

# Shropshire Health & Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Public Questions from Diane Peacock

*While parts of the UK have had higher death rates of care home residents than Shropshire and the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin (STW) Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) area, rigorous analysis at national and local levels is urgently needed to minimise the impact of a second surge of Covid-19 on these extremely vulnerable citizens.*

1. With reference to the very detailed ongoing 'whole system' Covid-19 prevention, control and support actions presented in today's committee papers relating to care homes and care home residents:
  - a. What are the main areas of learning emerging in our locality regarding mortality rates involving Covid-19 deaths in care homes and of deaths of care home residents involving Covid-19 in other locations such as hospitals?
  - b. How closely does the local experience differ from or reflect recently published analysis<sup>1</sup> at national level?
  - c. What are the main barriers to achieving system-wide improvements and ensuring better outcomes for care home residents and staff in the future?
2. Covid-19 swab test training for STW care home staff was completed by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020,<sup>2</sup> and from 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 weekly testing for care home staff and monthly testing for residents<sup>3</sup> was 'rolled out' nationally. What oversight mechanisms were used to track testing iterations in care homes in the area prior to 6<sup>th</sup> and can the public be assured that regular, whole care home testing will now be available rapidly and equitably?
3. The SHASC Overview and Scrutiny committee papers appear to lack the most basic local quantitative<sup>4</sup> data relating to numbers and date sequences of Covid-19 outbreaks and related deaths of care home residents in care homes and in hospitals since March 2020. Unless provided with all relevant qualitative and quantitative evidence, how can the public be assured that overview and scrutiny members are in a position to evaluate the impact of the multiple initiatives outlined in committee papers and thus hold the *authority's decision-makers to account*<sup>5</sup> for actions that affect our communities?

*DP respectfully requests that members are given access to the full document, including the footnotes.*

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<sup>1</sup> Examples: Vivaldi 1. *Impact of coronavirus in Care Homes in England: 26 May to 19 June 2020*. GOV.UK 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020.

Working Care Homes Group, *Care Homes Analysis*. GOV.UK 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020.

Deaths involving COVID-19 in the care sector, England and Wales: deaths occurring up to 12 June 2020 and registered up to 20 June 2020 (provisional) GOV.UK 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020.

Also *Evolution and impact of COVID-19 outbreaks in care homes: population analysis in 189 care homes in one geographic region*. Pre-print status. Relates to Scottish care homes 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>2</sup> STW COVID-19 Prevention and Support for Care Homes Action Plan, item 14.

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regular-retesting-rolled-out-for-care-home-staff-and-residents> N.B. Repeat testing will be initially prioritised for homes looking after over 65s or those with dementia before being rolled out to all adult care homes.

<sup>4</sup> Some other Shropshire Council committees and STP member committees have referenced local and national data. For example: Shropshire Performance Management Scrutiny Committee 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 minutes Agenda item 5, q.4 Cllr. Kidd's question on local outbreaks in care homes up to 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020. <https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/g4073/Public%20reports%20pack%2010th-Jun-2020%2011.00%20Performance%20Management%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

SaTH minutes 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020 item 19 relates to March/April Covid-19 data in *Learning from Deaths Report QTR4 2019-2020*. <https://www.sath.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/19-QTR4-19-20-Learning-from-Deaths.pdf> ONS data are now available on outbreaks, care home residents' Covid-19 related deaths etc. and the local media are publishing detailed data on care homes.

<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/800048/Statutory\\_Guidance\\_on\\_Overview\\_and\\_Scrutiny\\_in\\_Local\\_and\\_Combined\\_Authorities.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800048/Statutory_Guidance_on_Overview_and_Scrutiny_in_Local_and_Combined_Authorities.pdf) Ministerial Foreword to *Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities* (May 2019).