

Health and Wellbeing Board

Thursday 12 June 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Aspinall, in the Chair.
Councillor Lugger, Vice Chair.
Councillors Laing and P.Nicholson.

Core Members: David Haley (Director of Children's Services), Gary Walbridge (Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities), Sam Arnott (NHS Devon), and Professor Steve Maddern (Director of Public Health).

Additional Members: Laura Alexander (UoP) and Karen Pilkington (VCSE Rep).

Also in attendance: Rob Nelder (Public Health Specialist), Dan Preece (Public Health Specialist), Dave Schwartz (Public Health Specialist), David Bearman (Community Pharmacy Devon), Sue Taylor (Community Pharmacy Devon) (virtual), Ruth Harrell (Consultant in Public Health), and Elliot Wearne-Gould (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 3.39 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

41. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the code of conduct.

42. **Appointment of a Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2025-26**

The Board agreed to appoint Councillor Lugger as Vice-Chair for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

43. **Chairs urgent business**

There were two items of Chair's Urgent Business:

The Chair advised Board members that the Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise had requested support for their ambition to increase student placements from 58, to 72 annually.

Rob Nelder (Public Health Specialist) added:

- a) The Dental School had previously increased its intake during the COVID-19 pandemic and had therefore demonstrated its capacity to train 72 students per year. It now sought to make this increase permanent, bringing placement numbers in line with other Dental Schools across the country;
- b) The campaign aimed to secure broad support from local MPs, Councillors, and Health and Wellbeing Boards across Devon and Cornwall, recognising the regional benefits of retaining trained dentists locally;
- c) The Board was asked to support the campaign and write a letter of endorsement.

In response to questions, the Board discussed:

- d) Gratitude for the work of the Dental School and recognition of the regional benefits from retaining trained dentists locally;
- e) The importance of the Dental School in driving the city's ambition to improve dental access;
- f) The importance of engaging with local schools to promote dental careers and strengthen the local pipeline;
- g) Ongoing collaboration between dental public health colleagues and the Dental School to expand the availability of local end-stage supervised placements;
- h) The forthcoming opening of the city centre dental practice in October/November 2025, which would serve as a training site for dental students, therapists, and hygienists.

The Chair advised Board members that details of the Comprehensive Spending Review (2025) had recently been published, which would have implications for health and social care. Further details would be brought to a future Board meeting when available.

The Board agreed to:

- 1. Write a letter of support for the Dental School's campaign to increase annual student placements to 72, in line with other national dental schools;
- 2. Request that an update on the implications of the Comprehensive Spending Review are brought to a future Board meeting, when appropriate.

44. **Minutes**

The Board agreed the minutes of 06 March 2025 as a correct record.

45. **Questions from the public**

There were no questions from members of the public.

46. **Plymouth Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-28**

Rob Nelder (Public Health Specialist), David Bearman (Community Pharmacy Devon) and Sue Taylor (Community Pharmacy Devon (Virtual)) delivered the Plymouth Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025-28 and discussed:

- a) The Board held a statutory duty to produce a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) in three yearly cycles;
- b) The PNA examined pharmacy provision across Plymouth, and highlighted any gaps in services;
- c) The PNA was a 'control of entry document', and was utilised by organisations wishing to establish pharmacy provision in Plymouth to evidence how they would meet existing need. The Integrated Care Board (ICB) utilised the PNA to determine applications for new pharmacies or services;
- d) The PNA was developed jointly with Devon and Torbay to ensure consistency and cross-boundary planning;
- e) The assessment included locality-based analysis, demographic data, housing growth projections, and a gap analysis;
- f) The PNA identified that there was sufficient pharmacy provision across Plymouth, with no gaps in weekday or weekend access, except for one identified gap in Barne Barton due to deprivation and geographic isolation.
- g) The PNA included a "what if" analysis to assess the impact of potential closures and noted that while provision was currently adequate, closures in certain areas could create future gaps;
- h) Housing development data was incorporated to anticipate future demand;
- i) A 60-day professional consultation had been conducted, with positive feedback and minor corrections;
- j) The PNA had been brought forward due to recent pharmacy closures and concerns about system resilience;
- k) Community pharmacies were in a precarious financial position, and integration into broader health strategies was essential;
- l) The future of pharmacy would rely more on clinical services than supply alone, with independent prescribing becoming standard.

In response to questions, the Board discussed:

- m) Concerns about service quality and long queues experienced by customers, particularly in Plympton. It was reported that the PNA considered, and included contingency planning;
- n) Concerns about provision in Sherford and the need to analyse if provision was sufficient. It was reported that Sherford was primarily covered in Devon's PNA, which was being developed in parallel;
- o) The importance of local access for deprived communities.

