

## **Director of Adult Social Care Update Report for Scrutiny June 2021**

The health and social care system has seen increasing pressure across B&NES with increased demand for services and staff shortages. This is having a significant impact on our Reablement Service provided by Virgin Care and services provided by AWP and Oxford Health.

### **1. Community Resource Centres and Extra Care**

Work has continued to develop the activities within the CRCs and Extra Care following the transfer in October 2020. There has been significant work to increase recruitment and reduce the use of agency staff. This has been difficult as Covid has continued to place pressures on staffing levels and overall energy. However the services have also successfully supported the whole system by increasing occupancy, creating short term beds to support discharge out of hospital and, notably, worked closely with Virgin Care to set up a shared provision (intermediate nursing beds) while the Sulis community hospital was temporarily closed.

We are currently consulting on pay, terms and conditions to reduce the disparities identified post transfer to the Council. This consultation is supported by our Trade Union colleagues and has been well received by staff.

### **2. Commissioning**

The Commissioning team have continued to work hard to support the Covid response. Over £3 million from NHSE has now been distributed to care homes, home care and the third sector to support Infection Prevention and Control (IPC). This funding has either gone directly to the providers or supported measures to support the whole sector. Wider measures have included IPC officers who have been working proactively across the sector to prevent and respond to infections and outbreaks and this has been warmly received by providers. In addition, you may have seen the Proud to Care campaign which is supporting the sector to recruit and retain staff.

The team has also commissioned, and contract managed residential and nursing beds, home care and reablement provision to support flow out of hospital. The second wave of Covid led to significant pressures on both home care and care homes, leading to further infections and sadly deaths. Lateral flow tests and the introduction of vaccination have been very much welcomed and the Commissioning team have played a key role in maximising and monitoring the uptake of both testing and vaccination.

The Commissioning team also lead on the CCG and Council's engagement in the Better Care Fund (BCF). This fund is utilised to support the Virgin Care contract as well as range of schemes across the council, CCG, third sector and RUH. The fund supports integrated activity and particularly flow of health and social care support for residents in B&NES. The Health and Wellbeing Board were updated in April of a

balanced budget for 2020/21 and approved a range of new schemes which will be commissioned in 2021/22.

### **3. Community Wellbeing Hub**

Virgin Care have been instrumental in leading the development and operation of the Community Wellbeing Hub, alongside colleagues from 3SG, their members, BSWCCG and the Council. The Hub has provided a single point of access for community response and provides a joined-up intervention for anyone seeking support or guidance on COVID-19. Response teams include food support, welfare support, mental wellbeing, housing support and physical wellbeing advice.

The Hub was set up in response to COVID-19, but its effectiveness has meant that it will now develop into an ongoing service for joined-up community response to support the wellbeing of residents into the long term. As part of this process the Hub is engaging with colleagues from Adult Social Care within the council and Virgin Care for the planning of community support that the Hub can offer residents in B&NES for the long term.

### **4. Safeguarding**

During 20/21 the Council received 1115 safeguarding concerns relating to 838 adults considered to be at risk of abuse or neglect. Despite national concerns at the start of the year that the reporting of safeguarding issues would decrease due to the lack of access to care settings or visits by family or friends to people's homes, B&NES referral level only decreased by 27 in comparison with last year. There has, however, been a significant increase in the number of referrals received from GPs and other Primary Care staff. Of those that were supported through the safeguarding enquiry process 67% said that their identified outcome had been fully met, 30% said they were partly met and 2% said their outcomes were not met. The outcomes that remained unmet mostly related to an outcome of wanting the alleged person sacked or prosecuted but the employer or police did not feel this was warranted following an investigation.

Most safeguarding meetings have been undertaken remotely but the team have met with individuals (following appropriate PPE requirements) where it was felt that the person needed to be part of a face to face safeguarding meeting. Feedback on the arrangements has been positive and it is likely that the team will continue to undertake several meetings remotely.

### **5. Coronavirus Act 2020 Care Act Easements**

Members will be aware that on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 the Government passed the Coronavirus Act 2020. This allowed for the introduction of Care Act Easements. The first stage of these easements was business as usual and stage two could be used with the consent of the Principal Social Worker (Adults) and the Director of Adult Social

Services. Stage 2 allowed for Individual service type to prioritise short term allocation of care and support using current flexibilities within the Care Act. Stages 3 and 4 required the Department of Health and Social Care to be notified and evoked the ability to take steps that effected the care and support being received by Service Users and dispense with Care Act Assessments.

Bath and North East Somerset Council never invoked stages 3 or 4, but stage 2 was used to allow for minor changes in how care and support was provided within the flexibilities granted by the Care Act 2014.

Following further consideration by Government the ability to use the Care Act Easements ceased on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

In B&NES, as the easement changes at stage 2 were limited primarily to changes in support due to closure of services including day services and Covid related restrictions (such as shielding), the return to pre-Covid practice will not require a significant change.

## **6. Transformation**

Finally, staff in the community continue to see increased demand and are continuing to work hard to meet the demand. To ensure the service is sustainable in the future Adult Social Care are embarking on a significant Transformation Programme focused on delaying the demand for statutory services, ensuring quality service provision, improving outcomes for individuals and reducing spend.