

Summary notes of the informal (non-public) discussion meeting of Health Select Committee

25 November 2020

1. The Committee recognised that care homes have seen a small number of incidents of COVID-19. The perception is that care homes have the disease under control. The Committee will be exploring with the council how it is supporting care homes to facilitate visits, particularly for people living with dementia, in the run up to Christmas.
2. Concern was raised about the possible closure of Furlong Close, Rowde which provides long term adult social care for people with learning disabilities. It is early in the process, but the Committee would want to understand how Council can ensure that a potential closure will not adversely affect residents.
3. Wiltshire has seen a slight rise in COVID-19 cases, but it is not clear why this is happening. There are localised hotspots potentially due to increased economic activity, commuting and proximity to out of county transport links. The Committee would want to know how the Council and partners are dealing with localised outbreaks.
4. The longer-term effects of restrictions will see a rise in mental health challenges, and impact upon the Council's budgets. More children are also being home schooled. It is not clear how the rise in home schools may be impacting upon the mental and physical health of young people.
5. Concern was expressed that some elderly residents are being sent home from hospital with COVID-19 creating a potential risk of spreading the infection. This might be influencing the infection curve.
6. There have been isolated incidents where workers have been sent home by their employer when they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. They may not be identified as needing financial assistance. It is an opportunity for the Council to remind employers of their responsibilities. There was also concern that the Council's discretionary funding for people self-isolating may be running down during the current restrictions.
7. The Committee developed a number of questions, arising from the discussion above, to be raised at the COVID-19 Response task group (26 November 2020)