

## Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board

Wednesday 31 March 2021 at 3.00pm

This meeting was conducted virtually via MS Teams

### Present

#### Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC):

Councillor Maria Crompton	Deputy Leader (Chair);
Councillor Keith Allcock	Cabinet Member for Homes;
David Stevens	Chief Executive;
Katharine Willmette	Interim Director – Adult Social Care;
Lisa McNally	Director – Public Health;
Lesley Hagger	Executive Director – Children’s Services;

#### Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG):

Dr Ian Sykes	Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board (Vice-Chair);
Michelle Carolan	Managing Director Sandwell West Birmingham CCG;

#### Healthwatch Sandwell:

John Taylor	Chair of Healthwatch Sandwell;
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#### Sandwell Voluntary Sector Organisation:

Mark Davis	Chief Executive;
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#### Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust:

Marsha Foster	Director of Partnerships;
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#### In Attendance:

Chris Guest	Service Manager Adult Social Care;
Clair Norton	Health and Wellbeing Board Project Officer;
Paul Moseley	Sandwell Better Care Fund Programme Manager;

#### Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Elaine Giles	Chair – Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board;
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Councillor Joyce Underhill  
Councillor Farut Shaeen  
Ian Green  
Alexia Farmer

Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life;  
Cabinet Member for Living Healthy Lives;  
Chief Superintendent, West Midlands Police;  
Healthwatch Sandwell

### **01/21 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **02/21 Covid-19 Sandwell's Position and Updated Plan**

The Health and Wellbeing Board received a presentation from the Director of Public Health on the position within Sandwell.

Over the period from January to mid-March 2021 Sandwell had experienced one of the fastest declines in infection rates in the country. The period had also seen a marked decrease in long-term prevalence across the Borough.

The Director of Public Health thanked the voluntary sector leaders and influencers, faith leaders and residents for their contribution to achieving the current position.

The Board also took note of the efforts of officers who staffed the Covid-19 outbreak response cell, which continued to operate round-the-clock service. The cell withstood periods of extreme outbreak pressures, for example dealing with over 3,000 cases a week in January 2021.

The strategy of localising Covid-19 communications and news coverage was mentioned. It was found that residents engaged much more with communications targeted at the electoral ward level than those covering Sandwell Borough as one entity. For example, there was a move away from press coverage of Sandwell generally to articles about situation within specific wards and areas of the borough. Such localisation of news coverage proved highly effective in engaging residents and consequently bringing the case rates under control.

Weekly case rates of Covid-19 in Sandwell care homes had decreased significantly since they peaked at the end of January 2021.

Up to the week ending 12 March 2021, death rate from Covid-19 in Sandwell care homes stood at 31.1 per 100,000 of the population. This rate was significantly lower than that of both the neighbouring local authorities and the England and Wales average (53.1 per 100,000). This

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was in part due to the joint inter-departmental and inter-agency effort involved, including proactive testing effort by partners from the CCG and Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital (SWBH) Trust.

Weekly case rates reached their lowest level in the week ending 10 March with 87 cases and began to slowly rise from this point – to 97 in the week ending 31 March 2021. The Director of Public Health expressed concern that as the restrictions were being eased further, and more social interaction was occurring, the case rates would rise even more.

It was noted that the rise in weekly case rates from mid-March coincided with the full reopening of schools. The age-specific Covid-19 case rates displayed a marked rise for the 13-17 age group in mid-March when the schools reopened and for the 4-12 age group around the period 20-24 March.

It was explained that whilst this trend could be attributed in large part to the enormous increase in tests it was important to take note of because the rise in infection rates of younger age groups tended to precede the rises in infection rates of older age groups.

Sandwell had a high rate of COVID vaccination uptake, which stood at 93% for people 65 and over. This was contrary to the predictions that vaccination uptake would be lower due to factors such as the historically low uptake of flu jab.

Sandwell's flagship initiative for vaccination awareness work had been the Community Vaccination Leaders Programme. As of end of March, 170 people had been trained as the Community Vaccination Champions to raise awareness about the need for vaccination in the heart of community.

Sandwell Council had been assisting the Community Vaccination Champions with their function not only in terms of training and organised peer support sessions but also through written information in the form of a toolkit, access to funding, and to council services such as printing and graphic design.

