

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission held on Thursday 30 September 2021 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT:

Councillor David Noakes (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sandra Rhule
Councillor Bill Williams
Councillor Jane Salmon

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

OFFICER PARTNER SUPPORT:

& Genette Laws, Director of Commissioning , Southwark Council

Clair Kelland, Detective Superintendent, Public Protection, Police

Julie Timbrell, Project Manager, Scrutiny.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Victoria Olisa (chair), Charlie Smith and Maria Linforth-Hall provided apologies.

Councillor Jane Salmon attended as a reserve.

The Vice Chair, Councillor David Noakes, chaired the meeting.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were none.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. REVIEW: BREXIT

Genette Laws, Director of Commissioning, Children's and Adults' Services Southwark Council, presented the briefing on the impact of Brexit on the social care workforce, circulated with the agenda.

The chair then invited questions and the following points were made:

Southwark has a higher percentage of Non EU Nationals and a lower percentage of EU Nationals working in Health & Social Care. EU citizens comprise 6% of the Southwark workforce whereas nationally this is 7% and for London wide 13%.

A member commented that the council had been surprised at the number of citizens requesting resettlement in Southwark as this had ended up being more than the total estimated EU national population. Members requested the numbers (not just percentages) of EU settlement figures.

The data shows that Brexit did not have a material impact on adult social care workforce, however the council can be less sure about children's social care as the data is less complete. There is a bit of a local arms race to recruit to children's social care, which is being addressed through some London borough wide agreements.

There is a general shortfall of health and social care workers, which is less of an issue for Southwark than the rest of London. Southwark has an 8% vacancy rate, whereas London it is 9.5%. Members requested more information on vacancies and monitoring, for the social care workforce, and national figures.

The Director of Commissioning said the lower vacancy rate in Southwark is considered to be a result of the positive impact of the ethical care charter, which some boroughs have a version of and some do not.

Members asked the Director of Commissioning if she thought that the workforce scoping review ought to be opened up to include the impact of vaccination, as well as the wider impact of the pandemic on morale and burnout. The Director of Commissioning agreed that this would be beneficial. There is a risk of mandatory vaccination being potentially resented by some of the social care workforce given the particularly adverse impact of the pandemic on social care staff, and some feeling of being singled out - however good the reasons. She clarified that the vaccine is only presently mandated for care home staff and care homes visitors, like social workers, not home care workers. The rationale is probably the greater mortality rate in care homes in previous waves due to the risk of infection breakouts within a vulnerable population.

The introduction of mandatory vaccination for COVID 19 is likely to have an impact on the social care workforce, the Director of Commissioning said. There is also a consultation to extend mandatory vaccination to all health and social care staff, so there could well be more of an impact. The first milestone for Care Homes personal has been passed with 15th September being the date for first vaccination. This is being monitored through 'self-certification' however the second date will have harder monitoring.

RESOLVED

The Commission will expand the scope of the workforce review to look at mandatory vaccination and the impact of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of the workforce, particularly moral and burnout.

Officers to provide:

- Numbers (not just percentages) of EU settlement figures.
- More information on vacancies and monitoring, for the social care workforce, including national comparison figures.

6. SAFEGUARDING

Clair Kelland, Detective Superintendent, Public Protection, Police presented the report providing an overview of the arrangements for safeguarding children and adults in Southwark, on behalf of the Safeguarding Executive.

There are three people are on the Safeguarding Executive for Children and Adults, these are: David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services, Southwark Council; Clair Kelland, Detective Superintendent, Police; and Sam Hepplewhite, Place-Based Director (Southwark), NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group. There is also the same Independent Chair for both boards, Anne Berry, who started early 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic. The Detective Superintendent said it works well to have a joint chair, providing coherence across children & adults.

The boards have a people centred approach, with a strong partnership. There was a recent governance review.

The boards do not look at things on isolation- for example they look at the links between Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), children in care, and child abuse. They also look at emerging issues, for example 'Me Too', peer on peer abuse and the website 'Everyone invited', which was quite prominent with the number of independent schools in Southwark where young people had spoken of abuse.

The boards looks at themes and issue, whereas MACE will look at the needs of individual's.

The chair then invited members to ask questions and the following points were made:

- The boards meet every 2/3 months and the Safeguarding Executive more frequently, around one month.
- The board has considered three cases for review; one met the threshold. They can take up to two years as often an associated court process, however they try and do the learning earlier.
- All the safeguarding partners are engaged and committed.
- Issues of particular concern include:

- Serious Youth Violence
- Child exploitation - particularly adolescent risk as this is not always disclosed and then there is the challenge of victim / perpetrators often crossing over.
- The rise of domestic abuse in during covid lockdown, which has more been seen by other providers, rather than the police.
- 'Cuckoos', where the homes of vulnerable adults are used for drug dealing.
- Modern day slavery country lines – there is often little information and a reluctance to report to police.

RESOLVED

The Detective Superintendent will provide more information on Domestic Abuse, to support the mini review.

The Detective Superintendent will return with the rest of the Safeguarding Executive and the Independent Safeguarding Chair in February for a more in depth item on Safeguarding.

7. SCRUTINY REPORT: MENTAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES OF BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The final report was noted.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Members discussed the work-plan and reviews.

RESOLVED

- The NHS will be asked to consider the impact of the pandemic and mandatory vaccination on the workforce.
- The relevant cabinet members and deputy cabinet member will be invited to contribute to the mini review on Domestic Abuse.
- Access to GP appointments will be added to the next meeting's agenda, in order to understand why some constituents are struggling to get in-person consultations with their doctor and the GPs views on face to face meetings.

