



Oldham
Council

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Report to Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Thriving Communities and Health Improvement Update

Portfolio Holder:

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July 2020

Purpose of the Report

To update member of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the progress of the Thriving Communities Programme and response to Community Bronze need during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recommendations

The Sub Committee are asked to note the progress and changes to ways of working.

Thriving Communities Programme Update

Background

1. **Recap - The Oldham Model** - The Council, and its partners, are committed to a co-operative future for Oldham where 'everyone does their bit and everybody benefits.' The Partnership's Oldham Plan 2017-22 sets out the Oldham Model for delivering tangible and sustained change through a focus on inclusive economy, thriving communities and co-operative services.

Fig 1 - The Oldham model graphic



2. **Recap - Thriving Communities** – To accelerate the Thriving Communities element of the Oldham Model and deliver the common objectives of our health and social care integration - Oldham Cares - £2.69m was agreed from the Greater Manchester Transformation Fund as part of the Health and Social Care transformation fund to support GM devolution.

The programme is a 3 year programme which focuses on;

- building upon our strengths and support groups in the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector
- supporting people earlier in the care pathway
- driving the shift to more earlier intervention and prevention by helping Oldham residents make better life choices and not progress into higher levels of need

The programme will deliver £9m+ of reduced demand in the health and care system (reducing pressure on primary care and acute currently quantified and agreed in the business case signed off by commissioning partnership board in August 2018) in the establishment of Oldham Cares as well as delivering wider benefits to Oldham residents around improving their general physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Figs 2 and 3 - Thriving Communities Programme/Projects & Social Prescribing Leaflet

The Thriving Communities Programme



Wider Engagement, Attracting Funding, System Learning

Oldham Social Prescribing

What is Social Prescribing?
We know that taking care of your health involves more than just medicine. With Oldham Social Prescribing you can get specialist support for more than medical issues. Your local connector will contact you and spend time with you exploring what activities and/or local support could improve your health and wellbeing. You can consider the benefits of participating in them, and we will assist and support you to plan your next steps.

What support can I get?
Our connectors can help you with a range of issues, including:

- Social isolation
- Loneliness
- Emotional wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyle choices
- Getting out and about
- Life changing events such as birth, retirement, bereavement
- Long term health conditions
- Loss of confidence/purpose
- Poor health linked to housing or housing conditions
- Accessing work, training and volunteering

Did you know?
Your doctor isn't the only person who can help you feel better.
You can improve your health and wellbeing through social prescription.

The graphic includes illustrations of diverse people interacting in a community setting, such as a group sitting on a bench, a person with a cane, and a person with a shopping bag.

Update – Thriving Communities Response to COVID-19

- Due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic some projects in the Thriving Communities Programme have been paused so efforts could be made to support the Community Bronze response.

Coronavirus Emergency Need Helpline - Thriving Communities team have worked with council colleagues and partners to mobilise the Coronavirus Emergency Need Helpline. The Council, Oldham Foodbank and Action Together have worked together to arrange delivery of food, medicine and other essential personal and household items to people in need. This offer is for people who are unable to leave the house and don't have a trusted friend, neighbour or family member to help them.

Access Oldham Staff are taking the phone calls from the helpline and triaging people's needs. A referral is made into 1 of 5 community Place hubs that have been mobilised to cover the five areas of Oldham. The hub staff are made up of district coordinators, youth development, community development and Sports development staff and have helped residents to get access to Food, medication and essential personal and household items. The helpline was receiving over 100 phone calls a day with 50% of those calls being referred into the Place Hubs for support.

- TOR Database-** To support the mobilisation of the Coronavirus Helpline and Place Based Hubs a bespoke database using Microsoft Dynamics has produced to record referrals into the Place Based Hub. This is a database where multiple members of staff can see the incoming referrals in their areas for processing and can they can establish the correct support using the information and data on the database about the individual. This database has improved information management between staff and has allowed us to gather a deep insight and data around the activity of the helpline and the Place Hubs. This was a successful joint effort between the programme, Unity and community organisations.

