

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 6 July 2021. The meeting was held remotely and can be viewed on the Gloucestershire County Council website [here](#).

PRESENT:

Cllr Stephen Hirst (Chair)	Cllr Pam Tracey MBE
Cllr Alastair Chambers	Cllr Suzanne Williams
Cllr Cate Cody	Cllr Terry Hale
Cllr Mark Mackenzie- Charrington	Cllr Steve Robinson
Cllr Lisa Spivey	

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were made at the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 January 2021, (joint meeting with the Gloucestershire Health Scrutiny Committee), and 9 March 2021 were agreed as a true record of those meetings.

4. PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

Professor Sarah Scott, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health at Gloucestershire County Council, gave an update on current issues relating to public health services, including the response to the COVID-19 Emergency. The update included information on plans to invest national funding on rough sleeping and adult weight management services; health inequalities; public mental health issues and suicide; and domestic abuse.

A Covid-19 early warning indicator summary report, (for the period 24 to 30 June 2021), was presented at the meeting, providing members with the latest information on confirmed cases of COVID-19, (including registered COVID-19 related deaths in Gloucestershire). The summary report is attached.

Member's attention was drawn to the escalating repercussions of school children having to self isolate due to testing positive or coming into contact with someone with COVID-19. It was confirmed that over 200 cases of school children with COVID-19 had been reported in recent weeks and that a huge number of children was having to self-isolate. It was noted that a significant number of schools in Gloucestershire were located in rural areas, with home to school transport another

area of concern in relation to the current emergency situation. The resilience of local schools in response to the pandemic was noted and commended.

Noting the success of the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccination programme across the county, members enquired into the arrangements for extending the programme to reach the younger residents of Gloucestershire, including young people aged 20-24. It was explained that every effort was being made to encourage young people to take up the vaccination programme. A key area of work for the public health team was to establish a balance of encouraging young people to return to a more normal lifestyle via the protection and reassurances offered by the vaccination programme, whilst at the same time, highlighting the importance of adhering to safe and controlled COVID secure measures. It was confirmed that a huge amount of communications work, including the use of social media, was being invested in promoting key messages to young people.

Noting concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on mental health, particularly young people's mental health, it was agreed to provide a more detailed briefing on mental health issues at a future committee meeting. It was later suggested that a joint briefing to the members of this and the Health Scrutiny Committee might be useful in relation to the work of the Be Well Gloucestershire Initiative. Wellbeing Gloucestershire. Another proposal suggested as an item for future consideration was a briefing on the impact of COVID-19 on obesity across the county and whether the issue had been accentuated during the pandemic. In terms of obesity, the committee agreed to wait until more data was available issue before requesting an update on the issue at a future meeting. **Action by – Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health**

One member enquired into the sharing of information/communications with members on details relating to vaccination drop in centres and the roll out of the vaccination programme in local areas. It was confirmed that key messages relating to COVID-19, (when received from the NHS and Public Health England), were shared with members via email/member publications. The Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health agreed to liaise with the Gloucestershire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to request that details/up to date information relating to vaccination drop-in centre be communicated with members.

Another member enquired about the roll-out and take up of the vaccination programme with the Traveller Community. The committee was reassured that the work of the Gloucestershire Traveller Liaison Service was very effective and that good work had been undertaken at the Horse Fair in the Cotswolds District in May, including the communications of key messages and the distribution of over 1000 boxes of COVID-19 tests.

Members attention was drawn to the work involved in addressing health inequalities in Gloucestershire. It was noted that the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2019-2030) (JHWS) was the key driver for the work on prevention and health inequalities in Gloucestershire. Alongside this, the NHS Long Term Plan (LTP) provided an overarching framework for the work of the Integrated Care System (ICS) regarding prevention and health inequalities. The Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing

Board (GHWB), ICS Board and other member organisations were committed to embedding action on health inequalities and had agreed to take forward multiple programmes of work to address health inequalities, including agreeing to convene a Countywide Health Inequalities Panel to coordinate the developing health inequalities agenda for Gloucestershire. In addition, part of the Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) was being invested in measures to mitigate disparities in the longer-term impact of COVID-19, including resources to support community resilience.

Noting concerns about the protection and well-being of victims of domestic abuse, it was noted that, on implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, a significant amount of funding had been awarded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The County Council had received an allocation of £1,105,661, (2021/22), including funding to support domestic abuse victims and their children. District councils had received a further combined total of £198,956 to cover any administrative burdens specific to their areas. A key focus of work relating to providing safe accommodation for domestic abuse victims was to protect people in their own homes rather than transferring to safe houses. A cabinet report would be considered at the Gloucestershire County Council Cabinet meeting on 21 July 2021, seeking a decision on a number of initiatives and agreeing how the funding would be used to support such schemes.

