

A REVIEW BY THE EXTERNAL SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE'S SELECT PANEL: *GP PRESSURES*

Cabinet Member	Councillor Jane Palmer (designate)
Cabinet Portfolio	Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (designate)
Officer Contact	Liz Penny, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A - External Services Select Committee's Select Panel " <i>Review of GP Pressures</i> "

HEADLINES

Purpose of Report	To receive the review of GP Pressures prepared by the Select Panel of the External Services Select Committee and to give consideration to the recommendations of the review.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the Council objectives of: <i>Our People</i>
Financial Cost	There are no new financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	External Services Select Committee
Relevant Ward(s)	All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Welcomes the Select Panel report from the External Services Select Committee regarding its review of GP Pressures and endorses those recommendations which fall within the Council's remit, as set out overleaf; and
2. Requests that officers, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, liaise with Hillingdon Health and Care Partners to progress the implementation of those recommendations, as set out overleaf, which fall outside the Council's direct control.

External Services Select Committee Findings and Recommendations:

- 1) That Hillingdon Health and Care partners explore the establishment of a single online directory of health, care and wellbeing services (delivered and maintained / updated by Hillingdon Health and Care Partners) to be utilised across the partnership, particularly by GPs, and to link into emerging NHS digital applications being promoted nationally for patients. *
- 2) That Hillingdon Health and Care Partners work with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to explore the simplification of processes in relation to GP referrals to CAB services. *
- 3) That Hillingdon Health and Care Partners improve signposting for patients to CAB services and to emerging digital applications via information screens in GP surgeries. *
- 4) That Cabinet requests Adult Social Care officers make available information sessions to the emerging Neighbourhood Teams on the scope of the Council's Adult Social Care duties.
- 5) That Hillingdon Health and Care partners explore affordable options to enable homecare to be triaged and deployed more flexibly by the Neighbourhood Teams to support the independence of residents and prevent GP visits and hospital admissions that are avoidable. *
- 6) That Cabinet welcomes the pilot work by Council officers to streamline GP administrative procedures in relation to patient requests for medical information to support their housing assessments, and requests that this be rolled out across the Borough.
- 7) That planning officers be asked to notify Hillingdon CCG when processing any planning applications relating to accommodation for the elderly that are subject to CIL.
- 8) That Cabinet note that the External Services Select Committee will continue to closely monitor any implementation of the above recommendations, along with GP training programmes and the recruitment of new GPs, particularly in the South of the Borough.

** Subject to Cabinet endorsement, these external recommendations are not within the Council's control, and it is proposed Council officers will formally submit them to Hillingdon Health and Care Partners at the senior level for a response and to progress.*

Reasons for recommendations

The recommendations of the Committee's review will enable the Council to work in collaboration with local partners to reduce the current pressures on GPs, thereby improving the experience of local residents and levels of satisfaction throughout the Borough.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some, or all, of the Committee's recommendations, or pursue alternative routes to progress the objectives of the review.

Policy Overview Committee comments

The Select Panel's findings and the recommendations within the report were endorsed by Members at a meeting of the External Services Select Committee on 9 October 2019.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background to the Review

A review into GP pressures was originally initiated in 2015/16 by the Committee. Since the topic continued to be of importance and relevance, the Committee agreed to resume the review in more detail during 2018/19 and established a Select Panel for this purpose. The review aimed to consider the work undertaken previously, but also examined changes that had occurred more recently with a view to making practical recommendations to Cabinet.

The remit of the review was to explore current pressures on GPs in the Borough and consider ways in which said pressures could be alleviated, thereby enhancing the role of GPs and also the experience of local residents accessing these services.

The Terms of Reference of the Select Panel were as follows:

- a) To review the evidence gathered by the GP Pressures Working Group in 2015/2016;
- b) To understand the key / central current pressures that are faced by GPs;
- c) To explore the possible implications for residents of expected changes to services provided by GPs;
- d) To identify what support is currently in place for GPs and whether this level of support will be sufficient in the future;
- e) To examine best practice elsewhere through case studies, policy ideas and witness sessions;
- f) To explore ways in which services can improve and work more collaboratively to alleviate the pressures faced by GPs in the Borough, and recommend these to the appropriate body; and
- g) After due consideration of the above, to bring forward recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to the review.

As the review progressed, Members considered the considerable and extensive pressures on

GPs within the Borough which include an ageing population, funding issues, increasingly challenging workloads and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff.

The Select Panel undertook a number of witness sessions with a variety of both internal and external representatives; the latter included practising GPs, trainee GPs, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Health Education England, Hillingdon Local Medical Committee, Hillingdon CCG and Healthwatch Hillingdon. Members noted how insightful these witness sessions were in assisting them to complete their review.

The Committee has made eight recommendations which, it is hoped, will recognise the positive work already being undertaken by the Council and partners and identify areas that can be strengthened further to assist in reducing pressures on local GPs wherever possible in the future.

