

BARNSELY METROPLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Executive Director of Public Health & Communities

TITLE: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Sexual & Reproductive Health Task & Finish Group: Response Report

Report to:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	14 June 2023
Cabinet Member Portfolio:	Public Health & Communities
Key Decision:	No
Public or Private:	Public

Purpose of report:

To report to Cabinet the responses to the findings and recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) from the investigation undertaken on its behalf by the Sexual & Reproductive Health Task & Finish Group.

Council Plan priority:

Healthy Barnsley

Recommendations:

That Cabinet considers and endorses the responses to each recommendation.

1. Introduction

1.1 According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), sexual health is “fundamental to the overall health and wellbeing of individuals, couples, and families, and to the social and economic development of communities and countries. Sexual health, when viewed affirmatively, requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.”

1.2 Sexual health is a public health priority and a mandated function.

1.3 Sexual health needs vary according to factors such as age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. However, there are certain core needs common to

everyone and evidence suggests that sexual health outcomes can be improved by providing accurate, high-quality information and education enabling people to make informed responsible decisions, as well as access to high-quality, confidential services, treatment, and interventions.

- 1.4 Members identified Sexual & Reproductive Health as an area to explore during 2022/23 and added it to the work programme as a Task and Finish Group. Given the wide-ranging nature and complexity of the topic, the group agreed to direct the focus of the group towards Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) and Teenage Conceptions.

2. TFG Recommendations and Responses

2.1 Consider refreshing the health impact needs assessment to support effective decision making on the realignment of resources and identification of priorities to address the current and future sexual and reproductive health needs of the community and to reduce inequalities across the borough, particularly for groups who are disproportionately affected

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

The Sexual & Reproductive Health Needs Assessment is in the process of being refreshed which will highlight any priorities going forward for sexual and reproductive health. This will inform any future commissioning of sexual health services and target resources in priority areas across the borough for those groups who are disproportionately affected.

2.2 Through Barnsley Alliance, Education Services, and other partners, increase access to information and support for young people so that they have the practical knowledge and advice required to make healthy lifestyle choices, including, but not limited to:

- **Raising the profile of C Cards and making them more easily accessible to young people**
- **Promoting the offer of the Spectrum Sexual Health Clinic ‘drop-in’ sessions for young people**
- **Ensuring that young people have the appropriate information so that they know where to go in Barnsley in a sexual/reproductive health ‘emergency’**
- **Developing focussed work to further support those with SEND and Children in Care**
- **Raising aspirations, self-worth and confidence in young people who may be considered vulnerable and at risk of becoming teenage parents**

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Raising the profile of C Cards and making them more easily accessible to young people

The Service is working with Spectrum CIC, who provide the current training and administration for the C Card scheme in Barnsley, to undertake a full review. This will include a cross service training needs analysis which will be used to inform a revised training programme and a refreshed launch of the scheme. This will also include a review of which services are currently providing condoms to young people as part of the C Card scheme and the identification of any gaps in C Card provision. The service will use ward level data to ensure services working in ward areas with highest rates of Teenage Pregnancy and with young people most at risk of teenage conception are prioritised for refreshed training.

Promoting the offer of the Spectrum Sexual Health Clinic ‘drop-in’ sessions for young people

The Young Person (YP) offer is promoted in schools and colleges when Spectrum delivers statutory RSE lessons or outreach events. The RSE offer is up to year 11, and is available to all schools in the borough, which is a primary communication channel to young people about the “drop in” sessions, and availability of services to young people. The YP drop-in is also highlighted in any training Spectrum deliver to organisations across the borough who work with vulnerable young people. Spectrum also has an outreach worker that works specifically with vulnerable YP who will support a YP to access the service.

The main aspect of this offer is young person specific clinics, which are delivered on Wednesday afternoon after school hours. This is continually reviewed from a capacity perspective, young people are one of the recognised vulnerable high priority groups, therefore young people’s access to services are prioritised. This YP specific clinic is delivered via a hybrid model of telemedicine and face to face consultations.

There is also a new website which has been developed for Spectrum which has easy navigation for young people to access information around the drop-in service and any information they need around sexual health.

