



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Vulnerable Adults, Health and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Vulnerable Adults, Health and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday 16th July, 2024**, Rooms 18.06-0.8, 18th Floor Meeting Rooms. Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Patricia McAllister (Chair), Gillian Arrindell, Lorraine Dean, Robert Eagleton, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Selina Short and Hamza Taouzzale

Also Present: Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary Sector), David Bello (Bi-Borough Director of Health Partnerships), Jeffrey Lake (Deputy Bi-Borough Director of Public Health), Gareth Wall (Bi-Borough Director of Integrated Commissioning), Visva Sathasivam (Bi-Borough Director of Social Care), Khatija Rasool (Strategic Delivery Lead, Bi-Borough Adult Social Care and Health) and Linda Hunting (Policy and Scrutiny Advisor)

External Guests: Hitesh Patel (Chief Officer, Community Pharmacy Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster) and Cleo Chalk (Healthwatch Service Manager)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

- 1.1 Nominations for the post of Chair were invited.
- 1.2 One nomination was received by Councillor Eagleton.
- 1.3 This nomination was seconded by Councillor Arrindell.
- 1.4 There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED:

- 1.5 That Councillor McAllister be appointed as Chair of the Vulnerable Adults, Health and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

2 MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 The Committee noted there were no changes to membership.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 The Committee noted there were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES

4.1 The Committee approved the minutes of its meeting held on 7 March 2024.

RESOLVED:

4.2 That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 be signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

5 WORK PROGRAMME

5.1 The Committee noted the new work programme for the 2024-25 municipal year and received an overview of the forthcoming plans.

5.2 The Committee discussed its tracker and importance of deadlines.

5.3 The Chair invited Linda Hunting (Policy and Scrutiny Advisor) to provide an update on forthcoming briefings to the Committee from officers and to comment on the Committee Tracker.

5.4 The Committee discussed the CQC Inspection results to be considered by the Committee in its Work Programme in September or November 2024, or alternatively, as a separate ad-hoc meeting.

5.5 The Committee requested that information disseminated ahead of committee meetings be done as far in advance as possible and that printed copies of late emails be provided to Members if necessary.

6 COMMUNITY PHARMACY PROVISION - ACCESS TO MEDICINES FOR SOCIALLY VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

6.1 The Chair welcomed Hitesh Patel (Chief Officer, Community Pharmacy Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster) to introduce the report on Community Pharmacy provisions for socially vulnerable residents. The Chief Officer and Cleo Chalk (Healthwatch Service Manager) responded to questions on the following topics:

- Exceptions to the Pharmacy First Scheme and those residents that may receive some assistance for the cost of medications.
- The Self Care Scheme and where the funding has been derived for the pilot schemes in other areas of London.
- The potential opportunities for pharmacies to have the power to prescribe medications for residents and the funding that is provided by other ICB's (Integrated Care Board) at a local level.
- The national guidance for GP's (General Practitioners) to not prescribe medication that can be obtained over the counter.

- Resident's experiencing poor journeys of care in relation to obtaining medicines.
- Standard medications such as treatment for headlice and the morning after pill, the cost implications for socially vulnerable residents, and where these can be obtained if not prescribed by a GP.
- The Local Authority responsibility for sexual health services.
- What consultations have taken place in Westminster for the Pharmacy First Service and GP referrals.
- How a resident would access or is referred to the Pharmacy First Service for minor conditions, including, what issues are raised when a resident walks into a pharmacy and does not qualify for the Pharmacy First Service.
- How the pharmacies that take part in the Pharmacy First Service are remunerated and how the Pharmacy First service is funded.
- Clinical records and responsibility of pharmacies for Pharmacy First appointments and how checks of eligibility and suitability of referrals are carried out in the areas where the pilots exist.
- Workforce challenges in pharmacies and the current dispensing contracts.
- The cost to the ICB to run the Self Care and Pharmacy First Schemes in Westminster and whether there is any potential detriment to the available funds for other frontline services.
- The commissioning of services by the Local Authority and what provisions are part of this.
- How doctors and pharmacists are remunerated for prescribing medicines and the protocol for prescribing specific medications.
- Potential over-prescribing or selecting medications that are higher priced or have a higher commercial advantage.
- The Self Care Scheme and the choice of cost-effective medications.
- Whether the change in Government will affect plans for the Community Pharmacy, Pharmacy First, or Self Care Scheme plans.
- Public demand for more accessibility of medical advice, support, and prescriptions for socially vulnerable residents.
- The mapping of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea to ensure there are sufficient Community Pharmacies for residents and the concerns around the closure of pharmacies in areas of deprivation.
- The pharmacies that are part of the Community Pharmacy scheme and the advantages for being part of the scheme, including the reasons why a pharmacy may not want to take part in the Pharmacy First Service.
- How information is being collated by Healthwatch from residents about accessing care and the challenges they incur, which residents have engaged, and how this information will inform the overall Healthwatch report that will be published.
- The funding and differences of the services that Public Health and the NHS (National Health Service) provide.
- What additional measures can be implemented at a local level to help socially vulnerable residents.

