

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE HEALTH & ADULTS SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT 6.23 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 12 MARCH 2020**

**THE AMBROSE KING CENTRE, THE ROYAL LONDON, HOSPITAL, MOUNT TERRACE, WHITECHAPEL, E1 2BB.**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Kahar Chowdhury (Chair)  
Councillor Marc Francis (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Denise Jones

Councillor Andrew Wood

**Co-opted Members Present:**

David Burbidge

– Healthwatch Tower Hamlets Representative

Sue Kenten

– Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee Co-optee

**Apologies:**

Councillor Shad Chowdhury

Councillor Gabriela Salva Macallan

**Officers Present:**

Jack Kerr

– Strategy & Policy Manager

Jamal Uddin

– Strategy Policy & Performance Officer

Dr Somen Banerjee

– (Director of Public Health)

Chris Banks

– Chief Executive, Tower Hamlets GP Care Group CIC

Chris Lovitt

– (Associate Director of Public Health)

Denise Radley

– (Corporate Director, Health, Adults & Community)

Sukhjot Sanghera

– (Health, Adults & Community)

Joanne Starkie

– (Head of Strategy and Policy - Health Adults and Communities)

Rushena Miah

– (Committee Services Officer)

**1. TOUR OF THE AMBROSE CENTRE**

The tour of the centre was cancelled due to Barts Health advice on covid-19. The Chair announced that an update on Covid-19 would be presented in the any other business section of the meeting by Somen Banerjee, Director of Public Health.

**2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed Members and guests to the meeting.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests. The Chair disclosed a personal interest in that his wife worked in the health and social care sector.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

#### **RESOLVED:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION:**

#### **5.1 Sexual Health Services- update on new services**

The Committee received a report and presentation from Chris Lovitt (Associate Director of Public Health) and Vanessa Apea (Barts Health Trust) on updates to the sexual health contract.

In response to the presentation Members made the following comments:

- Members noted an overspend of £350,000 and asked whether this could be attributed to the rise in population. Presenting officers said that only half of the overspend was attributed to Barts, the other half was from out of borough services. Officers said that better integration, the e-service offer and targeted support to risk groups would enable the service to use the budget more efficiently.
- Public Health funding pressures was discussed. Officers said a two-million-pound saving was made after the service update.
- There was a discussion on PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) noting that a trail had taken place on black women in the borough because they were a risk group. Officers said costs associated with PrEP planning could be borne by the council b PH England would pay for the drugs. Officers said the trail experienced administrative issues and a mainstream service was not yet ready.
- Officers assured members that sexual health services were fully integrated into the boroughs GPs and Pharmacies. Patient engagement on available support was an ongoing communications exercise.
- Officers said around 10% of all STI tests were from repeat patients. They said all young people who had repeatedly presented to services were provided with an integrated sexual health advisor and online support.
- Members asked if young gay or bisexual were receiving tailored support. Officers said historically gay men had gone to the Chelsea and Dean Street surgery for support but with the newly refurbished Ambrose King Centre they were hoping to bring back local residents

because the services were better, for example Barts could provide more testing and contraceptive options.

- It was noted the Ambrose King Centre was designed for co-location desk space with other services for example the drug and alcohol team. In addition, all satellite sites were designed for co-location.

**ACTION: for the sexual health services budget to be reviewed by the Committee in June 2020.**

**RESOLVED:**

To note the report.

## **5.2 The GP Contract 2020/21**

This item was postponed to the April 2020 meeting of the committee.

## **5.3 Adult Social Care Charging Update**

Joanne Starkie, Head of Strategy & Policy HAC, provided the committee with an update report on actions requested by Members on the prior adult social care report.

- Members thanked officers for the comprehensive action log and hoped lessons had been learnt.
- Members strongly recommended that in future consultation exercises there should be an independent and external sense check on service change impacts.
- Officers explained that a charging consultation had been launched on proposals that will change the way the council calculates how much residents pay towards the cost of community-based adult social care services. They presented **two options**:

### **Option 1**

- Increase the maximum amount people can be asked to pay towards their care from £250 per week to £1000 per week.
- Reduce the 'standard utilities allowance' from £15 to £5.
- Provide respite and carer relief services free of charge, if they are put in place primarily to meet the needs of a carer following a carer assessment. At the moment these services are chargeable to the person receiving adult social care services.

