

Meeting: Council

Date: 19 March 2024

From: Councillor Smith

To: Councillor Wright, Executive Member for Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing

Question:

Can the Executive Member give an update on what is being done to encourage the Department of Health and Social Care and the NHS to ensure that there are sufficient NHS dental services in Bracknell Forest? This is important as more and more of our residents are having difficulty accessing an NHS dentist. This is of particular concern for children's dental health and due the fact that private dental treatment is increasingly unaffordable for many of our residents, who face significant cost of living pressures.

Answer:

As the Executive Member for Adults, Health & Housing and the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board for Bracknell Forest, I confirm that we work in partnership with our health colleagues to influence the delivery and provision of all health care locally. This includes NHS Dental Services.

I have raised your question with NHS Frimley Integrated Care Board and they have confirmed that improvement in NHS Dental Services is a key priority for them. In response to the high level of concern about access to NHS dental services at a national and local level, there are changes planned to the commissioning of dental services that should lead to some local improvement in access to dental services over the next 12 months.

At a national level this includes the **Dental Recovery Plan** (access, workforce, prevention focus) and a more **flexible approach to the commissioning of dental services** with a ring-fenced budget and additional resources committed locally (Frimley ICB) for dental services.

In order to explore those plans further, we will discuss NHS Dental Services and associated improvement plans at the next Bracknell Forest Health & Wellbeing Board so that these plans can be discussed in a public arena.