- COVID-19 Medication Collection and Delivery Pathway-** In order to relieve the heavy demand already placed upon community pharmacies, NHS Oldham CCG and Oldham Council collaborated to provide a service that ensures all patients, particularly the shielded and vulnerable, receive their medications. A process was set up to offer collection and delivery of medication using council vehicles. Support was also on offer from pharmacists to help Hub staff with the medication needs of residents. The process has been implemented successfully with residents receiving the medication they need. The process and service are

reviewed regularly by CCG and Council staff. This was signed off by the Local Pharmacy Council within a week.

6. **Test and Trace-** The National Contact Tracing Service launched 28th May 2020 and forms a central part of the government's Covid-19 recovery strategy. This Requires a co-ordinated effort from local and national government, the NHS, GPs, businesses and employers, voluntary organisations and other community partners, and the general public. This work is being split into two parts, the first part someone with Symptoms of Coronavirus they will have to isolate, have a test, get the results and if positive they will have to share who they have been in contact with. The second part is if someone is contacted by the NHS test and trace service because he or she has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus. These individuals will have to be alert, isolate and have a test if needed. Oldham is developing prototypes for testing hard to reach groups including rough sleepers, faith communities, asylum seekers, clinically shielded, Learning Disability, diagnosed Mental Illness, Victims of Domestic Abuse and those with complex social-economic circumstances. Mobile testing sites are also being set up to serve our BAME and emerging communities.
7. **The Thriving Communities Index-** During the Covid-19 response the Thriving Communities Index has been used for the comparison of helpline call locations, which correlate to a mix of the index and overall deprivation. This has helped us to ensure that all communities that are less thriving are using the helpline to some extent. It has also informed informal discussions about diabetes prevalence

By cross referencing the data from the call database and overlaying the data from the thriving communities index the council were able to analyse information on their neighbourhoods to monitor low call engagement zones which indicated that there may be unmet need in these areas caused by the national emergency. A multi-language comms campaign was then carried out to reach further into these communities to ensure that they had the right support to deal with the socio-economic impacts of C19. More information can be found at

<https://www.local.gov.uk/oldham-council-and-unity-partnership>

Update- Progress on Thriving Communities work that has continued during COVID-19

8. **The Social Prescribing network** is bridging the gap between medical care and the community, by having community connectors in each cluster that work with primary care (and other care forms such as acute, mental health, social care etc.) then support people into the right type of community support. This network helps people who may be coping with life or more than medical challenges such as;

- Social isolation / loneliness
- Loss of confidence or purpose
- Low level mental health
- Healthier lifestyle choices such as physical activity
- Life changing events like bereavement or birth
- Living a life with a long-term condition

We have initiated a new 3 year contract in April 19 which has been commissioned via an Innovation Partnership (a new model of commissioning one of the first in England – which allows the approach to be iterated and evolved through coproduction with residents and higher emphasis on social value). The partnership is;

- Led by Action Together and includes;
- Positive Steps

- Age UK
- Mind
- Altogether Better

Oldham people can directly refer themselves via the Oldham Cares website or a phone call or an email. If you need better connections in your community or this type of support, then you should not need to go via a GP to access it and we accept that not everyone uses technology so having the phone line is key. <https://oldhamcares.com/thriving-communities/social-prescribing/>

Social Prescribing Update:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and government guidelines around social distancing a lot of the groups that support residents who use the Social Prescribing service have been temporarily paused. This has led to a change in the operation of the Social Prescribing Consortium. Staff from Action Together have been redeployed to help with the Oldham Covid-19 response with staff working in the Place Hubs and the foodbanks to support our most vulnerable residents. Social Prescribing Link workers have moved from face to face interactions to phone interactions and online alternatives have been sourced for individuals and groups in forms of support.

