



Report of Councillor Matt Golby Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health

30th November 2023

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Safeguarding & Wellbeing Services

The Safeguarding team continues to experience a high level of alerts; during this quarter the annual release of national safeguarding data showed that the increase in demand within West Northants was significantly higher than the national average. In response to this work is being undertaken both internally and with partners to understand the reasons behind the increased demand being seen and implement actions to address this. The same release of data also showed that when section 42 safeguarding enquiries are undertaken West Northants performance for reducing the risk a vulnerable person is exposed to is above the national average.

Within our in-house care homes Boniface House in Brixworth closed its doors early in November. All residents were supported to find alternative accommodation within our care homes at either Southfields House or Obelisk House and formal consultation was successfully completed with the staff group on the options of either redeployment or redundancy. We have now commenced consultation on the future of Ridgway House in Towcester, which is experiencing similar challenges to those faced by Boniface House: significant under occupation, limitations to the care that can be provided due to the design and layout of the building, and challenges recruiting and retaining staff. Consultation closes at the end of November and feedback will be considered as part of any future decision-making process.

Our Occupational Therapy team continue to make positive progress implementing a programme of single-handed care, which provides equipment to people receiving care in their home so that they can be cared for by one carer rather than two, which is supporting the overall directorate respond to the budget pressures it is currently experiencing. The Assistive Technology Team has also entered the final phases of preparation for disaggregation with North Northants Council, this programme of work is on track and the team is due to disaggregate at the end of March 2024.

Adult Services

The teams remain very busy and continue to see increased demand at the front door. Work is continuing to look at the referral processes to ensure they are efficient and responsive and support staff to triage contacts easily. This includes working with the Customer Service Centre to explore what they can do to support and the most effective systems to use. In addition to improved processes this work links with a new waiting list prioritisation tool which is soon to be implemented.

A prevention project is in place to look at how the Community hubs and Supporting Independence Team can be aligned to enable us to enhance the prevention offer in each LAP area. This will ensure that people requesting Adult Social Care Support are supported to be as

independent as possible and access preventative and community services when they first make contact with the service.

The Community teams moved to align with the Local Area Partnership footprints. This means there are now 5 teams who cover the following areas:

Northampton Central Community Team
Northampton North and East Community Team
Northampton South and West Community Team
Rural North and West Community Team
Rural South and East Community Team

Work continues with corporate colleagues to look at the most appropriate bases for the new teams, within their new areas.

The Adults Learning and Development team is being recruited to and work is taking place to review our L and D offer to ensure staff are equipped with the knowledge they need to do their roles and have opportunities to develop. This work links with the wider project to review staff roles and progression pathways that is also taking place.

We continue to work with system partners to progress the ambitions of the Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism collaborative. With particular focus on our LD inpatients, the Dynamic risk register and community LD teams.

We are in the process of reviewing transport options across Adult Services to ensure that we are accessing the most cost effective and sustainable options to meet peoples needs.

Commissioning and Performance

The Home Care Recommissioning project is still progressing and we are moving packages of care from legacy contracted providers to our new 15 providers who are allocated work in line with Local Area Partnerships. The project has had significant barriers due to delays imposed by exiting providers. We are expecting for our new Home Care contract to be fully implemented by 31st March 2024.

In addition, we are currently reviewing our Extra Care contracted offer with a desire to enter into new contracts with providers from 1st April 2024. Extra Care is an important service for people who need a bit of extra support in a supported environment and often delays or prevents the need for more formal care home services.

We have undertaken a significant engagement exercise with our unpaid carers to ask them what we do that works well for them and what doesn't work so well. This engagement period has now ended which unfortunately, resulted in much less feedback then we would have liked. However, of the feedback we have received there is a lot for us to work on and we will be setting up a co-production group shortly to start designing the West Northamptonshire Carers Strategy.

Our integrated Brokerage Team is now in full swing, not only brokering packages of care for those eligible for Adult Social Care, but also picking up pathway 3 hospital discharges on behalf of Health. The implementation has been successful so far and is generating efficiencies for both Adult Social Care and our NHS colleagues.

We are currently setting out the Adult Social Care and Public Health approach to coproduction and we have engaged with the People's Advisory Group who have set out some really good principles that they want us to follow. Further updates will be provided in later briefs.

Lastly, we have started a Direct Payment working group to look at how we manage Direct Payments, how we fund them and how we support unpaid carers using Direct Payments. This will result in a new Policy which sets out our intentions for Direct Payments and how we use them to best meet peoples outcomes.

Discharge to Assess Services Update

Reablement West

RW have seen a successful recruitment drive over the last 2 months. RSO roles Appointed has reached 91% which enables the services to accept more referrals and deliver additional hours. They are also looking to re-open to community referrals.

