

**Children's and Adults Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel –  
11<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Lead Member Update**

**Service Challenges**

Occupational Therapy assessments have seen an increased demand with some people waiting over 6 months for Adult Social Care Occupational Therapy input and assessment. This demand continues to increase. All referrals are risk rated and prioritised accordingly and people waiting have a point of contact should their needs become more urgent. We are concerned that average waiting times for an OT assessment have risen to 8 months and have requested a plan from HCRG to decrease the waiting times for OT assessment. The plan includes.

- Triage and review need and where appropriate signpost to local services.
- Focus on those with the greatest need and prioritise for assessment.
- Refocus the OT workforce to help decrease the waiting list

**Finance**

In common with other Local Authorities we are experiencing a number of pressures on adult social care budgets, these include an increase in referrals, in complexity of referrals and increased costs of support packages. Our budgets were over-spent at quarter 2 and actions are being taken to reduce expenditure for the rest of the year. This includes a freeze on recruitment, agency staff only being used in critical situations, increased controls for discretionary spend and maximising the use of income. We will be able to report in more detail on the impact of these actions in the new year.

Improved arrangements are in place for hospital discharges and BANES continues to see a decreased number of people waiting to be discharged from hospital. The funding to support hospital discharge is jointly provided with Health and makes use of the discharge grants that form part of the joint pool arrangement (Better Care Fund).

**CQC Inspection**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has a new inspection role in relation to the statutory delivery of Adult Social Care. The inspection regime has been piloted at five councils with four received a rating of GOOD and one which Required Improvement. We are awaiting a date for inspection at B&NES.

**ASC Provider Services Update**

The council operates 5 Extra Care Schemes, 3 Care Homes (CRCs) and 1 care agency. The 5 extra care schemes remain rated as good by the CQC and the 3 care homes are rated overall requires improvement but with good in key areas such as caring and safety. Recruitment to the in-house provider services continues to improve with our vacancies reducing from 70 to 22 across the services. Our home care service has yet to be inspected by CQC.

There has been a comprehensive review of the delivery and costs of the CRCs and a consultation on future plans for the service is currently underway, this will be discussed as a

separate agenda item. A final decision on the future of the CRCs will be made via a Single Member Decision in January 2024.

United Care BANES (UCB) pilot is in the process of being reviewed. The pilot is due to be completed in March 2024. The service initially supported people discharged from hospital when there was very little capacity in the independent Domiciliary care sector. Commissioning and providers have worked together to focus on recruitment and retention of Domiciliary staff which has increased the number of hours available for local residents. There is currently over capacity in the Domiciliary care market and therefore the pilot is unlikely to be extended .

### **Work with the RUH**

We continue to have an active working relationship with the RUH through the multi-agency “Home is Best” programme. This has successfully enabled us to significantly reduce the number of people waiting to be discharged from Hospital from an average of 47 people waiting to leave (December 2022) to 22 (December 2023). This has been facilitated by regular Multi-disciplinary (MADE) events, utilising the Adult Social Care Discharge grant given to the ICB and Council and significant work by commissioners to draw new homecare agencies into B&NES to deliver timely discharge options. However due to financial pressures the ICB has recently had to withdraw a temporary community hospital ward (Homeward) set up to meet pressures which is likely to create additional demand on the system.

We have also had the benefit of new work led by the Community Wellbeing Hub (CWH). The CWH now has a base in the RUH and a part-time presence in Community Hospitals. This is giving carers and families the opportunity to draw on support from community and voluntary sector organisations at a time of significant need. This is helpfully supporting people who might otherwise have turned to statutory services.

### **New Supported Living Schemes**

The new accommodation for people with learning disability/autism is on track to open in the coming months. The contract for care provision has been awarded to the Affinity Trust which has over 30 years of experience with this client group but is new to the local area. Residents are currently being identified for the homes and a dedicated mobilisation scheme is in place. The house in Hygge Park is due to open in February with Sulis Meadows to follow in the spring. Work continues to develop other similar schemes within Bath and North East Somerset which will enable us to accommodate more of our residents in the local area.

### **Support for unpaid carers and co-production**

With the existing Carers strategy scheduled for renewal, the council is taking the opportunity to find a new co-production approach to writing this document. To achieve this, initial engagement work with local carer forums has begun. Recently commissioners visited Carers Voice, a carer group that meets monthly at the Carers Centre. The session was a great opportunity for the team to meet and talk with Carers about their lived experience, immediate priorities for a carers strategy, and to take the first steps in considering how a co-production working group will operate.

As one Carer told us – ‘If you talk to 1000 carers, you will hear 1000 unique stories’.

A bonus was meeting young carers, who joined the end of the session. They explained the amazing work they are doing, including running in-school training sessions and meeting with politicians and charity Chief Executive Officers at Westminster.

Work on the strategy will be guided by responses to the national Carer Survey, which has been completed by carers across the locality. Carers will be 'in the driving seat' and their voice and priorities will be apparent across the document. We expect this activity will pave the way for further co-production by others in the local authority who are embarking on similar processes.

### **Community Services Transformation**

ASC transfer continues to progress well and we are working in partnership with HCRG Care Group on the safe transfer of ASC services and workforce on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. On 22/23 November ASC officers held the third staff briefing sessions with Adult Social Work and Learning Disability day services teams. These sessions are invaluable to ensuring consistent messaging and information sharing to the transferring workforce and are jointly managed between B&NES and HCRG Care Group. All sessions were well attended and supported by HCRG Care Group appointed colleague representatives as well as Trade Union representatives. Many questions were raised during each session and collated and these will formally be responded to during the consultation period.

On 28<sup>th</sup> November B&NES officers were invited by HCRG Care Group to deliver an update session to B&NES community partners on progress with the 1 year ICB direct award and update on future commissioning of services as of April 2025.

The cabinet paper on 9<sup>th</sup> November covered a range of elements making up the wider Community Services Transformation programme.

### **Cllr Born – Cabinet Member for Adult Services**

**11<sup>th</sup> December 2023**