

West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

Report of Topics 2023/24 for Adur & Worthing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cathy Glynn-Davies, Member for Broadwater, Worthing Borough Council

Introduction

Adur and Worthing Council appoints us as their representatives on the West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. We are co-opted onto this committee with a view to reporting back on issues relating to Worthing and Adur. Borough and District attendees have an opportunity to scrutinise decisions affecting this region.

Over the past year HASC has focused on a number of key health issues across Adur and Worthing and their current and potential impact on our communities.

Around 40 people are invited to attend these meetings. Their role is to scrutinise, comment and question policies, strategies and changes currently taking place in health and care services in West Sussex and beyond (Coastal West Sussex). The cohort of attendees consists of cabinet members for WSCC and members from Mid Sussex, Crawley, Arun, Adur, Horsham, Chichester and Worthing; co opted members from Borough and District Councils; WSCC officers, as well as experts in relevant fields including organisations such as University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Sussex Integrated Care Services (formerly known as West Sussex Coastal Commissioning Group), West Sussex Local Dental Committee and Healthwatch.

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee is responsible for the overview and scrutiny of Cabinet portfolios areas set out below:

1. Adults Services portfolio
2. Public Health and Wellbeing portfolio relating to both adults and children

3. Review and scrutiny of the planning, provision and operation of health services in West Sussex (The health functions of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee arise under Part I of the Health and Social Care Act 2001)

The committee is open to suggestions on what they should scrutinise. Careful consideration is given to each proposal, with members first needing to satisfy themselves that scrutiny could have a positive impact before agreeing to add an item to a future agenda.

Format of Meetings:

Once the Agenda is agreed, members are invited to attend a pre meeting, usually via Zoom, to examine important and relevant issues which are likely to be the subject of discussion, how these relate to our communities, and to formulate questions and establish whether additional background information may be required.

Task and Finish Groups (TFGs): These are established by scrutiny committees to carry out time-limited examinations of specific issues of interest or concern. This may include reviewing particular proposals or decisions as well as giving input to policy development.

11th January 2023

Items scrutinised at this committee included the following:

- NHS proposal to change stroke services.
 - NHS Sussex perceived that change was needed to bring about improvements to stroke services. It was proposed that an Acute Stroke Centre (ASC) be developed at St Richard's Hospital in Chichester to work in conjunction with one at the Royal Sussex County, Brighton, and the Stroke Unit at Worthing Hospital be closed. Concerns raised included the transportation period (within the golden hour) from Worthing (or Shoreham) to either ASC. A consultation process was examined.

- HASC members requested to be engaged in the consultation process and received further data on travel times and staff retention.
- Delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategy 'The Life You Want To Lead'
 - HASC questioned the 'Strength Based' approach to Adult Social Care, the number of adults in meaningful employment, support for homeless people, funding issues, and the workforce strategy. Questions were also asked about the lack of CQC inspections and the 'peer to peer' strategy used to assess quality of care. CQC Inspections are due to begin again. K
- Key Decisions:
 - A briefing was requested re Avila House Extra Care Housing Scheme.
- Work Programme:
 - Asked that the Integrated Care Strategy and Task and Finish Groups related to Marjorie Cobby House and Shaw Day Services be scheduled.
- Deciding Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Task and Finish Group.
 - Scrutiny was requested on a number of issues, with a focus on young people, to include suicide prevention, CAMHS, the impact of digital/social media, and transition to adults' services.

8th March 2023

Items scrutinised at this committee included the following:

- South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust Improvement Update:
 - CQC observed good progress with improvements. A culture change is being implemented. A falls strategy is being developed. A stroke services model is being developed. Questions were raised about operational issues (wait times at hospitals, handover times, the use of private transport, and 'hear and treat') and workforce issues (bullying, sexual harassment, whistleblowing).
 - HASC will receive data on wait times and walk in services (private transport).

- Changes to Children’s Specialised Cancer Services Principal Treatment Centre Programme.
 - Resolved that there would not be a substantial variation and clinical outcomes would be improved. Concerns were raised about increased travel times and expense for families.
- Dentistry in West Sussex - Feedback from Evidence Gathering Session.
 - NHS works with Dentaaid to provide treatment to people struggling to access a dentist.
 - NHS Sussex is working with Healthwatch to develop web information services.
 - A letter was drafted by the Chair to West Sussex MPs and the Secretary of State for Health highlighting concerns.
- Quarterly Performance and Resources Report (Quarter 3)
 - Fewer adult social care assessments are taking place.
 - Anyone who is terminally ill is a priority for social care assessment.
 - Social Workers are being recruited from abroad.
 - Public engagement around mental health was requested.
 - The target for flu vaccination - committee requested it be increased.
 - Key performance indicators for access to GPs was requested.

