



In this edition of my Chair's Report, I talk about the General Election, the cancer scrutiny review, the THRIVE London initiative and the LGBT Needs Assessment. I would welcome Board Members to comment on any item covered should they wish to do so.

*Best wishes,
Cllr Maureen Worby, Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board*

The General Election

Whatever you think of the general election campaign and (lack of) result, it was refreshing to see health and social care take centre-stage in the debate. Every major party put forward their suggestions to resolve the health and care crisis we face today, and how we fund social care in particular proved an emotive and urgent issue for the electorate.

While the Government's proposals would bring a modest increase in funding to both the NHS and social care services in the short-term, they do not answer the long-term question of how we build sustainable solutions to the rapidly increasing pressures and demands that we face. Furthermore, the lack of a clear majority for the Conservatives means it is unclear what action will be taken at all by this unstable Parliament.

The election also drowned out the coverage of the publication of the Government's draft plan for air pollution, following a successful lawsuit from ClientEarth. James Thornton, Chief Executive of ClientEarth, commented that 'these are plans for more plans, what we need are plans for action'. Each year in London approximately 40,000 people die prematurely due to air pollution, making this a public health crisis in need of decisive action from both central and local government.

Thrive

Thrive London is a citywide movement for mental health, supported by the Mayor of London and the London Health Board, whose aim is to bring together agencies and communities to improve mental health services, prevent illness and promote community cohesion. Evidence for the effectiveness of Thrive's interventions can be seen by the Mental Health Foundation's work, including Young Mums Together, peer work with children and young people, and tackling the isolation of older people.

Thamesview in Barking and Dagenham has been identified as a potential pilot site for Thrive – albeit potentially in phase 2 of the project – meaning in the coming months:

- The Mental Health Foundation will offer a training session to Councillors and officers on mental health prevention and provide a Borough-wide development session on mental health, bringing together stakeholders.
- The Mental Health Foundation will put forward a plan for carrying out an initial consultation session with the residents of Thamesview, including an initial walkabout of the Estate.
- The Mental Health Foundation will seek out longer term funding for potential work in Barking and Dagenham

Cancer scrutiny review

At the start of 2015/16, the Health & Adult Services Select Committee agreed to undertake an in-depth scrutiny review into cancer prevention, awareness, and early detection. The review aims to raise the profile of cancer awareness in the borough and, as a result, early detection and intervention. The review answers the following 3 questions:

1. Why are residents of Barking and Dagenham more likely to develop cancer and less likely to survive cancer than residents in other London boroughs?
2. What is the reason that residents are less likely to respond to requests to screen for cancer than in other London boroughs?
3. What is the reason that residents are not as aware of the signs and symptoms of cancer as residents in other London boroughs?

The full report and resulting action plan will be brought to the next Board, in September 2017. However, it makes 12 key recommendations:

1. The Health and Wellbeing Board acts to reduce the prevalence of smokers in the borough, to levels comparable with London;
2. The Board sets out to the HASSC what action it is taking to reduce the number of overweight and obese individuals in the borough, to levels comparable with London;
3. The Board acts to increase residents' awareness of the how lifestyle, including exposure to the sun, can affect the likelihood of developing cancer, the signs and symptoms of cancer and the importance of early diagnosis, and screening;
4. The National Awareness and Early Detection Initiative informs the commissioners on what action it is taking to target specific 'at risk' groups;
5. The Barking & Dagenham Clinical Commissioning Group (BDCCG) ensures that GPs are auditing and acting on audit information to ensure that patients enter the cancer pathway appropriately, and cancer is diagnosed at as early a stage as possible;
6. The BDCCG, in partnership with Macmillan and Cancer Research UK, acts to increase the proportion of residents returning bowel cancer screening kits, within the next year;
7. The Board, along with MacMillan and Cancer Research UK, acts to raise awareness of the importance of screening and to increase uptake of breast and bowel screening in the borough to a level comparable with England within the next year;
8. The Board, along with MacMillan and Cancer Research UK, acts to raise awareness of the importance of screening and reduce the variation in cervical screening uptake between GP practices within the next year;
9. The Committee urges NHS England to make the Cancer Dashboard available within one year;
10. The Board acts to raise awareness of the importance of the Health Check and reduce the variation in Health Check uptake between GP practices;
11. NHS England provides assurance to it that residents will continue to have in-borough access to breast screening; and
12. The BDCCG, working through the North-East London Cancer Commissioning Board, assures the Committee of the action it is taking to increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer.

LGBT+ Needs Assessment

Barking and Dagenham's LGBT+ population face a range of health and wellbeing challenges and inequalities as a result of homophobic prejudice. The LGBT+ community is disproportionately impacted by issues such as mental health – including depression, self-harm and suicide – sexually transmitted infections, smoking and problematic drug and alcohol use. Public bodies also face difficulties in collecting LGBT+-specific evidence, due to an historic lack of data collection, and under-reporting where data is collected. Last year a Community Engagement Survey highlighted some of the service delivery difficulties related to the LGBT+ population in this Borough. 42.57% of respondents rated the extent to which the Council takes into account their views, experiences and concerns as 'poor' or 'dreadful'. 80% and 94% of respondents claimed to have never reported an incident of homophobia, transphobia or domestic abuse to the police or Council respectively.

It is for these reasons we are now conducting an LGBT+ Needs Assessment. Our recently established Steering Group will lead development of this assessment through consultation and analysis, and the end result will enable a robust understanding of the health and wellbeing needs and assets of the LGBT+ population. This assessment will then be able to form the foundation of further, targeted and co-produced action to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBT+ individuals in Barking and Dagenham.

The 2016-17 Local Account

We are putting the finishing touches to this year's Local Account – the Council's annual message to the community on the state of adult's care and support in Barking and Dagenham – and a draft will be circulated to members of the Board within the next week.

This year we have sought to ensure the Local Account is as accessible and useful as possible, shortening and simplifying the messages to make sure the most importance changes, challenges and achievements come through loud and clear.

We are keen to echo the views and priorities of the Board wherever possible, to strengthen our unified voice. We would therefore welcome any and all comments and suggestions on the draft Local Account, before it is brought to the September Board for final approval.

Future dates of the Health and Wellbeing Board

The Board will meet on the following dates:

- 6 September 2017
- 8 November 2017
- 16 January 2018
- 13 February 2018
- 12 April 2018