**03/21**

### **Local Outbreak Management Plan**

The Board was advised that each local authority was required to publish the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) before April 2021.

Sandwell had completed its plan and approval was sought from the Board for the Sandwell COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan before it could be published on the Council website.

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The Director of Public Health explained that the plan covered Sandwell's response to the ongoing COVID-19 threat, including new challenges relating to testing, variants of concern and vaccination uptake.

The Plan included sections on aspects of outbreak management such as governance, the use of data, intelligence and insight, supporting vulnerable groups, testing and contact tracing, communications and engagement, supporting vaccination uptake, enforcement, and resources and funding.

In relation to the Plan's contents, the Director of Public Health noted the success of Sandwell's test and trace and surge testing efforts.

It was explained that the Local Outbreak Management Plan was required to go through a regional assurance process conducted by the Department of Health and Social Care. The Director of Public Health confirmed that Sandwell's COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan passed this assurance process and received positive feedback from the Department of Health and Social Care.

**Agreed** that the Sandwell COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan 2021 be approved and published by the Council.

### **04/21 Better Care Fund (BCF) Update and Section 75 Agreement**

The BCF Programme Manager presented the update on the BCF and the Section 75 Agreement.

On 30 September 2020, the Board was presented with the overview of Sandwell's BCF Programme. The Programme had continued to support the delivery of national health and adult social care priorities. BCF team colleagues had worked alongside public health colleagues to support Sandwell's care providers during the pandemic as well as to ensure care providers complied with national Covid-19 reporting requirements.

The Board was advised that local BCF Programmes must comply with the following national BCF conditions for the year 2020/21:

- the local BCF plans would be agreed jointly by the local authority and the CCG (the planning requirement was suspended for 2020/21 due to the pandemic);
- the BCF programmes would be managed in line with the most recent BCF policy, published in 2019/20, which set out the following conditions;
  - that BCFs spend at least over 61% of their contribution from the CCG on social care services

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- that BCFs spend at least over 28% of their contribution from the CCG on CCG-commissioned out of hospital services
- that a clear plan was in place for managing delayed transfers of care.

Sandwell Better Care Fund met all national conditions. It had expected to invest £17.6 million, which was over 65% of the contribution from CCG on social care services. It had expected to spend almost £12.9 million on CCG-commissioned services such as intermediate care and GP support to care homes, as opposed to the minimum required of 28% which was just over £7.5 million for Sandwell. This also enabled Sandwell to meet its discharge to assess commitments. Lastly, there was a clear plan for managing delayed transfers of care. It was noted that Sandwell ranked as the number one authority in the country for reporting fewest delays in March 2020.

The Board was reminded of the requirement to establish a formal agreement between Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) to create a pooled budget for the purposes of delivering the Better Care Fund and Covid-19-related hospital discharge services in 2020/21 under powers conferred by Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006. This was a national condition for access to the BCF funding.

The Health and Wellbeing Board was required to approve the BCF plan and Section 75 Agreement each year. In recognition of the extra demands placed on the system by the pandemic, the national BCF leads agreed there would be no requirement for local areas to submit their plans for approval in 2020/21. However, there remained an expectation that local areas would establish S75 Agreements in respect of their local BCF programmes.

It was mandated that the funding to support the delivery of the NHS Covid-19 Discharge Arrangements had to be pooled between the Council and CCG using a new or existing S75 Agreement. The approach agreed by the Joint Partnership Board to achieve this was to establish a variation to the BCF S75 Agreement. This was in line with central and regional advice and most areas were expected to adopt this approach.

Approval was sought from the Health and Wellbeing Board for the proposed Section 75 Agreement for the Sandwell Better Care Fund for 2020-21 and for the proposed Variation to the BCF Section 75 Agreement for the purposes of implementing the NHS Covid-19 Discharge Requirements.

These documents were signed off by the Director of Adult Social Care and the Managing Director of Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG,

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following agreement of the Joint Partnership Board on 18 June 2020. The documents also received the support of the CCG's Sandwell Commissioning Committee on 19 November 2020.

