

## OSBP – 21 July 2020 – Advance Questions

### Strategic suggestions made before report prepared

1. The implementation, observance and monitoring of “Covid-safe” arrangements for the reopening of pubs, restaurants and other similar small businesses. **6.62**
2. The local operation of test, track and trace (and the funding arrangements). **6.18 - 26**
3. The role of the Healthier Communities Select Committee in feeding into the joint work on BAME health inequalities with Birmingham City Council. **6.27 – 6.30**
4. The status of dentist and optician services. **6.32 – 6.43**
5. The operation and performance of pharmacy services and their ongoing resilience. **6.32 – 6.43**
6. The actions being taken locally to minimise the additional risk of COVID-19 for pregnant BAME women and their babies. **6.31**
7. The impact of school closures: Summer School Catch Up and beyond. **6.46**
8. The Free School Meal summer programme (including children who are NRPF or vulnerable but not registered). **6.49**
9. Food parcels (those currently being distributed) and their nutritional content. **6.6 – 6.7**
10. School transport costs (the cost to children on public transport attending school now that the free Under 18 Oyster has been cancelled) and crowding on buses. **6.55 – 6.56**
11. The plans for September for Children in Alternative Provision in Year 11. **6.54**

### Advance questions

#### **Chair of Healthier Select Committee**

1. Has there been an overspend on adult placements in recent months?

COVID-19 has had a major impact on social care activity and costs. Numbers of funded residential and nursing placements reduced significantly in March and April due to deaths of some service users (108 compared to 31 in January and February). However numbers of new placements were also above average as hospital discharge activity increased (68 compared to 32 in January and February).

Placement budgets were reduced for 2020/21 as part of the total agreed cuts of £6m for adult social care. It has not been possible to achieve the savings as planned due to the impact of COVID but the net reduction described above means that spend is currently in line with the net budget. Overall, however, an overspend is projected for the year based on expected transitions from children's services.

Additionally we have allocated £1.2m of the Infection Control Fund to local residential and nursing providers and have agreed temporary increases in rates for placements which will be charged to the main COVID grant.

**2. Are care homes struggling to fill vacancies and are any other smaller care homes likely to close?**

The care home vacancy rate is monitored on a daily basis. Although this varies a fair amount, the average vacancy rate is between 20 - 30%. There is one older adults care home that is closing and we would hope to be able to accommodate residents in homes within the borough which will help with vacancies. It is very hard to say if any more care homes will close. Lewisham is vulnerable in that it has a large number of smaller care homes and research from the London School of Economics identifies small care homes as being more vulnerable. Although demand for care is increasing there is still reduced demand for care home placements although we anticipate that this may increase over the winter.