14th June 2023

Items scrutinised at this committee included the following:

- The Sussex Shared Delivery Plan.
- Quarterly Performance and Resources Report (Quarter 4)

15th September 2023

Items scrutinised at this committee included the following:

- Quarterly Performance and Resources Report (Quarter 1)
 - The target for waiting times in A&E Departments is unambitious
 - Proposals for CAMHS need further work.

- Unambitious targets for accessing appointments at GP Practices
- More information concerning people with disabilities is required.
- Was presented with information concerning 'virtual wards' and changes to digital NHS services.
- Children's mental health and dentistry are key areas of the plan.
- Actions included: New local measures for Adult Services; treatment for drug and alcohol addiction from Public Health Grant and other sources.

22nd November 2023

Items scrutinised at this committee included the following:

- NHS Winter Planning
 - Sussex NHS aims a minimum wait of 3 days for a bed. (currently between 7-8). Plans are in place to bring down length of stay in mental health beds. Vaccination levels require improvement and mobile vaccination units will be used. Digital exclusion will be explored. A 'modern' GP model is being introduced for triaging. Key areas discussed were access, staffing and workplace safety. NHS teams view live data of patients waiting for ambulances. Devices have been developed to enable lifts for patients suffering falls.
- Adults' Services Improvement Plan (including transition from Children's to Adults' Services)
 - AS to work on a definitive definition of 'Strength Based Approach'. Family members are called upon to provide care and support, reducing the reliance on the services. People in High cost living may be moved into supported living. Annual care reviews are not always taking place. Data available may not actually reflect what is happening on the ground. Council regularly lobbies Govt and MPs over underfunding for social care. Work is being done on recruitment and retention. The council has employed 35 Social Workers from various countries. Senior practitioners come from within the service. Vacancy rates compare well with other authorities.

- Public Health
 - Areas covered included falls prevention, mental health, wellbeing and also late diagnoses of HIV and Chlamydia and a drop in the number of people screened. Questions were asked about current sexual health services in Worthing (will a new facility be provided for the town?), and GP pharmaceutical support for sexual health services. Smoking and vaping were examined, and the control of illicit and underage sales and supplies. A comprehensive approach needs to be developed. A Key Performance Indicator needs to be developed to monitor the prevalence of smoking in children and young people.
- Quarterly Performance and Resources Report (Quarter 2)
 - Action: Adult Services to work on a definite definition of 'strength-based review'
 - Director of Public Health to provide a more detailed update on sexual health services including those in Worthing.

10th January 2024

- **Urgent Matters:** The decision to reduce assessment of dementia services and the number of dementia beds provided in West Sussex from January 2024 until March 2024. Committee questioned the use of partner organisations and the voluntary sector and the effect on families and carers and adult social care, and whether a risk assessment had been carried out. Resolved that the Chair would write to Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Sussex raising specific concerns.
- Access to Dentistry - Report by NHS Sussex
 - Report indicates that the system/service is on the point of collapse.
 - The current NHS dental contract was felt to be underfunded and the cause of problems facing access to dentistry and requires review and further support was required during the transition of services to Integrated Care Boards. The business model of dentistry needed to be looked at. The British Dental Association recommends a minimum of £35

per Unit of Dental Activity. Concerns were expressed that NHS dentistry was being allowed to fail, to be replaced with a private system. Starting a new NHS Dental Service will not be cost effective.

- Committee resolved that they should lobby strongly to local MPs and the Secretary of State for Health. Action programmes need to be developed and consider whether the current business model is sustainable.
- Sussex Health and Care People Plan (Recruitment and Staffing in Social Care)
 - The plan appeared aspirational. Pensions, secure contracts, recruitment and retention were not covered in the plan. Providers are being pushed over their financial envelope and there is a proposed greater reliance on partners and the voluntary sector. Committee has asked for further information on the overarching implementation plan to include time frames and detailed reporting, as well as year on year staffing figures.

Business Planning: An update was requested on the closure of Zachary Merton Hospital and will be brought to the Business Planning Group. (Marjory Cobby House and Shaw Day services are also being closed and the impact of this will be considered by the Business Planning Group. A request was tabled for more information on the current reablement contract.

Cathy Glynn-Davies

Borough Councillor for Broadwater, Worthing