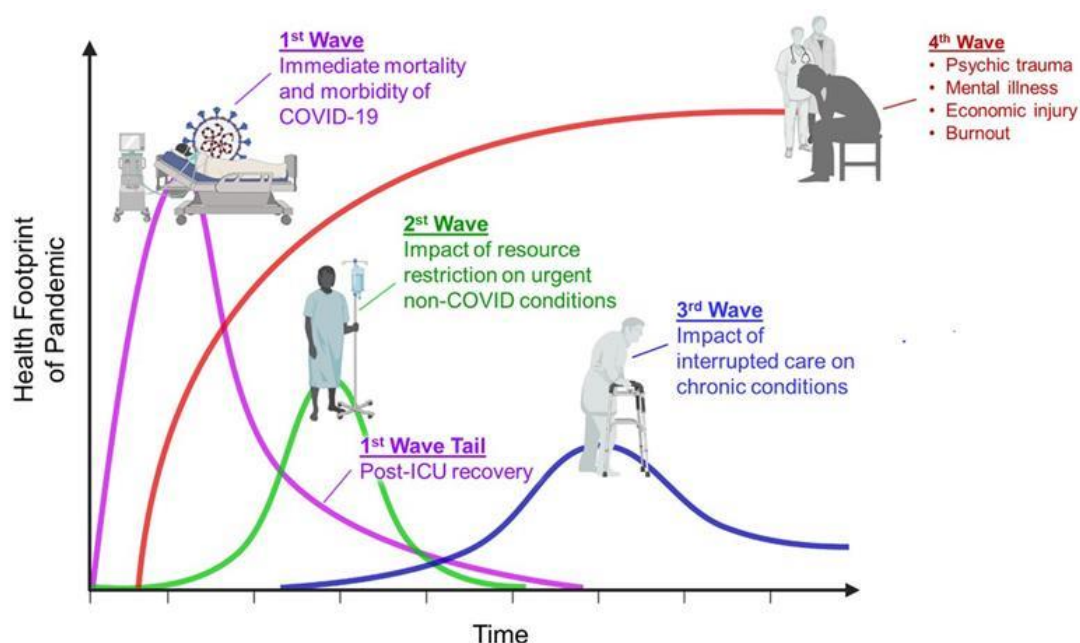


Figure 3.1 - The path of the pandemic on community wellbeing and what social prescribing will need to adapt to

There has been no change to the Social Prescribing funding envelope and potential growth through the engagement with primary care. The COVID response stage is still winding down which has led to planning for a transition stage for the consortium. This will include:

- Re initiating link worker recruitment with potential additional posts 4- 8
- Rebuilding links with cluster teams (CHASC)
- Review elemental with IT team and primary care delegates
- Maintain link with Place Based Integration
- Upscaling of direct support to those who are socially isolated e.g. telephone and virtual befriending
- Support to groups to adapt to social distancing

A transition plan is also in place to plan for the next 6-12 months, which combines the Social Prescribing Model with a befriending model (which will raise funds outside the Social Prescribing model) to support those who are socially isolated and need extra support.

Social Prescribing Data:

All data is captured from interactions and trackers in the SP network there is a challenge we are currently working on with Oldham Cares to obtain timely health data (but a challenge for all in the health and care system locally – which has been escalated). There is a caveat here around causality and attribution e.g. there are many variables in a person’s life, and it is hard to pinpoint a change to just one intervention.

Fig 4.0 - below shows the graph of increasing referral numbers broadly aligned to contract milestones. As we can see the rate of increase has more than doubled now the SP network is operating on the borough footprint. Since COVID-19 there has been a decrease in the number of referrals from Primary Care however referrals from Primary Care are starting to increase since the easing of lockdown measures. In total there have been 656 referrals into the Social Prescribing Service. There has been a drop in referrals due to covid but we are expecting a surge in the future as unmet need bubbles up.