Enhancing social care capacity - RW has been working with commissioning to draw up a reablement specifications to go out to the care market in Jan 24 to explore a mixed blend to our reablement offer.

RIBU

We continue to monitor our partnership working relationship with NHFT. We are in the process of reviewing allocation of funds to establish our funding sources for 23/24. We have seen a slight increase in length of stay which is being closely monitored by Emma Service Manager.

Flow & Capacity Team

The team continue to support NGH in relation to patient flow and reduction of length of stay. WNC currently have 3 people in the top 20 patient list. We are working with NGH to redesign our Pathway 1 to create additional efficiency.

Case Management Replacement

The project remains at procurement stage. All requirements have been evaluated and we are close to completing moderation. Demonstrations are planned for suppliers over the next 2 weeks.

PUBLIC HEALTH

People & Wellbeing

Suicide Prevention

The refreshed all-age county-wide Suicide Prevention Strategy and corresponding action plan was launched in September 2021. Following a year of delivery by the Northamptonshire Suicide Prevention Steering Group, the first annual review was completed on the action plan. This is

to ensure the action plan remains aligned to national guidance and local need. The updated action plan has been consulted with a range of partners and those with lived experience.

Family Hubs

Significant progress in developing a Family Hub and Start for Life Offer, with a phased launch of the Towcester Family Hub starting in January 2024. It is anticipated that the other two hubs in Northampton and Daventry will be launched by June 2024.

Children and Young People

Continuing with the 0-19 Service Improvement Programme, with a focus on the mandated health reviews carried out by health visitors. Significant progress in performance, in particular the 2-2.5-year checks which focus on developmental milestones and identifies children below evidence-based thresholds including personal and social, language and communication, movement and brain development. The plan will inform work to recommission a new service model from April 2025.

A six-month North and West project to translate the learning from the Pause programme (that worked with women who'd had children removed into care to break the cycle) has begun working with Care Leavers and Children in Care (through NCT) to pilot preventative ways of working with a younger age group. The name The Wave was chosen by previous care-experienced Pause participants.

Healthy Ageing

The "Healthy Ageing" Public Health workstream is gathering momentum, as key strand of work to enable local people to stay fit, well and independent. In the same month that Professor Chris Whitty, England's Chief Medical Officer (CMO), published his annual report with a focus on "Health in an Ageing Society", work was already well under way to implement a "healthy ageing" initiative across West Northants.

The aim is for this approach to be localised through our Local Area Partnerships, using a positive narrative to promote independence and autonomy, (instead of avoidance of "frailty"), and will link local people to a range of potential supports, based on the concept of 'productive healthy ageing'.

This will be a key strand of our approach to fulfilling the local strategic ambition of supporting "opportunities to be fit, well and independent", in the Live Your Best Life Strategy. A key aim will be to change the way people think about ageing, and for older adults to achieve a longer, healthier life with meaning, purpose, and a sense of belonging.

Partnership working with colleagues in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and also with Parish Councils is underway, with an initial focus on rural areas, working closely with Connect Northamptonshire and rural LAPs to start shaping this in practice.

Further information will be shared over the next month, as part of the existing Winter Comms programme, with the intention of having a launch event focused on "healthy ageing" in early 2024 with local and national keynote speakers.

Health Improvement & Communities

Stop Smoking Service

The government have announced a plan to create a smokefree generation, which includes a package of interventions. These include additional funding over the next five years (2024/25-2028/29) to expand locally delivered stop smoking services to increase the number of people who stop smoking. There will be some flexibility for the funding to support wider tobacco and youth vaping control efforts, such as local awareness raising campaigns, to provide more flexibility at the local level. However, the majority of the funding should be focused on stop smoking cessation.

WNC have been given an indicative additional allocation of £478,000. This is on the condition that we do not reduce our stop smoking service budget below its current level. WNC are currently developing service transformation proposal to ensure that this funding is used effectively and will work with stakeholders to develop this model.

West Northamptonshire Council drafted and submitted a response to Stopping the Start consultation and sent out comms to encourage both the public and partners to also respond.

The refreshed Northamptonshire Tobacco Control Alliance met in October and starting to discuss the objectives of the new Tobacco Control Strategy. As part of a regional tobacco control group, chaired by Sally Burns, we are working with colleagues across the West Midlands to develop a joined-up approach to this agenda. A regional vaping position statement has been finalised, and we are working on comms to promote this. Vaping in children and young people is a priority for West Northamptonshire at the moment, and we are currently planning a Vaping Summit on 5th February to bring together national experts and local stakeholders to discuss the challenges and develop an action plan to reduce vaping in children and young people.

