

From: Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
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To: Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee – 17 May 2023

Subject: **Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 Review**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: None

Future Pathway of report: None

Electoral Division: All

Summary: The report will provide an overview of the implementation and outcomes of the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023. The report focuses on the outcomes of contingency plans to manage pressure on services, financial implications of the actions that were taken and the outcomes for Kent County Council's partners and Kent's residents.

Recommendations: The Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** and **CONSIDER** the content of the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 was developed in order to ensure that the council had planned for and was able to respond to the significant pressures that were anticipated during the winter period. Its development built on the Adult Social Care Winter Plan 2021-2022' and the lessons learned from the review of its development and implementation.
- 1.2 It is good practice to ensure that there are well developed and robust plans to manage winter pressures under normal circumstances, and with the ongoing challenges of recovering from COVID-19 and its impact on the health and social care system, a clear plan was essential to ensure that appropriate arrangements were in place.
- 1.3 The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 built on previous winter resilience activities, including the Adult Social Care Winter Pressure Plan 2021-2022. The previous Adult Social Care Winter Pressure Plan was successful in managing a time of significant pressure; in 2021-2022 Kent continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and several acute hospitals operated at full capacity. Kent was also significantly impacted by the fuel crisis which added additional pressures to a stressed provider market and storms Eunice and Franklin which caused disruptions to transport, power and local loss of telephone and internet services.

- 1.4 In addition to the pressures associated to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, adult social care services have been impacted by local authority budget pressures in recent years, combined with the increased demographic pressures of an ageing population and people living longer with more complex needs.
- 1.5 Workforce sustainability issues in health and social care have continued throughout 2022-2023 and this has been compounded by the cost-of-living increase that has been seen nationally and which is particularly impactful for people on lower wages, including a large proportion of the adult social care workforce. This workforce is historically mobile and likely to seek opportunities in other sectors where wages will be equitable or higher, such as retail and hospitality.
- 1.6 The combined challenges of the usual winter pressures with the additional factors highlighted above resulted in a high level of concern about the pressures that would be faced in the winter 2022-2023 period. As a result, a range of robust contingency planning activities were carried out to ensure that high-quality, safe and timely support continued to be provided to everyone who needed it.
- 1.7 This report provides an update on the outcomes associated with key aspects of the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023, and the impact that it had over the winter period. Lessons will be taken forward to ensure that future arrangements continue to be robust.

2. Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 Review

- 2.1 The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 consisted of six key elements, which were:
 - Resilience and Emergency Planning, including the Operational Pressures Escalation Plan
 - Hospital Discharge and Community Support
 - Operational Capacity Management Plan for Winter 2022-2023
 - Strategic Commissioning activities to support and build resilience in the adult social care provider market, including the System-Wide Market Pressures Action Plan
 - Financial Implications, including plans for funding streams made available to KCC to support resilience activities.
 - Risk Management, including risk protocols and risk owners.
- 2.2 When comparing the winter periods 2021-2022 against 2022-2023, adult social care saw a slight decrease of 1.9% in contacts to the service as well as a slight decrease of 0.8% in incoming assessments. However, there was an increase of 3% in completed Care Needs Assessments and an increase of 24% incoming reviews of the Care and Support Plan were seen. Despite the continuing pressures over the winter period which included staffing and market pressures the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 was successful in anticipating risks and implementing appropriate mitigating actions.

Resilience and Emergency Planning

- 2.3 In line with previous resilience planning, the development of the plan was supported by a range of stakeholders including the Adult Social Care Directorate Business and Planning Team, Service Managers across adult social care, colleagues in finance and partner organisations in health. Oversight of the plan was provided through submission of the plan to Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee in November 2022.
- 2.4 Building on work conducted in 2021-2022, Resilience and Emergency Planning delivered a number of workstreams to support directorate resilience which included lessons learned activities, business continuity plans and exercises to stress test plans.
- 2.5 The Operational Pressures Escalation Plan has been well established in Adult Social Care and Health for several years. It continues to be used year-round to support the appropriate response to surges in demand across the Kent and Medway Health and Social Care System.
- 2.6 The Plan was successfully deployed on a number of occasions during the winter months in response to Acute Hospital Critical Incident declarations. With the support of partner agencies across the system, implementing their own plans beneath the overarching NHS England Operational Pressures Escalation Level Framework, these periods of intense pressure were managed down swiftly.
- 2.7 On reflection, 2022/2023 was a challenging year for directorate resilience. The directorate experienced a higher than usual number of significant incidents during 2022/2023 which put services under pressure. Nonetheless, services demonstrated a high level of resilience, responding effectively whilst maintaining critical functions. The most notable incident over the winter period was triggered by a UK Health Security Agency Level 3 Cold Weather event in December 2022. The directorate's Cold Weather Plan was implemented successfully, protecting the most vulnerable residents from harm. The subsequent thaw resulted in widespread short-term water outages across the county and a significant water outage in Tunbridge Wells lasting seven days, ending on Christmas Eve. The directorate was engaged in the response throughout and specifically the multi-agency Vulnerable People and Communities Cell which was established to oversee the delivery of bottled water to residents throughout this incident.

