

**Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – GP Access Task Group**

**Minutes – 12 January 2023**

**517 GP Access Task Group - Interim Report**

Discussion:

Members considered the interim report of the GP Access Task Group.

In deciding whether to forward the report and its interim recommendations to the Cabinet for approval, there was a difference of opinion amongst Members with some in favour of this and another view expressed that the report should not be forwarded to the Cabinet at this stage and the work be revisited in the summer and completed with more engagement with GPs. The latter view was then proposed on the basis that the Task Group had only spoken to 3 Medway GPs, none of these rural or locums.

A point was also made that answers were needed as to why Medway had such a significant problem with GP access. The proposed recommendations were not unique to Medway and more Medway specific evidence was needed.

Some Members opposed the proposal on the basis that the recommendations could achieve change, that enough GPs had been seen to give a good picture of the situation in Medway which matched the national picture. The Task Group had worked with health partners in a collaborative way and they had been pleased to have been listened to and had fed back that the recommendations would make a difference. In addition, it had quickly become apparent to the Task Group that the issue was not just about the public accessing GPs but being able to access primary care generally.

A Member queried the methodology adopted regarding inviting GPs to speak to the Task Group given it had resulted in so few GPs being spoken to. An assurance was given that a great deal of effort had been made to speak to more GPs. It had been recognised from the start that it would be difficult for GPs to attend so various routes had been used to contact GPs. 20-30 practices had been approached and some agreed times to meet with the Task Group had to be cancelled due to pressures facing GPs.

In accordance with Rule 12.5 of the Council Rules, a recorded vote was taken on the proposal that the report and its interim recommendations be revisited in the summer when the work can be completed with more engagement with GPs.

**For:**

Councillors Wildey, Purdy, Ahmed, Barrett, Sylvia Griffin and Lammas,

**Against:**

Councillors McDonald, Murray, Prenter, Price, Mrs Elizabeth Turpin and Van Dyke

As the vote was tied, the Chairman exercised his casting vote in favour of the proposal.

Councillor Thorne was not present for the recorded vote.

**Decision:**

The Committee agreed:

- a) to note the interim report from the GP Access Task Group.
- b) that the report is not forwarded to the Cabinet at this stage.
- c) that the report and its interim recommendations be revisited in the summer when the work can be completed with more engagement with GPs

**Minutes – 9 March 2023****674 Member's item - GP Access Task Group****Discussion:**

Members considered a report on a Member's item raised by Councillor Murray, in relation to the GP Access Task Group. The Member's item was as follows:

"At the last meeting of this Committee, following a discussion on the Interim GP Access Task Group, the following was agreed:

- a) to note the interim report from the GP Access Task Group.
- b) that it is not forwarded to the Cabinet at this stage.
- c) that the report and draft recommendations be revisited in the summer when the work can be completed with more engagement with GPs.

A number of Members spoke during the debate in favour of the Committee agreeing to forward the report and recommendations to the Cabinet. The decisions made by the Committee (on the Chairman's casting vote), demonstrated that the Committee could not agree on a final set of proposals to be forwarded to the Cabinet.

Paragraph 11.2 of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules state: "If an Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot agree on one single final set of proposals or recommendations to the Council or Leader/Cabinet (as appropriate), then a minority view which is supported by the largest minority, but at least three members, may be prepared and submitted for consideration by the Council or Leader/Cabinet (as appropriate) with the proposals and recommendations supported by the majority of the Committee. The names of those who dissent may, at a member's request, be recorded on the main submission." Therefore, I request that (at least) three Members

of this Committee indicate their support for a minority view which is to submit the GP Access Task Group interim report and interim recommendations to the next meeting of the Cabinet (4 April 2023).”

Councillor Murray introduced her Member’s item and commented this procedural mechanism had been used so that the report from the Task Group could be considered by the Cabinet. She did not agree with the view that the report’s findings were insufficient. She accepted the Task Group had not seen as many GPS as they would have liked but the Group had spoken to key practitioners and allied professionals who shared good practice and ideas. The people who the Task Group had engaged with felt the report was an excellent piece of work. There had been no forward planning about how this work could be progressed after the elections and this was the time to forward the recommendations.

Councillor Murray advised that all of the Labour and Co-operative Members on the Committee supported the request for a minority report to Cabinet.

**Decision:**

The Committee agreed to note that

- a) once at least three Members of the Committee have indicated their support for a minority view, the GP Access Task Group interim report and interim recommendations (as set out at Appendix 1) will be submitted for consideration by the Cabinet at its next meeting (4 April 2023).
- b) if a minority report is submitted now, no further minority report can be submitted at a later date.