

Please ask for: Councillor Rory Palmer  
Tel: 0116 4540002  
Our ref: 1397rphj  
Date: 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014



Councillor Lucy Chaplin  
Members Services  
Town Hall

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Dear Councillor Chaplin,

Thank you for meeting with the City Mayor and Executive recently to present the conclusions and recommendations of your review on the Winter Care Plan.

I would like to thank you and members of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Commissions who participated in the review. The Winter Care Plan is an important multi-agency plan and it is important that it is reviewed and strengthened on a rolling basis. Your scrutiny review has made a useful contribution to that work.

**I set out below a response to each of your recommendations on behalf of the Executive:**

***1.2.1. The Executive, Health & Wellbeing Board and council officers to meet with health professionals in emergency care to make greater links to determine how the Council can be more involved in winter care in the future.***

The City Council is actively engaged as a key partner in discussions on winter care and winter preparedness on a continual basis. These discussions take place via the Health & Wellbeing Board, the Urgent Care Working Group, Better Care Fund Implementation Group and the Joint Integrated Commissioning Board.

You will be aware of the two extraordinary meetings of the Health & Wellbeing Board I have called in recent weeks to discuss specifically the Urgent Care/ A&E Improvement Plan. Developing robust and effective plans for the winter period – as well as discussing performance during the recent winter – has been central to these discussions. The Health & Wellbeing Board has discussed on a regular basis urgent care and winter plans.

***1.2.2. More investment needs to be put into raising awareness amongst the public to be good neighbours (through a winter buddy scheme) during the winter.***

As I said when I attended one of your review meetings I think good neighbourliness in our communities can make an important contribution to protecting the welfare of vulnerable people during periods of bad weather.

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**Rory Palmer**

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I know that many vulnerable and elderly people value significantly the reassurance and practical help that can be provided by neighbours checking on them during periods of bad weather.

I will be asking council officers to develop some proposals for how the council could support the development of a 'good neighbours/ winter buddy' scheme.

**1.2.3. Future Council reports (particularly those related to Adult Social Care and Health & Wellbeing) to include a section entitled 'Winter Care Plan Implications' to assess the impact of changes of provision on winter care planning to be administered by the Public Health Team.**

In our view it is not necessary to add a further section to council reports. If a council report is considering a policy proposal that will have implications for vulnerable people or for service delivery during the winter period this should be clearly evident throughout the main body of the report.

Where there is a specific implication that may need to be identified in a report there is already a 'Other Implications' section that could be used to provide commentary on winter planning implications.

**1.2.4. City Council's Social Services Team to make links with Age UK to help address the increase of calls received by them during their out of hours.**

The City Council has good links with VCS providers including Age UK. These providers can contact the City Council's emergency teams out of hours. As part of the Better Care Fund work we will be extending the core hours offer into weekends and evening periods. This links to the plans for integrated unscheduled/ non-elective care teams in the city.

**1.2.5. All agencies to make better use of channels of communication such as social media, JC DeCaux poster sites and ward community meetings to signpost and get messages out to local people, especially to elderly and vulnerable people, and those who do not visit GP's and hospitals on a regular basis. This should extend further than the CCG's 'good neighbours' and 'community volunteers' schemes.**

I agree that effective communication is important in helping people prepare for winter from a health point of view and to be able to secure the most appropriate care and support if needed during the winter period.

As you know there was no national flu vaccination campaign this year, however we took the decision locally to implement a campaign to help maximise take-up.

A specific recommendation of the Urgent Care Improvement Plan is that public information campaigns for winter 2014/15 are jointly planned between health partners and the local authority. I think this is a useful step forward in making better use of resources and the communication channels available to us.

I have made my own observations at the recent Health & Wellbeing Board meetings on urgent care that some of the current communications messages around health care options are not as clear as they need to be.

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**1.2.6. All agencies should work with Voluntary Care Sector Community Groups to include them in winter care planning so that they can take an active role in the wider community by helping people to understand possible pathways to care and being good neighbours.**

VCS groups in the city have an important role to play in this area, including those that are service providers and those that are not. HealthWatch are playing an active role via the Health & Wellbeing Board and other channels in work relating to the Urgent Care Improvement Plan.

I agree that all organisations involved in winter care planning should engage with VCS groups for the reasons that the commission identifies.

**1.2.7. Public Health Team, Adult Social Care Services and CCG to submit data and questions to the 'Hackathon' initiative to ascertain ward level data around excess winter deaths. This needs to include more information on possible pockets of inequalities around housing, pollution, rising fuel costs, mental health and isolation issues so that more can be done to identify vulnerable groups and measures taken to reduce the possible effects during the winter period.**

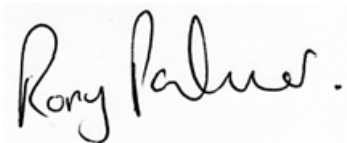
Adult Social Care submitted data to the recent Hackathon event. The council will be providing data and questions to support future Hackathon events. We make use of a wide variety of data sources and are constantly analysing data trends to inform our understanding of health trends and to health inequalities.

**1.2.8. A post winter review is conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the performance of the winter care plan. This should include Commission members with a final report coming to the joint commission again in late spring/early summer 2014.**

I am advised that this review is taking place, led by the Urgent Care lead from the Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group. I agree that it would be helpful for this review to be presented to the Joint Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Commission.

Thank you again for leading this review. If you would like to discuss the responses to your recommendations further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Rory Palmer**  
**Deputy City Mayor, Chair of Leicester Health & Wellbeing Board**

CC City Mayor and Executive  
Deb Watson, Strategic Director, Adult Social Care and Health