that the overall purpose of the Programme remained the same i.e. to provide a modern and sustainable domiciliary care service across Halton. Members

were advised that the programme's associated work streams had to be paused due to the pandemic, but would be resumed as soon as possible and work would continue to be progressed.

North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust: COVID-19 Response, Restoration & Recovery of Clinical Services

The Board received details from North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust in respect to the Trust's response to Covid-19 and the subsequent restoration and recovery of clinical services for the local population of Halton.

An overview of the current Trust and local Borough service delivery, patient activity including referral rates, activity levels, waiting list sizes and how and where care was being delivered was presented along with details of the process the Trust had undertaken to restore services in the short, medium and long term.

Population Mental Health (inc. Suicide Prevention) Update

The Board received a report which provided an update regarding population mental health prevention work that had been taking place during the Pandemic, including suicide prevention.

It was reported that mental health population involved an upstream approach targeting the majority of the population to keep people well. It used a whole systems approach to improving mental health and wellbeing and involved working in partnership with both statutory and voluntary organisations. The Health Improvement Team led on this area of work which fell into the following categories:

- Developing the workforce and communities;
- Tackling stigma and increasing awareness of support available;
- Supporting organisations to make positive changes in how they operate; and
- Suicide prevention.

The report provided detailed commentary and data on the work and activity carried out within each of these categories since April 2020.

Complex Spinal Surgery Service

At a special meeting of the Board in March 2021, the Board received a report which provided an update on the status of the realignment of Complex Spinal Surgery services across Cheshire and Merseyside.

In summary, the model of care that has been developed sets out the proposed locations and model for outpatients, non-complex spinal surgery, complex spinal surgery, and emergency spinal surgery. Under the new model, the proposed lead provider will be The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust, who will work in collaboration with Liverpool University Hospitals for the management of the single clinical team and workplans.

The majority of elective surgery would be carried out at the Walton Centre, performed at scale. All complex and non-elective surgery would be performed at the Walton Centre.

Under the new service model there would be no change to the location of outpatient clinics and all outpatient clinics managed by the Walton Centre would continue, with satellite clinics at Whiston, Chester, Southport, Isle of Man and Wirral.

Under the new model it is proposed that there would be no change to the location of the Outpatient (Satellite) clinics (as above) and at present this doesn't include one at Warrington and Halton Hospitals (WHH). However work will continue on assessing whether the demand for a clinic at WHH is warranted. It was agreed that if this changes, then the details will be shared with the Board when the update on progress towards the development of the overarching model is presented back to the Board.

Patient engagement has been conducted at Cheshire and Merseyside level to inform the development of this proposal, but the Board heard that this will now be conducted more locally.

POLICY

Home Assistance Policy 2020-2023 & Home Adaptations for Disabled People Policy & Procedure

The Board were presented with two policy documents, as above, which were both concerned with the Council's provision of housing adaptations to assist disabled people to continue living independently at home when appropriate. One is a public facing document and the other is aimed at staff

Members were advised of some minor changes to practice, to be brought in by these updated Policies and how these changes would align all adaptations with the successful extended warranty approach already in place for stair lifts.

SCRUTINY REVIEWS

At the Board's meeting in February 2020, it was agreed that the scrutiny topic for 2020/21 would focus on the integration of Adult Social Care with GP practices, as part of the One Halton GP Hub development. However, as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic, it was decided that scrutiny reviews, across all Policy and Performance Boards would not take place this year.

PERFORMANCE

The Health Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring and scrutinising the performance of the Council in delivering outcomes against its key health priorities. Therefore, in line with the Council's performance framework, during the year the Board has been provided with thematic reports which have included information on progress against key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health.

The Board also received reports through the year on key issues with respect to the quality of Care Homes and Domiciliary Care provision in the Borough.

INFORMATION BRIEFING

During 2020/21, the Board continued to receive an Information Briefing Bulletin in advance of each of the Board meetings.

The Information Briefing is a way of trying to manage the size of the agendas of the Board meetings better. Including information on topics which were previously presented to Board as reports only for the Board's information now into the Information Briefing bulletin allows the Board to focus more on areas where decisions etc. are needed.

Example of areas that have been included in the Information Briefing over the last 12 months have included:-

- Healthwatch Halton Annual Report 2019/20
- Halton's Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2015-2020 - Update on Implementation
- HBC's Adult Social Care COVID-19 Winter Plan 2020/21
- Halton Adult Social Care Workforce Development Strategy 2021-2023
- Adult Social Care Annual Report 2019/2020
- Age UK – Mid Mersey : Annual Report & Accounts 2019-20

WORK TOPICS FOR 2021/22:

A North West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (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 sets out a number of recommendations for councils that look beyond the pandemic at how the learning can shape future service design.

As such, at the Board's meeting in February 2021, it was agreed that the 2021/22 work topic would focus on the local implementation of the recommendations from this NWADASS Elected Member Commission report, '*The impact of Covid-19 on People with Care and Support Needs, their Families, Carers and Communities*'.

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