Officer comments on Recommendations

The Committee's recommendations have been formed in conjunction with relevant service departments. Subject to Cabinet's agreement, officers are prepared to consider the most practical implementation of said recommendations, particularly in consultation with Health and Care Partners (Hillingdon's Health and Care Partners is the Borough's Integrated Care Partnership, including the local GP Confederation, Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust, Hillingdon Hospital, H4All and other voluntary and community sectors partners).

Recommendation 1 - That Hillingdon Health and Care partners explore the establishment of a single online directory of health, care and wellbeing services (delivered and maintained / updated by Hillingdon Health and Care Partners) to be utilised across the partnership, particularly by GPs, and to link into emerging NHS digital applications being promoted nationally for patients.

The Council's online social care information directory established to meet Care Act requirements is being upgraded to improve functionality and the scope for its replacement to become the single directory for Hillingdon's health and care system is being explored with Hillingdon Health and Care Partners.

Recommendation 2 - That Hillingdon Health and Care Partners work with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to explore the simplification of processes in relation to GP referrals to CAB services.

To implement this action the H4All Wellbeing Service, which has staff based within the Neighbourhood Teams, will work with the CAB to review referral processes.

Recommendation 3 - That Hillingdon Health and Care Partners improve signposting for patients to CAB services and to emerging digital applications via information screens in GP surgeries.

The Wellbeing Service will provide signposting and liaison to CAB services via the Neighbourhood Teams. Digital solutions funding opportunities made available through NHSE will be pursued by the CCG in partnership with the GP Confederation to fund the provision of information screens in GP surgeries.

Recommendation 4 - That Cabinet requests Adult Social Care officers make available information sessions to the emerging Neighbourhood Teams on the scope of the Council's Adult Social Care duties.

Adult Social Care officers delivered a training session for matrons based within the Neighbourhood Teams on 26th September 2019. Further events can be delivered as required in response to feedback from the Neighbourhood Teams.

Recommendation 5 - That Hillingdon Health and Care partners explore affordable options to enable homecare to be triaged and deployed more flexibly by the Neighbourhood Teams to support the independence of residents and prevent GP visits and hospital admissions that are avoidable.

A test of concept pilot started in Q3 and this will inform future arrangements. This facility is being built into the specification for the tender of the Council's homecare contracts that will be undertaken during 2019/20. This means that it will be possible to activate this facility should the pilot prove successful.

Recommendation 6 - That Cabinet welcomes the pilot work by Council officers to streamline GP administrative procedures in relation to patient requests for medical information to support their housing assessments, and requests that this be rolled out across the Borough.

Officers note that progress has already been made in streamlining GP administrative procedures in relation to patient requests for medical information to support their housing assessments. The process for referrals and the practicalities around the sending and receiving of this medical information have been discussed and arranged with the Vice-Chair of Hillingdon Local Medical Committee (LMC). Officers are currently in the process of agreeing the remaining procedural requirements for the sending of this information to enable procedure notes and agreements to be written and reviewed by the services. It is anticipated that this revised modus operandi will be rolled out across the Borough in the near future.

Recommendation 7 - That planning officers be asked to notify Hillingdon CCG when processing any planning applications relating to accommodation for the elderly that are subject to CIL.

The validation of planning applications is undertaken by the Application Processing Team who have written instructions they follow for each case they validate which tell them who to consult on the application type in question. This document will be updated to notify the CCG should this recommendation be agreed by Cabinet. It is also the role of planning officers to check the correct consultations occur. Through both a written instruction and the monthly planning officers' and managers' team meeting, officers and managers will be updated on the Committee's recommendation. Each planning case has multiple sign offs (a minimum of an officer and a manager sign off each case).

Recommendation 8 - That Cabinet note that the External Services Select Committee will continue to closely monitor any implementation of the above recommendations, along with GP training programmes and the recruitment of new GPs, particularly in the South of the Borough.

If Cabinet agrees the recommendations of the review, the External Services Select Committee will continue to closely monitor their implementation.

Financial Implications

The recommendations proposed as a result of this review have no new financial implications.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

It is envisaged that a reduction in the current level of pressures on GPs in the Borough will enhance the experience of local residents and improve levels of satisfaction throughout the Borough. The single online directory of health, care and wellbeing services will be an invaluable resource which residents will readily be able to tap into. Moreover, it is anticipated that improved signposting for patients both to Citizen's Advice Bureaux services and to emerging digital applications will afford local residents easy access to the appropriate services to meet their needs. Furthermore, it is expected that initiatives in relation to homecare for the elderly will enable said homecare to be triaged and deployed more flexibly by the Neighbourhood Teams which is a positive development. Finally, given that they will henceforth be notified of all new planning applications (which are subject to CIL) in relation to accommodation for the elderly, it is hoped that the CCG will have a wider understanding of likely future healthcare demand thereby enabling them to prioritise healthcare provision appropriately.

Consultation carried out or required

The Select Panel sought a range of external witness testimony as detailed in its report. The draft review report was subsequently considered at a meeting of the External Services Select Committee on 9 October 2019 at which the findings of the Select Panel were welcomed.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report, confirming that there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations set out above.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL