

Medway Health and Wellbeing Board
Development Session 7th July 2023

1. Purpose of Session

Prior to the workshop a set of objectives were defined as follows

- a) To bring together Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) representatives to agree how to move forward the established priorities of the HWB, so it can be more effective in securing improved outcomes for communities.
- b) Establish shared aspirations and agreeing future development plans including around how the HWB engages with the wider system.
- c) A facilitated discussion on how the HWB can maximise its impact and encourage/facilitate greater collaboration between members and wider partners
- d) To be challenged and supported to consider how HWB members can contribute to delivery, ensure focus on health inequalities and to consider the art of the possible
- e) To support in developing a narrative for place.

It was agreed that this session would concentrate on Objectives a-c and work would continue within the HWB to deliver against all objectives

2. Agenda

The development session covered the role of the HWB, an update on JLHWS (Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy) refresh and a facilitated discussion on how the Board can maximise its impact particularly in relation to the new ICS.

The session had some short input on the national context and the Medway HWB terms of reference but the bulk on the session was input from board members. Improving outcomes for local people – One thing the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board could do to improve outcomes?

In a round table discussion board members were asked to identify the one thing they would personally like to see the HWB have an impact on over the next 4 years. The outcomes identified were improvements in

- Health inequalities and healthy life expectancy
- Children's mental health
- Access to GPs and Dentists
- Care Home standards
- Equality of access, ease of access e.g., digital exclusion
- Empowering/engaging communities to do things together. Particularly around the wider determinants e.g., healthy weight, safe walking, green spaces.
- Seeking opportunities across services and strategies to improve health and wellbeing e.g., Local Plan
- Prevention of ill health/wellbeing
- Support for the voluntary sector

3. Being the Best Health & Wellbeing Board and Maximising Impact

The development session covered some of the opportunities and risks in the operation and impact of the Board going forward. The proposition put forward was that the best HWBs are true partnerships, working together at the Board and in the system to deliver tangible and sustainable improvements in health and wellbeing. It identified the following:

Opportunities

- To be the key “place leader” for Health, Wellbeing and Care for Medway
- To be a key influencer in the wider Health and Care System

Risks

- It operates as a Council Committee
- It acts more like scrutiny than a partnership
- Behaviours are not conducive to partnership working
- It will not be or be seen as the key Place leader
- It will not be able to influence the wider system

Board members broke into small groups to discuss 3 main questions

- a) What are the key partnership behaviours the Board must consistently exhibit?
- b) What are the Board’s ways of working to ensure it operates as an effective partnership i.e., not a committee or scrutiny?
- c) How can you encourage/facilitate greater collaboration between the HWB and wider partners?

Feedback from the Groups fell into 5 broad categories

Key Partnership Behaviours

- Trust and working towards the same objectives
- Openness and feeling safe to say what we need to
- Listening
- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- HWB can hold partners to account for the non-delivery of agreed actions but must not become a Scrutiny Committee

Ways of Working

Practical

- Change dynamics of meeting e.g. seating arrangements
- Pre meets – quickly brief and then spend the meeting time debating and discussing
- Focussed papers with clear recommendations
- Meet in different locations across Medway

- No acronyms

Workplan and Agenda

- Review HWB terms of reference to ensure it remains fit for purpose
- Make time for deep dives into key areas – maybe restrict the agenda to 2 big issues and have the facility for Board members to add items to the agenda
- Accept that reporting cycles of individual organisations may impact on the HWB agendas
- Workplan accept that there is a lot going on in background. Need to understand how strategies feed into the Board. The workplan should enable the board to deliver on its priorities.

Role of Board Members

- Need education and understanding about individual board members i.e., “what we do and what we’ve done”
- Potential for board members to be assigned themes and be champions for that theme
- Need to agree role and involvement beyond the Board meeting. Need to be consistent whichever part of the system we are working in. Recognise we are not restricted to the work done in the meeting

Influencing the ICS

- Need to understand the structure of the system and how the HWB fits in.
- What are the key opportunities to influencing the system and what are the most appropriate mechanisms?

4. Key actions going forward

Based on the development session there are several key actions the Board could implement

1	Review the HWB terms of reference to ensure it remains fit for purpose and relevant for operating in the context of the ICS. Consider meeting within the communities of Medway.
2	Develop an approach and a review mechanism to ensure that Board behaviours are conducive to excellent collaboration and decision making.
3	Explicitly review/revise the workplan to ensure the Board meets its statutory obligations but also has the time to make the impact on outcomes for local communities
4	Consider and agree the role of Board members in relation to delivering outcomes and collaborating outside of HWB Meetings
5	The HWB to consider how best to engage/influence the ICS to have a clear voice about its priorities
6	A session to be arranged to explain the structure and working of the ICS in relation to the local place and partnerships