Hospital Discharge and Community Support

- 2.8 The System Discharge Pathways Programme was established in autumn 2020 following a jointly-commissioned review of Kent's hospital discharge pathways in summer 2020. The review found Kent did not have a whole-system, holistic approach to delivering effective discharge pathways and set out recommendations for the delivery of consistent, needs-based services aligned to the developing Integrated Care System (ICS). Adult social care worked closely with partners in the Kent Community Healthcare Foundation Trust and the former Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group to establish a

programme of work to deliver activities aligned to the review's recommendations.

- 2.9 Significant progress was made through the System Discharge Pathways Programme in 2021-2022 however, the governance arrangements were reviewed in 2022 in line with the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (K&M ICB) and local Health and Care Partnerships (HCP). A joint Commissioning Management Group which is co-chaired by the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health is now well established and a Better Care Fund Steering Committee and Intermediate Care Group is now in place and is co-chaired by the Adult Social Care Director of Operations (East Kent).
- 2.10 The programme of work for both groups is being refreshed for 2022-2023 and includes the development of integrated 'transfer of care hubs across the county' (piloting in East Kent); developing an intermediate care model for commissioned services to support on discharge from hospital; development of joint 'arranging support function; development of live capacity tracker and joint performance dashboard; expand use of technology and self-directed support as enablers.

Operational Capacity Management Plan for Winter 2022-2023

- 2.11 The Operational Capacity Management Plan for Winter 2022-2023 identified areas to maintain continuity of provision to meet the anticipated demands of winter 2022-2023.
- 2.12 The County Placement Team was resourced to deliver weekend and bank holiday working to support reduced length of stay in hospital for people medically fit for discharge.
- 2.13 The Area Referral Management Service (ARMS) continued to manage high level of referrals during the winter period and worked closely with Health partners to support pressures in their acute and Rapid Response services. This included extended working hours enabled the service to respond to a higher level of demand.
- 2.14 The Short-Term Pathways Team maintained additional Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA) to work with people discharged from hospital into the community or Short-Term Beds to improve their levels of ability and enable them to remain at home with reduced level of long-term support. Additional agency Registered Practitioners were also recruited in East Kent to provide additional assessment capacity to support assessments for people discharged from hospital into Short-Term Beds.
- 2.15 The Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Service implemented a range of business continuity arrangements to manage increased levels of activity. Additional capacity was provided by using extended working arrangements and additional workforce to the service until end of March 2023.
- 2.16 The Occupational Therapy (OT) Service maintained additional fixed term acting up management capacity and administration support to ensure that the OT workforce (of over 100 full time equivalent staff) was deployed in the most

effective way in response to current and emerging pressures, reducing risk to clients and carers, as well as pressure on partner services. Staff were retained and vacancies recruited expediently, including induction and training to elicit quality outcomes for people we support. The service continues the work on a range of innovations and service developments across the health, social care and local District and Borough Council economy to improve flow out from acute and community in patient settings, avoid admission into these settings, reduce duplication, streamline and simplify the process to speed up response rates and make best use of limited resource.

- 2.17 Kent Enablement at Home (KEaH) had a successful recruitment campaign which enabled them to fill 90% of their vacant hours. To address potential ongoing recruitment issues work has been completed in developing joint support worker posts between the NHS and Kent County Council. Additionally, redeployment opportunities were utilised during the winter period to manage increased demand on the service. KEaH also reported to the Adult Social Care Senior Management Team on a weekly basis to feed into the situational reporting which managed pressures across the health and care system and reported on a regular basis to the Market Pressures Working Group.

