



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Family and People Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Family and People Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday 17 October 2019** in Rooms 18.01 and 18.02, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Jonathan Glanz (Chairman), Margot Bright, Nafsika Butler-Thalassis, Matt Noble, Peter Freeman, Patricia McAllister and Selina Short

Also present: Councillor Heather Acton.

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 It was noted that Cllr Carmen had stepped down for the Committee and would be replaced by Cllr Noble for this meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

- 3.1 That the Minutes of the Family and People Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 June 2019 be approved.

4. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

- 4.1 Councillor Heather Acton (Cabinet Member for Family Services and Public Health), provided a briefing on key issues within her portfolio. The Committee also heard from Bernie Flaherty (Executive Director, Adult Social Care and Health), Houda Al-Sharifi (Interim Director of Public Health), Nicky Crouch (Interim Director of Family

Services), James Partis (Better Care Fund – Programme Lead) and Dominic Stanton (Head of Quality Assurance).

4.2 The Committee noted that Ofsted had recently carried out an inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services in Westminster. The report had recently been published and had rated the service ‘Outstanding’ in all areas. The Committee welcomed the news, expressed its thanks to the Cabinet Member and Officers on this outstanding achievement and requested that the report be circulated to Members.

4.2 The Committee received the update and held detailed discussions on the following topics:

- Residential and Nursing Care – It was anticipated that Beachcroft House would open in Summer 2020. Negotiations with Sanctuary Care were still ongoing regarding the variation of the existing Specialist Housing Strategy for Older People contract. It was confirmed that the negotiations would include discussions on all staff employed at Beachcroft receiving the London Living Wage.
- Better Care Fund (BCF) Submission – Westminster had submitted its BCF plans for 2019/20 to NHS England on 27 September 2019. The main changes arising in the submitted plan were in relation to the financial contributions from the Council and the CCGs being reduced to statutory minimum levels. The Committee noted that the same levels of funding were being invested into the partnership with the CCGs but a larger proportion of this would be managed outside of the BCF. This change would ensure that the partnership and the BCF focused attention on the core elements of integrated delivery in Westminster and to ensure local integration priorities received sufficient attention and focus from the partnership.
- North West London Clinical Commissioning Groups - A progress update was provided on the proposals for integration of the eight CCGs that made up the North West London (NWL) footprint. The Council had responded to the consultation, setting out concerns which included the loss of focus on local priorities for health integration and local needs, including mental health, and the potential financial impact on both Central London CCG and West London CCG. The Council had put forward an alternative proposal to the eight-to-one integration as an interim step. This was for a Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) which could be implemented initially as a pilot in order to assess impact and protect the local offer. Discussions with local health providers and commissioners would begin shortly to explore developing proposals for a bi-borough ICP.
- Local GP Practices – It was suggested that the Soho GP Practice was facing another period of uncertainty following a service of notice by the current

operators. The Patient Participation Group had expressed concern in relation to the short period of time provided to replace the current operators with new ones. It was felt that this represented wider concerns raised over small practices within Westminster which catered for communities with particular patient demographics. The importance of appropriate first-class local services being provided was highlighted and it was suggested a report on the provision of services from small GP Practices in Westminster come before the Committee at a future meeting.

- Review of Palliative Care Service – The Committee discussed the proposed changes to the palliative care services provided at Pembridge Hospice and how they could potentially impact on local residents. Concern was expressed that if Pembridge Hospice was to close and the number of palliative care beds in Westminster reduced, it was important that any resulting financial savings be reinvested in local care services. The Committee requested a future update on any proposed changes to the palliative care system.

4.3 The Committee also discussed Meals on Wheels, Youth Services, an update on the Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Plan, Homelessness, Community Champions and Immunisations.

5. IMMUNISATION PROGRAMMES IN WESTMINSTER

5.1 Catherine Heffernan (Principal Advisor for Commissioning Immunisations and Vaccination – NHS England) introduced the report, which provided an overview of adult, childhood and school age immunisation programmes in Westminster for 2018/19. Details were provided on vaccine coverage and uptake of the programmes along with an account of what NHS England and Improvement (NHSE&I) London Region were doing to improve uptake and coverage. The Committee also invited Russell Styles (Deputy Director of Public Health), Anna Cox (Public Health Business Partner), Kevin Driscoll (Central London CCG) and Louise Proctor (West London CCG) to join the discussion on this item.

