HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Friday, 9 May 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held at Committee Rooms - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 9 May 2025 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:
Gail Beer
Matthew Bell
Dr. Stephanie Coughlin (External Member)
Deputy Helen Fentimen OBE JP (Chair)
Deputy Marianne Fredericks
Judith Finlay
Jed Francique (External Member)
Sarah Gillinson (Deputy Chair)
Dr. Sandra Husbands
Gavin Stedman
Deputy Ceri Wilkins

In Attendance
Deputy Henry Pollard (Chief Commoner)

Officers:

Emmanuel Ross	-	City and Hackney
Nickie Brazell	-	City and Hackney
Froeks Kamminga	-	City and Hackney
Chris Lovitt	-	Community and Children's Services
Ian Tweedie	-	Community and Children's Services
Rachel Cleave	-	Healthwatch
Preet Desai	-	Town Clerk's
Gemma Stokely	-	Town Clerk's
Callum Southern	-	City Bridge Foundation

At the Outset of this meeting Mr Matthew Bell moved Deputy Marianne Fredericks into the Chair until the appointment of the Chair at agenda item 4, which was uncontested.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

   There were no apologies.

2. **DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

   There were no declarations.

3. **ORDER OF COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**

The Board received the Order of the Court of Common Council dated 25 April 2025, which appointed the Board and approved its Terms of Reference

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Board elected a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 28. The Town Clerk informed the Board that Deputy Helen Fentimen, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly declared Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board for the ensuring year and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

RESOLVED, that – Deputy Helen Fentimen be elected Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board for the ensuing year.

It was moved by Deputy Marianne Fredericks, seconded by Mattew Bell and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That - at the conclusion of her two-year term of office as their Chairman, the Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board wish to extend to:

Mary Durcan

their sincere thanks and appreciation for her commitment to addressing the physical and mental health and wellbeing needs of all City of London residents, workers and visitors.

Since Mary's election as Chairman in 2023, several essential and wide-reaching projects have been taken forward through the Board's proactive partnership work. These include supporting the health and wellbeing of the City of London's hidden and essential workers, suicide prevention, supporting the development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as well as tackling health inequalities across the Square Mile.

The Board wishes to place on record its recognition of Mary's dedication to the health and wellbeing of the City of London's residents, workers and learners. Her work ethic and compassionate nature have significantly contributed to the Board's achievements. Her colleagues wish to express their gratitude and offer their best wishes for the future.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Board proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. The Town Clerk informed the Board that Sarah Gillinson, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly declared Deputy Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board for the ensuring year.

RESOLVED, that – Sarah Gillinson be elected Deputy Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board for the ensuing year.

Under this item the Chair made the Board aware of the City of London vacancy on the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and it was agreed that the Deputy Chairman, Sarah Gillinson, would occupy this vacancy.

6. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that –the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on 7 February 2025 be approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

- The report seen previously from the Local Government Association, which detailed a focus on the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board, was also reviewed by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and the both the Committee and Board meet to discuss the forward plan to encourage better alignment of the works of both the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee.

  Officers highlighted to the Board of the requirement to keep the roles of the Board and Committee separate, and suggested that it was for the Chairs of these Boards/Committees to meet rather than the Committee and Board themselves. Officers would review the Forward Plan of both the Board and Committee and then arrange to meet with the Chairs to discuss, to which Members of the Board agreed.

- The Chair sought the approval of the Board to arrange a joint meeting with the Hackney Health and Wellbeing Board, alongside the integrated Health and Care Partnership Board, to discuss health inequalities, how best to work with the voluntary sector and to discuss the changes to NHS resourcing and its impact on services within neighbourhoods. The Board approved with a view to arrange this meeting for Autumn 2025.

7. **BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2025/26**

Items 7 and 8 was received as one item.

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the Better Care Fund (BCF) programme which supports local systems to deliver the integration of health and social care in a way that supports person centred care, sustainability and better outcomes for people and carers. The report sought the approval of the Board to approve the revised City of London Better Care Fund Plans 2025/26 and approve the Better Care Fund Quarter 3 2024/25 return.

