

## **Minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at 6.00 pm**  
**At Saltwells Education Development Centre, Bowling Green Road, Netherton**

### **Present:**

Councillor M Rogers (Chair)  
Councillor P Atkins (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors R Body, A Davies, J Elliott, J Foster, S Greenaway, L Johnson, P Lee, J Martin and K Razzaq

### **Dudley MBC Officers:**

M Spittle (Head of Access and Prevention), D Phillipowsky (Head of Adult Mental Health (Directorate of Adult Social Care)); D Pitches (Head of Healthcare Public Health), A Cartwright (Head of Service) (Directorate of Public Health and Wellbeing) and H Mills (Senior Democratic Services Officer) (Directorate of Finance and Legal).

### **Also in attendance:**

Councillor N Neale (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care)  
P Wall – West Midlands Ambulance Service (for Agenda Item No. 6)  
S Nicholls and J Young – Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust (for Agenda Item No. 6)  
L Abbiss – Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust (for Agenda Item No. 6)

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## **52 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Ahmed, R Collins, T Crumpton, M Hanif, A Hopwood, P Lowe; and Mr J Griffiths (Co-opted Member).

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53 **Appointment of Substitute Member**

It was reported that Councillors R Body, J Elliott, P Lee and J Martin had been appointed to serve as substitute members for Councillors T Crumpton, A Hopwood, R Collins and P Lowe, respectively, for this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee only.

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54 **Declaration of Interest**

No Member made a declaration of interest, in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct, in respect of any matter considered at the meeting.

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55 **Minutes**

**Resolved**

That the minutes from the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2023, be agreed as a correct record and signed.

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56 **Public Forum**

No issues were raised under this agenda item.

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57 **National Health Service (NHS) Quality Accounts**

The Committee considered the draft Quality Reports and Accounts of NHS Providers for 2022/23, including priorities set out for the respective services for the forthcoming year.

The Committee reviewed the Quality Account reports and documents that had been circulated and made comments as set out below:-

**West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS)**

A summary of the achievements in relation to the 2022/23 priorities was provided, together with the proposed priorities for the year 2023/24. It was recognised that some priorities spanned over both years.

Maternity had been a priority for 2022/23, with a lot of progress made to support the delivery of high-quality care for women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. Focus had been on providing training and the opportunity to observe within a maternity ward, as it was recognised that whilst maternity was a necessary skill, Ambulance staff were not always required to attend many maternity cases, therefore it was considered important to provide regular refresh training.

Mental Health was a priority for 2022/23 and would roll-forward into 2023/24 as it was considered a vital area of work to develop. Work continued in developing mental health champions to support other staff members across the Trust and commissioning discussions were still ongoing for funding to develop capacity and capability in mental health service delivery through work to achieve NHS Long Term Plan ambitions to improve the ambulance response to mental health.

Reference was made to the integrated emergency and urgent care clinical governance priority and WMAS taking on all 111 calls. It was confirmed that whilst the answering of 999 and 111 calls were among the best in the Country, a decision had been made to move 111 calls to a new private provider. Work would continue with the new provider to ensure calls were responded to appropriately and efficiently.

Use of alternative pathways was a priority for 2022/23 and would also roll-forward into 2023/24. It was reported that working collaboratively with Integrated Care Board's had allowed for patients to be referred/directed to the most appropriate pathway resulting in a reduction in conveyance rates to hospitals. Members were assured however that any patient that required emergency care would be conveyed to Accident and Emergency if required.

Developing WMAS role in Public Health to tackle inequalities and to play an integral part in supporting and improving public health was a priority for 2022/23. A WMAS Public Health Group had been established and key arrangements had been agreed. It was recognised that there was substantially more development work required in this area and therefore the priority would roll-forward into 2023/24.

