

Health Scrutiny Committee – End of Year Summary 2022/2023

Throughout the previous municipal year, the Committee has continued to look at various aspects of the provision of health and social care services and sought an assurance that they are being delivered to improve the health outcomes of all Manchester residents.

Like many who watched the BBC Panorama programme, that aired 28 September 2022 concerning the Edenfield Centre, we were shocked at the content. In response to these serious allegations of neglect and abuse, we summonsed the Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust to address the October 2022 meeting. At this meeting the Committee recommended that the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to ask that a Public Inquiry is launched to examine the issues raised in the BBC programme. The Committee have also agreed to dedicate the full meeting of the new municipal year to the Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust with a view to seeking an assurance that improvements are being made at this site and across all services provided by the Trust. The Committee will also invite patient representative groups to this meeting to also hear their views.

A central and ‘golden thread’ that runs throughout the Committee’s approach to any area of service delivery is addressing health inequalities. We were pleased to welcome the ‘Making Manchester Fairer: Tackling Health Inequalities in Manchester 2022-2027’ report at our meeting of October 2022. We were particularly pleased to welcome Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Institute of Health Equity to the meeting and we thank him for his invaluable contribution to this important area of work. The Committee will continue to return to this area of activity throughout the new municipal year.

In recognition of the unprecedented pressures experienced by the NHS that had been widely reported both locally and nationally over the winter period, the Committee called an extraordinary meeting to consider access to a range of NHS services. The Committee had invited the Rt. Hon. Steve Barclay MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to attend this meeting to learn of the pressures experienced by services across Manchester, however he was unable to attend. Having heard from all of the invited representatives the Committee agreed to convene a delegation to visit the offices of the Department of Health & Social Care to seek an urgent meeting with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. The purpose being to present the case for increased investment in the health and social care sector in Manchester to improve the health outcomes of all Manchester residents.

The Committee wish to take this opportunity to express their gratitude and appreciation to all staff working within the health and adult social care service, the many volunteers and partner organisations for their heroic response to this unprecedented situation.

Throughout the year Members have welcomed the opportunity to hear from and question a variety of invited guests with specialist knowledge and expertise in a range of subject areas. In particular, the Committee was interested to hear from the Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Services; Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma Informed Practice practitioners; Dental Practitioners to discuss the provision and access to NHS Dentistry across the city. The Committee also thank all those individuals who had attended the various meetings to share their lived experiences of services with Members. This resident voice at meeting provided a powerful testimony and was greatly appreciated by all members of the Committee.

Throughout the year the Committee have remained to the commitment given to consider the important issue of climate change from a health perspective. We considered reports on the impact of the heatwave experienced in 2022 and the work of the Manchester Climate Change Framework and Health. In recognition of the importance of this for all residents living in the city we agreed to consider specific aspects of this work regularly throughout the new municipal year.

During the year the Committee have also undertaken a number of visits to various sites to meet with teams delivering services on behalf of residents. These visits included North Manchester General Hospital and Adult Learning Disability. A visit to the Control Room which is the integrated hub for supporting patient flow out of hospital into the community will be arranged for the new municipal year. The Control Room is responsible for ensuring the safe and timely discharge of citizens across hospitals and to supports the system to work together to achieve the best outcomes for people.

The Chair and the Committee wish to thank all of the invited guests and officers for attending the meetings throughout the course of the year and contributing to the work of the Committee.