The following was noted in response to comments and questions:

- that Sandwell Better Care Fund was pivotal in delivering the discharge to assess model across Sandwell.

### **Agreed: -**

- (1) that the contents of the Better Care Fund Annual Report 2020/2021 and associated Section 75 documents be noted;
- (2) that the Section 75 Agreement for the Sandwell Better Care Fund for 2020/2021 be approved;
- (3) that the proposed variation to the Section 75 Agreement for the purposes of implementing the NHS COVID-19 Discharge Requirements be acknowledged and supported.

## **05/21 Healthwatch – Update on Draft Work Priorities 2021**

The Chair of Healthwatch provided an update on the status of three priority projects that Healthwatch Sandwell had agreed for 2020/21.

For the project on people's experiences of accessing mental health and wellbeing services as a result of the pandemic, the Healthwatch Board had developed recommendations which were sent out for comment to the Council and the CCG. These were expected to be published by the end of April.

For the project on people's experience of health services becoming digital, particularly around accessing primary care, it was noted that feedback from residents and patients was generally positive. Positive comments were received around the quickness of receiving equipment for example. Issues remained around access to digital services in communities where English is the second language and for people suffering from visual impairment. Full recommendations were expected to be published within the next few weeks.

Regarding the project on young people's experience, it was confirmed that Youth Healthwatch Sandwell was developed in the last year to ensure voices of young people were heard in the development and planning of services. Two online mental health training sessions had been arranged for April for Youth Healthwatch volunteers.

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For 2021/22, Healthwatch Sandwell had made available Community Cash Fund Awards of up to £1,500 for local organisations and groups to improve wellbeing in their community.

Four grants had been awarded to the following groups:

- 4 Community Trust – to work with children and young people gathering views of how they perceive health and social care in Sandwell;
- West Bromwich Dartmouth Cricket Club – to develop a community garden where local people can volunteer and develop the green space;
- Life in Community – to offer low level counselling to people impacted by the pandemic and support around mental health;
- New Baby Network – to offer six workshops to perinatal families focussing on developing wellbeing skills in daily life.

The Chair of Healthwatch explained the process of how new priorities for 2021/22 were determined. Three work priorities emerged from this process as follows:

- Hospital Treatment Pathways;
- The Hidden Impact on Carers;
- Young People's Mental Health.

Discussions were now taking place with individual stakeholders on developing project plans and proceeding with these projects from April 2021.

Healthwatch Sandwell agreed the following commitments for 2021/22:

- To work in partnership with local partners in the Health and Social Care system to feedback the public voice and seek outcomes;
- To have effective escalation routes for sharing cases of concerns with service providers;
- To ensure that the public is fully involved in shaping the Healthwatch agenda and influencing its work.

The following was noted in response to comments and questions:

- that New Baby Network workshops were a welcome development as perinatal care remained an area of concern in Sandwell;
- that it was positive to see young people's mental health being a Healthwatch priority and that Nurturing Young People Strategic Group and Children's Services would offer any support that would be required.

**06/21 Update on Knowle Resource Centre**

The Service Manager Adult Social Care provided an update on the Sandwell Integrated Social Care and Health Centre (Knowle Resource Centre) capital development in Rowley Regis.

The centre was being designed as an 80-bed intermediate care centre, with both social care and health provision on one site to avoid hospital admissions and to provide reablement support for discharged patients to enable them to return home with no or lower care packages.

It was designed as a centre primarily for older people but where younger adults could be supported as well where their assessed need would recommend such course of action.

The centre would have special arrangements for people with dementia. On the ground floor a separate dementia unit was planned with access to the sensory garden where people with dementia would be able to move around safely.

The centre would be staffed by care staff employed by the local authority and nurses and therapists from the acute trust. This would provide an integrated working model in terms of both systems and staff.

By building this provision, bed capacity that the Council was currently commissioning in the market would be released back into the market for use on long-term placements.

The Service Manager Adult Social Care shared the designer impression photos of the centre to help members visualise what the centre would look like once completed.

It was noted that the centre was currently on track to be completed in time for July 2022. Foundations had now been laid and lift pits were in situ. Steelwork was due to commence by the end of March 2021.

