

## HEALTH POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Health Policy and Performance Board held on Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Dourley (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Begg, Davidson, Fry, Garner, Goodall, C. Loftus, L. Nolan, Stretch and Thornton and D. Wilson – Healthwatch Co-optee

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: S. Salaman, A. Jones, D. Nolan, L Wilson, H. Moir and J. Gallagher

Also in attendance: A. Leo, Halton Place – NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

#### HEA1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2023 were signed as a correct record.

#### HEA2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The following public question had been received in relation to Item 6 (e) Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Review:

I'm contacting you on behalf of the Motor Neurone Disease Association. We are the national charity focusing on funding research, improving access to care and campaigning for people living with or affected by MND in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We have read item 6e on tomorrow's agenda - the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) review - with interest. During 2022 and 2023 we have been in regular correspondence with Halton Council on this issue, with your colleague Helen Moir having been our main contact. I have copied her into this message.

*Action*

We note that the recommendation to the Board in the accompanying paper for 6e is to form a steering group to “further review policy and processes in the light of the published DFG guidance”

In response, as a charity supporting people with and affected by MND in the Borough, we would like to table a question under item 3 of the agenda asking:

***What provision would be made to meet and engage with external stakeholders such as the MND Association in this planned review of DFG policy and process?***

Response:

We are currently working with Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) to develop a co-production framework and charter whereby everyone works together on an equal basis to influence the way services are designed, commissioned and delivered.

On this basis it is anticipated that this value based approach will influence the review and that representation from key stakeholders will be part of the process with everyone having a vital equal contribution in order to improve the quality of life for people and communities.

We would therefore welcome input not only from the Motor Neurone Disease Society but from other people and charities that will be affected by decisions made as a result of the review.

#### HEA3 HEALTH AND WELLBEING MINUTES

The minutes from the Health and Wellbeing Board’s meeting held on 18 January 2023 were submitted to the Board for information.

#### HEA4 HEALTH PPB ANNUAL REPORT

The Vice Chair, Councillor Baker, presented the Health Policy and Performance Board’s Annual Report for April 2022 to March 2023.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report for 2022-23 be received.

#### HEA5 THE BIG CONVERSATION

The Board received a report presenting the approach

being taken to 'The Big Conversation', which was integral to formulating a new Council Corporate Plan, to take effect from April 2024.

Further to agreement at Executive Board in March, the Council would provide adequate opportunity for meaningful public consultation and ultimately produce a Corporate Plan, which was unique and meaningful to the people of Halton.

'The Big Conversation' was all about engaging with the public so that they understood the challenges the Council is facing. The approach being taken was between the Council and everyone who lived or worked in Halton, to work together in order to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life. It was noted that feedback would be welcome in all formats; paper submissions, electronically or face to face, between now and the end of the year.

The report and accompanying presentation outlined the survey themes and questions, the process of data analysis and gave the timescales the project will take, up to the launching of the new Corporate Plan.

Following the presentation and Members' discussions, the following comments were made:

- Reference was made to a similar exercise that took place previously called Halton 2000 facilitated by lecturers from Edge Hill University;
- The five themes were taken from evidence based data from within the Council on the challenges the Borough currently faced and comparisons with other LA's Corporate Plans across the Country;
- The themes were about getting the conversation going and it was important to engage everyone in the Borough;
- Residents' contribution to a Corporate Plan had not been done before;
- Suggestions regarding the engagement of 'hard to reach' or 'hidden' communities were welcome – please contact officers with these;
- The consultation would also include a range of stakeholders, who will be asked to raise awareness of the survey amongst their organisations;
- Social media platforms are being used to promote the survey;
- The onus is on everyone including Councillors to engage people in all walks of life, so that the opportunity to contribute is given to all;

- Full engagement of the public was crucial to the success of this as the Council cannot do it on its own; and
- The Pride event taking place on 8 July at Norton Priory was noted.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) endorses the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'.

Operational  
Director Policy,  
People,  
Performance and  
Efficiency

#### HEA6 CARE WORKERS PETITION

The Board received details of a recent petition received by the Council from Halton Care Workers and the associated response to this.

At the Health PPB on 29 November 2022, the Board received a public question in respect to the payment of the Foundation Living Wage to all care workers across Halton, following receipt of the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund. The Board's response to this was presented in the report.

Subsequently, a petition was received by the Council in February 2023, from Halton Care Workers, requesting a pay rise; details listed in the report. Following receipt of this Councillor Wharton, Leader of the Council, responded to the petitioners; this was also presented in the report.

Further to debate from Members, it was noted that work on consulting with other local authorities in the area on this matter had begun, under the previous Chair of the Board, Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones.

One Member shared his aspirations for the Council to have its own 'domiciliary care hubs' so that the consistency of care for residents in the Borough could be improved. The difficulties being faced by care providers and local authorities with the recruitment of staff was highlighted at a care provider conference that took place last year.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted.

#### HEA7 SCRUTINY TOPIC BRIEF 2023/24

The Board received a report from the Director of Public Health, which presented the topic brief for the Health

Policy and Performance Board 2023-24 scrutiny review.

