

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

9 January 2025

Present:

Councillors P Bullivant (Chair), A Leadbetter and A Saywell
S Brown, Director of Public Health
T Forster, Director of Integrated Adult Social Care
S Lewis, Joint Engagement Forum
Councillor G Yardy, District Councils' representative

Present – (remote)

Councillor F Letch
S Lonton, Healthwatch, Devon
I Luscombe, Environmental Health Officer Group
Dr P Collins, NHS Devon
Ch Sup Dan Evans, Devon & Cornwall Police
C Tidman, Royal Devon University Healthcare

Apologies:

G Ellis, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
A Jones, Torbay & South Devon NHS
J Chandler, South West Ambulance Service

* **177** **Declarations of interest**

The Chair reminded Members they should declare any interests they may have in any item to be considered, prior to any discussion taking place on that item.

* **178** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2024 be signed as a correct record.

* **179** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

* **180** **Appointment of Vice-Chair**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

* **181** **Devon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy: Priorities and Outcomes Monitoring**

The Board considered the Report from the Director of Public Health on the performance for the Board, which monitored the priorities identified in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Devon 2020-25.

The latest Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Report was available on the [Devon Health and Wellbeing website](#).

The Report monitored the four Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-25 priorities, and included breakdowns by local authority, district and trends over time. These priorities areas included:

- Create opportunities for all
- Healthy safe, strong and sustainable communities
- Focus on mental health
- Maintain good health for all

Three indicators had been updated since the last report to the Board, namely:

- Smoking Prevalence in adults (aged 18 and over) – current smokers (APS) (%) (Persons) (1 year range) (Persons) (2023)
- Under 75 mortality rate from causes considered preventable (per 100,000) (Persons) (2023)
- Suicide rate (per 100,000) (10+ years) (Persons) (2021-23)

The Chair was keen to see an action plan going forward in regard to these key indicators and would discuss further with officers outside the meeting.

It was noted that South Hams exhibited significantly lower rates than other areas, indicating it could serve as a benchmark for learning.

* **182** **NHS Devon Update**

The Board noted the update presented by the Chief Medical Officer, NHS Devon, which provided Devon-wide and national developments within the NHS. It was intended to provide the Board with summary information to ensure Members were kept abreast of important developments.

Points of highlight included:

- Recognition of the valiant efforts by staff in the health and social care sector during a tough period, especially dealing with winter pressures and critical incident.
- There had been increased resilience compared to previous years due to better planning, despite challenges from winter respiratory viruses, post-holiday pressures, and a cold spell.

- Vaccination rates - Devon traditionally had higher vaccination rates, but this year rates were down nationally, impacting staff sickness and the population. Focus would be on regaining vaccination benefits next year.
- Waiting times - continued efforts to reduce long waits for elective patients, with a goal to eliminate 78 and 65-week long waits by the end of the financial year.
- Engagement work - update on the engagement work around the government's 10-year plan, with nearly 1000 pieces of engagement and upcoming face-to-face events in January.

In response to questions relating to the hospitals currently being overwhelmed with respiratory illness, Dr Collins stated that it was not too late for people to get vaccinated, as it still offered protective benefits even later into the winter season, and that it was planned to benefit from this year's experiences to improve future communications.

* **183** **Pharmacy Update**

The Board received a briefing paper from NHS Devon regarding Pharmacy Services in Devon, following a request made at a previous meeting.

The briefing paper stated that the Pharmacy First Service was a national service commissioned by NHS England. All community pharmacies in England had the opportunity to sign up and deliver the service, however, it was not mandatory. In Devon over 95% of community pharmacies were signed up to the scheme.

The paper also included updates on drug supply; support for pharmacists' mental health and wellbeing; and pharmacy support for vulnerable and elderly individuals with their prescribed medications.

In discussion, the Board noted that there was to be a pharmacy needs assessment update early this year, which would help determine the feasibility of going to market and potentially increasing provision.

Dr Collins committed to updating on next steps and timelines following the community pharmacies consultation, to which the Board had already responded.

* **184** **Better Care Fund Update**

The Board noted the quarterly update Report of the Director of Integrated Adult Social Care on the Better Care Fund, covering latest performance.

The report provided information the BCF 2024/25 Q2 return for the Additional Discharge Fund, which was approved by Councillor Bullivant as Chair on 31 October 2024, to meet national deadlines.

