

Chief Executive: There is a group arrangement where Lincolnshire Community Services and United Lincolnshire Trust will enjoy a single senior management structure with effect from April 1. Andrew Morgan had been expected to retire on March 31st, 2024, but he has now agreed to continue in both roles until the end of June 2024. This will allow both recruitment into this important senior role and a period of transition for the new postholder.

NHS Digital Data on GP Practices: NHS Digital compiles what are classed as experimental statistics which capture a wide range of information from GPs. This includes the total number of appointments offered, including same day appointments, the number of do not attends, whether the appointments were in person or by phone or on line, the number of appointments recorded in the Primary Care Network system, analysis by time of the booking date and the actual appointment date, number of appointments undertaken by GPs or other healthcare professionals, the number of appointments offered each day, including weekends, over each monthly reporting period and finally the number of Covid 19 vaccination appointments. However, the system does not include an age profile.

Government consultation on new powers given to the General Dental Council when registering dentists on a temporary basis: This was launched on February 16 and covered allowing dentists trained abroad to work in this country. Presently such candidates have to pass exams over a number of years. It is hoped these changes will increase the number of dentists to improve access to services 30percent of dentists on the Register are already trained outside this country and 46 percent of new additions were trained overseas. Under the proposals the General Dental Council would be given the autonomy to set the terms for provisional registrations too ensure high levels of patient safety and quality of care. Dentists on the provisional register would be able to work here but only under the supervision of a fully GDC registered dentist. The consultation will run for three months. The wider dental recovery plan will include payments in the form of golden hellos worth £20,000 over three years for dentists working in underserved areas, which it is hoped will create an additional 2.5m dental appointments.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Kings Lynn problems with reinforced concrete: On February 16 the hospital produced a newsletter which revealed the 18-month project to rectify the concrete problems was progressing well and preventative work continued. Disruption is being kept to a minimum.

Annual Report: Lincolnshire County Council's Director of Public Health Derek Ward presented his annual report entitled "Aging Better". He likened the subject to a flower, with older people at the centre and eight petals outside covering the following topics:

Community Support and health services, Outdoor spaces and Buildings, Transportation (work going into this through funding via county council) Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic participation and. Employment, communications and information (digital). Each petal is interdependent in making a flower and each of the categories highlighted has the same role.

"Establishing Lincolnshire as a positive age-friendly place for our older population to live is important in comparison to inner cities, our large proportion of older people, combined with the rural and coastal geography in Lincolnshire, add different logistical and personal dimensions to good provision of services and infrastructure that support the health and wellbeing of older people" is the key message.

Dr Ward estimates that the over 85's will be nearly double within the decade, so he felt that services needed to change so that people could stay as healthy as they can but remembering that one size does not fit all when it comes to deprivation.

East Lindsey was identified as having already done valuable work in regard to Ageing Better and was said to have shown what was achievable. It is accepted our district has many challenges but the work that has been carried out is said to show a commitment to listening to the needs of the elderly population.

In Lincolnshire 23 percent of the population is over 65 against a national average of 18 percent. At 65 a male can look forward to a further 10.2 years being healthy and a further 8.3 years of ill health; females are expected to have 10.3 healthy years with 10.5 years unhealthy. Well over a quarter of over 65s have a limiting long-term illness which limits their day-to-day activities - it is estimated that adults over 65 have on average 2.6 long term conditions compared with 0.7 in the under 65 age group.

Multi-morbidity is set to increase by 2035. The most deprived areas of Lincolnshire according to the map are within this district, with the exceptions of Grantham, Gainsborough and Lincoln.

The report has a section on Falls. Each hip fracture is estimated to cost the NHS an average of £14.6k, with each day in hospital costing approximately £400. The severity of falls increases with age and there are over 53,000 falls in Lincolnshire annually, causing a significant strain on services. LIVES have a Falls Response team and have reduced the number of transfers to hospital for urgent care by 5 percent. They pro-actively refer patients onto prevention and early intervention services, which is 5.5 times more than EMAS achieved. One You Lincolnshire is piloting a programme to help older people at risk of fall to improve strength and balance.

Respect and Social Inclusion plays a positive role in ensuring that isolation is kept to a minimum, but it is accepted this does increase with age. Support structures are needed to cater for groups such as LGBTQ as well as ethnic minorities and immigrants. These groups do however tend to be smaller in rural areas. Increased intergenerational activity is identified as good practice. Many examples of good practice are identified within the county and East Lindsey was shown to coproduce activities to provide companionship, advice and advocacy, digital skills education, opportunities for physical activity and health advice, support for older men and unpaid carers.

Communication and Information plays a crucial part in active ageing but there is the worry there could be information overload. Recognising the diverse needs of our older residents and service users is essential, including people who speak languages other than English, those with limited digital technology skills or people with dementia or physical impairments, financial constraints, poor signage, and inadequate digital infrastructure. This all needs recognising and addressing particularly in health and care settings. Staff awareness of communication barriers can promote positive interactions between professionals and service users/patients. Digital activities can enrich the lives of the elderly in rural and coastal areas with limited transport options and can help reduce isolation and loneliness. More now depends on the use of online tools and apps but many in the older generation prefer a more personal contact. The county's Digital Inclusion Group is working to engage with vulnerable groups. Lincs Digital was highlighted as helping to address the challenge. Formats must be used to meet the needs of older people, including adjustments for the physically and sensory impaired.