The report was noted

5. ADULT SOCIAL CARE REPORT

The committee received an update from the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, (Gloucestershire County Council), on matters relating to adult social care, including the response to the COVID-19 Emergency.

Key points referred to at the meeting included:

- a) Work to roll out the Enhanced Independence Offer (EIO) was progressing. It was explained that the project was focusing on the home-based and bed-based pathways out of acute and community hospitals and in meeting the needs of people suffering with ill-health in the community. It was anticipated that the new service would be functioning from 1 November 2021. In the meantime, improvements were being made to improve the overall capacity of the Home First (Reablement) Service, including rationalising the assessment bed pathway to ensure the right type of bed based service is available to meet demand. Alongside this will be a review of therapy services to ensure the right type of therapy is available for each person.
- b) Updating members on some of the outcomes of the financial support allocated to social care providers during the pandemic, members noted that the Rapid Testing Funding had been used to fund COVID-19 testing in care homes. Of the £1,964,902 funding received in respect of 6,018 care home registered beds and 90 residential drug and alcohol beds, the full £1,945,793

had been allocated to care homes. It was noted that £19,109 funding remained unspent due to the funds not being accepted by providers.

- c) As of May 2021, the Gloucestershire Care Sector had received £23.7m financial support. By June 2021, this had been anticipated to reach £27.9m
- d) A member requested a more detailed update on the Park Homes Project at a future meeting and this was noted. It was explained that initial funding from the Disabled Facilities Grant had provided additional funds in 2018-19 to enable a pilot project to insulate some of the park homes located at various sites around the county. Concerns about the a higher prevalence of long term conditions including respiratory and cardio vascular issues amongst park home residents were noted. **Action by – Executive Director Adult Social Care and Public Health**
- e) It was reported that Gloucestershire had achieved one of the highest performances in the South-West Region for the number of people undergoing an annual health check. Gloucestershire achieved an overall position of 74% health checks completed, from a target of 67%.
- f) A Review of the Gloucestershire Care Partnership (GCP) Care Home Estate will need to be continued to meet the requirements of the council's duty under the Care Act 2014. The Integrated Commissioning Team to work with the independent care market to ensure the council focusses on promoting the individual's wellbeing, commissioning quality care provision and developing sustainable models of care to meet the needs of Gloucestershire's diverse population. It was noted that the wider impact of the pandemic had created additional stresses on the care market, with many independent care homes experiencing significant loses and having to review the viability of their businesses.
- g) Members were advised that the number of older people aged 65 and above in Gloucestershire was expected to continue to rise at a faster pace than the number of older people nationally, rising from 126,800 in 2015 to 206,300 by 2039, with an estimated 25,400 older people anticipated to have a long-term illness or disability limiting their day-to-day activities.
- h) One significant consequence of the pandemic had been the decision by many residents not to go into residential care, and instead, choosing to purchase retirement accommodation/remain at home rather than seek care home placements. Continuing review of the Gloucestershire Care Partnership Estate may involve consideration of the decommissioning, repurposing and re-developing of sites within the estate, with the aim of matching provision with identified demographic needs.

The report was noted.

6. CHIEF FIRE OFFICER UPDATE

The committee received an update from the Interim Chief Fire Officer on matters relating to the delivery of services included within the portfolio of services covered by the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service in context to the remit of the committee. These included: Trading Standards, Civil Protection and Coroners Services.

The new members of the committee were informed that the County Council had a legal duty to provide a fire and rescue service for the county and that the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service fulfilled this duty on the council's behalf.

At the Gloucestershire County Council Annual General Meeting on 19 May 2021, the Council agreed to establish a new, (stand alone), scrutiny committee, comprising seven members, to scrutinise the Fire and Rescue Service. The new committee was asked to carry out the scrutiny functions of the County Council, as set out in Article 8 of the Constitution, in the context of matters relating to Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service, including: -

- a) Response to fire and other emergencies
- b) Fire regulation, prevention and promoting fire safety
- c) Performance against Key and Local Performance Indicators
- d) Progress against recommendations from inspections and delivery of the Improvement Plan
- e) Co-operation and partnership working with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency and increase community resilience
- f) Cross-boundary co-operation with other Fire and Rescue Authorities
- g) Civil contingency planning
- h) Leadership, culture and workforce development across the service

Members were advised that the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee was no longer required to consider any of the above, fire related, aspects of work as part of its remit. Going forward, the committee to receive strategic update reports from Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS) on key issues relating to community safety provision and non-fire related services.