The Board agreed:

- 1. To Formally accept the Plymouth Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment for 2025-2028;
- 2. To agree to the publication of the PNA on the Health and Wellbeing Board page of the Plymouth Public Health website (part of the wider Plymouth City Council site);
- 3. To review the implications for Pharmacy provision in Sherford following the publication of Devon's PNA to ensure it was sufficient.

47. **MoN - Strengthening Measures to Combat Youth Vaping. A review of the current Health and Wellbeing Board position statement on vaping.**

Dan Preece (Public Health Specialist) and Dave Schwartz (Public Health Specialist) delivered the report and discussed:

- a) A Council motion passed in January 2025 had called for the Health and Wellbeing Board to review its 'Vaping Position Statement to account for the changing use by children';
- b) The Board's current position, adopted in 2019 and reaffirmed in 2023, was: "If you smoke, vaping is much safer. If you don't smoke, don't vape.";
- c) A citywide partnership approach had been developed, involving Public Health, schools, Trading Standards, police, safeguarding teams, and VCSE organisations;
- d) The partnership had secured funding for two full-time vape workers and was delivering CPD training to schools;
- e) All secondary schools had participated in the 2024 Health-Related Behaviour Survey;
- f) Survey results showed that while around one-third of Year 8 and Year 10 pupils had tried vaping, only 8% were regular users. Most who tried vaping did not continue;

- g) Trading Standards had conducted test purchases and seizures of illegal vapes, including those containing controlled substances;
- h) The Tobacco and Vapes Bill was progressing through Parliament and included:
 - i. A ban on disposable vapes (already in effect)
 - ii. Powers to restrict flavours, packaging, and display
 - iii. A progressive ban on tobacco sales to anyone born after 1 January 2009

In response to questions, the Board discussed:

- i) The prevalence of illegal substances in vapes. It was confirmed that around 10% of confiscated vapes contained controlled substances;
- j) Disappointment that the tobacco age ban did not extend to vapes;
- k) The risk profile of vapes which was significantly lower than tobacco;
- l) Praise for the city's leadership on this issue and the strong engagement from schools.

The Board agreed:

1. To re-affirm their support for the Vaping Position Statement 2019 (as amended in September 2023), and confirm that it remains fit for purpose to date;
2. To note that “this is a dynamic situation, and we will continue to review and respond to new evidence as it emerges” (Vaping Position Statement 2023);
3. To note and commend work building a city-wide approach to vaping as presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2024 and work subsequently undertaken under the Schools Place Based Improvement Plan
4. To acknowledge the requests of the Motion on Notice heard at Full Council in January 2025 as actioned;
5. To request that a letter was sent to the Department for Education requesting that a long-term strategy to reduce youth uptake and eventual dependency on nicotine is developed, informed by emerging evidence, including consideration of a generational ban on vape sales in the future.

48. **Health and Wellbeing Board Development Session Feedback**

Professor Steve Maddern (Director of Public Health) presented the Health and Wellbeing Board Development Session Feedback report and discussed:

- a) The development session had highlighted that Board members held a reasonable understanding of the Board's purpose and their role within it;
- b) There had been a collective request for greater clarity of the role within the wider Integrated Care System;
- c) There was a need to define the strategic priorities of the Board and implement a strategic approach for delivering them throughout the year;
- d) It had been agreed to narrow the Board's focus to key strategic issues to allow in depth analysis, alongside a review of the Board's Terms of Reference and membership;
- e) Overall administration of the Board worked well however, there was a need to ensure every item had a 'call to action' and clear defined purpose;
- f) There was a recognised need to celebrate success stories across the city, and to raise public awareness and engagement in the Board's work;
- g) The Board would be holding a second development session at the conclusion of this meeting to progress the actions as outlined in the report.

The Board agreed:

- 1. To note the recommendations as set out in the report;
- 2. To continue to discuss the next steps for the development of the Health and Wellbeing Board in the afternoon workshop session.

49. **Tracking Decisions**

Elliot Wearne-Gould (Democratic Advisor) provided updates on outstanding actions:

- a) Dental Contract: A written update had been received from NHS Devon and shared with Board members confirming that routine check-ups remained under pressure due to workforce shortages. Melissa Redmayne (ICB Dental Commissioner) would attend the next meeting to provide a full update;
- b) Suicide Prevention Training: A session had been scheduled for 29 July 2025.

The Board agreed to note the Tracking Decisions Log.

50. **Work Programme**

The Board agreed to note the work programme.