Social Participation helps the older generation integrate in our society. Participation levels are influenced by a number of factors, unpaid carers are especially important in this regard. Transport challenges, financial constraints, limited access to information, personal choice, loss of a spouse and lack of suitable opportunities all impact on health and well-being. The prevalence of coronary heart disease, stroke and Alzheimer's are all increasing in the county and will require hospital admission. Rural and coastal areas are most at risk of loneliness, which affects unpaid carers in particular. There are 5,300 unpaid carers in East Lindsey, the highest number in Lincolnshire.

Civic Participation and Employment, including volunteering is vital in ensuring that older residents contribute to their communities. The rurality of Lincolnshire does not help provide opportunities for older people to contribute to their community. Around 17,000 over 65s are still economically active but 90 percent of the over 65s are classed as economically inactive with 96percent classed as retired. Finding work is challenging as individuals age and can be hindered further by lack of transport and technological access. Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Services do provide comprehensive options for older individuals. It is thought 100.000 older residents could be participating in voluntary activities but for many reduced incomes can lead to a sense of disempowerment.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings play a pivotal role in ensuring a secure, pleasant and welcoming environment for older people. Such spaces should feature age friendly elements! Lincolnshire does boast an abundance of green spaces, public parks, 25,000 miles of public rights of way and about 50 miles of coastline, so there are ample opportunities for outdoor activities. It was noted that gyms, swimming pools and sports clubs can be costly and less accessible in rural areas but walking and gardening are more accessible and less costly. The Chief Medical Officer recommends 150 minutes of physical activity each week and using "Move More" offers advice on health ageing including nutrition, mental health, falls and dementia prevention. An evaluation of the scheme shows more than 4500 improved their physical activity status in 2022. GP practices can provide social prescribing for Move More.

Transportation through accessible, affordable and safe public transport is a crucial element of an age friendly environment. Without this rural areas in particular suffer increased isolation, hindering access to healthcare, shopping and social activities. This will continue to be a challenge for East Lindsey in particular. Less than 45percent of over 85s have access to private transport, and around half of the county's residents are unable to access their GP by walking or public transport within 15 minutes and less than half of Lincolnshire's residents can access urgent care or a community hospital within 30 minutes on public transport.

Housing is fundamental to a quality of life and ageing independently in the community. Having housing close to essential services plays a pivotal role in enabling older people to live comfortably and securely. There needs to be a variety of housing options to help enable continued independent living too. Poor quality housing, especially cold and poorly maintained homes can significantly impact older residents which frequently leads to falls and accidents, which can trigger a decline in health. Declining incomes also limits housing choices and all this contributes to affecting older people living in the most deprived areas including the east coast.62 percent of residents who are 65plus who own their own home report good health status whilst this figure drops to 42 percent for those who rent. There were said to be 25,000 caravan dwellers on our coast but this was amended when pointed out!!

What's Next? The Director of Public Health notes that by effecting change or improvement in one domain, there can be far reaching positive impacts on others which cover all interdependent aspects of ageing well in Lincolnshire. Whilst challenges are not insurmountable it is felt that the ability within the county council and across the district councils together with 3rd Sector organisations specific focus areas can reasonably effect measurable impact. "Where if focused efforts on improving opportunities were made, we could not only add years to life but life to years."

*The Full Report is available on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Lincolnshire 2024 and the Better Lives Integrated Care Partnership 2024 Report Comments: This strategy is built round:

*Carers

- *Healthy Weight
- *Homes for Independence
- *Mental Health and Dementia
- *Physical Activity.

Delivery groups have been identified in each of the categories. This was all discussed with partners and stakeholders at a prioritisation workshop and based on the feedback the recommendation report was then presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board back in June 2023.

Lincolnshire is classed as 91st out of 151 for deprivation in upper tier authorities. The general deprivation trend is in line with national statistics, so the coastal strip and urban centres show higher levels of deprivation, with Skegness and Mablethorpe identified as being in the 10 percent most deprived in the country. Lincolnshire is 49percent male and 51percent female with diversity increasing to show in the 2021 Census that 89percent were classed as White British and a further 6.7percent white, primarily from Eastern Europe.

Unemployment rates remain high, and skills gaps still persist, with the 16-64 age group having no qualifications, which is higher than the national average.

The county has high rates of fuel poverty, particularly in deprived areas and in rural areas where there is no connection to a gas supply. There is a shortage of housing for older people and a shortage of housing for sale or shared ownership compared to those for rent. These all contribute to increased visits to GPs, hospital admissions and reliance on medicines.

The full report submitted is now available online at the County Council website. In the report is a detailed run-down of how each of the components of the strategy will be addressed and what we can expect to see as a result. There will be updates on progress at regular intervals and an Annual Assurance Report will be presented each June.

The Integrated Care Partnership Strategy is also available in draft form, the second iteration of the proposals and is closely aligned to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The later sets out the priorities whilst this strategy sets out how we will work together and what will be done to enable the Lincolnshire population to have the best start in life and be supported to "live, age and die well".

Health Overview and Scrutiny Regulations and Guidance: There are amendments to the Health Scrutiny regulations as part of a new schedule to the NHS Service Act 2006. These came into force on January 31 this year together with revised guidance for health overview and scrutiny committees, and new statutory guidance for the NHS. The key amendment to the regulations is the removal of powers of health and overview scrutiny committees to refer matters to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. Schedule 100A of the NHS Act 2006 requires commissioners of NHS Services to notify the Secretary of State of proposals for substantial change. In addition, there are new ministerial intervention powers on proposed reconfigurations. The Committee highlighted that the proposals would give a member of the public more scope to Call In changes but felt their powers may be diminished. More light will be shed on the matter at the March meeting.

The next meeting will be held on 20 March 2024.