5.2 The Committee discussed the importance of IT in monitoring immunisation levels and the role it could play in improving coverage. Information on the different IT systems used to extract immunisation data was provided and how three different providers provided the interface between general practices and the Child Health Information Service (CHIS). It was recognised that the system in London was very complicated and issues with the data had the potential to make it difficult to locate pockets of the community which had low levels of uptake. The Committee was advised that the processes were improving however, and it was expected that these benefits would shortly be recognised. A National Events Management System, which was a pilot programme, was currently being rolled out in North East London to deliver a more joined-up, user friendly IT package which it was hoped would resolve some of the data issues currently experienced. An

expression of interest from the Committee in the possibility of Westminster becoming involved in this pilot was welcomed and could be explored.

- 5.3 An overview of various other initiatives being developed was provided which the Committee was interested to note. These included proposals by NHS England to introduce an e-consent service to tackle issues around school age vaccinations relating to refusals, lack of return of paper forms, self-consent and lack of school support. The initiative involved developing a communication strategy between providers and schools as well as developing an escalation process that could be followed. This would make it easier for residents to agree to immunisations, improve uptake in general practice populations and allow rates to be monitored. The Committee was informed that a plan focusing on improving the uptake of MMR rates for those children aged 2 and under was also being implemented. The importance of improving these rates was discussed and the Committee suggested that the possibility of setting up a pilot scheme to extend the school vaccination programme out to nurseries be explored.
- 5.4 The Committee was interested to learn that Westminster had a high number of private practices compared to other boroughs. This posed a challenge to recording levels of uptake as a child could register in the area and therefore show up on the CHIS system. However, they may never actually access their GP or alternatively have certain vaccinations and then receive others privately. As private practice data cannot be accessed, it was currently unknown what number this constituted. The Committee expressed concern with regards to this barrier to producing accurate information and requested that potential mechanisms requiring private practices to share immunisation rates be explored.
- 5.5 Detailed discussions were held on other barriers to immunisation and how uptake and coverage could be improved within Westminster. The issue around some of the MMR vaccines containing porcine gelatine was discussed and how this had resulted in low uptake across some communities. It was noted that suitable alternative vaccinations were available which did not contain porcine gelatine. The Committee highlighted the importance of ensuring residents were aware that suitable alternative vaccinations were available and it was suggested that if possible non-porcine vaccinations be provided throughout the borough as a default position.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That NHS England be requested to continue to explore methods of extending an e-consent service to tackle uptake issues around school age vaccinations;
- 2) That vaccination providers be encouraged to make residents aware that suitable alternative non-porcine vaccinations were available and if possible provide non-porcine vaccinations throughout the borough as a default position;

- 3) That all groups involved with immunisations in Westminster be encouraged to promote immunisation uptake across the city;
- 4) That potential mechanisms requiring private GP practices to share immunisation rates be explored;
- 5) That the possibility of Westminster participating in the National Events Management System pilot IT programme, currently being rolled in North East London, be explored; and
- 6) That the possibility of setting up a pilot scheme to extend the school vaccination programme out to nurseries be explored.

6. ANNUAL ADOPTION AND FOSTERING REPORTS

- 6.1 Sally Pillay (Head of Fostering and Adoption) introduced the Annual Adoption Service Report and a report providing an Overview of the Work of Fostering Services.
- 6.2 The Committee was provided with an overview of the functions and performance of Westminster City Council's Adoption Service within the context of the Three Borough Shared Service. The Committee was pleased to note that the National Scorecard performance thresholds had been met and Westminster was performing above or better than the national average, being rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in the last inspection.
- 6.3 The report setting out how the Fostering and Adoption Service continued to explore opportunities to provide high quality and timely foster care services was noted. The methods being developed to continue to improve the service were detailed along with the challenges facing the service, which included the permanent placement of children with complex needs.
- 6.4 The Committee was pleased to note all the work being undertaken by the Adoption and Fostering Services and expressed its thanks to the teams for the award of the recent 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating in relation to the adoption services provided.

7. 2019/20 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER

- 7.1 Aaron Hardy (Policy and Scrutiny Manager) presented the Committee's 2019/20 Work Programme and Action Tracker.

7.2 The Committee reviewed the draft list of suggested items and made minor amendments to the Work Programme:

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the item on Primary Care Networks (and Social Prescribing) be moved from the 25 November 2019 meeting to a future date; and
- 2) That the Healthwatch Update programmed for 25 November 2019 be circulated to the Committee offline.

8. REPORTS OF ANY URGENT SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

8.1 The Committee received an update from Nicky Crouch (Interim Director of Family Services) with regards to a recent serious incident which had occurred in Westminster. Information on the safeguarding work undertaken with local schools following the incident and the support provided to those affected by it were provided. The Committee was informed that a recommendation for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (previously known as a Serious Case Review) had been submitted and further information would be provided in due course.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 The Committee wished to record its thanks to Aaron Hardy (Policy and Scrutiny Manager) for all his hard work carried out in support of the Committee.

The Meeting ended at 8:59pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE: _____