Weight Management

The current Northamptonshire tier 2 weight management service contracts are due to end in March 2024. Following a review of local needs and the current offer, West Northamptonshire Public Health have identified the need for three different types of services to meet the needs of residents. These are:

- A face to face tier 2 weight management service – the tender for which was published on November 15th 2023
- A digital tier 2 weight management service – which is to be tendered in the coming weeks
- Community services targeting those parts of the West Northamptonshire communities that don't traditionally access such services – this programme is being designed and more details will be available in the New Year. We anticipate a range of different offers to be generated out of this exercise that will build on and develop the work done by Public Health in 2021.
- The Council will be seeking through all of these services to increase accessibility and take up of weight management service from those people living in the top 50% most deprived areas, men, people from minoritized communities, people with mental health conditions and people with learning disabilities.

Food for Life

The Food for Life programme in schools has engaged with 18 out of 35 target schools.

- Those enrolled are: Spring Lane Primary; Vernon Terrace; Kings Heath and Billing Brook.

- Those showing positive signs of engaging: Kings Meadow; Greenfield; Hunsbury; St James CofE; St Mary's Catholic Primary School; The Good Shepherd; Standens Barn Primary School.

This is in line with plans projected at the start of the agreement earlier this year. Training is being delivered this month for enrolled and interested schools to give an overview of the project and to begin the journey to accreditation.

10 Early Years providers have also been identified in Northampton and Daventry for the project.

The West Northants Sustainable Food Network has met and is developing the plans to employ a project manager so we can drive forward on the development and implementation of our joint action plan.

The 'Grow, Cook, Eat' project has delivered further training and grants to community organisations and partners to develop local activity. To date 38 local champions have been trained and grants awarded to 15 organisations and projects. The project had recent great coverage on BBC Look East which has led to partners in Milton Keynes asking for advice on how to develop something similar. A first phase celebration event is being held in December for the champions by the provider.

Workplace Wellbeing

The service proposals regarding the developments for 'Making Every Contact Count' are being finalised. This will enable the service to make forward plans regarding supporting frontline workers in delivering health and wellbeing messages and signposting in their day job and so make more of every contact they have with the general public and service users.

The WNC Workplace Wellbeing toolkit is nearing completion which will enable workplaces to review and plan for health and wellbeing needs.

Breathlessness Project

The breathlessness project in Northampton Central LAP continues to develop, and we are currently reviewing engagement reports submitted by VCSE partners who have engaged with residents to understand their experiences of managing long-term conditions. A funding offer is currently available to local partners to establish a Community Champions programme, with funding available to a local organisation to recruit a volunteer coordinator who will recruit, train and support community champions who will provide links into communities and provide health and wellbeing information. As part of this project Public Health have funded two health coaches who have started working for GPA, their roles will be to support people with COPD who are currently not accessing services to support them to better manage their condition and to access the support available. Alongside this we are working with digital colleagues to offer support to people to access digital devices and training so that they are able to access the myCOPD self-management app that is being rolled out by the NHS. A stop smoking advisor is also delivering targeted support in the LAP, working with local organisations. Another element of this project will be to focus on air quality (indoor and out) and to support children and young people with asthma. These elements of the project are currently in development.

Wider Determinants

Anti-Poverty

- HSF4 continues to be delivered across various support pillars.
- Our VCSE partners are providing food aid using HSF monies. This includes expanded wrap around support services such as money management and cooking skills. For those already engaged with these services this may also include the provision of supermarket vouchers. The second agreed tranche of these vouchers are due to be released imminently.
- HSF is also funding targeted support for vulnerable groups such as Gypsy Roma Traveller community where we are working with trusted referrers and colleagues to ensure funding reaches those most in need.
- We are preparing for school parent vouchers release over the Christmas holidays.
- The online applications for those on low incomes and who did not already receive the cost-of-living payment have been issued.
- Food banks have received their HSF4 funding and continue to deliver support.
- We carried out an outreach food bank pilot at two locations on the canal to reach people who are living on a boat to understand their needs.
- Re-registration of Welcoming Spaces Online Directory is taking place – 88 submitted so far and comms toolkit sent to organisations for promotional purposes
- Launch of Welcoming Spaces Grant Funding – 21 applications received, 18 approved so far
- Towcester Library – 6-month pilot of WNC Employment Service & Community Law drop-in sessions has started and will be reviewed March 2024
- Current conversations for outreach sessions include Adult Social Care Team, NHFT IAPT Talking Therapies and WNC Armed Forces Covenant
- Winter Wellbeing Campaign promotions including online briefing session from Community Law/Care & Repair regarding winter offer for vulnerable residents

Substance Misuse

Drugs and Alcohol

There are currently 3 drug and alcohol services which are now out for tender. These are Family Support Services, Children and Young People (including Youth Offending provision) and Detoxification Provision. These are all countywide provisions which will start 1st April 2024. Contracts will be for a period of 2 years to align with the re-commissioning of all drug and alcohol services 2026.

