

Minutes of last Community Wellbeing Board meeting

Community Wellbeing Board

Wednesday, 17 May 2023

18 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#)

Item	Decisions and actions
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1 Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies for absence from councillors David Baines, Angela MacPherson, Joanne Harding, Rachel Blake and Tim Swift. Cllr Jim Beall was in attendance as a substitute.

Cllr Fothergill congratulated Cllr Mike Bell who had become Leader of North Somerset Council following the May 2023 Local Elections.

There were no apologies or declarations of interest.

2 Decisions and actions from the previous meeting

The minutes of the Community Wellbeing Board meeting held on Wednesday 1 March 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Update paper

Kevin Halden gave an update on the Right Person, Right Care plan which would see changes to police involvement in incidents of people experiencing mental health episodes. The LGA had raised concerns about the new burdens this would place on other public services.

Members asked officers to seek clarity on how this would affect those under 18.

Members agreed that a local government perspective was needed. Concern was raised that mental health and social services were already in crisis that this approach would exacerbate and that a whole system approach was needed.

Further dialogue on what this would mean for local government and the rest of the public sector was ongoing

Cllr Fothergill fed back that he had attended two veterans board meetings

at the Cabinet Office with Johnny Mercer, a winter capacity expert group meeting with Stephen Chandler and an APPG meeting on leasehold reform in relation to older people's housing and accommodation.

Decision

The Community Wellbeing Board **agreed** to note the report.

4 Achieving Smokefree 2030 – Cutting smoking and stopping underage vaping

Cllr Fothergill welcomed Richard Boden, Head of Tobacco Control and Gambling at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) to the meeting. Richard gave an update on the policy announcement made in April 2023 which was in response to the Khan review published in June 2022. This included action to fulfil the Government's commitment for England to be Smokefree by 2030 (5% or less) and action to tackle youth vaping.

Richard explained that the proportion of 11–15-year-olds using e-cigarettes had increased from 6% in 2018 to 9% in 2021. The increase was particularly large amongst girls (5% in 2018 to 10% in 2021). The increase of vaping amongst young people was attributed to the growth of a new class of “disposable” vapes. The call for evidence on Youth Vaping would last for 8 weeks. Government's aim was to identify opportunities to reduce the number of children accessing and using vapes, exploring issues such as regulatory compliance, the marketing and promotion of vape products, environmental impact of disposable vapes.

Richard also highlighted the ‘swap to stop’ scheme which aimed to help 1 million smokers to quit, enforcement to stop illicit tobacco, a financial incentive scheme for pregnant smokers and a consultation on pack inserts.

Paul Ogden, Senior Adviser, added that the LGA is supportive of vaping as a tool to quit smoking though concerns remain, especially those raised by the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board regarding waste (recycling and disposal) and environmental issues. Paul confirmed that work was being carried out in partnership with the with Safer and Stronger Communities Board to submit a response to the call for evidence by the 6 June deadline. Though extra funding is welcome, the cut to public health grants which delivers smoking cessation services would have an impact on local governments ability to assist with the delivery of the strategy's associated programmes.

Members raised the following points:

- Concern that the ‘swap to stop scheme’ would give non-smokers the false impression that vaping isn't dangerous.
- Concern that vapes were clearly advertised and marketed to children using cartoons, brands, colours, flavours etc which Government had not legislated against.
- Pocket money prices and a loophole allowing vapes to be given away for free/to minors was concerning.

- vaping causes addiction and environmental issues that didn't exist 10 years ago, 'swap to stop' will make both problems worse by 2030.
- Menthol cigarettes were banned – why have flavoured e-cigarettes been allowed? It is all flavoured nicotine designed to create addiction.
- Environmental issue is at point of extraction, not just disposal.
- Reputational risk for councils encouraging people to vape – long term health effects of vaping unknown and could be disastrous (as with smoking).
- Cross cutting issue that touches on the work of the Community Wellbeing, Community Safety (licencing), Environment and Children and Young People boards.
- Queried the government's appetite for vaping to be available on prescription only.