At the February meeting of the Board, and as part of Member involvement in the business planning process, Public Health was discussed as an area for consideration for the next scrutiny review. It was agreed that '*Health inequalities across Halton and approaches to reducing them*' would be the focus of the 2023-24 scrutiny review.

The report outlined the main areas to be considered and a detailed Topic Brief, explaining the rationale and scope of the group, was appended to the report.

It was agreed that all Members of the Board be invited to participate in the scrutiny review.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) approves the topic brief.

#### HEA8 MARKET SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Adults, informing of the Market Sustainability Plan (MSP) for care homes for older people (65+) and Domiciliary Care for adults (18+).

It was reported that the Government set out its vision for adult social care in its white paper '*People at the Heart of Care*' in December 2021 which proposed a range of reforms and initiatives to improve care and support for vulnerable people.

In relation to care provided for older people who needed a care home admission and vulnerable adults requiring care in their own home, the Government set out plans for all local authorities with adult social care duties to undertake a 'fair cost of care exercise' (FCOC) with providers of these types of care, and to utilise this information to publish a 'Market Sustainability Plan' in March 2023.

The requirements of the Market Sustainability Plans were set out in the report with the key plans to address market sustainability issues for Halton.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

## HEA9 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG) REVIEW

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Adults, which presented the results of the benchmarking exercise of current practice against the new Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Guidance.

The DFG was established 34 years ago and were mandatory capital grants that were available from local authorities, to pay for essential housing adaptations to help disabled people live an independent life and stay in their own homes. It was available to owner occupiers, private sector tenants and housing association tenants.

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) issued new DFG Guidance (part of the National Disability Strategy) in 2022, to advise local authorities how they could effectively and efficiently deliver the DFG funded adaptations. This brought together existing policy frameworks, legislative duties and powers, and recommended best practice to help local authorities best serve disabled tenants and residents in their area.

The report set out the current issues faced in Halton relating to the demand for the service and described the benchmarking exercise carried out. This had provided assurance that current DFG practice was working well for the people of Halton however, a further review of the policy and processes were still required, in light of the published DFG Guidance. A steering group would be established to explore these options and the item would return to the Board at a future date.

Further to Members' questions on the results of the exercise, the following additional information was provided:

- There were two options available for residents who were awarded funding for adaptations – the Council would carry out the 'best value' exercise and invite tenders for the work from 3 providers; or, the private route, whereby the resident arranges their own work and the money is provided to them;
- Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) were already building new houses that were adapted for people with disabilities;
- In cases where older/traditional homes could not be adapted, the resident would be moved to a suitable home; and
- The length of time a grant application took varied due to the specific requirements of the resident, eg a

house extension would take longer than someone who required minor adaptations.

It was noted that the steering group would be inclusive and groups such as the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MND), who had submitted the public question today, would be invited to join.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the contents of the report.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

#### HEA10 COUNCILLOR CARE HOME VISITS GUIDANCE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Adults, which presented the recently revised *Councillor Visits to Care Homes: Guidance for Elected Members* document – this was appended to the report.

Members were advised that revised guidance had been developed to support elected Members 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 focussed more on the engagement and relationship building role of Councillors, and less on an inspection type approach.

It was noted that the guidance aimed to support and facilitate the important role that Councillors had in developing relationships with, and advocating (as appropriate) on behalf of care home residents and their families. As explained in the report the document covered many subject areas, including information about safeguarding procedures.

The guidance included a list of care homes by Ward with contact details and a feedback form that Councillors should complete following a visit, in order to ensure that any issues identified during the visit were addressed accordingly. The feedback form would be sent separately from the guidance to Members', so this can be done easily.

The Board discussed the importance of the need to be trained properly before entering a care home and that these visits should be made regularly for the sake of the residents. E-learning relating to safeguarding is available for Councillors to complete, but it was also important for them to know what to look for on a visit and the best time of the day to make a visit.

Officer support is always available to Members who

want to visit the care homes and Members were invited to contact them if this is required in future.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the contents of the report; and
- 2) endorses the guidance attached.

Executive Director  
of Adult Services

HEA11 HEALTH BASED PRIORITY PERFORMANCE REPORTS  
Q4 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management Reports for quarter 4 of 2022/23.

Members were advised that the report introduced, through the submission of a structured thematic performance report, the progress of key performance indicators, milestones and targets relating to Health in quarter three of 2022-23. This included a description of factors, which were affecting the service.

The Board was requested to consider the progress and performance information; raise any questions or points for clarification; and highlight any areas of interest or concern for reporting at future meetings of the Board.

Officers advised that the quarter 4 data being presented was subject to some data validation. They also highlighted some service areas that were doing well, with a positive direction of travel.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management reports for quarter 4 of 2022/23 be received.

*The Chair gave thanks to his predecessor, Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones, who was Chair of the Board for two years and generously shared his experience and knowledge in the health field with him and other Members.*

*Meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.*