Officers provided an overview of the Better Care Fund Plan for 2025-2026, explaining that it supports the integration of health and social care through a pooled budget from the ICB and local authorities. The plan is based on a policy framework and guidance from NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care.

The Board were informed that the Q3 covered expenditure to date and essentially all funds would be used and there would be no overspend in any area. A small amount of the Improve Better Care Grant that the City Corporation would be carrying over into 2025/26. However, other schemes would be delivered on plan and there was no concern over the delivery of metrics given the City's small population which effected its rate from Quarter to Quarter. Officers advised Board that within the Q3 report there was a high number of complex cases admitted to hospital over the winter period which all required residential placements, although this caused significant delays with some hospitals being situated outside London. Work was being done with commissioning colleagues to address potential surges of this kind in the future.

A Member noted the 2% growth to forecast demand for 2025-26 and asked officers if it was a reasonable estimation and officers advised that the NHS Business Intelligence Team had forecasted 2% growth within the Health System, however this could play out differently in respect of local authority demand such as packages of care and residential placements, and officers were aware of increasing demand for intermediate care (and other short-term care across North East London.

Officers were asked to provide further information on the development of the Transfer of Care Hub and a Member noted that some patients experienced difficulties when being discharged from UCLH and the Royal London Hospital and encouraged officers to work to address this. The Member also highlighted the objective to prioritise alternative pathways through of hospital care, and raised the issue of those patients with long term health conditions being admitted to the wrong hospital, due to an emergency issue, and then being delayed with a discharge as they await for an ambulance service to redirect them to correct hospital, and encouraged work to be done in conjunction with Healthwatch to address this issue. In respect of working with other hospitals, officers advised the Board that the Better Care Fund could be used for the care navigator service and these hospitals which had already received positive feedback. Leaflets were also displayed at these hospitals to advise patients of how the City and services could support discharges.

A Member was concerned about the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and noted that there not much funds available for this and noted that there would be a new home improvement agency and asked if this was being done to assist those above the means tested threshold. Officers confirmed that the amount available were subsidised by carryovers due to an underspend from previous years and that the new housing assistance policy would assist those who were outside the financial thresholds for a DFG and to have the project management support to undertake adaptations to help prevent needs developing or escalating. Officers were hoping to see an increase uptake of the DFG.

Regarding the statistics on discharge, Members were keen to know how long the delay is in hospital before they granted a patient's discharge and whether there were any improvements made. Officers confirmed that this would be investigated further under the BCF Plan 2025/26, however retrospectively it was approximately seven days per person.

A Member encouraged officers to ensure that City Residents were aware that the BCF was available to those City Residents in need and that the Board ensured that it met its targets, with an ongoing action tracker being mentioned. Officers confirmed that funds had been spent on prevention and early intervention, and officers already produced a quarterly return which tracked what KPI' were being measured across all the BCF services.

The Chair noted that reports could better detail the objectives of the Board and determining which services need better promotion, and how the different contributions to neighbourhoods are being made and its impact. Officers highlighted a report concerning prevention and early intervention across the City and Adult Social Care which might help those to understand the work and impact of the City and Hackney Partnership in health and wellbeing, and would submit this report to the Board if requested. The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services agreed that this would be appropriate along with the City Corporation's Adult Social Care Strategy.

The Deputy Chair was interested to know of the definition within the City Corporation of the term 'Neighbourhood' and wanted to know whether a neighbourhood model was operational. Officers confirmed that although there was positive engagement with Shoreditch Park and City Neighbourhood forums it was not always focused solely on the needs of the City and its residents. Work had been undertaken to establish a multi-disciplinary meeting bespoke for the City and the term 'Neighbourhood', in the context of the report, referred to the whole of the City. Members were keen for City residents to understand the objectives and impacts of Neighbourhoods Engagement Involvement and for it to be reviewed to note its achievements.

RESOLVED, that – Members approved the revised City of London Better Care Fund Plans 2025/26.

8. **BETTER CARE FUND 2024/25 Q3 RETURN**

Items 7 and 8 was received as one item.

The Board received a report from the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services in respect of the Better Care Fund (BCF) Programme which sought the approval for the Q3 2024/25 Better Care Fund return.