Richard responded that a tricky balance was needed as the regulatory system was not fit for purpose – a medicinally licenced product was not available in the UK and the consumer market was the route for smokers to access vapes to quit. He continued to say that although there was very little evidence to suggest that the gateway goes the other way, vaping was not a silver bullet, not replace Nicotine Replacement Therapy and that the strategy would support people to quit vaping too. Vaping was substantially less harmful than smoking. An education piece for schools on how to tackle vaping how be available from July 2023.

Action: Share the LGA's submission to the call for evidence. Specific research on why girls vape more and how to target this.

5 The Government's plans for adult social care reform

The Chairman welcomed Michelle Dyson, Director General of Adult Social Care (ASC) at the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to the meeting. Michelle gave a presentation on the Government's recently published 'Next steps to put people at the heart of care' plan outlining the Government's aspirations for care and support.

Michelle summarised DHSC action on workforce, housing, technology and integration, data and assurance, innovation and improvement and unpaid carers. This included an older people's housing task force, recently launched with DHSC and DLUHC which would target 80% of care homes using digital records by 2024.

Michelle defended the unallocated £6 million, not as a cut but as unallocated funding, most likely to be spent on ASC workforce and acknowledged local authority concerns about CQC assurance but didn't view this as a major issue.

In the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Government needed to take a wider economic view on ASC. Without sufficient ASC and support, it will impact on wider workforce such as

- unpaid carers giving up work.
- Disappointment expressed at the £250m reduction for ASC training and development.
- Concern about regulatory framework and one-word assessments especially given current criticisms of Ofsted one-word assessments, urging Government to think again.
- The demoralising effect on workforce when poor rating is due to inadequate resources.
- Local authorities will struggle to be compliant due to lack of funding and ASC will fail without adequate funding and a proper workforce to deliver care.

In response Michelle explained that the £250m for training had been removed because of concerns that it wouldn't be spent. She did not comment on the Government's future use of single word assessments and challenged the view that consensus on next steps for ASC had been received as overwhelmingly negative by the sector. Technology would provide some of the solution to the challenges facing ASC.

Decision:

The Community Wellbeing Board agreed to note the contents of the report.

6 Major Conditions Strategy

The Chairman welcomed Jennifer Benjamin, Deputy Director for Policy Provision and Accountability at the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) as well as Lead Members of the Children and Young People Board to the meeting. Jennifer gave a progress report on the Major Conditions Strategy (MCS) summarising the context for the change in strategy, scale of the challenge and burden on health and care systems.

Jennifer highlighted the burden on individuals and the interaction between conditions saying the strategy would focus on the impact of deprivation and health disparities on a cluster of conditions, the key objectives being to increase life expectancy by 5 years, narrow the gap and reduce pressure on health and care services. Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) would have a major role in MCS with the autonomy to act

During the discussion, Members made the following comments:

- Questioned the need for more evidence rather than considering the overwhelming existing evidence of the impact of poverty on health outcomes.
- Disappointment MCS had not included plans for support for carers.
- Causes of ill-health are socio-economic, cultural etc., health and social care alone cannot overcome these factors.
- Concern the strategy will focus on NHS and clinical interventions rather than on primary prevention.
- Concern that there will be a delay and dilution off the 10-year Mental Health Strategy and whether the link between mental and physical health has truly been considered.

Decision

The Community Wellbeing Board **agreed** the proposed initial policy lines in the report.

Action

Invite to be circulated to Board members and DHSC to the 'one year on' event in Cheshire West and Chester on their being a Marmot area.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset County Council
Vice-Chairman		
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Sarah Osborne Cllr Patricia Patterson- Vanegas	East Sussex County Council Wealden District Council
Members	Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald Cllr Tim Oliver Cllr Jonathan Owen Cllr Sue Woolley Cllr Beccy Hopfensperger Cllr Karen Kilgour Cllr Kaya Comer- Schwartz Cllr Chris McEwan Cllr Mike Bell Cllr James Giles	Peterborough City Council Surrey County Council East Riding of Yorkshire Council Lincolnshire County Council Suffolk County Council Newcastle upon Tyne City Council Islington London Borough Darlington Borough Council North Somerset Council Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Apologies	Cllr Angela Macpherson Cllr David Baines Cllr Timothy Swift MBE Cllr Rachel Blake Cllr Joanne Harding	Buckinghamshire Council St Helens Borough Council Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council Tower Hamlets Council Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council