

**Minutes of a Meeting of the External  
Partnerships Select Committee held  
Virtually on 8 September 2020**

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- + Cllr Robin Perry (Chairman)
- Cllr Morgan Rise (Vice Chairman)
  

+ Cllr Dan Adams	+ Cllr Tim FitzGerald
+ Cllr Richard Brooks	+ Cllr Shaun Garrett
+ Cllr Vivienne Chapman	+ Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath
+ Cllr Sarah Jane Croke	+ Cllr Pat Tedder
+ Cllr Paul Deach	+ Cllr Helen Whitcroft
	+ Cllr Kristian Wrenn

- + Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Graham Tapper (in place of Cllr Morgan Rise)

Members in Attendance: Cllr Rodney Bates, Cllr Valerie White, Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam and Cllr Victoria Wheeler

Officers Present: Jayne Boitout, Louise Livingston and Tim Pashen

**5/EP Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting were agreed to be signed by the Chairman at the next opportunity.

**6/EP Declarations of Interest**

It was noted for the record that:

1. Councillor Shaun Garrett declared that he was involved in Surrey Heath Age Concern, Old Dean Community Centre and Chloe's and Sophie's Special Ear Fund who all worked with Voluntary Support North Surrey.
2. Councillor Alan McClafferty declared that:
  - a) he and his Wife both volunteered for Surrey Heath Age Concern who worked closely with Voluntary Support North Surrey.
  - b) he was the Council's outside body representative for Voluntary Support North Surrey.

**7/EP Voluntary Support North Surrey**

Solette Sheppardson, Chief Executive Officer, gave a presentation in respect of Voluntary Support North Surrey and its work within Surrey Heath. Voluntary Support North Surrey (VSNS) supported the community and voluntary organisations within Surrey Heath which totalled to between 300- 400 organisations within Surrey Heath. The organisation's aim was to empower and increase the capacity of third sector organisations. VSNS had worked in partnership with the Council in order to achieve via the following services:

1. Core Services providing charities and the third sector with guidance on governance, strategy, and funding. It was emphasised during the Covid-19 pandemic funding had become a priority area service for VSNS; with third sector organisations experiencing a squeeze on their funds.
2. Support on how to manage, train and motivate volunteers and the administration of DBS checks.
1. Specific support to the areas of deprivation in partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council

VSNS directly ran the Time to Talk Project, which was delivered in conjunction with Surrey Heath Age Concern. The project served individuals which were suffering with isolation and loneliness. During Covid-19 the project had reconfigured to provide its befriending services via phone and had seen a rise in demand for its services.

VSNS worked closely in partnership with the Council and Surrey Heath Prepared on the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. VSNS gave strong assistance to Surrey Heath Prepared helping them recruit and manage volunteers; as well as providing logistics support in respect of acquiring and delivery of Personal Protective Equipment.

It was acknowledged that the third sector was a laggard in respect of providing digital services and VSNS were continually striving to develop what charitable organisations offered to supporters and clients online. VSNS also aimed to inform and help organisations develop new ways to fundraise online and in the post-lockdown world. It was emphasised that fundraising had become more difficult given the economic situation and the success of online grant applications had become more crucial for the third sector, entailing greater demand for VSNS's support and expertise on the matter.

During Lockdown many new volunteers had come forward and in turn had opened their mind to volunteering. Whilst numbers of volunteering opportunities had decreased, there was now a new section of volunteers in society for local groups to harness.

Arising from Members questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Voluntary Support North Surrey measured their success via statistics captured in respect of volunteering. For example VSNS could measure how many volunteers were currently on placements and how many corporate organisations were currently taking part in volunteering schemes ran by VSNS. However it was suggested by Members that there could be better, more in-depth, regular measurement of VSNS's performance in the future.
- VSNS assisted and guided third sector organisations through the DBS check process.
- VSNS aimed to help third sector organisations to harness the new pandemic-led emphasis on the digital world. VSNS aimed to get more third sector organisations meeting via digital board meetings, and undertaking day to day functions via video-conferencing services. Acknowledging that it was a key indicator for fundholders, VSNS actively helped third sector organisations develop their websites and their social media presence.