INFORMATION REQUESTS:

- 6.2 Healthwatch to share the report of their research with the Committee when it is published.

- 6.3 That information be provided to the Committee from the ICB about the delivery of the Self Care and Pharmacy First Schemes that have been running in North Central London and North East London areas.
- 6.4 That information be provided to the Committee in relation to Emergency Hormonal Contraception access, rates of teenage pregnancy, and Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- 6.5 That information will be provided to the Committee relating to headlice and the level of concern this raises.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 6.6 That the NWL ICB shares what attention it has given to support residents who are vulnerable and/ or on low incomes with medicine costs and considers commissioning free basic medication.
- 6.7 That the NWL ICB is asked what consideration it has given to the business case for provision of medicines to low income and/or vulnerable groups in Westminster, including financial implications and implementation of the Self Care Scheme to provide free medication, and experiences of users in visiting medical professionals.

7 WINTER HOT MEALS PROVISION PILOT

- 7.1 The Chair welcomed Khatija Rasool (Strategic Delivery Lead, Bi-Borough Adult Social Care and Health) and Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary Sector) to introduce the report on the Winter Hot Meals Pilot, the delivery of the service, and possible expansion of the scheme. The Strategic Delivery Lead, Cabinet Member, David Bello (Bi-Borough Director of Health Partnerships), and Gareth Wall (Bi-Borough Director of Integrated Commissioning), responded to questions on the following topics:
- The ability of the pilot to cater for all dietary and ethnicity requirements.
 - Eligibility to receive the provision, the criteria, and the assessment process.
 - How referrals to the provision are made and by whom and whether there is an option to receive the meals without a full care package.
 - The lunchtime scheduling of the hot meal delivery and the importance of the social engagement of the hot meal visit.
 - The individual cost of a meal and delivery.
 - How the take-up of the pilot from further eligible residents will reduce the overall running cost of the scheme.
 - What engagement will take place across the summer with users and communities' teams to plan Year 2 of the pilot that will be launched in October 2024.
 - Ensuring the quality of the food provided and that it is good value, and what quality assurance has been carried out.

- The contribution of £2 from residents to obtain the hot meal, how this is paid by the Digital Wallet, and how the system operates.
- The scope to extend the timeframe of the offer beyond the Year 2 pilot and focus on the winter period.
- The support for residents that cannot leave their homes, including access and housing adaptation issues inside properties and the work that should be happening between Adult Social Care and Housing to aid vulnerable residents.
- The benefits of getting residents out of their homes and into community settings for meals.
- Opportunities for social engagement with the delivery and serving of the meals and the ability to monitor potential food wastage if the meal is delivered and not eaten.
- Investigating delivery options for the Hot Meals such as on bicycle or other greener opportunities with the provider.
- Potential recycling opportunities for the meal containers.
- The challenges in obtaining a hot meal provider of high quality for the service.
- How the current provider for Hot Meals was chosen.
- Feedback from users and research into what is needed and how this is being carried out and taken forward.

INFORMATION REQUESTS:

- 7.2 That the Committee will receive an update in October 2024 from officers focusing on the service delivery of the Hot Meals Provision.
- 7.3 That the Committee will receive an update on the Community Catalyst Scheme from officers, with the Committee providing further steer on what it would like to see in this update.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.4 That the Council will seek to put methods of social interaction with hot meals users in place to engage with residents and to help ensure that food wastage is avoided.
- 7.5 That the Council continues to investigate methods of recycling within the Hot Meal provision with the provider, such as the recycling of meal containers.

The meeting ended at 8.26pm.

CHAIR: _____

DATE _____