

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No. 2 2021

Date: 26 January 2021

Briefing paper to: All Members of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

STRATEGIC RISK SR09A - CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS OF OLDER PEOPLE AND WORKING AGE ADULTS

Purpose: The Committee has requested a briefing paper on new Strategic Risk SR09A - Changing Demographics of Older People and Working Age Adults

Background

Due to the increasing pressure on Adult Social Care, it was agreed that a new risk **“Changing Demographics of Older People and Working Age Adults”** would be added to the risk register for 2020.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessments states: *Increasing life expectancy and a reduction in fertility is leading to an ageing of the population in England. Substantial changes in population structure have profound implications for the provision of health and social care services.*

Even though Medway has a slightly younger population than the national average, projections from 2016 to 2026 suggest that the number of people 65 years of age or over will increase by 22% to 52,400 and the number of people over 85 years will grow by 31% to 6,400

The numbers in other age groups are all expected to increase over the same period with the exception of the 20-29 and 45-54 age groups.

Increasing numbers of older people mean that there will be increasing numbers of people developing chronic conditions who become intensive users of services (assuming age-specific rates remain constant). This ageing of the population is likely to result in a substantial increase in costs and pressures to the health and social care system.

In addition, we have seen an increase in demand following the COVID 19 pandemic and this will continue as people rehabilitate from this extremely debilitating virus. We must also consider the possibility that that this will leave people with long term care needs.

This will all, of course, result in additional pressure on Adult Social Care as people are living longer and have more complex needs.

Actions taken to mitigate risk

With Local Authorities facing considerable challenges in terms of providing adult social care services with decreasing budgets, whilst demographic demands and expectations are constantly rising, it is imperative that we look at a range of actions to mitigate the risk.

- Continuing to maintain our close working relationships with providers to ensure financial stability across the sector
- Recruit to workforce vacancies
- Working with strategic partners to establish integrated working
- Review and adjust service levels and placement costs where appropriate
- We are currently developing an Adult Social Care Transformation and Improvement programme to ensure all the good work currently taking place and new work being planned is managed successfully, with interdependencies, risks and issues monitored and escalated appropriately.

The programme will concentrate on improving service delivery, reducing the number of inappropriate referrals by providing information, advice and guidance and signposting to appropriate agencies.

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