

From: Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Richard Smith, Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health

To: Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee – 17
November 2022

Subject: **ADULT SOCIAL CARE PRESSURES PLAN 2022-2023**

Classification: Unrestricted

Previous Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Divisions: All

Summary: The report will provide an overview of the current pressures faced by Adult Social Care and Health and the mitigating actions in place to ensure service continuity and resilience. The report focuses on outlining the strategic and operational response to a range of factors including COVID-19 and flu, vacancies in the health and social care workforce, waiting lists for care and support, winter pressures and budgetary pressures. The full Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 identifies the component elements of the directorate’s response to the unprecedented pressures on the health and social care system and identifies owners for each of the response elements.

Recommendation: The Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** and **CONSIDER** the content of the report and the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Directorate has continued to operate in an extremely challenging environment throughout 2022, as it manages pressures associated with COVID-19 recovery, impacts of local authority budget pressures, cost of living impacts, increased demographic pressures of an ageing population and people living longer with more complex needs, alongside workforce vacancy rates and high turnover which have continued to increase across the health and social care sector. Many of these are the same pressures faced by most other local authorities nationally, as a result of national rather than local factors.

- 1.2 The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023, attached as Appendix 1, identifies the factors which are likely to impact the operating environment in the coming months and beyond, and the strategic and operational actions which are being taken to ensure directorate resilience.
- 1.3 The plan will be maintained as a live document which will enable ASCH to continually review its business processes and escalation procedures, ensure that risks and issues are addressed at an early stage and implement appropriate mitigations to support service continuity.

2. Context

- 2.1 ASCH has historically faced system pressure during the winter period due to its interdependencies with the NHS, the need to support hospital discharges and increased demand for care and support during winter. In 2022-2023, challenges which pre-date COVID-19 have been compounded by the impact of the pandemic and result in a particularly difficult set of challenges for the winter months and beyond.
- 2.2 Local authorities have seen increased budget pressures in recent years, which has impacted on the funding available for adult social care services. This is in the context of increased demographic pressures, with an aging population and people living longer with more complex needs. Spend on adult social care has inevitably increased during the pandemic to manage the increased costs of services, staffing and equipment including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), as well as increased levels of demand and complexity following the pandemic with people presenting to us later with more complex needs.
- 2.3 At the same time, the directorate is managing increased waiting lists for services due to the workforce pressures which are being seen across multiple sectors, but which are particularly acute in health and social care. Skills for Care figures from October 2021 indicated a vacancy rate of 165,000 jobs in adult social care services nationally, which represents approximately 10.7% of the total of adult social care, the South East has an estimate of 10.7% vacancy rate. Turnover rates across the sector also remain high, at 29% with employers reporting that retention is now more difficult than before the pandemic.
- 2.4 The government's People at the Heart of Care, Adult Social Care Reform White Paper, published in December 2021 acknowledges the historic challenges relating to social care funding pressures and seeks to address some of the current disparity between funding for the NHS and social care. Amongst other measures the White Paper details the introduction of a cap of a maximum of £86,000 that individuals will have to pay towards their personal care cost and a new means-test threshold. The lower capital threshold will change from £14,250 to £20,000 and the upper capital threshold will increase from £23,250 to £100,000. These revised capital thresholds will come into effect in October 2023 and will apply to everyone newly assessed as being eligible for care and support as well as those people who are already in receipt of and who continue

to receive care and support. The upper threshold of £100,000 will become the limit above which people will fund their own care.

- 2.5 New analysis undertaken by the County Council Network (CCN) published in October 2022 shows that adult social care services in England are set to face £3.7bn in additional costs in 2023 compared to 2021 simply to maintain current service levels due to rising inflation, wage increases and growth in demand. These rising costs are double that of previous estimates by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for CCN, which estimated costs would rise £1.6bn over the same two-year period due to a combination of service demand and inflation.
- 2.6 In addition to financial and workforce pressures, there are concerns about the ongoing high COVID-19 infection rate and the impact this will have on health and social care services when combined with normal seasonal illnesses. Higher than usual number of infections with seasonal flu (influenza) are expected for this winter and the consequences of simultaneous infections with both COVID-19 and flu are unknown. As well as increasing hospital admissions and demand for discharge and social care services, staff sickness is likely to impact health and social care workforce capacity during the winter months.
- 2.7 The totality of the challenges outlined above mean that ASCH faces a period of sustained pressure and must be proactive and agile in managing its response. The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan identifies a range of activities which will support both the directorate's own staff and services and Kent's provider market to ensure they have appropriate business continuity plans and risk mitigations in place to sustain service delivery.

