

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board**
held on Tuesday, 18th March, 2025 in the Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

BOARD MEMBERS

Councillor Sam Corcoran (Chair), Cheshire East Council
Helen Charlesworth-May, Executive Director Adults, Health and
Integration
Phil Cresswell, Executive Director Place
Councillor Stewart Gardiner, Cheshire East Council (substitute)
Councillor Jill Rhodes, Chair of Adults and Health Committee, Cheshire
East Council
Councillor Carol Bulman, Cheshire East Council
Isla Wilson, Chair, Cheshire East Health and Care Place Partnership
Kate Little, Deputy CEO, CVS Cheshire East
Mark Groves, Healthwatch Cheshire (substitute)
Superintendent Andrew Blizzard, Cheshire Constabulary

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Guy Kilminster, Corporate Manager, Health Improvement
Professor Rod Thomson, Interim Public Health Consultant
Maddy Lowry, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Lori Hawthorn, Public Health Development Officer
Matthew Atkinson, Consultant in Public Health
Alex Jones, Better Care Fund Programme Lead
Claire Williamson, Director, Education, Strong Start and Integration,
Children and Families, Cheshire East Council
Frances Handley, Democratic Services Officer

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Michelle Davis - Housing representative, Dr Paul Bishop - NHS Cheshire
and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, Mark Wilkinson – Place Director,
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, Louise Barry -
Healthwatch, Kathryn Sullivan – CVSCE, Councillor Janet Clowes , Denise
Bowman, Cheshire Fire and Rescue

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interests of openness, Councillor Stewart Gardiner declared that the
smoking cessation incentives scheme had previously been presented to
the Adults and Health Committee and noted that he did speak and vote on
the item and that he had previously used the services of Cheshire and
Wirral Partnership.

Professor Rod Thompson declared that he was a trustee of Listening Ear, the mental health charity that provided the Amparo service and a trustee of Everybody, Health and Leisure, the charity that ran the Cheshire East Council leisure services and until October 2024, a non-executive director with Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

In the interest of openness, Councillor S Corcoran declared an interest by virtue of his wife being a GP.

46 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.

47 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

48 MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP UPDATE ON PLAN AND PRIORITIES

The Board received a presentation on the Cheshire East Place Mental Health Plan (2024-2029) by the Mental Health Partnership Board.

The board raised that mental health and physical health were inextricably linked and were encouraged to attend a briefing on homelessness and rough sleeping on 9th April 2025.

The board queried whether younger persons mental health problems aligned with deprivation incidence and occurrences were appearing where they were expected to be. There was discussion in respect of children in care and SEND children that were presenting with self-harm and whether this was linked to areas of deprivation. The 'Tartan Rug' was referenced and it appeared that there was a clear correlation to areas of deprivation.

It was also questioned whether a proposed Urgent Care facility in Crewe would be linked to the Leighton Hospital expansion and whether they were in talks with the hospital in relation to a mental health facility. It was noted that there was a masterplan that referenced a mental health facility however that had not yet been confirmed or agreed. CWP were looking for funding under the capital development programme for an urgent care centre which was unrelated to the hospital development, however it could tie in with the new site, or it may be that the site was situated elsewhere.

It was noted that the Leighton Hospital would be a regular item on the Health and Wellbeing Board agenda going forward.

It was raised what actions were being taken in respect of rural schools if a member of staff was to go off for training. It was confirmed that the training was being arranged for out of school hours and that it would be accessible for all, including being available online.

It was agreed that Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust would liaise with Cheshire East to ensure any data collected and presented was accurate.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

49 SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Board received a presentation on updates on progress made against the 2023-2025 Plan. The refreshed Plan for 2025-2027 was presented for the Board's consideration and approval.

The suicide awareness training was commended and noted that it was available for free on the Live Well and Cheshire East website or through the suicide alliance.

The Board questioned why there appeared to have been an increase over the North West, Cheshire and Merseyside to above the national average. It was agreed that there were various factors that could have impacted this including the cost of living and post pandemic related issues.

Officers raised that they have been working with Network Rail and gave assurance that they have been doing dedicated, targeted work in high schools in Congleton.

The Board commented on the engagement with the community and noted this appeared to be having a positive impact and visibility had increased in the community.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board note the progress made in relation to the 2023-2025 Self Harm and Suicide Prevention Plan and agreed the 2025-2027 Plan.

Isla Wilson left the meeting at 14.55

50 SMOKING CESSATION INCENTIVES SCHEME

The Board received an update on the progress of the local Smoking Cessation Incentives Scheme and the next steps for developing the project in the context of the introduction of a national scheme.

The Board raised questions around people taking up vaping and whether the scheme would be extended to vaping. It was confirmed that the position taken was that vaping was safer than smoking however the message was if you do not smoke, then do not vape, it was not a safe product, it was a harm reduction product to help people to quit smoking. The long term effects of vaping were still unclear however there was emerging evidence that vaping was harmful and there were concerns about nicotine addiction particularly in young people. There was currently no service for vaping as of yet.

There were concerns with the levels of vaping in schools which was one of the most significant concerns that schools were raising and work would continue with schools to tackle the issue.

RESOLVED:

That the Board note the report and support the continuous improvement of the scheme as it evolves and progresses.

51 BETTER CARE FUND 2025-2026

The Board received an update on the Better Care Fund Plan for 2025/26.

The Board questioned what the general rate of inflation in the care sector was with the Fund having a 3.9% increase and what Cheshire East Council were contributing. The local authority had worked on this in considering care market fees. National living wage 6.7% increase, operational costs had increased by 2.5% and employment contributions had also increased by approximately 5.6%. There was a total of 50 million pounds worth of funding and 26 million pounds was Cheshire East Council's contribution. Work on a discharge to assess pathway was underway and this was funded from the Council and ICB and the Trusts and a transfer of care hub where various professionals worked together.

The Board raised questions regarding ensuring that people had lasting powers of attorney and clear instructions as to what they wanted in terms of treatment and end of life preferences and what was being done to ensure that a person was not in hospital over the weekend as it would be the only place available to be cared for. It was noted that work was being undertaken around admission avoidance. Mark Groves - Healthwatch advised that a 'discharge to assess' report was currently being finalised and it should be published within the next month. It was confirmed by Professor Rod Thompson that work was being undertaken across Cheshire and Merseyside in relation to end of life care and that whilst there may be notice in place of a preferred end of life care plan, that circumstances may change. A report at the end of the year would look at whether there was a weakness in the system or whether it was the circumstances causing the system to fail.

It was noted that free training had been secured for professionals within the system around health literacy and communication with health care professionals and patients. A pilot programme would be rolled out around end-of-life care.

It was raised that the Better Care Fund was going to change during 26/27 and there would be a transition from current investment to new investment priorities. Admission avoidance was prioritised.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Health and Wellbeing Board endorse the Better Care Fund plan for 2025/26.

52 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - CONSULTATION (CLOSING DATE MONDAY 21 APRIL 2025)

A brief update was provided and the board was advised that the links to the consultation were included in the agenda pack and encouraged them to respond if they deemed it appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the Board note the update.

The meeting commenced at 14.00 and concluded at 15.25

Councillor S Corcoran (Chair)