

REPORT TO: Health Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 27th June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director, Adults

PORTFOLIO: Adult Social Care

SUBJECT: Councillor Care Home Visits Guidance

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To present to PPB the recently revised document – ‘Councillor Visits to Care Homes: Guidance for Elected Members’.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) the Board notes the contents of the report; and**
- 2) the Board endorses the guidance attached.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Revised guidance has been developed to support elected members to undertake visits to local care homes. Previous guidance dating back to 2016 was used as the basis for the revised document but the approach now focusses more on the engagement and relationship building role of Councillors and less on an inspection type approach (that is suitably covered via other processes).

3.2 It is recognised that Councillors will wish to engage in conversations with care home residents just as they do with their constituents who do not reside in care homes. This guidance aims to support and facilitate the important role that Councillors have in developing relationships with, and advocating on behalf (as appropriate), care home residents and their families.

3.3 The guidance document covers the following subject areas:

- Visiting principles to follow before, during and after the visit.
- Areas for consideration during the visit.
- Dos and Don'ts
- Information on how to access the e-learning platform that Councillors may find useful to access before undertaking a visit (for example, training on topics such as safeguarding, and dementia may be beneficial).

3.4 The guidance also contains information about safeguarding procedures; Councillors are advised to discuss any concerns with the manager of the home in the first instance but information on how to report a concern about abuse or neglect is provided.

3.5 Appendix 1 details a list of care homes by council ward along with information on the ward councillors and contact details for the care home.

3.6 Appendix 2 contains a Feedback Form that Councillors should complete following a visit in order to ensure that any issues identified during the visit are addressed accordingly. It will also allow areas of good practice to be highlighted and replicated where possible.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This revised guidance updates outdated guidance from 2016 with a new approach that aligns more suitably with the role of Councillors.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None identified.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The guidance outlines processes to support Councillors to visit care home residents, which will allow some of the most vulnerable members of the local community to share their views and receive support from their local Councillors, as needed.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Having this guidance in place will ensure that residents of care homes (and their families) are offered the opportunity to share their views with their local Councillors and the processes outlined as part

of the guidance mean that this can be done in the most appropriate way for all concerned.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Visiting care homes of course requires some local travel on the part of Councillors, however, engaging with constituents is an essential part of the role and ensures that the views of vulnerable residents can be heard.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.