

Lancashire County Council

Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 5th February, 2025 at 10.30 am in
Committee Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present:

County Councillor David Westley (Chair)

County Councillors

J Mein	N Hennessy
U Arif	E Pope
P Britcliffe	S Rigby
J Burrows	

Co-opted members

Councillor Margaret France, Chorley Council
Councillor Martin Gawith, Lancaster City Council
Councillor Lou Jackson, South Ribble Borough Council
Councillor Liz McInnes, Rossendale Borough Council

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Nweeda Khan and Borough Councillors Zafar Coupland, Chris Church, Julie Robinson and Viv Willder.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13 December 2024

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record.

4. Supporting People with Learning Disabilities into Employment

County Councillor Sue Whittam, Lead Member for Health, Paul Lee, Director of Adult Care and Provider Services, Charlotte Hammond, Head of Service Learning Disability Autism, Nicola Clear, Head of Service Disability and Gillian Collins, Service

Manager attended the meeting to provide information and partake in a discussion on supporting people with learning disabilities into employment.

The report circulated with the agenda pack provided information on the progress made in relation to the Department for Work and Pensions Local Supported Employment (LSE) programme and update on next steps including integrating it into a mainstream offer. It was noted that Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care supported 4,200 people with learning disabilities and supporting people into employment was underpinned by the county council's duties under The Care Act 2014. It was further noted that Lancashire County Council were one of 23 authorities piloting the 'Employment Trailblazer' programme.

The Chair invited questions from the committee and a summary is outlined below:

- It was highlighted that part of the employment support service offer was educating employers, including that employers had a duty to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace under employment law. In the long term, it was noted that if an individual had gained paid employment and support from the employment team had concluded, 'Access to Work' also provided additional support in the workplace and individuals can contact Adult Social Care at any point.
- Regarding the estimated 30,000 people in Lancashire living with a learning disability, members queried if Adult Social Care had information on these 30,000 individuals. It was highlighted to the committee that this figure was based on population data and specifically referred to individuals not known to Adult Social Care. It was noted that many individuals living with a learning disability or autism gained successful employment without any intervention from the council.
- The committee asked for clarification on how Adult Social Care services provided by the county council are promoted and communicated to the public. It was explained that anyone receiving support from any Adult Social Care service would have a review annually of their support and if appropriate, they could receive support into employment. It was agreed that further work could be undertaken to review how the service was promoted online and within the community, to ensure individuals were aware of the service.
- Members queried how information regarding employment support was made available to young people with disabilities, specifically before they were 18. It was highlighted that the transitions team liaised with young people with disabilities, those in our care or those known to social services to provide information specifically about employment and support into employment. It was noted that Lancashire County Council also offered supported internships and apprenticeships whilst the service attended open evenings at schools and colleges on a regular basis.



- The committee were informed that there was no unit cost for the programme and no set timescale, this varied as each person's needs were different. It was highlighted that the 'Connect to Work' programme would commence in late 2025 and would calculate a unit cost to support someone into employment, with a target of 30% of participants gaining employment. It was highlighted the service currently supported 45% of participants into employment.
- The committee queried how they could support the services work. It was further queried who the main employers were across Lancashire involved with the service. Members were informed that liaising and encouraging employers to be involved with the service was imperative. It was confirmed that information regarding employers across Lancashire could be brought back to and circulated to the committee at a later date.
- In regard to people not in employment or training, the committee queried how the service reached these individuals. The committee were informed that there were a large number of people not known to the service however they may be accessing another county council service (e.g. day services, supported living facilities). It was highlighted that social workers promoted the service to these Service Users where they thought appropriate, as well as communicating with parents and carers.
- The committee queried if collaborative work was being undertaken with district councils to ensure they were aware of the support available to their residents. Members were informed that the service did work with some district councils and information could be provided at a later date regarding all of the employment support available by district councils in Lancashire.
- Members queried if the service worked with any other organisations to support this work. It was confirmed that there were no formal contracts with other organisations. It was highlighted that the employment rate in Lancashire for people with learning disabilities was in line with the national average.
- Regarding the estimated 30,000 people living with a learning disability in Lancashire, the committee queried if the service had the capacity to support all these individuals if requested. It was highlighted to members that the 4,200 adults with learning disabilities were eligible to receive support under The Care Act 2014. It was confirmed that the service did not have capacity for 30,000 extra Service Users.
- It was clarified to members that the individuals accessing the programme were able to enter employment, however, many Service Users with learning disabilities had complex needs and employment was not suitable.

Resolved: That



- (i) A bite size briefing be provided to all councillors on the employment support available to people with learning difficulties.
- (ii) Further work be undertaken to review how the service offer is communicated and promoted and how employers are engaged to raise awareness and how councillors can support, especially with regards to the upcoming 'Connect to Work'.

5. Community Mental Health Transformation Programme Update

Tracy Cook-Scowen, Interim Director of Strategy and Partnerships, LSCFT and Jodie Carney, Healthwatch Lancashire attended the meeting to provide information and partake in a discussion on the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme.

The report circulated with the agenda pack provided an update on the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme, as well as work undertaken by Healthwatch Lancashire on Waiting for Wellness - an investigation into people's experiences and accessibility of mental health services in Lancashire.