Interim Chief Fire Officer, Mark Preece, presented a short power-point presentation, outlining some of the work undertaken within the three Community Safety Directorate service areas for which the committee would be scrutinising at future meetings. These included: -

1) Civil Protection Team

- a) Working with all service areas across GCC to strengthen Business Continuity Management
- b) Ongoing work with GCC colleagues to revise, resource and train staff members involved in emergency response
- c) Working with district colleagues in accordance with Service Level Agreements

It was explained that the Civil Protection Team continued to support both County & District Councils to be compliant with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and to work closely with multi-agency partners as a key member of the Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum. All functions, (except for live face to face training), had now resumed.

2) Coroner's Office

- a) Looking to return to 'Business as Usual' arrangements as quickly as possible;
- b) Continuing to work towards fulfilling statutory duties;
- c) Continuing to operate from Barnwood
- d) Mortuary service arrangements operating under the guidance of the Senior Coroner
- e) Complex inquests to be scheduled later in the year

The Coroner Service was continuing to work towards fulfilling its statutory duties under the Coroner & Justice Act of investigating all sudden, suspicious, unexpected or unexplained deaths. All Coronial functions continued to operate from the Coroner's Court at Barnwood, Gloucester, whilst Mortuary arrangements continued to operate under the guidance of the Senior Coroner. Any complex inquests postponed during the pandemic were now being re-scheduled later in the year. Essentially, the service was looking to return to 'business as usual'. There remained a small number of back-logged longer-term inquests which needed to be scheduled. Visitors to the centre were still being limited but staff were now largely working from site, with some staff still utilising working at home arrangements, when possible.

3) Trading Standards

- a) Work had resumed in all areas
- b) Programme inspections and new investigation work was underway
- c) Legal processes had resumed
- d) Food Premise Inspections were being carried out
- e) Product Safety arrangements (post EU Exit) to continue
- f) All work to be aligned with GCC requirements
- g) The on-going review of Work of Service to continue

One member highlighted the various elements of work provided by Trading Standards. In terms of work with the County Council and the District Councils, it was suggested more information on the work with District Councils be included in the next report to the committee. **Action by – Interim Chief Fire Officer**

A member with a particular interest in animal welfare invited the Interim Chief Fire Officer and the Head of Regulatory Services, Consumer Protection and Trading Standards to meet with him in the Forest Dean to observe any potential issues relating to the abuse of animals by small holders. The invitation was noted and it was suggested officers liaise with the member/other members of the committee before considering the arrangements for a visit later in the year. Information on

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Trading Standards work associated with Animal Welfare to be included in the next report to the committee. **Action by – Interim Chief Fire Officer/Democratic Services**

One member of the committee expressed concern about road safety and enquired about the progress of the recommendations made by the Road Safety Cabinet Panel in 2020, (the recommendations were considered at the committee meeting held on 26 January 2020). In response, it was suggested the committee may want to consider a piece of work on road safety at a future meeting, with the focus of the next GFRS, (Community Safety), report to include background information on this aspect of work. The committee was reminded of the potential overlap in work covered by the various scrutiny committees and the need to avoid the duplication of certain issues. **Action by Interim Chief Fire Officer/Democratic Services**

The report was noted

7. QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT (2020/21)

Members were presented with an analysis of performance relating to delivery of services within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee. The report was prepared by the County Council's Performance & Improvement Team, using data up to 31 March 2021.

Cllr Carole Allaway Martin, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care: Commissioning, gave a useful explanation of what aspects of the performance report members might wish to concentrate on at future meetings, including the use of targets and symbols. It was suggested members may wish to make comparisons with previous performance reports and to prepare questions in advance of the meeting on areas they wished to seek clarification or further explanation on.

The committee reflected on the impact of the pandemic on delivery and performance and the unknown certainties anticipated from the easing of restrictions on 19 July 2021.

The report was noted.

8. WORK PLAN

The committee was asked to suggest items to add to the committee work plan and informed of items considered at previous meetings.

Highlighting the impact of the pandemic on the delivery of services going forward and the likely outcomes of pressures being placed on the NHS and Public Health Team over the winter months, it was suggested that the committee engage with the members of the Health Scrutiny Committee in considering the NHS Winter Plan proposals for 2021/22. An in-depth review of the Winter Plan 2021/22 to be considered at a joint committee meeting on the date of the scheduled Health Scrutiny Committee meeting on 8 March 2022. The date of the Adult Social Care

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and Communities Committee meeting scheduled on 15 March 2022 to be held in reserve (if required).

One member of the committee asked for an update on the Shingles Vaccination Programme to be included in a report to the committee at a future meeting.

Other items suggested for consideration at future meetings included:

- 1) Market Management Overview
- 2) Gloucestershire Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2020/21
- 3) Adult Social Care (Care Act) Three Tier Offer
- 4) Contain Outbreak Management Funding
- 5) Domiciliary Care Report
- 6) System Flow (New Guidance)
- 7) Health Inequalities
- 9) Covid-19 Funding/Community Grant Schemes Overview

CHAIRPERSON

Meeting concluded at 12.10pm