Additionally, the report requested that the Board note the Q3 return, due on 14 February 2025, would fall outside the Board's meeting schedule. Therefore, Councillor Bullivant would approve the return before submission, to be presented to a future Board meeting for endorsement.

The Board's questions and discussion points included:

- As to the levels of falls, it was noted that falls were not unique to Devon, and that it was an annual measure. Devon's aging population and frailty contributed to higher fall rates. A challenging target had been set to be ambitious despite the population's characteristics.
- Regarding the Government's announcement of an additional £86 million in DSG funding for this financial year and the next, the exact timing remained unknown. However, it was clarified that the funds would be distributed as soon as they were received.
- Concerns around the three Pathways, particularly the potential shortfall in P2 rehab capacity leading to overuse of care home capacity. Officers acknowledged the issue, and agreed to investigate benchmarking data and report back to the Discharge group.
- An internal BCF metric to measure the move from institutionalised care to home care to promote independence was suggested.
- Making communities more frailty-friendly to help people stay at home longer with support from family and local communities; and that Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 specifications were being updated, with data collection over future months to monitor impacts and reduce reliance on bed-based care.

* **185** **Climate Change Dashboard**

The Board noted the report on the first outline Climate dashboard to inform the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

It was explained that the Climate Change dashboard had been developed following a [report](#) to the Board in 2024. The specific aim for Devon was to develop a JSNA that informed local climate, health and equity as part of a Health in All Policy approach. A pragmatic approach had been taken to develop a tool with available indicators that met priority needs, and sought to influence creation of adoption of further indicators deemed most important.

The Board were asked to note the [Climate Change dashboard](#) and comment on content to inform any development they considered should be prioritised.

Discussion followed around the role of district councils in addressing the various issues; the importance of strategic discussions between different teams to ensure understanding and a focus on areas of success; and the Board's strategy refresh which was highlighted as an opportunity to define their role, using data to measure progress.

Examples of air pollution and its impact on behaviour were also discussed, stressing the need for local data and the ability to influence behaviour through information. The conversation also touched on the importance of understanding cost implications and long-term trends to make informed decisions.

* **186** **Early Years Strategy - progress update**

The Board considered the report and presentation of the Director of Public Health & Communities together with attached Early Years Strategy for Devon 2024-25. The report asked the Board to endorse the Early Years Strategy and to agree regular updates on its implementation and to support associated actions.

The report set out the overall vision, the six strategic priorities, and guiding principles of the Strategy. The Strategy was last presented to the Board in July 2023 and this report provided an update on progress.

Board discussion highlighted the importance of understanding financial and resource requirements, along with the value of community engagement in prevention and support services. The Board agreed on the importance of developing detailed action plans and understanding the cost implications to make informed decisions.

The Board **resolved** to endorse the Early Years Strategy 2024-25 and to agree to regular updates.

* **187** **Devon Youth Council - Mental Health in Schools and Colleges**

The Board received the presentation report from Devon Youth Council on their work relating to mental health in schools and colleges, highlighting the need for early prevention and support.

The Youth Council had conducted a 'Make Your Mark' survey, which had revealed that mental health was the top issue for young people in Devon. Over 2,000 responses had been gathered, and the Youth Council were collaborating with the NHS to review mental health support in schools. The focus was on ensuring resources were allocated effectively to meet the needs identified by young people and to inform future commissioning for mental health support teams.

Discussion focussed on the need for simple changes in schools to support neurodivergent students and those with special educational needs. The importance of inclusive school environments and the role of the Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP) was highlighted. The conversation also emphasised the need for cultural change, consistent mental health support, and the value of extracurricular activities in building confidence and a sense of belonging among students. Collaboration with public health surveys and securing funding for equal support across schools were also discussed.

The Board congratulated the presenters on an excellent report.

* **188** **Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Board noted the Scrutiny Work Programme.

* **189** **Forward Plan**

The Board noted the Board's Forward Plan.

* **190** **Dates of Future Meetings**

Board Development Workshop – Friday 14 March, 1pm-4pm at County Hall

Next Board meeting – 20 March 2025

Future meeting dates of the Board could be found on the Council's website - [Browse meetings - Health and Wellbeing Board - Democracy in Devon](#)

NOTES:

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

* **DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.54 pm