

Health and Well-Being board 18th January 2022

Public Questions

Q1 "Can you please advise what we need to do for Harrow Council's support to sponsor or promote the work of Mind Angels Charity for the Health and Wellbeing of Harrow residents?"

Mental Health and wellbeing are important areas of work for the council and especially so since the pandemic began. Our role, as a council, is to identify and address the local health and wellbeing needs of our population. As part of these needs assessments we review the evidence of effectiveness and cost effectiveness of the various options and how they might meet our needs.

Local Authority procurement is a carefully balanced process given the requirements, the resources and the capacity we have. We work as a strong partnership with schools, the voluntary sector and all of our NHS partners to co-produce these evidences based and carefully evaluated programmes. We involve young people in designing or reviewing the programmes themselves.

Over the past few years, we have funded many programmes – probably too many to mention here - but working in such a close partnership has allowed us to gain additional funding to address the health needs. One of the innovative programmes which I'm sure you are aware of is the How are You (or HAY) Harrow programme. The evidence from this programme has allowed us to bid for funding from a variety of sources including private investors.

What we do not get involved in is the initial evaluation of the products of private companies. That is for them to do. Our role is to review the evidence of effectiveness of such products and how they might fit into the programme we are commissioning.

Q2 “The Bridge has provided valuable support to mental health service users over the years. Since the pandemic services have been online, however I understood there were plans to bring face to face services back. I would like to know what is happening about this, and how Rethink will ensure that all service users are made aware of the current position.

I would like the chair of the health and wellbeing board to ask this question for me”.

Rethink have continued to support service users throughout the pandemic virtually. In person, or face-to-face services commenced from 1st December 2021. However the government restrictions put in place on 28th December 2021 due to the increased number of infections of the Omicron variant meant that Rethink temporarily moved the face-to-face groups to online to keep clients and staff safe due to the increased rate of infection. This will continue until there is a change to the Government’s restrictions.

Rethink’s intention is to deliver the Peer led group with Covid Safe numbers and guidelines when they are able to return to face-to-face groups.

All service users who are receiving an intervention with a support worker have been informed of updates and what provision is available to support them by their support workers.

Rethink are working to establish the following service offer soon:

- A variety of groups hosted from the Bridge and other venues throughout Harrow.
- drop in sessions
- coffee morning groups to enable people to access support and develop support planning.
- The introducing a care navigator to support service users with Physical wellbeing. This will include hosting low impact exercise classes with a fully qualified gym instructor at the Bridge and supporting access to the wider exercise offer across Harrow. This is in response to the feedback from the transitions groups that Rethink hosted during 2021 to inform the post pandemic offer.
- Working in partnership with other providers to enhance the offer across Harrow to reduce any cliff edges and support warm handovers and ease access to alternative services.

In addition, Rethink’s further developments are as follows:

- Co-production workshops to ensure that the service offer develops alongside the need of Harrows Citizens.
- Exploring a co-production lead to ensure accountability when implementing changes.
- Developing their marketing strategy including leaflets and posters to promote the service.
- Developing a Harrow Community Newsletter published quarterly with services updates including information on how to self-refer. As part of this Rethink are aiming at creating unique volunteering opportunities that will support the editing and writing of the newsletter and to to this in collaboration with other providers in Harrow.,
- Developing a ‘Meet and Greet’ role to ensure that new clients feel welcome

Q3 “How is Harrow’s implementation of the new autism strategy going have particular areas of challenge been identified and how are adults with autism but without learning disabilities, and their families and carers, being kept informed of progress”.

In terms of how the implementation of the strategy is going, we can inform that we have had several focus meetings with service users, carers partners and VCS over the last four months.

This has helped us identify key focus themes such as, late diagnosis for individuals, improving pathways for diagnosis and post diagnostic support, building the right support in the community, improving access to education and employment and supporting positive transitions in to adulthood

We are now at the drafting stage of the joint (CCG/Harrow Council) all age strategy and are seeking ratification first half of this year.

Simultaneously we are drafting an implementation plan to deliver the strategy.

Currently we use the members of the health social care focus groups to enable communication with their members, we also use the LD/Autism Newsletter and the VCS to disseminate updates.

However we recognise that there is a cohort of people with autism alone that are not accessing or party to these modes of communication and therefore we need to consider how best we address this.

The difficulty being there are people with autism alone who manage their lives without contact with statutory services or newsletters

We accept that there is always room for improvement and as such will table this as an agenda item at the next ASD Health and Social Care Focus Group

Q4

The Adult Safeguarding Report presented to the previous Health and Wellbeing Board included a number of priorities for 2021/2022. This included " Harrow Council to sign up to an Appropriate Adult scheme (which ensures that vulnerable adults in police custody receive appropriate health and support)." This has been an issue for many years, what progress is being made in ensuring there is an appropriate and effective scheme in place?

Harrow Council commissioned The Appropriate Adult (AA) Service to deliver a pilot Appropriate Adult service in line with neighbouring Boroughs within the Met Police BCU (Brent and Barnet) and as part of the MOPAC Pan-London Appropriate Adult Scheme. This service is now in place and is working well and was formally commended by the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adult Board at their recent meeting in December. This Service will continue to be carefully monitored to ensure its effectiveness. Regular updates on the delivery of the service will be presented to the Safeguarding Board and to the Director of Adult Social Services and Director of Children Services. A decision on the continuation of the service is expected by April 2022, to coincide with the new financial year.