

HEALTH AND ADULT CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 June 2020

Present:-

Councillors S Randall-Johnson (Chair), H Ackland (Vice-Chair), M Asvachin, J Berry, P Crabb, R Peart, S Russell, P Sanders, A Saywell, M Shaw, R Scott, J Trail, P Twiss, N Way, C Wright and J Yabsley

Apologies:-

Councillor L Parker

Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25

Councillor A Leadbetter

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Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 March 2020 be signed as a correct record.

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Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

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Public Participation

In accordance with the Council's Public Participation Rules, the Committee received and acknowledged representations from Councillor C Gardener (East Devon District Council) read on her behalf by the Scrutiny Officer (near the conclusion of the meeting) on a matter to be considered by the Committee, namely 'Covid-19 Response' (Minute *194 refers).

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Preparation and Response for the COVID 19 - Response

(Councillor A Leadbetter attended in accordance with Standing Order 25 (1) and spoke to this item at the invitation of the Committee highlighting and thanking the County Council officers and staff working with NHS and partners across health and care for their exceptional work during this pandemic).

(a) Introductory Comments

The Chief Executive (Devon County Council) with the Director of Public Health and Accountable Officer (NHS Devon Clinical Commission Group) and the Chief Officer and Adult Care and Health (Devon County Council) reported on the previous and current measures being undertaken by the County Council with the NHS and the private/voluntary care sector to safeguard the public and mitigate the wider impacts of the COVID-19 virus.

The Officers responded to Members' questions relating to:

- the effective work of the Council with NHS partners and the relatively low incidents of infections and mortality in the County both in hospitals and in the community including care and nursing homes which was a tribute to all Health and Care staff across the system;
- the support for key workers across the County;

- governance and local decision making and planning arrangements and the County Council's designation as a Beacon Council, leading in the South West;
- the approach of the recovery phase including assessment and mitigation of the wider economic, societal and health impacts including the suppressed other health demands and their implications;
- the procurement arrangements to ensure proper supply of personal protection equipment (PPE), redeployment of staff across to support the 111 service, Devon Doctors and local hospitals;
- new joint crossing working arrangements led by Public Health and the ongoing planning through for example a Pandemic Incident Management Team;
- support provided to all CQC registered care homes with close working between the CCG and the County Council to ensure adequate PPE supplies, infection control and testing;
- partnership working with Public Health on the local deployments of the national Test and Trace service and the Local Outbreak Management Plan;
- Lessons were to be learned from discharge from hospitals into community settings and the need for early testing, trace and isolate processes; and
- the need for and development of local control to manage effectively any further local outbreaks and with low levels of incidents the chances of success would be enhanced.

(b) System Response

The Committee considered the Report of the Associate Director of Commissioning (Care and Health) (Devon County Council and NHS Devon CCG) and Director of Commissioning – NHS Devon CCG on the background to the pandemic, planning and preparation, the ongoing response, restoration and transformation, and activity and performance.

The Directors and the Chair of the Devon CCG and Dr D Jones (GP) responded to Members' questions relating to:

- the quick effective roll out and use of digital technology for remote consultations to help ensure safety for GP surgeries and the public across the County and the anticipated increase of such use in the future;
- the possible impact of the pandemic and its indirect consequences on the Long Term Plan across the health and care system and partners;
- the complex process for the recording of deaths and analysis of excess (non COVID-19) deaths and subject to verification the lower than expected numbers in Devon;
- the possible impacts of the pandemic on Mental Health and domestic abuse for example and the wider implications which were being examined by the County Council;
- removal by Government of routine burdens to assist surge planning within the NHS (a full list would be provided to Members);
- the existing and developing work across health and social care by the Health Protection Board on testing processes including all staff and residents in care settings and preparation for further outbreaks (and the Director of Public Health undertook to provide a briefing note to Members on social care and health developments in these areas); and
- the impact on care homes and possible future closures.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Randall Johnson, **SECONDED** by Councillor Ackland and

RESOLVED

(i) that the summary of arrangements for planning for and responding to the COVID-19 emergency within the health and care system in Devon be acknowledged;

(ii) that the restoration and transformation of services following the COVID-19 emergency be supported; and

(iii) that the commitment and achievements of all health and care staff across the period be recognised and accordingly all staff be thanked for their dedicated service.

