

CABINET 21 OCTOBER 2021

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

From Cllr Bernie Bentick (joining virtually) (Please see preamble in separate document)

Will Shropshire Council publish a detailed report on the discussions held with Shropshire, Telford, and Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (the CCG), its Primary Care Committee and its predecessors regarding the proposed Health Hubs and request Full Formal Consultation on any proposed changes to Primary Health Care, including Health Hubs, at all appropriate stages, including early planning and before any changes are agreed by the CCG in accordance with Statutory Legislation

Response:

There are a number of health hubs being discussed and developed locally by NHS colleagues. These include the Shrewsbury Health and Wellbeing Hub which is a new facility that could open in Autumn 2024 and bring a range of health and wellbeing services together including up to eight GP practices and a Community Diagnostic Hub. In addition the wider Primary Care Strategy, within which these programmes may sit, is also being developed. The stage of development of these proposals and strategies varies.

The Shrewsbury Health and Wellbeing Hub proposals and plans will be taken through Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin CCG Governance at the Primary Care Commissioning Committee. Public Questions can be received in writing through the CCG Governing Body on this and other issues.

From a Shropshire Council perspective, reference to the Shrewsbury Health and Wellbeing Hub was included as part of the regular Integrated Care System update to the Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2021 for the first time, the expectation is that regular updates will be brought to the Board. The primary care strategy has, and continues to be an area which Health Overview and Scrutiny review in conjunction with the Health and Wellbeing Board, this will provide detail on the direction of local primary care services within Shropshire, including resources and type of services; we await further details on this Strategy. In addition Shropshire Council officers have been invited to the Shrewsbury Health Hub Board and sub committees meetings that are, and are being established by the CCG to inform the development of the projects.

The engagement and consultation process on proposals are determined by NHS England and the CCG. From the Health and Wellbeing Board in

September we understand a “listening exercise” has been launched. The data from the listening exercise will be reviewed regularly and a formal report produced at the end of the process to inform clinical modelling going forwards. A formal consultation will be launched in November when more details are known. This was outlined in the report to the Board <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s28176/210901%20HWBB%20ICS%20update%20FINAL.pdf>. At this stage we do not have any further details but I will formally request this through the Boards and Governance arrangements and will make a commitment to share this with members and the public, I will also commit to challenge where we do not think this is robust enough.

In addition, at the September Health and Wellbeing Board the Director of Public Health asked that a full Integrated Impact Assessment be carried out on proposals and members of the Board also asked that this is brought to Health Overview and Scrutiny. Detailed reports will be provided prior to the Scrutiny meetings.

From Cllr David Vasmer

Roads Minister Baroness Vere has announced that local authority transport plans will need to set out “how quantifiable carbon reductions will be achieved” and that funding will be “dependent on those plans being robust, ambitious and achievable” (<https://www.highwaysmagazine.co.uk/Councils-must-have-quantifiable-carbon-reduction-plans-or-lose-cash-roads-minister-says/9324>)

As a result of this Government policy:

1. Will Shropshire lose funding because the planned North West Relief Road will contribute an extra 48,000 tonnes of carbon for an operational saving of 350 tonnes of carbon per year – meaning that it will be carbon neutral in 130 years?
2. Will LTP4 include “quantifiable carbon reduction plans”?
3. How will carbon reduction be achieved in the absence of any meaningful investment in active travel following the recent vote against increased spending on active travel at the last Council meeting?

Response

As a result of this Government policy:

1. Will Shropshire lose funding because the planned North West Relief Road will contribute an extra 48,000 tonnes of carbon for an operational saving of 350 tonnes of carbon per year – meaning that it will be carbon neutral in 130 years?

The council has not had visibility of the detail behind this proposal to be able to respond but the North West Relief Road should be considered as part of the broader opportunities it enables to reallocate cycling, walking and bus infrastructure in Shrewsbury and the overall net carbon benefit it can potentially offer rather than focussing on the NWRR in isolation.