3. Components of the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023

- 3.1 The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 collates several component plans which outline the operational and tactical preparations and response to pressures, the strategic activities and the collaborative working being progressed with partner organisations and the provider market.
- 3.2 The Resilience and Emergency Planning section of the plan identifies a number of tools and mechanisms to support directorate resilience and business continuity, including the Operational Pressures Escalation Plan.
 - Winter 2021/2022 put the directorate under additional pressure due to the fuel crisis in late September and early October, and Storms Eunice and Franklin in February 2022. The directorate contributed alongside NHS partners to the multi-agency debrief reports which were delivered in March 2022. Lessons arising from the way these incidents were handled including notable practice were reported to relevant management teams and recommendations for improvement have been taken forward through established programmes of work this year.
 - Summer 2022 saw the most significant heatwave event in our region since the Heatwave Plan for England was published. The Directorate Incident Management Plan and associated tools and resources were

deployed in response to widespread water outages. Welfare provision for households and communities without water was co-ordinated through the multi-agency Kent Resilience Forum Vulnerable People and Communities Cell. Further lessons and recommendations arising from these incidents have been taken forward and reflected in the directorate's planning for winter 2022/2023

- Areas of risk for winter 2022/2023 and beyond have been identified and assessed to ensure appropriate controls and actions are in place, including loss of access to fuel, power outages, loss of access to key ICT systems. All service level Business Continuity Plans across operational services have been stress tested, Service Managers and their deputies have been exercised to ensure all key staff are aware of their responsibilities and are familiar with the tools and resources available to them.

- 3.3 The plans will be maintained as live documents throughout winter 2022-2023 and the ASCH Senior Management Team will maintain oversight of their implementation and will escalate any concerns to the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health.
- 3.4 The Department of Health and Social Care issued revised Hospital Discharge and Community Support Guidance on 31 March 2022 following the ending of national discharge fund. Across Kent it was agreed as a health and care system to continue with the Discharge to Assess approach to support people back to their own home as quickly as possible and assess their ongoing needs in their home environment. System leaders across Kent County Council (KCC) and NHS Kent and Medway agreed a set of principles about how we will work together, and governance arrangements have been revised to take forward those ambitions. The Joint Commissioning Management Group and Joint Commissioning Operational Group have been formed and key priorities for 2022-2023 have been established.
- 3.5 The Operational Capacity Management Plan for Winter 2022-2023 identifies the recruitment activities, extended working arrangements and staff redeployment contingency arrangements that will be implemented for ASCH Teams throughout the winter period. These arrangements will enable continuity of service and will also ensure that extended working arrangements support partners in the health system to manage demand on their services and hospital discharges.
- 3.6 The plans for Adult Social Care's Commissioned Services encompass work with Kent's provider market to support their short-term preparedness and resilience and seek to encourage long-term sustainability through market development. Activities under the Commissioned Services offer are aligned to preventative actions to keep people safe and well at home, supporting safe and timely discharge from hospital and helping people to recover and thrive in their own home. The System-Wide Market Pressures Action Plan also implements additional capacity in services and identifies dedicated commissioners for locality areas to ensure providers receive targeted, timely support.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1 KCC has seen significant cost pressures arise during the COVID-19 pandemic and with the change in hospital discharge arrangements. KCC's spend on adult social care has risen sharply in a number of areas over the past three years. One of the areas where the council is seeing the most significant pressure is the Older Person's Residential and Nursing (Long Term and Short Term) for example due to people's needs being higher. Other areas where the council is seeing pressure include, the position of the social care market due to workforce and other cost pressures; increased costs due to increasing numbers of people with mental health needs requiring supported living; and the complex needs of some people being supported at home requiring them to have higher levels of care and support. The spend on Short Term Beds has risen from around £3m in 2019-2020 to a forecast of over £20m in the current year. This is not sustainable for the council.
- 4.2 This interdependency between health and social care demonstrates the importance of taking a whole-system approach to the commissioning and funding of discharge services across the system. The System Discharge Pathways Programme will continue to work collaboratively with the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (KMICB) to ensure best value for money and use of resources across the system.

5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and is available within the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023.

6. Other corporate implications

- 6.1 The delivery of the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 builds on the 'Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2021-2022' and the lessons learned from partnership working, joint commissioning and contingency planning in that period. Lessons learned from the delivery of the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 will be owned by the owners of the component plans and will be shared corporately where appropriate.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The challenges facing ASCH in the coming months and beyond are unprecedented in terms of the collective impact of financial, workforce and health stressors on the system. Whilst robust plans have been tested and put in place to manage pressures across the health and social care system, there is a high level of concern about the level of pressure that services will face. The directorate will need to maintain an agile, collaborative and creative approach to respond to this unique set of circumstances and will continue to work closely with its partners to prioritise the health and wellbeing of Kent residents.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Recommendation(s): The Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** and **CONSIDER** the content of the report and the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023.

9. Background Documents

None

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