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Caring Sub-committee

Thursday, 27 July 2023

Present: Councillor J Shaw (Chair)
Councillors M Fox, J Cruddas, T Hallway,
A Holdsworth, J Kirwin, L Marshall and P McIntyre

Apologies: Councillors L Arkley, G Bell, M Murphy and T Neira

C5/23 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

C6/23 Declarations of Interest or Dispensations

Councillor Julie Cruddas declared a registerable personal interest in Item 5 Overview of Public Health and Health and Wellbeing and Item 6 Healthwatch North Tyneside – Annual report and update, as she is a Director of Justice Prince Community Interest Company.

C7/23 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

C8/23 Overview of Public Health and Health and Wellbeing

The sub-committee received a presentation from the Director of Public Health which provided an overview of the Public Health and Health and Wellbeing service area.

It was acknowledged that almost every aspect of our lives impacts our health and ultimately life expectancy. This includes access to education, outdoor space

and public transport, jobs and homes, experience of poverty and being a victim of crime.

Members were informed that the vision in North Tyneside is to reduce inequalities by breaking the link between people's circumstances and their opportunities for a healthy, thriving and fulfilled life. The approach is informed by a robust and up-to-date evidence base on what works to reduce inequalities led by Sir Michael Marmot. This includes giving every child the best start in life; ensuring a healthy standard of living for all; and strengthening the role and impact of health prevention.

It was noted that in the last two decades, many of the indicators of health and wellbeing have improved significantly in North Tyneside, however they remain on average worse than those for England. The overall picture of health and wellbeing across North Tyneside is mixed. The healthy life expectancy for males and females in the borough has fallen over the past decade. The decrease for females is more significant, while healthy life expectancy for England has held steady. It was noted that these indicators are driven by self-reported health information.

Members were informed that the Public Health Department consists of a Specialist Public Health Team, 0-19 Children's Public Health Service, Community Safety and Resilience Team and Public Protection Team. Key activities of these teams are:

- Promotion of health and wellbeing across the population
- Improving health and reducing health inequalities
- Protecting the health and wellbeing of the population
- Protecting and supporting residents and consumers and regulating legitimate businesses
- Promoting and improving community safety
- Preparing and planning for emergencies

Priorities for the Specialist Public Health Team for 2023/24 include a review of the stop smoking services, development of a strategy to reduce alcohol misuse and the delivery of targeted weight management programmes. Priorities for the 0-19 Children's Public Health Team include the delivery of the healthy child programme, the roll out of perinatal mental health training for all colleagues and

a focus on recruitment and retention.

Members discussed the prevalence of vaping amongst young people and asked what work was being done to reduce this. It was noted that information packs are sent out to secondary schools for sharing with pupils and trading standards to do a lot of work around preventing the sale of vapes to underage children.

The ways in which public health collaborate with other departments was also discussed by the sub-committee. It was noted that the development of strategies across the Authority includes consideration of inequalities and that there is a wide representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board all thinking about health-related issues.

Members discussed housing and health needs and the joint up working approach between public protection and housing. It was also noted that health visitors have contact with families in their homes and this provides a route to feedback any concerns in standards of accommodation, i.e., damp problems in private rented accommodation.

It was **agreed** to note the information presented.

C9/23 Healthwatch North Tyneside – Annual report and update

The sub-committee received an update from Healthwatch North Tyneside, following the publication of its Annual Report. The 'What we've heard during 2022-23 – summary report' and 'Healthwatch North Tyneside Annual Report 2022-23' had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

Members were informed that the role of Healthwatch North Tyneside is to collect general feedback from local people on their experiences of health and social care services. Residents can share feedback via community engagement events, telephone, leaving reviews of specific services, via email/website and by participating in an annual 'Have your Say' survey. Between April 2022 and March 2023, a total of 3579 people shared their views and experiences to help raise issues and improve care.

Through the views and feedback of residents, a number of common themes were

apparent including:

- Quality of care is high
- Access to information
- Waiting, delays and cancellations are an issue
- Choice is important
- Cost of living is impacting on health and wellbeing
- Transport continues to be a concern for many

It was noted that during 2022/23, Healthwatch North Tyneside published a number of detailed reports on issues that people had raised in previous years. These related to:

- Breast screening
- Digital inclusion
- Health inequalities
- Pharmacy
- Outpatient appointments
- Carers – adults and young carers

The work around breast screening had identified some issues with the process used for issuing invites and concerns around parking charges. As a result of the research project, free parking for people attending breast screening appointments was arranged and a smoother invite system was put in place.

It was highlighted that transport continues to be a concern for many residents, with the cost of living impacting on the affordability of public transport to travel to service provision. Travel to hospitals is a particular problem, but difficulties have also been reported in accessing more local services such as GPs and pharmacy.

It was **agreed** to note the information provided.

C10/23 Caring Sub-committee – Work Programme

The Chair advised that an update on the work programme would be a standard item for each meeting on the sub-committee.

The Chair suggested that at the September meeting the sub-committee could start to focus on work in relation to voluntary carers. This could include direct payments and support provided to carers to help with their health and wellbeing.

It was **agreed** that carers be the focus on the meeting to be held in September meeting.

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