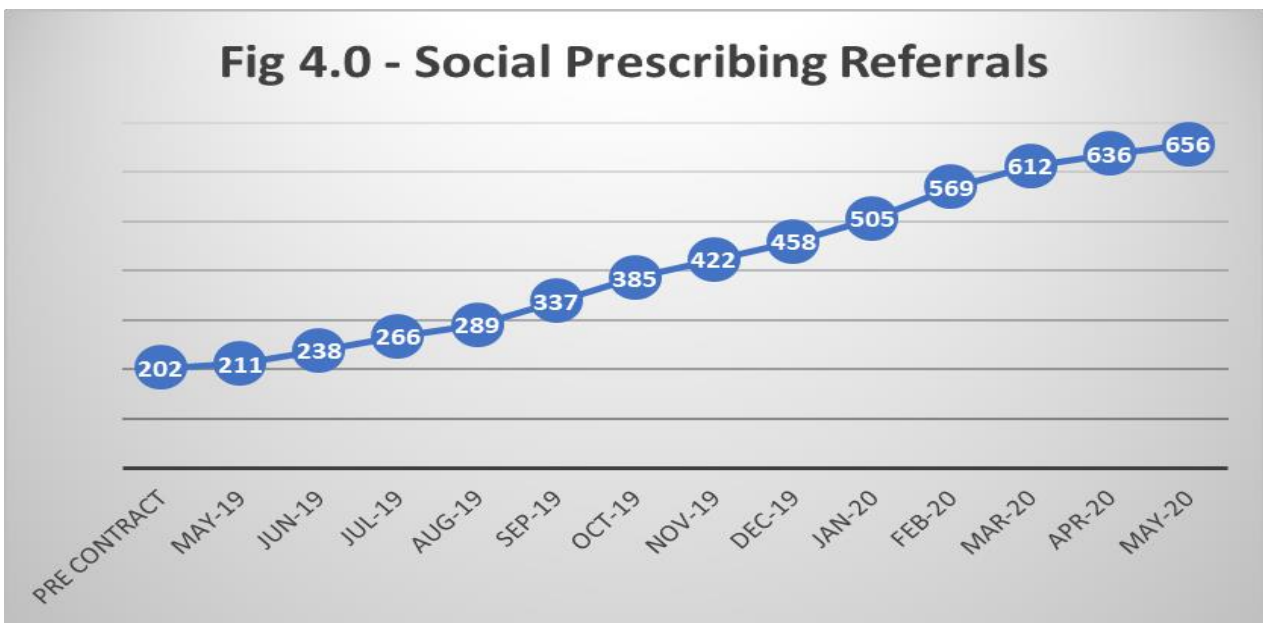


Figure 4.1 below shows the most current Social Prescribing deflections data. The deflections data is only reported on for people who have completed their six-month review.

Figure 1.4	Baseline Number	Review Number	Count	% Reduction
Overall Reduction in Ave A&E Visits	12	2	10	-83.33%
Overall Reduction in Ave GP Appointment	108	49	59	-54.63%
Overall Reduction in Ave Non-Elected Hospital Admissions	4	1	3	-75.00%

To summarise the data key message - Deflections conversions are higher for primary care, non-elective bed days and accident and emergency admissions. This is caveated by a small sample size that is limited currently by access to acute and primary health data – which is a system wide challenge to be resolved with an initial plan in place to progress.

9. **The Fast Grants** – The 19/20 programme commenced in July 19. By March 2020 all the monies had been awarded into over 140 grassroots community groups without an overly bureaucratic process. Grants ranged from £50 to £500. The Fast Grant monies for 19/20 was allocated and due to the current Covid-19 situation group activities have been paused. The allocation and process of this financial years funding and monitoring for Fast Grants is to be agreed pending further guidance.

10. **The Social Action Fund** – Social isolation is a growing issue in Oldham. 10% of all people at all ages in Oldham self-identify as being lonely and >30% of all households in Oldham are classed as single occupancy. The fund will use £850k over 3 years to commission 5 medium sized projects to tackle loneliness head on for Oldham as well as physical and mental health. The 5 successful projects were agreed by commissioning partnership board in April 2019. By its very nature all projects involved promoting and increasing social interactions and involving people through participation, volunteering and coordinating community activity. At the time of UK government introducing lockdown measures in response to the Covid19 crisis projects were between 6 and 12 months into three-year programmes. The lockdown restrictions have had a significant impact on all five projects and what they are able to deliver, each project has responded and adapted based on the nature of the project and their individual organisational circumstances. New partnerships have been developed through the Community of Practice which continues to be active via Whatsapp and Teams.
 - **The Oldham BAME Consortium:** Project activities have shifted online through Zoom and Whatsapp, plus the introduction of telephone befriending activities, provision of activity packs and therapeutic services. The project is also supporting BAME communities with wider needs as a result of the crisis including access to food, essential supplies, bereavement support, providing information about government guidance etc. and signposting to other services. More online activities are planned such as online Yoga sessions in partnership with Wellbeing Leisure and online cooking classes.
 - **Wellbeing Leisure:** Lockdown restrictions meant the physical activity sessions being held at Oldham Leisure Centre and through other community centres had to be cancelled. The project coordinator is providing online exercise classes for residents, including an

online continuation of the Friday club. Some exercise advice has also been provided over the phone, and activity packs, exercise at home booklets and exercise bands provided. Plans underway to trial online sessions with new parents via Children's Centres, and to look at outdoor activities on street, walking groups and in partnership with local parks (as government guidance allows). They will be promoting their activities via a feature on That's Manchester TV, and this opportunity will be available to all Social Action Fund projects.