(c) A Public Health Overview

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity (PH/20/01) in an overview of the COVID-19 Pandemic and context for the impact on the Health and Care system and the responses.

The Report covered national preparation for pandemics through modelling, the impact of social distancing measures including data on the population and international comparisons, deaths in Devon and the future including identified risks and implications, financial, legal and equality considerations.

The Government recently asked Upper Tier and Unitary Local Authorities to establish COVID-19 Health Protection Boards (chaired by their Directors of Public Health) and Local Outbreak Engagement Boards (Chaired by Leaders) to ensure outbreaks of COVID-19 could be managed at local level. Work was underway to prepare Local Outbreak Management Plans with the expectation that these would be in place by the end of June 2020. Devon County Council had been selected as a 'Beacon Council' in the South West to develop and share best practice, one of eleven nationally.

The Committee noted the overview report and supported the further work taking place on the development of Local Outbreak Management Plans.

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Whole System Performance

The Committee considered the Joint Report of the Associate Director of Commissioning (Care and Health) and Director of Commissioning (Devon CCG) (ACH/20/124) on an update on activity and performance across the wider health and care system based on performance data as at April 2020 (Month 1) including later data where available. The focus covered acute and community hospital settings, primary care and social care selected by system leaders to provide a whole system view.

The Directors and the Chair of Devon CCG responded to Members' questions relating to:

- diagnostics within 6 weeks and performance against the range of national cancer standards targets (correction of the figures in section 5.6 of the Report was reported) and the need for a wider Devon/Cornwall and Peninsula approach with specialised services and diagnostic techniques which were being developed, the single hospital solution was not appropriate;
- the socio-economic impacts and safeguarding issues as a result of the pandemic and work to add capacity and investment to support vulnerable people;
- the success of the 'proud to care campaign' and the need for more capacity across health and social care noting the complex training required with increased acuity within personal care in the community;
- the ongoing planning for restoration of elective activity levels for treatment and diagnostic testing;
- streamlined processes for improving delayed transfers of care and the need to build resilience in the personal care market; and
- the need to review the long Term Plan as a result of the pandemic and its ongoing impacts across health and social care.

The Committee noted the Report on the impact of COVID-19 on health and social care and the consequent need to review the Long Term Plan.

* **196** **Winter Pressures 2019/2020**

The Committee considered the Report of Associate Director of Commissioning (Care and Health) (Devon County Council and NHS Devon CCG) and Director of Commissioning – NHS Devon CCG (ACH/20/125) on activity and performance over the winter period of October 2019 to March 2020 and a comparison to the previous year was available. It was noted that preparations to respond to the Covid19 pandemic commenced during late February and into March impacting upon the Urgent Care Winter performance. The Report covered 3 areas:

- Pre-admission to hospital;
- Hospital performance; and
- Discharge and post hospital

The Officers and Dr D Jones (GP) responded to Members' questions relating to:

- the need to promote the flu vaccinations programme which in accordance with the national strategy was planned to be implemented earlier and to cover more people with a proposed reduction in the age limit; the social distancing and other current measures if continued would mitigate the impacts;
- improved access to primary care now provided total cover for the Devon population with access to primary care services at evenings and weekends with more digital assessments and less face to face contacts;
- analysis of the number of adult social care assessments and the impact of the pandemic cover and ensuring; and
- the national ongoing review of the 'Nightingale' hospitals and the remaining uncertainties in regard to the pandemic.

The Committee recognised the ongoing pressures faced by the Health and Care system over winter 2019/20 and noted the COVID-19 pandemic impact on review arrangements for last winter.

* **197** **Information Previously Circulated**

Information previously circulated for Members relating to topical developments included:

- (a) Regular Adult Social Care Briefings (from May to June 2020).
- (b) Information and invite to an NHS Devon CCG and COVID-19 Councillor Webinar on 27 May on giving a virtual session on their response to COVID-19 in Devon.
- (c) Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust 17 April, 1 May and 15 May 2020 Update - Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee.
- (d) Newsletter: South West Academic Health Science Network April 2020 Newsletter.
- (e) Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Update - Letter from Matt Hancock and Robert Jenrick outlining the latest position.
- (f) Stakeholder update from Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust: May 2020.

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

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 1.20 pm