The plan was to commence with the recruitment of the centre's staff was from summer 2021. This would be in parallel with the ordering of specialist equipment, with small joint equipment centre planned on site for access by the community. Care Quality Commission (CQC) registration and the establishment of the centre's service model would follow before the centre opening, planned for July 2022.

**07/21 Update on Willow Gardens**

The Service Manager Adult Social Care provided an update on the Willow Gardens Extra Care Scheme development.

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Willow Gardens was a development of 90 extra care apartments located at the junction of Harvest Road and Moor Lane in Rowley Regis. Extra care was a way of supporting people with varying levels of need to live in a home of their own by providing professional care and support staff on site, available 24/7.

All residents at Willow Gardens scheme would benefit from fully self-contained accommodation (a lounge, fully fitted kitchen, one or two bedrooms and level access shower room with toilet) and a range of on-site communal facilities within the building.

A range of communal facilities was to be provided on site including a restaurant and a hairdressing salon. These facilities would be available to both the tenants and the local community, and the centre would be promoted as a community resource.

Each flat would have a call button so that the resident could alert care staff on site in case of an emergency 24/7.

The Service Manager Adult Social Care explained the key milestones in the Willow Gardens development.

The scheme was agreed in March 2017. In April 2020, following consultation, the Cabinet took the decision to progress with the closure of two internal Extra Care Schemes - Holly Grange and Manifoldia Grange. Staff and tenants from these centres would be relocated to either Willow Gardens or other options across Sandwell.

Transferring tenants would occupy under half of the Willow Gardens Scheme with remaining spaces opened to other Sandwell residents wishing to move to Extra Care, but particularly from the Rowley Regis area where there was currently limited supply of supported living options.

Tenants and staff scheduled to relocate had been shown a virtual tour of the scheme.

An expression of interest list was currently being held, in line with existing process for Extra Care nomination.

It was noted that completion date was now anticipated to be in September/October 2021.

The Board received a detailed virtual tour of the scheme.

The following was noted in response to comments and questions:

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- It was clarified that the Willow Gardens Scheme was designed primarily as a long-term accommodation. Residents at the scheme would be regarded as council tenants. Options were sought to designate some of the flats for reablement.

### **08/21 Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Updates**

The Vice-Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board updated members on changes to CCG arrangements. Sandwell and Birmingham CCG would cease to exist as of end of 31 March 2021. The new Black Country and Birmingham CCG was to replace the existing arrangement and would become operational from 1 April 2021.

The Black Country and Birmingham CCG was given an Integrated Care System (ICS) status and would include five areas including Sandwell.

It was expected that this change would not have any adverse impact on Sandwell residents. It was also not expected to lead to any changes in terms of CCG representation on the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board.

It was hoped the change would provide more opportunities for locally based commissioning with new Sandwell place-based commissioning committee being formed, where each of the eight primary care networks within Sandwell would be represented.

The Vice-Chair provided a brief vaccination programme update. The remarkable progress that was made over the last four months was noted. At present around 120,000 people within Sandwell had received a first dose of vaccination, with around 60% of those delivered from GP practice centres. There was now a mass vaccination site at Tipton Sports Academy and several pharmacies were also offering vaccinations.

The Vice-Chair took the opportunity to thank Dr Ayaz Ahmed who was finishing his term on this Board. The Chair joined in thanking Dr Ahmed for his contribution to this Board.

### **09/21 Board Forward Plan – Health and Wellbeing Board Project Manager**

The Health and Wellbeing Board Project Officer outlined the matters which would be brought to the next meeting of the Board scheduled for June as follows: -

- Sandwell Carers Strategy;
- Suicide Prevention Strategy.

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There was a further item which was not yet allocated a date as follows: -

- Improving Palliative and End of Life Care Workstream.

If anyone has any items for the new municipal year forward plan could these be forwarded to the Board's Project Officer.

### **10/21 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board would be held at **5pm on 16 June 2021. (Virtual meeting using MS Teams).**

The Chair took the opportunity to thank and offer best wishes to Shane Parkes, Democratic Services Officer, who was retiring. Officers and members present joined the Chair in extending their thanks in appreciation for her years of service supporting this Board.

Meeting ended at 4.11pm

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