- **Oldham Play Action Group and Wifi** - Due to lockdown restrictions the play streets and cooking courses planned for Spring and Summer have been cancelled during what would have been the busiest period of the year for the project. OPAG staff have been furloughed. WIFI NW continues to operate and provided hot meals to the Street Angels drop-in, as well as supporting the East Oldham Hub by providing meals to particularly vulnerable families and doing online cookalongs and tutorials including how to make healthy meals from government ration packs. Planning is now underway for alternatives to play streets, such as activity packs, online activities and socially distanced street activities (when government guidance allows).
- **Street Angels:** Street Angels continue to operate their twice weekly food drop-in with a reduced team of volunteers as a takeaway service from the Hunters Lane base. Hot food was provided by WIFI NW through SAF funding for some weeks, and is now being provided by Oasis Academy, they also provide other food, clothing and supplies as donations allow. As lockdown has continued they have seen numbers attending increase. They have been successful in bidding for the Action Together Covid19 Response Fund to support this activity and with a bid into the GM Mayor's homelessness fund this is enabling them to provide additional support in terms of food, technology and improve their own food storage facilities. Their on-street activity on Saturday nights has ceased completely due to lockdown, and this has delayed the start of the Friday night offer.
- **Groundwork Consortium:** Groundwork project staff have been furloughed during this period, so their project activities have been paused during this time. Talk, Listen, Change have continued their counselling service online, and have seen a resulting increased attendance from people. They have offered this service to other Social Action Fund partners. Get up and grow have plans for a house plant subscription service for residents of the sheltered housing they have been working with previously. Plans are being drawn up for alternative activities Groundwork will be able to provide going forward.

Figs 6 & 7 – Fast grants and Social Action Fund Marketing



11. **Thriving Communities Hub** – work is underway through the Thriving Communities Hub to embed the Thriving Communities approach through strategies to support a sustainable Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector (VCFSE). In particular; this has focused on the following areas, these areas have been paused during Covid19 crisis however are now being picked up and progressed again. Work is also underway in partnership with Action Together to understand the impact of the crisis on the VCFSE sector sustainability, and to identify priorities for action coming out of this.

- **Investment**; a Thriving Communities Funding Opportunities partnership group has been established to identify pipeline projects and priorities and develop strategic relationships with funders. A review of public sector grant funding has been undertaken, alongside a review of best practice, with a view to developing a more strategic approach across partners within the borough.
- **Evidence**; a broad evaluation framework for Thriving Communities has been agreed by Commissioning Partnership Board which incorporates a mixed methodology recognising the wider determinants of health and system impact of the approach. A tender process is underway to appoint an evaluation partner who we will work with to co-design and implement the evaluation.
- **Engagement, Co-design & Co-production**; the Thriving Communities team are working with a range of partners to understand current approaches to involving residents in the borough and identify the opportunities and barriers to creating a more consistent system wide approach to this in Oldham. Initial proposals will be discussed by SDA in Spring.
- **Physical Assets**; £7k LGA funding has been secured to provide 17 days expert support to Oldham's Community Centre Network enabling them to develop proposals for joint working and shared infrastructure. This will also provide a fuller understanding of the sustainability of the centres which will feed into an Overview and Scrutiny review of the Community Asset Transfer process.

A joint bid has also been submitted on behalf of Oldham Council, Oldham CCG and Action Together to the National Lottery and King's Fund Healthy Communities Together fund to support the development of connectivity and collaboration between health and care commissioners and the VCFSE sector. The outcome of the first stage bid is expected in early July.

12. **Communications, media and profile for Oldham** – The work of Thriving Communities is being viewed as leading edge – The Thriving Communities Index has been used as a Case Study by The Times on Digital Transformation and COVID-19. The Social Prescribing Innovation Partnership and Thriving Communities have been nominated for the Innovation in Politics Award – which is a high profile European award previously won by Jean Claude Juncker.
13. **Workforce Development** –Workforce Development – Team Oldham Workforce Strategy has been signed off by Cabinet. In line with the Strategy, new governance arrangements will be put in place and all workforce programme, including any that are proposed to continue will need to demonstrate that they fit with the Strategy's approach and ambition.

