

Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee – 7 March 2023

Report from the Director of Public Health

Public Health & Communities Update

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1. Mental health tender award

We have completed the tender for the new mental wellbeing helpline for adults. The contract has been awarded to Rethink Mental Illness and the new service will launch on the 1st April 2023.

The service will provide early intervention support to people experiencing mild-moderate mental health issues, such as anxiety, stress, and depression. Drop-in support will be available via the phone, text, or web chat, 7 hours a day, 365 days a year. Users will have the option to remain anonymous. The service will work closely with more specialist mental health services in the county and can signpost to further support for those with higher level needs. It will also have an outreach function with a focus on engaging with communities who might be at higher risk of poor mental health and face barriers to seeking support.

The new helpline will incorporate the dedicated support for self-harm currently provided by the Gloucestershire Self-Harm Helpline, the contract for which ends in March 2023. It will also replace the current Qwell online mental health platform which also comes to the end of its contract in Spring 2023. We appreciate that service changes can be unsettling for vulnerable service users and will be working to ensure a smooth transition into the new service model.

We will monitor a range of service measures, including the presenting issues of people contacting the service, demographics, and individual wellbeing outcomes.

2. Children and Young People's Healthier Lifestyles (Weight Management) Service Contract Award

Commissioners have completed the tender process for a countywide children and young people's healthier lifestyles (weight management) service. The contract was awarded to BZ Bodies Ltd in February 2023, and the new service will be launched on 1st May 2023. There will be an initial contact term on four years and 11 months, until 31st March 2028, with an option for a three-year extension.

BZ Bodies is a specialised behavioural science and children's weight management provider, with a strong track record of delivering innovative lifestyle programmes for children and young people. BZ Bodies have been working with us since 2019 to develop and test a local weight management model for 7–11 year-olds and their families in Gloucester City and the Forest of Dean. Our next steps are to build on this experience to extend the offer across the county,

and introduce an offer for teenagers, and for under 7s (working closely with the developing 'family hubs' model).

The Service will foster a culture of building on individual and community strengths, enabling people to help themselves where they can, but with options for a range of digital and face-to-face support that is proportionate to a child or family's needs. It will work closely with more specialised weight management support, which is being developed within the county as part of our participation in NHS England's Childhood Obesity Integration Programme. Over time this will deliver an end-to-end integrated care pathway to support the range of children and young people's weight management needs.

The Service will adopt a community development approach, aiming to enable communities to play an increasing role in future delivery. To this end, we aim to reduce the annual contract value from Year 3 so we can invest a portion of the budget in community provision, focusing on neighbourhoods at higher risk of poorer health and communities facing barriers to accessing support.

3. Cabinet decisions

In January the Public Health and Communities Hub took three papers to Cabinet for approval.

Cabinet approved the decision to commission both the Specialist Sexual Health Service and the Public Health Nursing Service via a Section 76 agreement with NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board. This decision secures delivery of the Council's statutory responsibilities for sexual and reproductive health, the Healthy Child Programme and National Child Measurement Programme when the current commissioning arrangements end in March 2024. It maintains the integrated delivery model in the county, whereby the services are provided by Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust. The new agreement will come into place from 1st April 2024 and will be reviewed on an annual basis for a maximum of 9 years until 2033.

Cabinet also approved the request to run a competitive procurement process in respect of a contract for the supply of community drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services for adults. The current contract ends in March 2024 and the proposed new contract will have a term of up to nine years, giving service users continuity and stability. This decision allows us to continue to support some of our most vulnerable residents and help to reduce harm and improve outcomes. The social and economic return on investment for drug treatment services is 4:1 and we know that housing, health, and social care services all benefit when drug treatment services are working effectively. Commissioners are looking to publish the tender in May and award the contract in early Autumn for a contract start date of 1st April 2024.

4. The Gloucestershire Integrated Care Strategy – Unifying Themes

The Gloucestershire Integrated Care Strategy was published in December 2022. It has been developed by the One Gloucestershire Health & Wellbeing Partnership, based upon engagement with the public and in discussion with wider stakeholders across Gloucestershire. The strategy builds on the work already in place across the county, whilst recognising the opportunities of working together in the relatively newly formed Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

The strategy sets out a call to action across three unifying themes – employment, smoking and blood pressure. The idea is to use the unifying themes as a litmus test for the strategy and the partnership. Working on these themes will provide us with important insights over the next year into how we can galvanise our collective effort to support the delivery of this strategy. We will use the knowledge we gain by working together to develop the next iteration of the

Integrated Care Strategy. For each theme an ambition statement has been incorporated, we will work together over the coming months to identify what each partner can contribute towards achieving these ambitions, the scale of the impact we can collectively commit to, and the indicators we will use to understand our progress.

5. Visit from the Chief Medical Officer for England

In January, we were honoured to welcome Professor Chris Whitty to the county to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Edward Jenner's death, the pioneer of vaccinations who paved the way for small pox eradication. In addition to delivering a lecture at Gloucester Cathedral and other engagements across the county, he spent two hours with our public health senior leadership team. We talked about our reflections and learning from the pandemic, some of the strengths and challenges the county experiences, our local approach to levelling up, and heard Prof. Whitty's insights on how we can best work within our ICB to further develop local action on health and reducing inequalities. We also took him to the Cavern to meet the founders of the Kingfisher Treasure Seekers charity and hear about the amazing work they do to support vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Gloucester.



6. Funding to support a South West Illegal Tobacco Lead Post

Illegal tobacco is used at a higher rate in poorer communities and creates a cheap source of tobacco for children and young people, with children often being able to buy a single cigarette rather than a whole pack. Some illegal tobacco also contains higher levels of toxic ingredients such as tar, carbon monoxide, lead and arsenic, and the low cost encourages adults to continue smoking. It is also linked to low-level and large scaled organised crime.