VSNS offered training courses on language use in grant applications as well as a grant application checking service.

- VSNS worked with local voluntary organisations in order to place students taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. However it was acknowledged outside of this they could improve on their efforts to engage with young people. It was acknowledged young people could offer voluntary organisations significant social media expertise and skills. It was suggested that Surrey Heath Youth Council and Surrey Youth Cabinet, as well as Secondary Schools could be good initial channels for promoting volunteering to local young people.
- Although there was acknowledged room for improvement in respect of raising their own funds, VSNS had managed to access funding from central government Health and Wellbeing funds and had attracted small donations from individuals.
- VSNS steered potential volunteers to where they were needed and did not give the Time to Talk Project any preferential treatment.
- As per the annex in the agenda report pack VSNS placed 412 volunteers during the first quarter of this year. However it was noted that this figure was slightly higher than normal due to the influx of volunteers at the start of the pandemic.

The Committee thanked Solette for her informative presentation.

## **8/EP Surrey Heath Clinical Commissioning Group**

Nicola Airey, Director of Planning & Delivery, gave a presentation in respect of the Clinical Commissioning Group's priorities in the next six months and their response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the health recovery which would follow.

NHS Surrey Heath Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was made up of the seven GP practices (10 surgeries) in Surrey Heath and Ash Vale and spent around £114m on community and hospital care for around 95,000 people registered at these surgeries.

The CCG's vision was to improve the health of local people by commissioning hospital and community health care to meet the needs of the population, and to ensure that local health services are high quality, value for money and meet the needs of the population.

Since last presenting to the Committee, a number of key issues had significant impacts on the CCGs work:

- The CCG were a key stakeholder in assuring a successful recovery and restoration to Health Care within Surrey Heath.
- There was significant planning being undertaken in respect of a scenario where winter pressures were to put substantial burdens on NHS Services. The plans included the provision of an innovative drive through flu clinic in order to safely administer the flu vaccination for Surrey Heath.
- The creation of a new 'Community Deal', which sought to assess and improve the ways in which local NHS services had conversations with different communities,

- The need for EU Exit Planning.
- A planned organisational restructure.

In a wider focus, the CCG were still aiming to concentrate on early intervention rather than integrated care which had been the organisation's main focus since its inception. In addition there was a continued emphasis on 'Early Help', which took the form of resources being directed towards new CAMHS services and greater partnerships between Mental Health services and schools.

The following priorities for the CCG over the next six months were outlined:

- The strengthening of Mental Health services including partnership working tying in with the prioritisation of early intervention and reflecting an anticipated greater demand due to COVID-19.
- Further development of the integrated care journey for older people for the next level, ensuring that when older residents go into supported accommodation they do with a joined up package with health partners.
- Identifying how they tackle inequalities within society in Surrey Heath and ensuring that delivered care that is equitable and does not vary in quality of delivery or outcomes because of personal characteristics. It was acknowledged that deprivation, learning disabilities, and difficulties in accessing services led to poorer health outcomes.

The Covid-19 Pandemic had changed forever how the NHS engages with its residents. In its most obvious sense this included a huge increase in the amount of telephone and online appointments and consultations. In addition General practice was now back to the same levels of consultations pre-pandemic and although many more of these had been video and text consultations, feedback suggested that this hadn't taken away from appointments' effectiveness.