3. Other activity to ensure Directorate and system resilience

- 3.1 The Innovation Delivery Team has provided a range of activities with objectives to enable workforce development and support in the provider market. A focus on communication and engagement with the care market has included the delivery of regular newsletters, locality meetings with Registered Managers and the delivery of Autumn and Spring Registered Managers conferences with 300 people in attendance each time.
- 3.2 Providers have been supported to focus on Quality Improvement with a wide training and support offer including funded access to the Social Care Information Learning Service (Scils) online training portal offering over 200 courses; these have been accessed by over 1,500 users. Bitesize health and clinical webinars run monthly to upskill worker's around more complex care. The Skills for Care Nurses Leadership Programme has supported another 15 nurses in social care to develop their skillset. Partnership work with the ICS has provided training around Ageing Well and Frailty for 130 care workers. Specialist Clinical Mental Health topics have been provided specifically for learning disability and mental health providers and included Personality Disorders, Suicide Prevention, Eating Disorders, Clinical Risk Assessments, Managing Suicide – 234 workers have accessed these sessions.
- 3.3 Recruitment and retention in the provider market has been supported through a variety of campaigns undertaken in collaboration with partners and the promotion of the National Department of Health and Social Care 'Made with Care' campaign. Work with local schools continued to raise the profile of social care careers, reaching 2,000 students. The Innovation Delivery Team also received two media awards in relation to a short video produced to share with schools on the values required to work in the care sector.

- 3.4 Adult social care continued to participate in local authority workforce groups at a national and regional level to share ideas, good practice support and a regional approach to recruitment and retention.
- 3.4 As part of the focus on workforce recruitment and retention, the Care Friends app has been implemented; the app rewards care workers if they successfully recruit friends and family into the care workforce. All 8,000 licences have now been allocated free to providers resulting in 300 new starters since the launch in 2022. To ensure providers are considering all potential new workers fairly, drama-based workshops on De-Biasing Recruitment, funded by the ICS, have been made available to care providers along with Flexi Working webinars to help providers consider new retention strategies.
- 3.5 Collaboration between health and social care is ongoing to support a streamlined approach for identifying and allocating placements and work experience opportunities within the care sector for students. Progress has also been made in offering providers the opportunity to attend school and college career fairs in their local areas to help them to potentially build their future workforce. Over 45 events around the county this year.
- 3.6 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has been supporting the sector with information webinars for managers on the recruitment support available to them and links have been made between local DWP career advisors and providers.
- 3.7 Support continues for the sector with maintaining their health and wellbeing as we continue to be a sector under extreme pressure. The promotion of the Kent and Medway NHS Wellbeing Hub has been well received and a series of webinars on resilience, managing stress etc have also been made available.
- 3.8 With retention of nurses being an issue across the health and care sector a support program has been established for social care nurses to help them feel valued. The offer includes clinical training and updates for nurses, a K&M Nurses in Social Care support network, opportunities to access grants for their personal development, links with professional bodies and wellbeing support. To help grow the future nurse's workforce in the care sector, the Nursing Associate program, in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University and the West Kent NHS Nursing Associate Consortium, continues to be promoted to nursing services so their care workers can undertake Nursing Associate qualifications which can progress to a fully qualified registered nurse. Funding has also been secured from Health Education England for a 12-month post to support this work.
- 3.9 The K&M ICB secured funding from NHS England as part of a programme to drive digital across the adult social care sector to improve the quality, safety and personalisation of care. Funding is to be used to support adult social care providers to adopt technologies that can transform care with a focus on:
- Increase uptake of digital social care records, also known as digital care plans, to ensure data is captured at the point of care and can be shared between care settings.

- Roll-out sensor-based falls prevention and detection technologies for those most at risk of falls, to reduce the frequency and severity of falls-related injuries resulting in hospital admissions.
- Test other care technologies based on local need to further develop understanding of what works.

3.10 In addition funding has been secured to test Technology Facilitators in hospital settings to support people to be discharged with technology.

3.11 Adult social care has recently completed procurement activity to procure a countywide Technology Enabled Care Service. Technology Enabled Care will contribute towards the long-term sustainability of social care through transforming the way care and support is delivered. Evidence from other local authorities who have implemented a Technology Enabled Care model show improved outcomes for people and demonstrated benefits in terms of delaying and reducing the demand for services such as community-based care and residential and nursing care.

3.12 Adult social care has also introduced an information, advice and guidance platform [Home | Connect to Support | Kent](#) which is designed to signpost and connect people. During the summer of 2023, a digital self-assessment is being implemented, this will allow people to see if they are eligible for social care and provide them with bespoke recommendations and connections to support and services.