Strength Based Approaches – contract awarded to The Big Life on 7 April 2020, currently working with them on the approach to codesign. In normal circumstances, the codesign would be undertaken face to face via a number of workshops, however given the current situation with COVID19 it is proposed that this happens virtually. In addition, it is proposed that The Big Life work with a cross section of the Oldham Cares workforce (circa 40 staff) commencing at the beginning of July.

As part of the codesign of the strengths based approaches training, alignment with Public Health training programmes (such as MECC and Health Literacy) and any other new initiatives will be taken into consideration. Any further next steps around the wider workforce development will be taken through the new Workforce Strategy Board.

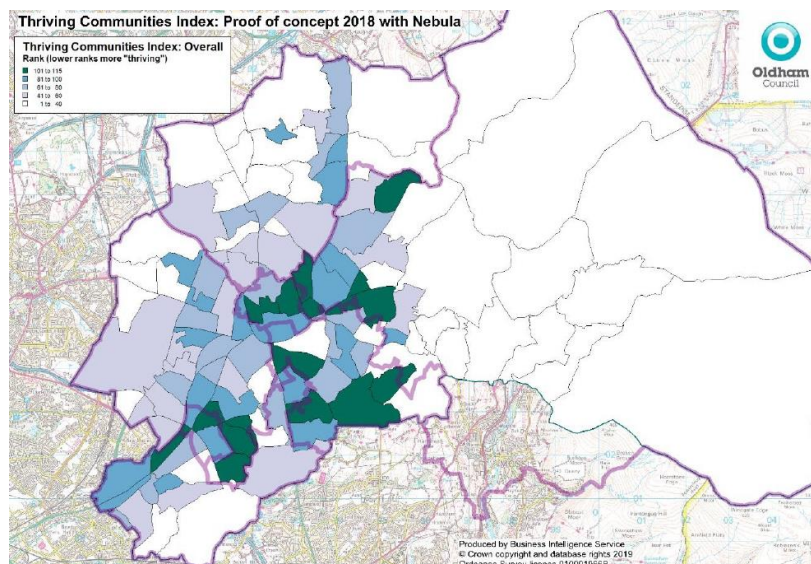
14. **A stronger focus on evidence and evaluation with the Thriving Communities Index** – The Thriving Communities Index segments Oldham into and pulls in 39 indicators in categories of Place, Resident and Reactive Demand – to give us deeper insight into where

our positive and negative norms lay within the borough. The index has been used in the implementation of social value in procurement. And the Nebula analysis highlighting the lack of youth-friendliness compared to age-friendliness was used to challenge some of the preconceptions and has led to a widening of the measure on community support.

During the Covid-19 response the Thriving Communities Index has been used for the comparison of helpline call locations, which correlate to a mix of the index and overall deprivation. This has helped us to ensure that all communities that are less thriving are using the helpline to some extent. It has also informed informal discussions about diabetes prevalence.

The index is available for those involved in the planning and delivery of services including members to use and can be loaded onto their machines via a mapping tool – we strongly encourage take-up – please contact report author for the link.

Fig 8 - The Thriving Communities Index Map



- 14 **Health Improvement Update** - Commissioners are working with providers to ensure that revised service delivery, in line with FRSH guidance, is in place in Oldham and across GM to ensure that complex and urgent patients are still able to access services, whilst communicating what is still currently available for the wider population. Recovery Planning is underway, starting initially with ensuring that people are able to access their contraception of choice with a focus on Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC – Implants and IUD/IUS). There has also been a focus on HIV Testing as part of the national #breakthechain campaign.

Community Stop Smoking service delivery has changed to offer virtual appointments in line with government guidance but the provision of stop smoking treatment and behavioural support has remained throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Numbers accessing the service are comparable with the same period last year although it was hoped that GM Comms activity would result in an increase in the numbers of people accessing the service as part of #quitforcovid.

Commissioning activity for the Health Improvement and Weight Management service has been suspended following feedback from the market. Commissioners are considering next steps in light of COVID-19 recovery and the impact of the pandemic on the local system.