

Minutes of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

11 March 2024 at 6.03pm
Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House

Present: Councillor E Giles (Chair);
Councillors Johnston, Kalebe- Nyamongo, Millar, Muflihi,
Tipper, Uppal and Williams.

Also Present: Paul Higgitt (Healthwatch Sandwell).

Officers: Liann Brookes-Smith (Interim Director of Public Health),
Rosanna Fforde (Consultant in Public Health), Alex Goddard
(Scrutiny Lead Officer) and John Swann (Democratic
Services Officer).

10/24 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Allcock and S Gill.

11/24 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

12/24 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 22
January 2024 are approved as a correct record.



13/24 **Urgent Additional Items of Business**

There were no urgent additional items of business.

14/24 **Preparation for Care Quality Commission assurance of Adult Social Care in Sandwell**

Resolved that consideration of the Preparation for Care Quality Commission assurance of Adult Social Care in Sandwell is deferred to a future meeting of the Board.

15/24 **Building Wellness and Wellbeing**

The Board considered the draft strategy plan for Building Wellness and Wellbeing in Sandwell.

The draft plan “A Stronger Sandwell – from the Towns to the Borough of Sandwell” would contribute to the review of health and wellbeing needs within the borough and would support the development of a new strategy for 2025 onwards.

Following efforts to update the Health and Wellbeing Board strategy, the Director of Public Health report for 2024, the WorkWell Vanguard Bid and further bids for an improved community health offer. It was required to review the needs of Sandwell and start to develop the plans to create a new strategy for 2025 in collaboration with the Council’s partners. This draft strategy had been designed to complement the Levelling- Up Partnership programme and the Integrated Care Partnership programme of work for each of the six towns.

This was an initial draft plan of the work to take forward in the next municipal year and would be used to apply for funds from the Integrated Care Partnership to increase funding to Sandwell on community health programmes.

From the comments and questions by members of the Board, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-



- The aim of the strategy was to provide holistic support at a local level, rather than just targeting specific health issues.
- The model of working would help reduce the need for health care interventions through looking at lifestyles, housing condition and other aspects to achieve more efficient and better ways of working.
- Public Health officers attended Town Meetings to identify key priorities for each town, working with the Town Lead Members as well as Healthwatch, the Integrated Care Board and other partners.
- The importance of pets on people's wellbeing was acknowledged and would be reflected where possible.
- Healthwatch had carried out six workshops across Sandwell to identify local people's health-related priorities. Another series of events was underway to hear about where gaps might be in provision.
- The strategy was in a very early stage but the Interim Director of Public Health wanted to ensure that the Scrutiny Board was informed and able to contribute throughout its development.
- There would be performance indicators and outcome measurements to help identify the impact of the strategy once it was in place.

16/24

Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Social Isolation in Sandwell

The Board considered the findings of the Scrutiny Review of Loneliness and Isolation and the activities of the Working Group.

The review had commenced in 2022/23 and had progressed well, research undertaken by the Working Group had shown that many organisations across the public, private and voluntary and community sector were undertaking initiatives that tried to tackle loneliness and isolation. However the Working Group had identified a number of recommendations that could continue to address loneliness and social isolation in Sandwell.



The Board considered the draft review report and recommendations of the Working Group and approved them for submission to Cabinet.

Resolved that the following recommendations be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration:-

- (1) That for any pilot schemes or trials aimed to reduce social isolation and loneliness consideration be given first to conducting them in Tipton and Wednesbury due to the identified need in those towns.
- (2) That information on support services, community groups and local events are publicised widely including in Sandwell's libraries, on the Council's website, on community notice boards, at pop-up stalls and via the Sandwell Herald and Health-related publications.
- (3) To explore how the Council can train and support the community run their own sessions, based on their own interests, and how to get others to participate.
- (4) That the Social Prescribing Strategy for Sandwell addresses the issues of loneliness and social isolation.
- (5) That a training module on the Council's e-learning platform be developed for frontline staff members to raise awareness of Loneliness and Social Isolation, their signs and how to direct individuals to support opportunities.
- (6) That the Assistant Director – Green Spaces, Green Services and Events explore options to introduce 'Happy to Chat' benches within the borough's green spaces and parks.



17/24 **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board Action Tracker**

The Board noted the status of actions and recommendations it had made. Further updates would be presented to future meetings of the Board.

18/24 **Cabinet Forward Plan and Work Programme**

The Board received the Cabinet Forward Plan and noted its work programme for 2023/24.

Meeting ended at 6.48pm

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