4. Commissioned services

4.1 Commissioned services in Kent continue to experience extreme pressure due to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and associated challenges in recruiting and retaining workforce, primarily due to the current cost of living increases. The Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 identified plans to support providers in delivering against three key themes:

1. Keep people safe and well at home
- 2 Support safe and timely discharge from hospital
- 3 Help people to recover and thrive in their own home

4.2 Activities and services delivered were aligned to each of these objectives and included wellbeing offers to support independent living, support for carers, managing appropriate hospital discharge services, delivery of effective reablement, access to community-based activities and development of long-term strategies to support market sustainability, including partnership working and the micro provider strategy.

4.3 Throughout the winter period senior officers from across the health and care system have met weekly (or on occasion more frequently) to review the pressures in care homes and community-based care services. This has enabled these groups to understand pressures at a system level and develop system responses and actions relating to quality, market sustainability and capacity.

- 4.4 Dashboards and analytic insights have been developed for community-based services including KEAH, Homecare, Supporting Independence Services and Hilton Discharge to Assess Services. These have enabled adult social care and its partners to closely monitor demand and capacity across a number of interdependent services and assess where pressures are particularly acute.
- 4.5 Waiting lists for services remained high through much of 2022. For Care and Support in the Home Services, waiting lists had increased from a weekly average of 46 in early 2021 to a weekly average of approximately 400 from December 2021, and remained close to that level for some time. However, since September 2022, the number of people waiting for a package of homecare has steadily decreased to a current weekly average of approximately 180. Although this remains relatively high, and two thirds (67%) of people waiting for a homecare package are in East Kent, which continues to be the most challenging area, there is continued evidence of an overall easing of pressure in terms of waiting list size.
- 4.6 Demand for services has been compounded by an increased number of provider handbacks and increases in hospital discharges during the winter period.
- 4.7 The Adult Social Care Senior Management Team is now managing oversight and actions relating to market pressures, and will seek to mitigate the current market pressures through the delivery of projects including Technology Enabled Care, managing timely reviews in adult social care services and ongoing market sustainability activities. However, there remains a high level of pressure on commissioned services especially with the challenges associated to the impact of the cost-of-living increases.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 The Adult Social Care Directorate Management Team (DMT) maintain risk registers at a directorate level to oversee risks to service delivery and ensure that appropriate mitigations are put in place. Risk registers are maintained centrally and reviewed regularly by DMT to ensure actions have been implemented and monitor the outcomes. The risk registers are maintained as live documents and updated with newly identified risks and mitigating actions. The risks currently overseen relate to social care market, safeguarding, budget pressures, culture change, workforce recruitment and retention, information governance and systems management.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Adult Social Care and Health Directorate continues to see significant cost overspends resulting from higher activity, complexity and unit costs than originally budgeted for. At Q3 we were forecasting a forecast pressure of £25m, we are not expecting the year end position to show any significant change.
- 6.2 The impact of implementing the discharge element of the Adult Social Care and Health Winter Pressure Plan 2022-2023 has been assisted by additional funding made available from the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund which was

released in December 2022 to support additional activity to manage pressures of hospital discharges.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken and is available within the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023.

8. Other corporate implications

- 8.1 In delivering the Adult Social Care Pressure Plan 2022-2023, lessons have been learned about partnership working and managing market pressures. Lessons learned will be owned by the relevant plan owners and will be shared corporately where appropriate.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 In reviewing the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-2023 and the way in which it has built on its predecessor for 2021-2022, there has been positive learning in relation to the value of joint working, particularly with the NHS, to have a strong system response to collective pressures.
- 9.2 There continue to be pressures on workforce across the wider health and care sector and challenged budgetary position for health and social care services nationally. Managing the interdependencies across these factors is crucial and it is key that adult social care continues to prioritise and build on the improved working relationships with system-wide and provider partners. In line with previous years, lessons learned from the Adult Social Care Pressures Plan will be reviewed and incorporated within future planning for pressures management.

10. Recommendations

10.1 Recommendation(s): The Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** and **CONSIDER** the content of the report.

11. Background Documents

Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2022-23
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/b23467/Item%2010%20-%20Appendix%201%20ASC%20Pressures%20Plan%202022-23%20updated%2017th-Nov-2022%2014.00%20Adult%20Social%20Care%20Cabi.pdf?T=9>

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