There was a conscious effort to ramp up vaccination efforts ahead of flu season which included the provision of holding a drive through clinic at Blackbushe Airport, Camberley. The clinic opened on 21 September and was designed to ensure safe delivery of the flu vaccination.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Surrey Heath CCG followed the Mental Health Investment Standard which required CCGs to increase investment in Mental Health services in line with their overall increase in allocation each year. There was also a reconfiguration of Mental Health services to reflect the new lines of communication given the Covid-19 pandemic, including an increase in 24/7 crisis call lines. In addition the CCG had agreed to give additional resource and support to the Citizens Advice Bureau in respect of clients' access to Mental Health Services.
- Not all of Surrey Heath is covered by Surrey Heath CCG or the partnering CCGs that Surrey CCG regularly liaised with through the Integrated Commissioning Fund (ICF). Whilst Frimley Health Trust had announced the release of a new Electronic Patient Record (EPR), this meant it would be soon working off a different system from St Peters Hospital and the Royal Surrey Hospital which many of the Borough's eastern residents also regularly used. The new EPR will allow for the transfer of the Connected Care Record across the Surrey Heath CCG's social care, community and

acute trust services. However it was unknown how well Surrey Heath CCG's new EPR will be able to connect with other acute trusts.

- There was an acknowledged overload on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS); whose demand had increased due to the social distancing measures. Surrey Heath CCG was aiming to create greater capacity in the CAMHS system by commissioning and investing in services relating to the early intervention of behaviours including behavioural support for 4, 5 and 6 year olds.
- The Council's planning department were good at informing the CCG in respect of new developments which would increase demand on Surrey Heath's NHS services. A frequent casework comment received by Members was that the local infrastructure was inadequate to absorb future demand from new developments. This was exacerbated by a perceived poor use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.
- Waiting times at GP Practises within the CCG area were better than the national average. In addition the recent rise in online consultations had reduced waiting times for groups of people and GP waiting times had actually eased during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- It was noted there were additional opportunities for partnership working with the Borough Council, including to feeding to the Equality Working Group's work in respect of ethnicity and access to services.

The Committee thanked Nicola Airey for her informative presentation.

## **9/EP Covid-19 Update - Recovery Phase and Preparation for 2nd Wave**

The Committee received a presentation from Louise Livingston, Executive Head, Transformation, on the recovery phase to the Council's Covid-19 response and its preparations for a second wave.

The Borough Council's emergency response to the pandemic so far had included:

- 1461 tonnes more waste and recycling collected from households compared to a pre-lockdown average
- £15,145,000 of statutory business support grants paid out to 1,189 local firms.
- £825,000 of discretionary business support grants paid out to 99 firms.
- £61,000 of emergency grants awarded to local charities

These were updated figures since the last update heard by the Committee.

The Council's recovery programme consisted of 6 recovery workstreams, which ranged from communication and member engagement to business support and local economic recovery. The Council's recovery started with the launch of the Surrey Heath Covid-19 Emergency Charity Grant Scheme and had transitioned to contingency planning for a possible second wave.

The Council's contingency plan included Covid-19 case monitoring to foot parcel planning and welfare preparation and staffing.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- The economic situation resulting from the pandemic and the ending of the Central Government Furlough scheme would result in job losses and Surrey Heath residents accessing the benefit system who haven't previously done so. The Council was currently actively reaching out to businesses to make them aware of what support they had available through the Surrey Chambers of Commerce and the Growth Hub. The Council's Economic Development team were also looking at setting up initiatives in respect of equipping residents with skills and increasing employability as well as specific schemes for 16-24 year olds.
- There was value in a simple and concise one page communication, which could be published in Heathscene and/or on Social Media signposting residents and businesses where they could get help if they were in hardship. This was agreed to be taken forward as a potential initiative by officers.
- As it stood there was no noticeable rise in Surrey Heath residents going back to commuting to London in large numbers. The Council was continuing to encourage compliance with the social distancing guidelines and was taking an active role advising local businesses on how to reopen safely.
- Surrey County Council was working with Surrey's schools in order to use their parent mails as information channels to pass on information in respect of its Covid-19 response. It was recognised that the Borough Council also had the potential to harness its partnerships with the Borough's schools as a means of communication.

**RESOLVED that a one page, easy reference communication in respect where to get hardship support in light of the pandemic be explored and created.**

#### **10/EP Committee Work Programme**

**RESOLVED that the Committee Work Programme be noted for the rest of the 20-21 municipal year.**

Chairman