

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Questions to Portfolio Holders

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel Wednesday 3rd March 2021

Questions received from Councillor Malyon:

1. “Could we send a letter to all of the stations in SMDC that are facilitating the injections for COVID 19, and thank all of them for the professional way they have accomplished so much so quickly?”

Response:

Yes, a letter will be sent on behalf of the Panel to the vaccination stations within the Moorlands.

2. “As we hopefully come out of the pandemic, will we be giving support and help to the most vulnerable of our society, who perhaps have not been very far or even out of their home during this time with little contact, the support systems that are in place must be stretched, what actions will SMDC be taking to help?”

Response:

We are already seeing the legacy impact of Covid-19 and the measures to control it in increased levels of poverty and poor mental health for both older people, young people and working age people. We are working closely with Support Staffordshire and other voluntary groups such as Citizens Advice, Homelink, Bidduph Youth and Community Zone, Haregate Community Centre and the local food banks to share information about what is happening and work together to meet emerging needs.

Question received from Councillor Price:

3. “Could SMDC please seek clarification of the criteria used locally to identify adult carers to receive vaccinations under cohort 6 of the Covid-19 ‘Green Book’ in chapter 14a?”

Response:

The Health and Care Directorate of Staffordshire County Council has confirmed that the full national standard operating procedure for identifying carers has not yet been released. As we currently understand it will proceed in three phases:

1. Carers in receipt of carers allowance drawn from DWP lists and carers identified as such on GP lists
2. Carers in receipt of support from the local authority and carers known to local voluntary and community sector carers organisations
3. Carers who self-identify as such for which there may be a verification procedure

Question received from Councillor Atkins:

4 “According to the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, there are four things which are essential to making scrutiny effective:

1. Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge;
2. Amplify the voice and concerns of the public;
3. Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role;
4. Drive improvement in public services.

How does the SMDC Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel deliver on these fundamental principles of good scrutiny?”

Response:

Listening to and giving voice to the public is central to scrutiny’s effectiveness. The agenda for every meeting of all of the Council’s overview and scrutiny panels includes an item on the work programme. At this point all councillors can make suggestions for items to be added to future panel meetings that echo the concerns of local people and community groups. This is a fundamental part of our scrutiny process which ensures that work programmes are owned and driven by councillors. By taking this approach providers of local services can be held to account, receive constructive and honest feedback which subsequently lead to improved delivery of services as a result.