The drug and alcohol grants continue to be successful and a commitment from the Office of Health Improvement & Disparities (OHID) have committed funding until March 2025. There is an opportunity to bid for the Individual Placement Support (IPS) via OHID which aims to support those people in treatment into employment. This will be a 2-year commitment until March 2025. Public Health colleagues are working together across the two councils to secure this additional funding.

A Combating Drugs Partnership (CDP) held a countywide event on the 15th November which was very successful with over 50 stakeholders present. Guest speakers included OHID, Job Centre Plus, Probation, Police and clients (Change, Grow, Live). Group work was facilitated to capture stakeholders feedback into the delivery of the CDP Strategic Plan. The chair for the

CDP has now moved from Sally Burns, Director of Public Health for West Northants Council to Jane Bethea, Director of Public Health for North Northants for the next financial year.

Employment

- The work well partnership programme funding bid is due to be released early December which is aimed at developing interventions to support people in work or getting people back into work who have a Long-Term Health Condition. We are working with Economic Development Team, and health and other delivery partners to prepare for this bid and also how we link other funding sources such as the UKSPF.

Town and Parish Councils

- We have allocated 2.5 of our Public Health Officer role to work with Town and Parish Councils on harnessing their impact on health and wellbeing by developing template, guidance and insights to inform strategy development.

Other

- We have 5 members of the team due to start their Public Health Apprenticeship in January, this will lead to an undergraduate degree in Public Health and Public Health Practitioner formal registration with the Faculty of Public Health.

Health Protection

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

The care homes compliance work programme is well underway and to date 20 care homes have been supported by the team. The work is focusing on good IPC practice and empowering care home staff to prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases. The IPC Champion programme has been launched alongside, and the interest received from care home staff has been encouraging. The programme aims to ensure each care home has at least one IPC Champion who will embed good IPC in all activities undertaken in care homes.

Mobile Programme Flu and COVID-19 programmes

Our Mobile Outreach Programme recommenced during September, providing Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations across the West Northants area as part of the national programmes. We have also started to provide NHS health checks during some of the clinics. We are continuing to focus on delivery in areas and to groups experiencing inequalities via community locations and events, including increasingly the Welcoming Spaces. Between September and 22 November 2023, this programme has so far delivered over 4,300 COVID-19 vaccinations, more than 1,150 Flu vaccinations and 115 Health checks at the 62 clinics scheduled. We are continuing delivery of this programme up to the end of March 2024 and will commence planning early in 2024 for the programme post April.

Events for Homeless and Rough Sleepers

The Health Protection Team have successfully organised two health and wellbeing events for homeless and rough sleepers in the Northampton area at partner agency venues. We arranged for a range of services to attend offering vaccination, screening, health checks, sexual health, stop smoking, optical and oral health services and advice at both days. The events were a success, being attended by 87 people who are homeless, rough sleepers, sofa surfers or in temporary accommodation. We are planning similar events in the South Northants and Daventry areas in the new year and will be working with partners to organise Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter health days next year.

Vaccination clinics for eligible WNC staff have been taking place during October and November at local authority locations in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester. Whilst social care and health staff have been prioritised, due to the vulnerable service users they work with, all eligible staff have been invited to attend. 4 clinics have taken place with 154 COVID-19 vaccinations and 157 Flu vaccinations administered. A further vaccination clinic is scheduled in December.

WNC staff health check clinics have been regularly taking place at locations across WNC. 34 health checks have been delivered to eligible staff in the authority. The clinics will be continuing on a monthly basis into the new year.

We are continuing with our health protection communications campaign plan. Recent activity has included:

- Return to education reminder for parents to get their children vaccinated
- Organ donation (promotion to WNC staff)
- Breast cancer awareness
- Cervical cancer awareness
- Flu vaccination – by December all cohorts will be targeted
- We are also supporting the campaigns for COVID-19 (ICB led) and MMR (NNC led)
- Updating winter wellness information, as part of WNC campaign
- Expanding online health protection information

We have also been working with system partners to prepare for the forthcoming winter months, by planning and preparing for outbreaks, incidents and surges of winter infections.

Commissioning

Children and young people, Sexual Health, Oral Health

In addition to the 0-19 service improvement plan referenced above, we are also working jointly with NNC Public Health on service improvement plans for Strong Start Universal Early Years Service (provided by WNC Libraries), the Intergrated Sexual Health Service (provided by NHFT), and the Oral Health Promotion (provided by NHFT). Discussions with Strong Start are focused on aligning delivery with Family Hubs. All services are showing improvement on the identified areas. A paper recommending the separate North and West commissioning of these services from April 2025 will be going to Shared Services Joint Committee in January 2024 and has been to People SLT and ELT and preparations are being made for the redesign and recommissioning of these services in WNC.

Councillor Matt Golby

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health