Ensuring that young people have the appropriate information so that they know where to go in Barnsley in a sexual/reproductive health ‘emergency’

Spectrum has a newly launched, reconfigured microsite on the website, which, following consultation with young people provides accurate, up to date validated information relating to emergency contraception and other information around:

- STIs
- HIV
- Contraception
- Pregnancy
- Risk & Safety
- RSE.

In addition to information sources, there is also:

- A symptom checker
- STI testing sources
- C Card Access
- Emergency Contraception Access
- HIV & PrEP
- Links to other relevant partner providers e.g. Termination of Pregnancy providers,
- Clinic locators.

In addition to the information about services, the website also includes other options for out of hours provision such as being able and where to access emergency hormonal contraception when services are closed. Spectrum also ensures relevant information is published on their website and social media for occasions such as long bank holiday weekends, reminding people where they can access care. Spectrum runs relevant campaigns relating to risk behaviours which could result in poor sexual health outcomes such as alcohol, young people going on holiday during the summer, Christmas parties, Freshers Week.

Developing focussed work to further support those with SEND and Children in Care

The lead nurse for Children In Care and the SEND improvement officer are members of the re-established teenage pregnancy prevention and supporting teenage parents' partnership. Ensuring we have corrected representation for CIC and SEND on the partnership will support the action planning for those with SEND and Children in Care.

Raising aspirations, self-worth and confidence in young people who may be considered vulnerable and at risk of becoming teenage parents

This requires a whole system approach that starts early in a child's life through the early identification of risk and implementation of early help strategies. The Service will meet with the lead for emotional health and wellbeing to explore issues relating to raising aspirations for vulnerable young people in Barnsley.

The service will ensure that there is consistent engagement with service leads who work with young people who are vulnerable and identify shared actions to raise aspirations.

2.3 Develop promotional messages using social media platforms frequently accessed by the target audience and work towards removing the stigma of the traditional sexual health clinic

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Spectrum has a broad provision of social media platforms communicating messages to the population. However, the data which indicates how many people regularly “follow/like/repost/comment/share” is limited. It is acknowledged that stigma in relation to engaging with social media relating to sexual health service provision remains challenging. This remains a priority and we do take the opportunities to improve engagement where possible. This can include engagement of stakeholders in social media which is reciprocated by Spectrum engaging with theirs. Spectrum’s communication team are constantly reviewing social media apps that YP use to send out appropriate messages and information regarding services available and public health messages around safe sexual health.

2.4 Work in partnership with CAMHS to offer C Cards and signposting to Spectrum for young people

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

CAMHS already signpost young people to Spectrum CIC. The service will review the C Card offer in CAMHS as part of recommendation one. This is a complex and sensitive area of work for young people who are experiencing emotional health and wellbeing issues.

2.5 Work in partnership with primary care to look at where the demand for training lies and how this can be addressed locally, and to ensure that the LARC offer is equitable across all Wards of the borough, thus benefitting residents

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

Spectrum was successful in submitting a newly designed LARC Model of service delivery in 2021. This model was a hybrid provision, ensuring that Primary Care and Spectrum’s Specialist Provider knowledge works in collaboration to improve LARC uptake and unwanted pregnancies throughout the borough. This model included options for patients where they were able to access LARC provision through general practice, but also an enhanced provision through Spectrum, via a Peripatetic Nurse model (in addition to routine access) both at over Level 3 site, but also at targeted locations throughout the borough with poorer sexual health outcomes.

Spectrum ensures that specialist staff are both expert in the provision (fitting) of LARCs but are also registered trainers with the governing body (FSRH). This enables a clinical training provision at the Level 3 service site (Gateway Plaza) where the service can train both colleagues new to specialist services, but also those who are providing, or looking to provide an enhanced contraception (in addition to their core contract) service within Primary Care.

The FSRH has very specific training pathways*, which are supported with wider community colleagues with e.g. assessments and Letters of Competency training and updates. For those who are already established fitters as part of their revalidation process, they are expected to attend training relevant to maintain their skills which Spectrum delivers via the provision of theoretical learning events referred to as “Fitter Forums”.

These specialists are also available to give case specific advice to practitioners working in the community/primary care and take referrals of more complex cases.

As part of contract monitoring, Spectrum provides clinical governance to Primary Care providers, this can include discussing best practice, interpretation of national guidance, and clinical audit.

