

Ref: Ruby Ward – HASC Follow up 26/10/21

Directorate of Health Improvement

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Dear Cllr Wildey,

Following last week's meeting of Medway Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC), we are pleased to come back to you on several points raised by members during the discussion about the Ruby Ward proposal.

Location of pop-up exhibitions

Cllr Thorne suggested that we look at using the Pentagon Centre for pop-up exhibitions and public-facing engagement work in future and we are very happy to ensure that it is on our list of venues for future use.

At the previous HASC meeting, we were grateful to Cllr Price for his suggestion that the Sunlight Centre was a Medway-based venue that would be able to host an exhibition and went ahead with the Centre on that basis. We were grateful to the Centre for not only allowing us to hold an exhibition, but also for the support they provided through their communications channels, enabling us to reach relevant groups and individuals during consultation.

Links with VCSE groups and networks

We appreciated Cllr McDonald's feedback and recommendations about accessing VCSE groups and networks for future consultation and engagement work. As Steph Hood outlined during the meeting, we utilised many groups, organisations and networks including Healthwatch and charities with links to older people and with a special interest in mental health, however we are always keen to improve our engagement and increase our reach to target specific groups within the community. We will ensure that we write to Cllr McDonald directly in future to seek his assistance in cascading information to, and his advice on, accessing his established VCSE networks.

Details about number of volunteer drivers in Medway

Cllr Price requested information about the number of volunteer drivers working with KMPT in the Medway area and we will include this information in the travel and transport work to mitigate concerns raised during consultation that is currently in development. We also note Cllr McDonald's kind offer to advise on potential coordination of volunteer travel and transport services with his voluntary and community sector links and will come back to him for further information and advice directly on this point as we develop these mitigations.

Hard copy distribution of consultation materials to libraries

Cllr Thorne asked about distribution of hard copies of materials to local libraries, noting that Medway-based libraries were not on the list of locations in receipt of materials outlined in the consultation activity report.

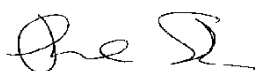
Recognising the restrictions on distributing hard copy documents and leaflets in health and community-based settings because of COVID considerations (explicitly, infection control concerns, with usual community facilities and waiting rooms not accepting printed information in the way they have in the past), we focused on digital distribution and direct engagement through groups and networks. We felt that this would be the most effective way of reaching and eliciting feedback from those with an interest or who would be directly affected by the proposals. We prioritised this effort in Medway. However, following a meeting with colleagues from Maidstone Borough Council, we were asked for some distribution of documents to Maidstone libraries which is why the activity report focuses on libraries in this area. With hindsight we could have distributed them more widely and included Medway libraries, and apologise for this oversight.

Next steps

- We look forward to receiving HASC's formal response and recommendations as part of our consultation with Medway Council by 8th November 2021 and will respond to these specific comments and recommendations through the decision-making business case (DMBC).
- We are in the process of reviewing the additional potential sites and locations suggested by members of the public during consultation and will share a briefing note on this analysis with HASC members for their information as soon as possible.
- As referenced at the meeting and above, mitigations to address travel and transport concerns are in development and will form part of the wider DMBC. We will share this information with HASC as part of the publication of the DMBC when it is considered by KMCCG's Governing Body at the end of November 2021. We would also like to take the opportunity to return to HASC once a decision on the future location of Ruby Ward has been made and implementation of any change has completed, with particular reference to updating members on the progress and delivery of travel and transport mitigations within this programme of work.

Once again, we'd like to thank you and your fellow committee members for your valuable input and insights during the development and scrutiny of this proposal. We appreciated last week's discussion with HASC members in refining and focusing our response to the issues raised during consultation. This will help us do our very best to support and reassure those in Medway who have concerns about the proposal. We look forward to working closely with you as we move towards decision-making.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Selkirk
Executive Director of Health Improvement / Chief Operating Officer
NHS Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group

Cc:

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