In 2017, DPHs from nine Local Authorities across the South West agreed to contribute to funding a two-year secondment to create a new role of South West Illegal Tobacco Lead (SWITL). From 2019, this post has been funded by Trading Standards South-West (TSSW), contributions from DPH budgets and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). To date Gloucestershire has not contributed to the funding of this post.

The funding from HMRC is restricted in its use and the SWITL role has expanded significantly beyond the scope of this funding. Hence, the DPH contribution is used to fund the extended role to ensure that support is available to undertake the specific functions that DsPH required, such as:

- Liaison with Public Health colleagues and Trading Standards Teams
- Work around underage sales
- Work relating to e-cigs and vapes
- Social media and website activity
- Publicity and communications surrounding the successes of the SWITL and their completed investigations.

In 2021, TSSW was approached by the Directors of Public Health to consider a longer-term funding plan, thus enabling a more sustainable funding position, which matched the remaining period of HMRC funding, from April 2023 to Mar 2025. In addition, a part-time Support Officer has also been recruited to develop campaigns and liaise with tobacco control teams / DPHs and improve communications and social media.

These roles will be based within the South-West Regional Enforcement Team and will include support to the 12 Trading Standards services in the South-West, as well as support to public health teams in the delivery of their Tobacco Control Strategies.

The level of funding required across the South West over two years, April 2023 – March 2025 is £120,000. Each areas contribution is based on population data from the Office of National Statistics, with the contribution request from Gloucestershire over two years being £15,123.

There is significant added value provided from funding these posts on a regional basis and the local Trading Standards team have been consulted and are in support of the proposal. The Gloucestershire contribution will be funded from the public health budget.

7. White Ribbon Accreditation

In November 2022, the Council passed a motion condemning violence against women and girls (VAWG). The motion sets out a number of actions, including a commitment for the Council to become the first public body in Gloucestershire to receive 'White Ribbon Accreditation'.

White Ribbon Accreditation is overseen by the UK Charity White Ribbon and forms part of an international movement. The accreditation is intended to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to prevent and address male violence against women through:

- having a positive and safe organisational culture
- having staff who are knowledgeable and skilful in recognising and addressing violence against women, including abusive and sexist behaviour
- raising awareness among staff, enabling them to become allies and positive role models
- improving the experience of customers and stakeholders; and
- influencing wider societal change beyond the organisation to end violence against women.

In order to achieve the accreditation, the Council will need to establish a steering group to develop and deliver a three-year action plan; and establish a network of White Ribbon Ambassadors and Champions throughout the organisation. Rob Ayliffe, Director of Policy, Performance and Governance, has agreed to act as the senior White Ribbon Ambassador for the programme.

Officers are currently drawing together the steering group, and further updates on the programme will be provided to scrutiny in due course. The Scrutiny Committee will also receive a separate report on wider work in the county to address violence against women and girls at its March meeting.

8. Maximising Immunisations Uptake Plan

Alongside Gloucestershire ICB members, the Public Health and Communities Team are active participants in a local 'Maximising Immunisation Uptake Group' (MIUG), chaired by NHS England, the commissioners of vaccination services. The aim of this group is to ensure that interventions surrounding vaccinations are data-driven and evidence based; that areas of highest need are prioritised; community voices are heard and acted on, and interventions are evaluated for impact. A Local Action Plan has been put together which identifies pockets of low vaccination uptake in Gloucestershire and action being taken across the partnership to improve uptake.

Following a review of the data, the group agreed to prioritise efforts on childhood immunisations with a focus on people living in the 20% most deprived areas identified by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (known as the Core 20%). The strategic priority for the group is to ensure that vaccine coverage of two doses of MMR and 4-in-1 pre-school booster are above 95% by the time the child is 5. A local priority of understanding low uptake of Shingles vaccine amongst older people has also been added to the priority list to establish if there is any opportunity to improvement.

A list of initiatives being delivered by a range of partners has been identified and will be monitored for their impact on uptake (lead in brackets):

- (NHSE) Targeted work with primary care in conjunction with the Improving Immunisation Uptake Team based in the South, Central and West Commissioning Support Unit.
- (NHSE) Updating of an Adult Immunisation Toolkit to help GPs in their practice to better protect their patients by suggesting ways to improve uptake of the shingles and pneumococcal vaccines.
- (NHSE) National project on vaccine confidence to support Healthcare professionals in helping patients making decision about vaccine and what tools to use in conversations to address vaccine concerns.
- (NHSE) Measles and Rubella Elimination Strategy (detail to be confirmed, but in line with the national action plan).
- (Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board) Demonstrator site for delivery of immunisations based on the success of the Covid vaccine project.
- (GCC/GHLL) Delivery of e-Bug (a health education programme, developed by the UK Health Security Agency UKHSA and delivered locally by Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning, that aims to promote positive behaviour change among children and young people to support infection prevention control and increase vaccine uptake).
- (GCC) Promotion of the work of Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning who support schools to achieve the Healthy Schools Award, this includes delivering teaching modules on vaccination programmes.
- (GCC) Working via the Family Hubs model of early intervention and universal services to promote and enable uptake.

The group will also be routinely revisiting data and insight to establish whether additional initiatives need to be developed for certain inclusion groups at risk of lower uptake, for example new migrants, traveller communities, looked after children and home educated children.

Detail of the full UK immunisations schedule can be found here [Complete routine immunisation schedule - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complete-routine-immunisation-schedule)