The priorities for 2023/34 were outlined, namely:-

- Mental Health
- Integrated Emergency and Urgent Care Clinical Governance
- Utilisation of Alternative Pathways
- Developing WMAS role in improving Public Health
- Reducing Patient harm incidents across the Trust

Following the presentation of the report, Members made comments and asked questions and responses were provided, where necessary, as follows:-

- a) Councillor P Atkins, in referring to Part 3 of the document, in particular the use of alternative pathways performance, commented that all actions/measures of success had been rag rated green as actions complete, however there was no data on the number of non-conveyance or evidence to identify that the pathways were working well. In response P Wall confirmed that the data was available and would be happy to include in the final document or circulate to members separately for information.
- b) In referring to the non-conveyance of patients, Councillor P Atkins asked for assurance that WMAS were comfortable with this approach and if the decision was made from taking a call assessment or by ambulance staff upon arrival. In responding P Wall stated that calls were broken down into categories namely 'hear and treat', 'see and treat' or 'see and convey'. Figures for conveying to the Emergency Department were now back to what they were in 2017, data of which would be shared with members following the meeting, however data would reflect the West Midlands and Black Country and not just residents within the Dudley Borough. Assurance was provided that should a patient require emergency care they would continue to be conveyed to the Emergency Department without delay.
- c) Councillor P Atkins referred to the number of outstanding actions for the Mental Health priority and commented that it would be useful for feedback to be provided in the future from patients, and the patients forum once established. In responding P Wall confirmed that a stakeholder meeting was scheduled to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2023 which would focus on Mental Health. An invite would be circulated to Members accordingly.

- d) Councillor P Atkins commented positively on the WMAS social media activity.
- e) In responding to a question raised by Councillor R Body with regards to obesity, P Wall commented that obesity had not been incorporated as a specific priority however would be linked to other aspects including supporting public health. It was however recognised that in extreme circumstances specialist equipment and training was required.

S Nicholls of Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust referred to the health advice and support provided by the School Nurse Service on how to keep healthy and whilst data was not included in the accounts, service delivery was doing well and further information could be provided following the meeting.

### Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust (DIHC)

A background to the remit of the Trust and services in which it supported was provided. It was commented that clinical audits had recommenced following reduced activity and service constraints during the pandemic, and that the Trust was still within its developing stages during 2022/23.

The three core elements that were priorities during 2022/23, namely Safe, Effective and Experience, would roll-forward and form the priorities for 2023/24, with greater focus on learning and working systems.

It was commented that the Trust was confident in its approach to safety of its patients and workforce, and the priority would be to focus on the further development and implementation of key national schemes designed to strengthen systems and processes for learning.

Work moving forward would also focus on health inequalities, patient populations and the impact from Covid and how the trust can improve annual health checks to address these issues, working closely with NHS providers and Primary Care.

Reference was also made to infection protection and control post pandemic and to learn from best practise to protect staff and communities and incident reporting and learning for workforce. From recent staff surveys, improvements had been identified in 5 areas, in particular in relation to staff retention.

## The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust (DGFT)

In presenting the Quality Accounts for DGFT, whilst it was recognised that not all actions/priorities had been achieved, it was commented that the trust was still recovering from the impact of the Pandemic, and Members were reassured that the Trust were doing their level best to improve.

It was reported that any priorities not achieved would be rolled forward into 2023/24. In referring to patient feedback, the consensus was that patients did feel more involved with regards to their care and treatment decisions and that things were returning back to normal with visits now allowed and information provided.

With regards to complaints, whilst it was recognised that there had been an increase in the number of complaints, some of which were complex, there had been a decrease in the percentage response time.

In referring to the priority for treating patients in the right place at the right time, it was commented that the newly built rainbow unit, which provided acute medical care, had provided support in achieving this target, although the Trust were still experiencing issues in applying the 'Home for Lunch' initiative and with the discharge of patients. Work would continue with Social Care partners to improve discharge rates to ensure the Emergency Department could continue to flow and this would remain as a priority for 2023/24.

The participation of patients in Dudley trials was positively commented upon and it was advised that the Care Quality Commission had undertaken an unannounced focussed inspection of the Paediatric Emergency Department in February 2023. The inspection report had not yet been published, although may be available for inclusion in the final version.

Following the presentation of the report, Members made comments and asked questions and responses were provided, where necessary, as follows:-

- a) In response to a question raised by Councillor P Atkins with regards to how often DGFT achieved 30 discharges and if there were any barriers that the Local Authority could assist with, it was commented that more than 30 discharges were regularly achieved and work with Social Services to improve discharges had improved, although it was recognised that there was much more work to be done to make a measurable impact.