2. Will LTP4 include “quantifiable carbon reduction plans”?

The council is firmly committed to encouraging carbon reduction and we await confirmation on the details behind the government's new approach and will ensure that these are considered within the development of the LTP4

3. How will carbon reduction be achieved in the absence of any meaningful investment in active travel following the recent vote against increased spending on active travel at the last Council meeting?

The government provide plenty of opportunities for local authorities to bid for funding to develop carbon reduction initiatives above and beyond the core allocation that is provided to local authorities. The success for accessing these funds will be very dependent on the quality of authorities Local Transport Plans, Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans, Bus Strategies, EV charging Strategies etc. and resources have been made available to ensure that quality plans are developed to enable the authority to best position itself to access the funding that is available.

From Cllr Ruth Houghton (to be read out by Cllr Vasmer)

Given the recent media coverage on the recruitment issues facing the Care sector what is Shropshire Council doing to ensure that vulnerable, disabled and older people in Shropshire continue to receive good quality, person centred care and that staff are fairly remunerated for providing this care and support?

Response

As our members are aware the UK is experiencing a national crisis regarding the recruitment and retention of care staff. Skills for care have recently reported that 105,000 jobs are being advertised on an average day in 2020/21, with sick days almost double from the previous year.

Shropshire is no different and also experiencing workforce pressures impacting our ability to place people in a timely way to more suitable services within the community that best meets their assessed needs. The current rates Shropshire pays are comparable with neighbouring authorities and certainly the highest in the West Midlands for domiciliary

care to support people to remain at home. It is important to note that no one is left without care.

Shropshire council are currently:

- Targeting reviews to free capacity to ensure those who need care receives it.
- Working with our health and care partners and the wider Council regarding a robust recruitment campaign to drive the message to the market place regarding engaging people with the right values and skills to seek employment in the sector, seeking opportunities to work with education and apprentice schemes to attract workers to care and putting the value back into care
- Offering incentives for providers to take on care packages but they are one offs at the point of brokerage in order to incentivise packages being picked up.
- Supporting care partners to have in place contingency plans regarding staffing – but drawing on wide resources where they can and in seeking to ensure that they all working together to support.
- Commissioning block care, offering further stability as we enter the winter period for example we have commissioned 16 winter pressure beds
- Targeting reviews to free capacity to ensure those who need care receives it.
- Investing in our START reablement support services to support those being discharged from hospital
- The council is also working with partners to prevent admission into hospital and/or social care through a variety of methods including focus on reablement, strength based practice, information and advice, linking people to their communities, social prescribing any activities that improves wellbeing.
- The council also has some pilot schemes on technology which is proving to reduce the need for care so we can target resources elsewhere.
- The council has a winter plan which also has commissioned support from the voluntary and community sector to support people to get home or remain home

I hope this answers your question, please do not hesitate to come back for further clarification on any of the points.

From Cllr Roy Aldcroft (joining meeting virtually)

I am concerned to know more about the nature of the complaints (Customer Feedback Annual Report 2020/21) about Education and Children's Services referred to the Ombudsman. Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services please expand on the report and any actions taken since the report was published.

Response

There were 9 complaints for Education and Children's Services referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in 2020/21 and 8 of those were considered/decided. Of the 8 complaints, 3 were upheld, 1 was referred to Shropshire Council and 4 complainants were given advice and then referred to Shropshire Council.

For the 3 upheld complaints Shropshire Council has worked to implement the recommendations. The compliance report provided by the Ombudsman records all three cases with the remedy achieved dates.

None of the 5 cases given advice and referred back to local level are open with Shropshire Council (using the Ombudsman numbers as a reference). This may be because advice was adequate and complainants did not want to pursue a complaint following that advice, it could be that complaints were for Shropshire Council's administrative area but were not about services the Council directly provides (so complaints may then be directed to the service providers' complaints procedures), or it may be that cases have progressed and complainants have made different complaints as a result of advice (therefore a new reference would be allocated). The data from the Ombudsman does not allow us to track the outcome of those cases unless we are approached with an Ombudsman reference number.

Local complaints continue to be monitored frequently and the quarter 2 report is currently being considered by officers.