*NB there is a minimal training fee for FSRH accredited training provision.

2.6 Work closely with Area Councils and elected members via an All-Member Information Brief so that members can support residents effectively

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

An information brief will be produced and sent out to area councils around sexual and reproductive health services available in Barnsley to their residents.

2.7 Where appropriate, move towards collaborative commissioning for sexual and reproductive health services as part of Integrated Care to remove fragmentation, maximise opportunities and strengthen partnerships

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

This is an ongoing piece of work that will need exploring and scoping at a higher commissioning level within organisations. An assessment will need to take place to scope the feasibility of co commissioning of sexual and reproductive health across organisations within Barnsley.

2.8 Investigate the potential of working with Family Centres to offer support for sexual health, reproductive health and peer support groups for young people who are, or about to become, teenage parents

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

This is an action that has been identified in the development of the new family hubs model across Barnsley and will be supported by a multi-agency approach. This work will be reflected in the Teenage Pregnancy prevention action plan.

2.9 Further develop support for young parents and their children. Consider the most appropriate model to deliver a targeted approach so that young people can give their child the best start in life and develop positive relationships

Service Response: This recommendation is supported

A 1st review of the pilot scheme that provides an intensive home support programme for teenage parents has been undertaken. Learning from this will be presented at the next TPP and TSP meeting 24 May 2023.

The responses and to progress against the recommendations in this report will be overseen by the Barnsley Sexual Health Alliance and added to the Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan.

3. Implications

3.1 Financial & Risk

There are no specific financial implications or risks associated with the report, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the financial and risk implications of these will be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding. Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Director of Finance (S151 Officer).

3.2 Legal

There are no specific legal implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the legal implications of these will be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding. Legal Services have been consulted.

3.3 Equality

Throughout the TFG's involvement in this work it has become apparent that there is some inequality of access to LARC across the borough; that some sections of the community are disproportionately affected by poor sexual and reproductive health; and that additional barriers exist for some people, such as those with SEND and the LGBTQ+ community. It is hoped that the recommendations and the work of all those involved will go some way to reducing inequalities in these areas.

3.4 Sustainability

There are no specific sustainability implications or risks associated with the report, although in responding to the report, the sustainability implications of these will be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

3.5 Employee

There are no specific employee implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the employee implications of these will be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

3.6 Communications

It is evident that there is work to be done to break down the public's misconceptions around the offer of the Integrated Sexual Health Service and remove the stigma of the traditional sexual health clinic as well as promoting the services via the most appropriate means to ensure maximum reach for the target audience. Recommendations included in the report are in support of increasing awareness to help people access treatment and support, ensuring that they know what services are available to them to improve outcomes and lead healthier lives. Work needs to be done with partners to break down barriers, ensure that services are fit for purpose and delivered for the benefit of residents.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultations have taken place with: the Sexual & Reproductive Health TFG members; OSC members; the council's Cabinet members; council officers from Public Health; Barnsley Local Medical Committee; Spectrum Integrated Sexual Health Service; and the council's Senior Management Team.

5. Alternative Options Considered

5.1 No alternative options have been considered in writing this report.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 The TFG were reassured by the amount of work being done to support people with their sexual and reproductive health and the ambitions for the future and found many areas of good practice. It is hoped that the new Sexual Health Plan and Sexual Health Alliance will be able to drive the agenda forward ensuring that it receives as much attention as tobacco, alcohol and food have in the past. Similarly, members will be keen to see how the introduction of the IHSP and the Healthier Futures project will contribute to improving health outcomes for young people.

7.2 The investigation undertaken by the TFG, as well as the recommendations made, are in support of improving health outcomes for the people of Barnsley and reducing inequalities. Whilst recognising that there is lots of evidence of good practice, the TFG have made the recommendations in order to support the continual improvement of services with a view to achieving local priorities, the priorities within the Government's Framework for Sexual Health Improvement and reducing teenage conception rates.

REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation and sign off	Vanessa Hunter 16/05/2023
Legal consultation and sign off	David Nuttall 17/05/2023

Report Author: Jeanette Crabbe

Post: Senior Public Health Practitioner

Date: 17 May 2023