


LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Meeting / Date	Cabinet 22 September 2022	
Report Title	Health Scrutiny Committee Themed Review 2021-22: Primary Care	
Cabinet Portfolio	Councillor Naheed Asghar, Portfolio Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing	
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Wards affected	None specifically	
Public Access	OPEN	
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 – Themed Review 2021-22: Primary Care</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Proposed Response</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Equalities Analysis Screening Tool</p>	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's scrutiny committees conduct themed reviews as part of an annual work programme. This is an opportunity for a committee to engage in a sustained way with a particular topic. This year the Health Scrutiny Committee conducted its review on access to primary care in Waltham Forest and the proposed new integrated model of primary care for the Borough. The attached report sets out the Committee's findings and recommendations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Cabinet is asked to approve the following recommendations:
 - 2.1.1 That the Health Scrutiny Committee Themed Review report be noted;
 - 2.1.2 That the recommendations outlined in the report be adopted and taken forward as outlined in the proposed response in appendix 2, including where recommendations have been amended.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Committee conducted its themed review throughout 2021-22, and its approach is outlined in **appendix 1**. Officers have prepared a proposed response which is attached as **appendix 2**. Cabinet are asked to review and approve the response.

- 3.2 The full recommendations are outlined in the report (appendix 1). A summary of recommendations can be found below:

3.3 Summary of recommendations

The Committee recommends:

- 1. That GP surgeries endeavour to be flexible, ensuring patients can access primary care in the way most appropriate for them
- 2. That, where alternative means of interacting with Primary Care exist, for example collecting repeat prescriptions at pharmacies or using GP email addresses, these are clearly communicated to patients
- 3. That the Council works closely with its NHS partners to promote public health campaigns aimed at preventing patients requiring primary care services
- 4. That, in the short term, the Council uses its resources to ensure residents know their options around accessing primary care, whether face-to-face, telephone or digital
- 5. That the Council works with Healthwatch to ensure they have the capacity to survey residents and gather data on how they are experiencing primary care
- 6. That the CCG/ICS monitors how GP practices triage patients and works with them to refine and roll out the most effective triage methodology
- 7. That the Council (including public health, housing and other relevant services) works closely with primary care to ensure GPs and other healthcare professionals are able to signpost patients to services that would help improve their overall standard of health
- 8. That the new model ensures that patients are reassured they are seeing the right healthcare professional for their needs

9. That digital integration is prioritised in the new model, ensuring primary care platforms are well integrated with secondary care, community care and social care services
 10. That the historic underinvestment in Waltham Forest compared to other NEL boroughs with respect to primary care services is noted and prioritised for correction by the new ICS
- 3.4 Aside from recommendations 3, 4, 6 and 10, which officers and health partners propose to amend, all have been accepted.
- 3.5 **Recommendations proposed for amendment by officers and health partners**
- 3.6 The response to recommendation 3 proposes that the recommendation is expanded to clearly note that this is to ensure that residents are aware of their options for accessing primary care.
- 3.7 It is proposed that recommendation 4 is combined with the amended recommendation 3 as they are interdependent.
- 3.8 The ICS propose removing the monitoring element of recommendation 6 and amending it to be more collaborative with GP surgeries recognising a transition to a strong focus for using online triage ensuring that patients who are unable to use that approach are not disadvantaged.
- 3.9 It is proposed that recommendation 10 is amended to ensure that additional investment in Waltham Forest health services is linked to population health needs.

4. OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Committee has reviewed the Council's policy and practice, and its proposals relate to current service delivery. It is a requirement for the Cabinet to consider each individual scrutiny committee themed review and respond to the recommendations within the report.

5. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES (AND OTHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES OR STRATEGIES)

- 5.1 The attached report of the scrutiny committee sets out a number of ways the themed review has taken into consideration both local and national policies in respect to its area of focus.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Formal consultation is not required for a scrutiny committee to conduct a themed review. The Committee has, however, spoken to a range of witnesses and sought a diversity of views in respect to its topic, as set out in its report.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance, Value for Money and Risk

- 7.1.1 The recommendations have been developed so that they can be implemented within the existing budgets available to relevant services. However, if in preparing to implement the recommendations contained within the themed review report, they are not sustainable within existing resources and officers find that additional expenditure is required, a report should be brought back to Cabinet to explain either: a) why the recommendations cannot be implemented; or b) proposals to finance their implementation.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 Part of the Council's constitution sets out the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules including, in paragraph 5, the procedure for Policy Review and Development. This report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 6.1 of the procedure rules as a report by Overview and Scrutiny. The procedure rules provide that in carrying out any such policy review or development, Overview and Scrutiny must have regard to available budgets and resources (para.5.2) and make recommendations to Cabinet (6.1).

7.3 Equalities and Diversity

- 7.3.1 The Council must further take into account its wider Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 when making a decision. The Council will consider the impact of changes that might arise as a result of implementing the recommendations on those with protected equality characteristics, in particular where there is likely to be an impact on residents or service users from any changes to, or decommissioning of existing services. In order to assist with this, an Equality Analysis screening tool has been completed and is attached as **appendix 3**.

7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

- 7.4.1 The recommendations contained within this themed review report may have a positive impact on sustainability as engagement at an earlier stage may avoid sustainability implications at a later date. The recommendations may have an additional impact on sustainability, arising from day to day operations. These concerns will be taken into consideration by relevant officers during the design and implementation phase. If in preparing to implement the recommendations contained within the themed review report, they are noted to have a negative impact on sustainability, a report should be brought back to Cabinet to explain either: a) why the recommendations cannot be implemented; b) options to curtail negative sustainability impact.

7.5 Council Infrastructure

7.5.1 The recommendations contained within this themed review report are expected to be delivered within existing council infrastructure and resources.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

None