- b) In responding to a question raised by Councillor R Body in relation to whether there was evidence of a high number of deaths following discharges as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, it was confirmed that although there was no specific data to record this information, a review of mortality was conducted on a yearly basis which would identify if anything had happened to cause a spike. Members were assured that whilst there was a demand for beds, a patient would not be discharged until considered medically fit.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the Quality Reports and Accounts of NHS Providers for 2022/23 and the priorities set out for the services for the forthcoming year be received and noted.
- (2) That West Midlands Ambulance Service to provide data in relation to the number of patients conveyed to the Emergency Department or directed to alternative pathways.
- (3) That Dudley Integrated Health and Care Trust provide further information and data of the work of the School Nurse Service, particular with regards to tackling obesity.

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## **58 Serious Violence Statutory Duty and Strategy**

A report of the Acting Director of Public Health and Wellbeing was submitted on the new statutory duty for Local Authorities with regard to violence and the work being undertaken to meet this duty.

In presenting the report, the Head of Service stated that the 2022 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill placed a duty on Community Safety Partnership to develop a strategy to tackle violent crime. The law required specified authorities, namely the police, justice and probation services, youth offending teams, fire and rescue, health and integrated Boards, together with the local authority, to work collaboratively to prevent and reduce serious violence, including domestic abuse and sexual offences.

It was commented that the direction of focus would be youth on youth and knife crime, and Dudley's Safeguarding People Partnership already had a number of work streams in place to address these concerns.

It was recognised that serious violence could not be tackled in isolation and that the strategy was based upon a Public Health approach examining evidence to understand the wider influences, with focus on early intervention and prevention. Early help work was considered vital and interventions to avert a young person from criminal behaviour to other activities needed to be further explored. Collaborative partnership working to address wider determinant was essential, and it was recognised that further work to tackle disproportion within deprived areas was needed.

Following the presentation of the report, Members made comments and asked questions and responses were provided, where necessary, as follows:-

- In responding to a question raised by Councillor R Body in relation to the data for youth crime and violence in the Borough and what interventions were currently taking place, the Head of Service confirmed that she would share the current crime data with Members following the meeting, however Public Health were working on a profile of 49% for serious crime and violence in Dudley. It was acknowledged that 20-30 years ago the majority of crimes were in relation to car crime/theft or shopping lifting, and a reduction in crime had been evident during the covid lockdown period. However there had been a dramatic increase in serious violence offences.

The majority of interventions were currently taking place in known hot spot areas namely Dudley Town Centre and Merry Hill, where crime rates and hospital admissions as a result of violent crime were higher. A good relationship had been developed with local schools and colleges to help identify young people that may be getting involved in violence. Work was also undertaken with faith trusts and Cranstoun Here4Youth, who provided support to young people.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the report on Serious Violence Statutory Duty and the associated draft strategy, be received and noted.
- (2) That the work of the Safe and Sound Board in undertaking the statutory duty around prevention of serious violence on behalf of the Local Authority, be supported.
- (3) That the Head of Service provide Members with current crime data following the meeting.



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59 **Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 3 (1<sup>st</sup> October, 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2022)**

Members considered a report of the Director of Adult and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and the Acting Director of Public Health and Wellbeing on the quarter 3 Public Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care Quarterly Performance covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2022.

In referring to Performance Indicator PI 2074 – Proportion of premises in the Borough that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law (star rating 3 or more), the Chair referred to comments that had previously been raised in relation to whether 3 stars and being broadly compliant was a high enough standard of achievement. The Head of Service confirmed that this was a national rating standard, and most providers were rated 3 stars.

**Resolved**

That the report be noted.

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60 **Annual Scrutiny Report 2022/23**

Members considered a report of the Lead for Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) on the Annual Scrutiny Report for 2022/23.

The Chair reported that the Annual Scrutiny Report had been approved at Full Council on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2023. Should Members wish to suggest any possible future items of business for inclusion in the draft Annual Scrutiny Programme for consideration in the forthcoming year, it was requested that these be submitted directly to the Chair or Democratic Services.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Annual Scrutiny Report 2022/23 be received and noted.
- (2) That any proposed future items of business for inclusion in the draft Annual Scrutiny Programme for 2023/24 be submitted directly to the Chair or Democratic Services.

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61 **Action Tracker and Future Business**

**Resolved**

That the action tracker and Future Business, be received and noted.

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62 **Questions under Council Procedure Rule 11.8**

There were no questions to the Chair pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.8.

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The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

CHAIR