RESOLVED, that – Members approved the Better Care Fund Quarter 3 2024/25 return.

9. ***HEALTH IMPACTS OF VAPING**

Professor Anne McNeil presented the latest evidence on the health impacts of vaping, emphasizing that vaping posed only a small fraction of the risks of smoking and was an effective tool for smoking cessation.

During the presentation Members were advised of the concerns of adolescent vaping, noting that whilst there was some increase in vaping among never-smoking youth, there was an importance of a regulatory framework to be established which maximized the benefits of vaping for smoking cessation while minimizing the risks of uptake among youth and never smokers.

Concern was raised about the effect of chemical flavouring and additives associated with vaping, and its ties to the tobacco industry. Professor Anne McNeil explained that it should be encouraged to inform those that there are widespread differences between vaping and tobacco smoking but both still presented impacts on health, however for those who smoke it should be encouraged that they use legal regulated nicotine products to limit harm where possible. A Member asked why other forms of holistic ways to stop smoking, such as hypnotherapy, was not suggested as an alternative way to stop smoking, and it was highlighted that generally methods that are shown to be effective is what is offered as listed in the report. The Stop Smoking Service offered a variety of evidence based methods to quit tobacco smoking and vapes were considered to be a part of a wider toolkit as nicotine replacement therapy and other methods. Officers also confirmed that this service did provide holistic treatment through behavioural support.

The Deputy Chair asked how the overall risks of tobacco smoking and the use of vaping as smoking cessation tool to quit tobacco smoking was communicated to the public and officers advised the Board of the Vaping Communications Plan which was aimed specifically at smokers which noted the popularity and effectiveness of vaping as a quit aid.

A Member asked about the impact of Snus on health and it was confirmed that long term epidemiological evidence which suggested that the use of Snus presented a lower risk to health compared to tobacco smoking.

RESOLVED, that – Noting that Deputy Marianne Fredericks abstained from this endorsement, the remainder of the Board endorsed the evidence-based City and Hackney vaping position statement, which was co-developed with the local Tobacco Control Alliance (TCA).

10. ***HEALTHWATCH CITY OF LONDON PROGRESS REPORT**

The Board received a report of the Healthwatch, City of London in respect of the Healthwatch City of London report.

The Chair, Healthwatch provided an update on Healthwatch City of London’s activities, including the launch of the digital apps in healthcare report, the ‘Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) report, and the Bart’s Centre review.

The Board were advised of the issues surrounding PALS and complaints received regarding the access to this service, and there was a need for further for oversight and scrutiny on the PALS to determine what could be done to provide a better service for those who utilise PALS. A Member asked if PALS fit for purpose and the Chair, Healthwatch confirmed that PALS is a mechanism to be used by patients or their family to raise their concerns about the standard of service and if it is not fit for purpose then this should be reviewed. In respect of the Bart's Centre Review, the Board were made aware of the issue at St Bartholomew's Hospital regarding cardiology.

The Chair, Healthwatch mentioned various engagement activities, including patient panels, the Health Mella event, and planned activities for the upcoming quarter, and highlighted the importance of these activities in gathering feedback and engaging with the community. Another City of London Healthwatch event was in expected to take place in the coming weeks.

The Chair thanked City Healthwatch for all the work that they have undertaken and encouraged the Board to the note the recommendations made and incorporate these into the Health and Wellbeing Board's work plan. The Chair noted the absence of the representative for St Bartholomew's Hospital and advised the Town Clerk to remind Members of their Membership of the Board to encourage better attendance at the following meetings.

The Executive Director, Community and Children's Services raised a question in relation to the Adult Social Care reference group and the struggle to find participants and asked for an update regarding this. The Chair, Healthwatch confirmed that work was being done to address this and an event was due to be held at Guildhall to encourage further participation. Further work on mobility aids and home adaptation was also expected to be undertaken.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no questions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items of business.

13. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED, – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

14. SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES IN THE CITY OF LONDON

The Committee received a report of the Director of Public Health in respect of the sexual health services in the City of London.

RESOLVED, that – the report and its contents be noted.

15. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no non-public questions.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There were no non-public urgent items of business.

The meeting ended at 12.49 pm

Chairman

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