

HEALTH LIAISON BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2021 commencing at 2.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Maskell (Chairman)

Cllr. Parkin (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Perry Cole, G. Darrington, Harrison and Hunter

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Foster

Cllrs. Griffiths and Osborne-Jackson were also present.

41. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Health Liaison Board held on 9 September 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

42. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

43. Actions from the previous meeting

Members were advised that a meeting with West Kent Housing regarding digital inclusion had not yet taken place. The Health & Communities Manager advised that funding had been received to address digital inclusion. The Council had been collaborating with Compaid and the Local Strategic Partnership Group to ensure residents had access to digital services.

An item on digital inclusion would be brought to a future meeting of the Board.

44. Health Liaison Board 2021

The Health & Communities Manager presented the report which outlined the terms of reference for the Board. Members were invited to consider the key priorities they would like the Board to focus on in the year.

Members discussed their involvement in local groups relating to health. Examples included the Senior Actions Forum, local Patient Participation Groups (PPG), the Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust Stakeholder Council, Kent County Council's Health & Overview Scrutiny Committee, the Sevenoaks District Access Group and the Housing & Health Advisory Committee.

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Members suggested that digital inclusion should be a key priority for the Board as many healthcare services were provided online or over the phone. It was expressed that some residents, particularly the elderly, may not be able to access the services. There were concerns that digital services had led to difficulty accessing prescriptions and social isolation for residents.

A further topic of interest to Members was communication between General Practice (GP) surgeries and patients. Based on experiences and discussions in other groups, Members were concerned GP surgeries did not have the necessary support in order to communicate to patients effectively. It was reported that variations in surgeries' effective communication was leading to residents' anxiety around Covid-19 vaccination programmes. It was suggested that there was some disparity between the operation of GP surgeries and information from the Primary Care Network (PCN). It was recommended that best practice should be identified accordingly through the appropriate meeting channels by Officers and Members.

Some Members had been appointed as Council representatives to the Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust Stakeholder Council but had had little contact with them in the last year.

Members raised concerns and developments with the delivery of vaccinations against Covid-19 which were currently being rolled out within the district. Residents had been directed to vaccination centres far away from where they lived or received mixed messages about which centre they needed to go to. The Health & Communities Manager advised that the vaccination of all residents over 80 had nearly been completed by the Sevenoaks PCN covering Sevenoaks, Edenbridge and surrounding villages. However, the vaccination process had been slower in the North of the District. In addition, vaccinations were being delivered at the homes of residents who were housebound. The brief closure of the vaccination centre at the Alexandria Suite in Swanley was likely due to a delay to the delivery of doses. Members queried if there was a database available to allow them to keep track of vaccinations by ward. The Health & Communities Manager advised it would be circulated should one be available.

Members discussed the asymptomatic testing for Covid-19 which was taking place across Kent. It was raised that there had been some inconsistent messaging on websites about who was able to access a test. It was noted that the guidance concerning Covid-19 was frequently changing. There were concerns that some residents did not know the asymptomatic testing was available to them. The Community Connectors newsletter was being circulated to residents to let them know they could get an asymptomatic test. Following queries on how residents without access to email would access the information on the Community Connectors letter, the Health & Communities Manager advised that a meeting with volunteer leads would take place where they would discuss how to get key messages out to communities.

Further topics raised for the Board to discuss included district nursing, dentistry and preventative care.

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Resolved: That the report be noted.

45. Updates from Members

Cllr Dr Canet reported that the Senior Action Forum had concerns for elderly residents who may be suffering from loneliness which had been made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cllr Harrison raised that the Community Cupboard had been liaising with other agencies as some residents seeking food support needed other forms of support. The Health & Communities Manager advised that referrals to the Council would allow residents to be directed to support for their specific needs.

The Board requested their vote of thanks to be recorded to NHS staff who had been working during the pandemic. In particular, the staff at Darent Valley Hospital were praised for their care and professionalism.

46. Workplan

Members discussed the work plan. A presentation from the Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services (DAVSS) would take place at the next meeting. Further items suggested for future meetings included Dentistry service provision, a District Nursing Report, Preventative Care progress and a presentation on progress from the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Health and Wellbeing Board.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 3.54 PM

CHAIRMAN