The Chair invited questions from the committee and a summary is outlined below:

- In regard to the Water Meadow View at Whittingham, the learning disability inpatient facility, the committee queried the revenue consequences associated with this type of unit. It was confirmed to the committee that the running cost was approximately £7m, it was highlighted that this was capital funding and no grants were received.
- The committee raised concern regarding the wait times for children and young people to receive mental health support. Members were informed that an incident management group had been in place for 18 months to ensure pathways were as efficient as possible. It was noted that access to acute children's mental health beds was good in Lancashire and South Cumbria trusts and though A&E was not an appropriate place for an acute mental health crisis, it was often the safest environment for an individual while a decision on their care was made.
- The committee noted the hour response time from Mental Health Liaison Teams (MHLTs) following a referral from Emergency Department's being met in 95.9% of cases was positive, further to this concern was raised that although assessments took place quickly, patients were then left for a prolonged period of time following this. It was highlighted to members that the purpose of MHLTs was to undertake an initial assessment to inform support moving forward, the teams would also continue to support the patient whilst in EDs and if they were transferred to an acute bed.
- It was clarified to members that the beds available at Water Meadow View were not mental health beds, they were for patients with learning



disabilities. It was further explained that some individuals in out of area beds with learning disabilities would not benefit from being moved however reviews of their circumstances took place regularly.

- In regard to young people accessing provision, it was queried by the committee if young people reported the support they received as helpful. It was explained that the way success was measured was challenging, it was confirmed that further feedback could be sought from young people who have accessed provision to gain a better understanding.
- Regarding carers that supported people with mental health problems, the committee queried if there was provision available to support them. It was explained to the committee that there was no specific Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust (LSCFT) provision for carers unless they met the threshold for mental health support themselves however patience and carer Forums were utilised to inform services and decision making. It was highlighted that a partnership approach at a local level informed LSCFT of provision of support available, including Spring North who provided support groups etc.
- It was confirmed to the committee that Mental Health Improvement Standard (MHIS) monies had been received since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Members raised concern regarding the lack of neurodivergence specific training for healthcare professionals. The committee heard that over 85% of LSCFT colleagues had completed the Oliver McGowen training. It was further noted that the ICB's Primary Care Committee had also been encouraged to deliver this training.
- The committee were informed that the letter received from a member of the public regarding the lack of neuro-divergent care and coordination of services in Lancashire, would be referred to the Health and Adult Services Steering Group Committee at a later date for consideration.

Resolved: That

- (i) A review be considered by Healthwatch Lancashire to further understand and define measures of success for young people who had been able to access various forms of mental health support.
- (ii) A review be undertaken by the Health Scrutiny Steering Group at their next meeting on 25 February to further understand the challenges around the diagnostic pathways for autism/ADHD.



6. ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Long Covid Services

Steve Flynn, Head of Services Planned Care, LSC ICB attended the meeting to provide information and partake in a discussion on ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Long Covid Services.

The report circulated with the agenda pack provided information on the ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis), CFS (chronic fatigue syndrome) and Long Covid services, treatment options and staff training currently in place across Lancashire. It was noted that currently only one services, limited to Central Lancashire, offered provision of support for ME.

The committee agreed that County Councillor Gina Dowding be allowed to comment and ask questions on this item only.

The Chair invited questions from the committee and a summary is outlined below:

- The committee queried if there were any services offering home visits for individuals unable to leave the home due to their condition. It was confirmed that the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome domiciliary service did offer home visits however this was dependent on which core services managed the patients care and their location. It was highlighted that patients accessing provision in Central Lancashire would have access to home visits. It was further explained that the 'Moving Well' website had contact details for different parts of the service which could be circulated to members.
- It was confirmed that the Central Lancashire services had been continually evaluated and best practice had been identified however this had not been expanded into other localities.
- The committee raised concern that the gap in service provision included both diagnosis pathways and treatment options following a diagnosis. It was noted by members that the gap in provision between areas across Lancashire was also concerning. It was highlighted that there were several options to ensure an equitable offer across Lancashire, including integrating ME/CFS services with existing services or creating a stand alone service.
- Members were informed that in regard to the nature of ME/CFS, with patients presenting several times, there were several inefficiencies that would be considered in a business case including cost. It was noted that a streamlined model would ensure business savings and improve patient experience.

Resolved: That the Scrutiny Committee agreed to ask the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to request the ICB to

- (i) Undertake a separate thorough detailed epidemiological analysis of the incidence, prevalence, morbidity, mortality rates of:
 1. ME/CFS
 2. Long Covid



3. other post-viral conditions

for the population of Lancashire to be completed by a collaborative group of the Directors of Public Health drawn from across the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB.

- (ii) Consider funding and commissioning a full Health Needs Assessment for
 - (a) ME/CFS
 - (b) Long Covid
 - (c) other post-viral conditions

across the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB and then develop a comprehensive diagnostic and treatment pathway for these conditions.

7. Report of the Health Scrutiny Steering Group

County Councillor David Westley presented a report on the Health Scrutiny Steering Group meeting which took place on 13 January 2025.

The report circulated in the agenda pack provided information on the ICB Recovery and Transformation Update, Community Equipment and Minor Adaptations Services and the Lancashire and South Cumbria Pathology Service Network.

Resolved: That the report of the Health Scrutiny Steering Group be received.

8. Work Programme 2024/25 - Actions and Assurances Update

County Councillor David Westley presented a report on the Health and Adult Services Committee and Steering Group work programme 2024/25. Information was also provided on actions from the last meeting of the committee and an update on assurances.

Resolved: That the Health and Adult Services Work Programme 2024/25 be noted.

9. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee will be held on Wednesday 12 March 2025 at 10:30am in Committee Room C – The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston.

H MacAndrew
Director of Law and Governance

County Hall



Preston

