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Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	7 September 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Hollyer, Rowley, Musson, Daubeney and Orrell
Apologies	Councillors Pearson, Mason and Kilbane

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## **20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

## **21. MINUTES**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held at 2:00pm on 10 August 2020 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair at a later date.

At this point in the meeting the Chair explained that, as a result of Cllr D Taylor becoming an Independent Member of the Council, proportionality on Committees had had to be recalculated. Further to that exercise, Cllr Mason had now replaced Cllr D Taylor on the Committee. Expressing his disappointment that there was now no Green Party representative on the Committee, he thanked Cllr D Taylor for his input into the Committee and former role as Chair of Children and Education Scrutiny Committee.

## **22. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

## **23. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Committee received a finance and performance update from the Head of Corporate Finance and Commercial

Procurement. In response to Members questions during the presentation she explained that:

- In relation to the SEND and Mental Health Services, the Council had agreements in place with the CCG.
- Regarding the safeguarding around the delivery of Adult Health and Social Care, senior managers had been focussed on the delivery of front line services and would be looking at back office. As part of mitigation and managing financial challenges, managers would be looking at savings. The detail on the position regarding savings would be outlined in the report to Executive on 1 October.
- Due to the pooling and safety net mechanism for business rates the Council was no less exposed to the drop in business rate income. The process for the pooling of business rates was explained.
- Debt recovery is paused during COVID-19 and in order to get the right help to the right people, the Council had started work on softer debt recovery to identify people who may be struggling to pay their bills.
- In terms of business rents to the Council, all had been offered a payment holiday and had been all had been written to and had started to pay or agree a payment schedule. It was noted that a number of businesses had not taken grants or payment holidays and of those that had, some small businesses had repaid their grants.

Head of Corporate Finance and Commercial Procurement was thanked for her update.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee be updated on finance and performance.

## **24. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S UPDATE**

The Director of Public Health gave an update on the COVID-19 position noting the following points:

- There had been 991 cases in York to date. The rate in the city was slowly increasing and remained under the national and Yorkshire and Humber averages.
- There had been an increase in the number of people being tested and positive cases were lower than the national and regional averages at this point in time.

- In care homes some residents had tested positive again and it was thought that this was because the tests were picking up small levels of virus and it was not necessarily infectious.
- The age of cases was changing with more cases in children and young people (an increase of 13% in 10 – 19 year olds and 20% in 20-29 year olds) and this was not unique to York.
- The arrival of college/university students was a key focus and work was being done with colleges and universities on this, including looking at a walk in test centre and working with students.

In answer to Member questions, the Director of Public Health clarified that:

- In order to look at trends in rates of COVID-19 in different age brackets, the numbers were small and the trend needed to be tracked.
- A huge amount of work has been done by schools in preparation for the September return and schools in York were as prepared as they could be to fully open.
- A Standard Operating Procedure for schools had been developed and all procedures had been signed off.
- Closing a school would be a last resort and children had been grouped in 'bubbles'. The process by which the bubbles would operate was explained.
- There had been no excess deaths in the last 13 weeks and there were 43 fewer deaths over that period than in the last 3 years. There were excess deaths through April with a peak in May and this had gradually decreased.
- To determine the impact of COVID-19 numbers on mortality, the data would need to be looked at retrospectively.
- The process for looking after care home residents who had tested positive for a second time was explained.
- There was no walk in test centre because the Pillar 2 test centres were under contracts with central government. The number of cases in York was low compared to other areas which were a priority, however the priority may change due to the number of students arriving in the city.
- Regarding the arrival of students, those that were asymptomatic would not be tested. If there was an outbreak a mobile testing facility could be requested.
- There had been discussions with the universities about preparation with students as they arrived.

The Director of Public Health was thanked for her update.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To ensure that Members were aware of the current situation in York relating to Covid-19.

An adjournment took place at 3:07pm until 3:15pm.

## **25. THE NON-COVID HEALTH IMPACTS OF CORONAVIRUS**

The Executive Director of Primary Care and Population Health (NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group) had been invited to the meeting to give a presentation on the impact of COVID-19 in North Yorkshire and York detailing the specific concerns regarding the four waves of COVID-19. Details of the presentation had been circulated to Members of the Committee shortly before the meeting. For each of the four waves, Dr Lee explained who was the most vulnerable, what the impacts were and possible mitigations, and what partners and the public had said about these.

Following the presentation, there was a verbal update on delayed diagnosis following hospital's conversion to COVID-19 care in March and April. The following points were noted:

- There were co dependencies between services and the hospital was working with the independent sector to support the NHS, for example cancer services had been deployed to the independent sector.
- Delayed diagnosis was particularly of relevance to cancer services – in March there had been a 75% reduction in two week referrals and by June this was restored to 90% of pre COVID-19 levels and had since increased to 96%.
- There had been 75% reduction in admissions March to June and this had now restored to 90% and routine surgery had now back to 68% of pre COVID-19 levels.

The Executive Director of Primary Care and Population Health was thanked for his update and in answer to questions explained:

- The mental health service support in place during COVID-19. There had been a 15% rise in the demand for support which had offset admissions. Referral routes had been stable throughout and COVID-19 secure support had been delivered via telephone and online consultations.

- Regarding GP appointments, all GP practices were mandated to triage patients and there had been a fundamental shift in the delivery of primary care.
- Social prescribers had worked closely with the voluntary sector and some support was not a medicalised intervention.
- The hospital had clinically risk assessed backlogs and prioritised from this.
- The proportion waiting longer than a year or more had gone up and was estimated to be circa 7000 at the end of the year.
- The health protection team in Yorkshire and the Humber would deal with outbreaks over the next six months.
- The eligibility for flu vaccination had been expanded to the over 50s and vaccinations had begun in September. The setting up of a mass flu vaccination site was being examined.
- The consumption of illicit drugs was down and the issue of alcohol consumption was on the agenda for the York health and care collaborative. The Health and Wellbeing Board had identified alcohol, smoking and obesity as areas of concern.

The Director of Public Health and Executive Director of Primary Care and Population Health were thanked for their updates and contributions.

Resolved:

- i. That the update be noted.
- ii. That the impact of the opening of Schools and Universities be examined at a future meeting.
- iii. That access to GP appointments be referred to the Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

Reason: To ensure that Members were aware of the current situation in York relating to Covid-19.

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.05 pm].