

Cabinet Lead Update November 2024

Adult Social Care

CQC Inspection

The CQC inspection of adult social care took place in September. Current indications are that the report will be published at the end of November.

Community Health Services Contract Award

Following the decision to not extend the HCRG Care Group contract for health and care services in B&NES and the subsequent in-sourcing of B&NES adult social care services in April this year; the Integrated Care Board (ICB) undertook a procurement process for community health services across B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire. This resulted in the contract being awarded to HCRG Care Group with a start date of April 2025. This will be discussed elsewhere on the agenda.

Budget Pressures

There are in-year pressures on adult social care budgets, primarily in the areas of learning disabilities and older people. These are being managed and adult social care is currently predicting a break-even position at year end.

Englishcombe Lane Development

Planning permission has now been granted for the development of 16 new homes for people with complex learning disabilities and autism. The homes are designed specifically for the needs of this client group and the development will protect and enhance it's green setting. It will enable us to further increase local service provision which will reduce the need to place B&NES residents out of area. We are hoping that the homes will be ready for occupancy during 2027.

Black History Month

B&NES worked alongside AWP to arrange and host an event for Black History Month. Pauline Spence-McCalla, B&NES employed admin in the older adults mental health team was key in putting the interactive and fun agenda together. It included the following:

- Rubba - 'Afidance' African drum and dance
- //Kabbo Hue - African Artist (see attached bio). <https://kahue-stories.org.uk/>
- Speaker: Pauline Swaby - Services provided in BaNES by 'Bath Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens Association' and Age UK for the BaME community.
- Speaker: Professor Shawn Sobers – University of West England 'A Visual Black History of home, culture and identity. (Book: Black Everyday Lives, Material, Culture and Narratives).

Pauline further arranged for a pop up food van selling Caribbean fare to be located on the RUH site on the day of the collaboration event.

Pauline also took time each week to celebrate Black History Month by sending out facts and information about Black Culture over the centuries, information that was both a surprise and illuminating.

Lastly, there was also an opportunity to book to go along to Fairfield House for a tour and talk about its history.

Public Health

Drugs and alcohol

The B&NES Drug and Alcohol Partnership submitted a Synthetic Opioids Preparedness Plan to the national Joint Combating Drugs Unit as part of a national approach to tackle the risks from drugs like fentanyl or nitazines. The Council's drug and alcohol team hosted a webinar in September summarizing the key parts of this plan and a video is available to watch. Key contributors also included colleagues from the Council's Emergency Planning team and local drug and alcohol services.

New Food Access Toolkit

A new toolkit to support community leaders and policy makers in addressing food insecurity has been developed in collaboration with University of Bath. Toolkit development was funded through the University of Bath's UKRI funded Policy Support Fund and informed by workshops with Radstock Town Council and partners, and with Council Transport colleagues. Workshops are also currently running in partnership with Keynsham Town Council.

Smoking

Smokers in Bath and North East Somerset are being encouraged to swap cigarettes for vapes with a free vape kit offer from B&NES Stop Smoking Service as part of the Government's ambition towards a smoke-free generation. Swap to Stop is a world-first national scheme in which almost 1 in 5 of all smokers in England will be provided with a vape starter kit to help them quit smoking as part of a series of measures to help the government meet its ambition of being smokefree by 2030.

Bath West Children's Centre Service

In August, following a robust options appraisal and Officer recommendation, a Single Member Decision was made by Cllr Paul May to in-source the Bath West Children's Centre Service. The current contract with Action for Children ends on 31st March 2025, after which time the service will be delivered by Bright Start Children's Centre Services, who currently provide children's centre services in Bath East, Keynsham and Chew Valley and Somer Valley. Mobilisation meetings are underway to bring together key teams from the Council and Action for Children to ensure a smooth transition and continuous support for families in the Bath West area.

Royal Victoria Park café and leisure facilities

Following a recent procurement exercise by B&NES Council the current operator of the tennis and golf facilities, Excel Tennis Ltd, was awarded a contract to run both the café and the leisure activities for the next 20 years. Excel will continue to offer

the leisure activities as well as run the café. It has already invested over £250K in refurbishment of the pavilion and café area - Treetops.

Winter preparation

The Council hosted a Care Provider Winter Preparedness Workshop for all care homes, home care and other adult social care services. In partnership with the BSW Integrated Care Board and the UK Health Security Agency. The event was well attended and aimed to prepare care providers for the autumn winter season, by providing advice and guidance on all aspects of infection prevention management and to provide training and networking opportunities.

Alison Born – Cabinet Lead for Adult Services and Public Health