It is estimated that 28 people will be impacted by increasing the maximum weekly contribution. If a person is not currently contributing the maximum of £250 per week, they will not be impacted by this proposed increase.

It is projected that reducing the 'standard utilities allowance' to £5 will impact 1,239 people.

## Option 2

- Increase the maximum amount people can be asked to contribute towards their care from £250 per week to £300 per week.
- Remove the £15 'standard utilities allowance'.
- Provide respite and carer relief services free of charge, if they are put in place primarily to meet the needs of a carer following a carer assessment. At the moment these services are chargeable to the person receiving adult social care services.

It is estimated that 28 people will be impacted by increasing the maximum weekly contribution. If a person is not currently contributing the maximum of £250 per week, they will not be impacted by this proposed increase.

To have a weekly maximum contribution of £300 per week, the 'standard utilities allowance' is removed in this option. We estimate that this will impact 1,304 people.

The consultation will run from **Monday 9 March 2020 to Sunday 31 May 2020**.

### **RESOLVED:**

To note the report.

## **5.4 Health & Social Care Integration Update**

The committee received an update on integration from Warwick Tomsett - Joint Director of Integrated Commissioning.

In response to the presentation the following comment were made:

- Members wanted to know if there was shared integrated budget. Officers said organisations were funded separately but the better care fund was a joint provision by the Council and CCG. Members advised that integrated budgets were essential to meaningful integration and officers should plan towards this.
- Members also said it was important to capture user engagement and patient stories and present these at board meetings. Officers said this was beginning to happen.
- ELFT representatives informed the committee that they were building a bank of patient stories and were hoping to present stories next year.
- Officers said impact measurement was recorded using the 'I statements'.
- It was noted the Tower Hamlets Together partnership reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Lead Member for Health said

partnership working in Tower Hamlets was one of the best across London.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To note the report

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Council Budget:**

Denise Radley, Corporate Director for Health Adults Community, summarised proposed savings in the council's annual budget with regards to adult social care. The chair informed the committee that he had met with the corporate director prior to the committee meeting regarding the proposals.

- There was a proposal to merge Riverside day centre and a day hostel.
- Savings would be made in adult social care charging, telecare and rehab. These would be phased over three years and were indicated in the current budget.
- The day centre proposal would fall into the next financial year.
- The day hostel proposal would fall into year two of the budget.
- The telecare proposal would fall into year three of the budget.

In response to the update

- Members said that they were aware of the savings proposals in the budget but the option 2 discussed earlier in the meeting was not in the budget analysis to Members.

**ACTION: Denise Radley to provide the committee with a budget analysis on the two options for the adult social care charging proposals.**

- Members were concerned about the compatibility of the patients from the two-day centres because one focused on general care and the other catered to clients with dementia. The strongly recommended that in-depth consultation takes place with the service users.

**COVID-19**

The second item of urgent business was an update from Somen Banerjee Director of Public Health on Covid-19.

The Director said that the situation was changing rapidly. He summarised that:

- the goal was to delay the peak of the virus into the warmer months when beds were generally free because flu season was over.

- everyone should be washing their hands with soap and water and gel sanitiser if they did not have access to soap and water.
- People should practice social distancing and only come in to work for key services.
- The council could expect 40% of its staff off sick in the coming months.
- A contingency planning exercise was to be conducted at the council the following day.
- The situation may continue for approximately 6-9 months. Colleagues would have to work together to minimise anxiety and maintain core services.
- A borough emergency command centre may be set up at the council depending on the scale of the issue.

Members made the following comments:

- The screens at the idea's stores, council and all council websites and social media should display Covid-19 precautions. Officers said they could do this.
- Members wanted to know if any support was being offered to local retailers. Officers said it was an issue that would have to be addressed at the national and local level.

**ACTION: Covid-19 precaution message across all council sites and social media.**

**RESOLVED:**

To note the AOB.

**The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.**

**Chair, Councillor Kahar Chowdhury  
Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee**