

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH ENGAGEMENT PANEL  
HELD IN THE WAYTEMORE ROOM,  
BISHOP'S STORTFORD ON TUESDAY  
15 DECEMBER 2009 AT 7.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor K Darby (Chairman).  
Councillors S A Bull, R Gilbert,  
D Hone and M Wood.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors K A Barnes, Mrs M H Goldspink,  
R L Parker and R I Taylor.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Assistant
Tracy Strange	- Head of Health and Housing
Paul Thomas	- Environmental Health Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Lynda Dent	- East and North Herts PCT
Margaret Folan	- East and North Herts PCT
Councillor S Newton	- Hertfordshire County Council
Councillor John Barfoot	- Hertfordshire County Council
Andrew Parker	- East and North Herts PCT

13 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of  
Councillor C B Woodward.

14 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Lynda Dent and Andrew Parker, East and North Herts PCT, to the meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMSACTION15 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Health Engagement Panel meeting held on 20 October 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Insert as Declaration of Interest – Councillor K Darby declared a personal interest in the matter referred to at minute 10, on the grounds that she was an employee of Vale House Stabilisation Services.

16 URGENT CARE CENTRE PROPOSED FOR BISHOP'S STORTFORD

Andrew Parker, Director of Primary Care Development for East and North Herts PCT, outlined the content of his presentation relating to Urgent Care Centres (UCCs). He detailed the services available at the Herts and Essex Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) in Bishop's Stortford.

Andrew Parker referred to the collaborative work between staff working from the Herts and Essex MIU and the accident and emergency team at the Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH).

Andrew Parker highlighted the background to the introduction of UCCs and summarised the services they would provide. He stressed that the centres allowed accident and emergency staff to focus on more seriously ill patients. He stated that the UCCs would provide care closer to patients' homes.

Andrew Parker referred to the tendering process utilised by the PCT when awarding contracts. He updated the Panel on the original timeline for the introduction of UCCs. He emphasized that the PCT had halted the tendering and procurement process, as it was not bringing them the results they were looking for. The PCT retained the strategic aim of enhancing the facilities at the Herts and Essex MIU.

Andrew Parker advised that the PCT would now work with existing providers, the PAH, General Practitioners (GPs) and Hertfordshire Community Health Services (HCHS) to secure a broader range of services at the Herts and Essex MIU.

Andrew Parker stressed that the PCT hoped to expand the opening hours of the Herts and Essex MIU and review the skills mix provided. He hoped that the increase in demand would match the cost of increased service delivery.

Andrew Parker concluded that the PCT hoped to conclude negotiations by March 2010 and deliver a new approach to ensure enhanced urgent care services at the Herts and Essex MIU from October 2010.

The Chairman sought and was given clarification regarding the definitions of a MIU and UCC. Linda Dent commented on the high quality of the nursing staff working from the Herts and Essex MIU. She stressed that the Manager of the MIU was in charge of providing a standard of care that almost matched the service provided by UCCs.

Linda Dent also stated that a key was the broad spectrum of care provided by the Herts and Essex MIU. Andrew Parker stressed that the PCT hoped to ensure a continuity of provision at the MIU.

Councillor R Gilbert commented on why Hertford and Cheshunt had been selected for UCCs. Linda Dent stated that the decision had been made to run a pilot scheme of UCCs in Hertford and Cheshunt following the results of research carried out by ORS, a social research company

that had been commissioned by the PCT. The Panel was advised that, once the pilot had been completed, the PCT would decide on the future of the UCCs at Cheshunt and Hertford.

Councillor M Wood referred to a long standing local concern that Bishop's Stortford was being marginalised. He stressed that the lack of an UCC in Bishop's Stortford was adding to the genuine concern that the growth of the town was not being recognised.

Andrew Parker commented that the PCT was very happy to engage with Members and the public. He emphasised that he hoped to challenge the perception that Bishop's Stortford was being marginalised by the PCT.

Councillor S A Bull commented on how the PCT promoted where residents should go to access out of hours GP care. Linda Dent advised that the PCT had recently issued some guidance on this issue. She stated that the PCT was happy to engage with residents via parish magazines or in anyway that was suggested.

Councillor R I Taylor expressed concern that residents who required out of hours GP care and had missed the slot available at the Herts and Essex MIU on Saturday mornings faced a 50 mile round trip to the QE2 hospital. He commented that parking at that hospital was a major problem.

Councillor Taylor commented that, following the closure of the Accident and Emergency Unit at the Herts and Essex Hospital Site, residents had been promised a 24 hour MIU by the PCT. He stressed that the MIU was actually only available Monday to Friday 9 am till 5 pm and was staffed by nurses.

Councillor Taylor emphasised that UCCs could cope with a number of urgent injuries almost up to the level of major trauma. He commented that the catchment area of Bishop's Stortford was now 37,000 people and a wider catchment area of surrounding villages increased that

number to between 50,000 and 60,000 people.

Andrew Parker commented that the current strategy of concentrating expertise into major centres was based on a clinical model of best practice. The Panel was advised that once paramedics had assessed and stabilised a patient, they were taken to where there was the appropriate expertise to save life.

Andrew Parker commented that the skills set of nurses was best suited to a MIU, as the skills set of a GP was more focussed on treating minor illnesses. He further emphasised that a 24 hour Accident and Emergency unit at the Herts and Essex Hospital was not sustainable as a majority of overnight admissions involved minor injuries.

Councillor Taylor expressed concerns that nurse led care did not cater for patients with more pressing medical needs. Councillor Mrs M H Goldspink sought and was given clarification on the specific details on the levels of care provided by UCCs and the Herts and Essex MIU.

Linda Dent commented that patients needing X rays could be seen at the Herts and Essex MIU as X ray films could be interpreted on site. She stressed that under no circumstances would unconscious patients be transferred to UCCs or to the Herts and Essex MIU.

Councillor R Gilbert sought and was given clarification on how the public knew where to access the appropriate care. Linda Dent stressed that the PCT had issued strict protocols regarding which patients should be treated in UCCs. The PCT had sought to actively communicate what levels of care UCCs could provide.

Councillor John Barfoot, County Councillor for Bishop's Stortford East, sought and was given clarification regarding the outcomes of the formal tendering process for an Urgent Care Centre in Bishop's Stortford.

Councillor R L Parker, East Herts Council Executive Member for Housing and Health, emphasised that

documents and presentations presented to the Panel in 2007/08 had indicated that Bishop's Stortford would get an Urgent Care Centre (UCC) at the Herts and Essex Hospital Site.

Councillor Parker stressed that there had been collective concern when it became clear that an Urgent Care Centre for Bishop's Stortford was unlikely due to costs. He stated that the appropriate authorities should do whatever it takes to ensure that Bishop's Stortford was provided with an Urgent Care Centre.

A petition comprising 700 signatures was submitted by Councillor Mrs M H Goldspink, District Councillor for Bishop's Stortford Central, as follows:

'We, the undersigned, call upon the Primary Care Trusts of East, West and North Herts, to honour their previous commitment and to provide an Urgent Care/Injuries Centre in Bishop's Stortford as soon as possible. The residents of Bishop's Stortford do not understand why the residents of Hertford and Cheshunt have already been provided with this facility whilst we, in the biggest conurbation in East Herts, are being denied one'.

Andrew Parker thanked Councillor Goldspink and commented that he was happy to accept the petition on behalf of the PCT. Councillor K Darby requested that the PCT update the Panel and the public on how local residents could engage with the PCT regarding the issue of an Urgent Care Centre at the Herts and Essex Community Hospital.

Linda Dent advised that the PCT would keep the public up to date via the Health Engagement Panel. A public meeting would also be convened at the Herts and Essex Community Hospital. Those present were further advised that the public would be kept up to date with future developments as soon as information became available.

Linda Dent made her contact details available should the Panel or the public wish to contact her for future updates:

[Lynda.Dent@herts-pcts.nhs.uk](mailto:Lynda.Dent@herts-pcts.nhs.uk)

RESOLVED – that the petition be received and noted.

17 REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE ON EAST HERTS PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY 2009/10 ACTION PLAN AND PROPOSALS FOR 2010/11

The Environmental Health Manager commented that the current East Herts Public Health Strategy Action Plan 2009/10 had been in place for 8 months in what was the second year of the East Herts Public Health Strategy 2008 - 2013.

The Panel was advised that the action plan contained 43 objectives. The Environmental Health Manager detailed a number of objectives that had been completed. He invited Simon Barfoot, Environmental Health Promotion Officer, to give a presentation in respect of reviewing 2009/10 East Herts Public Health Strategy Action Plan.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer advised that of the 43 objectives detailed in the 2009/10 action plan, 16 objectives had been completed and a further 22 objectives were on target to be completed by 31 March 2010. Members were reminded of the detailed guiding principles of the East Herts Public Health Strategy 2008 - 2013.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer detailed the key principles of the East Herts Public Health Strategy 2008 - 2013. He drew the Panel's attention to data from the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHO) relating to deprivation and life expectancy in East Herts.

Members were referred to health profile comparisons between 2007 and 2008/09 for East Herts. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer highlighted that there had been an increase the percentage of physically active children in East Herts.

The Panel was invited to focus on the action plan for 2010/11. The Environment Health Promotion Officer summarised the highlights of the 2009/10 Action plan. He also drew the Panel's attention to the feedback provided by Members for the 2009/10 Action Plan.

The Panel was invited to suggest ideas and plans for the 2010/11 Action Plan. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer reminded Members of the key themes from the 2009/10 Action Plan. Members requested that the 2010/11 Action Plan continue to support the Hertfordshire Stop Smoking Service.

Linda Dent commented that the NHS was continuing to support smoking cessation workshops. She stated that this support was part of a significant push to support people who wished to give up smoking.

Councillor K A Barnes expressed concern that, in respect of promoting physical activity, there was not enough collaboration between East Herts Planning and Building Control Officers and applicants seeking to enhance leisure facilities across the District.

Councillor Barnes commented on the provision of leisure facilities. He referred to a conflict between planning applications and the provision of space of physical activity.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer advised that he had met with other Managers and Heads of Service, including the Head of Planning and Building Control, to consider such issues at a previous Health Engagement Panel meeting. One of the aspects considered was the issue of supporting applicants with enhancing provision for physical activity for appropriate developments. He undertook to feedback the Panel's concerns to the Head of Planning and Building Control.

Councillor S A Bull commented that although the income from public usage of the swimming pools could not be guaranteed, he would like to see a better provision of timetabled sessions for the casual swimmer. The Panel



was advised that the leisure provider was encouraging the take up of leisure activity as well as the usage of the new gym facilities at Hartham and Grange Paddocks.

Members were advised that the Health and Fitness Development Officer, Mark Kingsland, was in regular contact with SLM to promote the take up of leisure services. It was also confirmed that SLM would be reporting to the next meeting of Community Scrutiny on 26 January 2010.

Councillor R Gilbert commented on whether sufficient formal activities were being organised for primary school children. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer commented that Officers had concentrated resources into primary schools to promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity.

The Panel was reminded of the national guidance stating that primary school children should undertake a minimum of 2 hours physical activity per week. Members were reminded that local schools often appreciated specialists working in primary schools to promote physical activity and healthy eating.

The Panel requested that Officers continue to back up the Bishop's Stortford YMCA with support for cooking lessons. The Environmental Health Promotion Officer commented that Officers would continue to support the YMCA.

Officers reminded the Panel of Health Inequalities Project as well as the ethical issues in respect of obesity. The Panel was reminded of the key linkages that Officers maintained with the PCTs.

Councillor K Darby commented on the importance of liaising with GPs to emphasise the issues surrounding Type 2 diabetes. The Panel was advised that training was available in support of the issues surrounding type 2 diabetes.

RESOLVED - that (A) the progress made to date

with implementing the Public Health Strategy's Action Plan for 2009/10 be noted; and

(B) the projects outlined in the Public Health Strategy's Action Plan for 2010/11 be supported.

18 FEEDBACK FROM CHAIRMAN – HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21 OCTOBER 2009

---

Councillor D M Hone commented that she had attended a meeting of Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee on 21 October 2009. The main item of discussion had been the setting of their work programme.

Councillor Hone advised that there had been a presentation given by Anne Walker on behalf of the NHS and the PCT. Feedback had been submitted on plans to merge the local boards of these organisations. The Panel was advised that employees on the one joint board would have more time to address local issues as a result of this merger.

Councillor Hone commented that the next meeting would include financial updates as well as consultation relating to Urgent Care Centres and the Hemel Hempstead Birth Unit. Members of the Panel should advise Councillor Hone of any comments prior to the next meeting.

Councillor M Wood expressed concern that this merger would not encourage the support of local issues. He enquired as to how many respondents had not supported the merger of the two health authorities.

Linda Dent commented that out of the 30 responses submitted to the Strategic Health Authority, there had been 4 responses that were not supportive of the merger. She acknowledged the strong opposition from Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

Councillor Hone commented that there had been a National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) Joint Commissioning

Board meeting on 7 December 2009. The Panel was advised that NICE did more than regulating drugs for use on the NHS. NICE often consulted on issues such as obesity and there was support available to local authorities on the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

Councillor Hone referred to the issue of wasted medication due to patient misunderstanding and non compliance. Councillor R Gilbert expressed concern that there was insufficient cooperation between suppliers of medication in relation to packaging.

In response to comments made by Councillor Wood that Bishop's Stortford was being increasingly marginalised, Linda Dent commented that it maybe possible to arrange a meeting so that local concerns could be aired in public.

Councillor Wood requested that future meetings should look at provision of Mental Health Care in East Herts, out of hours GP cover, public transport to health related settings and an up-date on the issue of an Urgent Care Centre in Bishop's Stortford.

RESOLVED – that the update be noted.

#### 19 WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

The Health Engagement Panel reviewed its work programme. The Scrutiny Officer advised that the issue of transport had not yet got a fixed date as Hertfordshire County Council was now working on their new LTP3 transport strategy to fit in with changes to government guidelines.

East Herts Council would now work in parallel with Hertfordshire County Council in preparing the Transport and Parking Strategy - A New Way Forward. The Scrutiny Officer advised that as soon there was further information for Members, a report would be included on the Panel's work programme and speakers would be invited from the PCT and HCC Passenger Transport Unit.

The Panel expressed an interest in a number of items being added to the programme. Members were interested in reports on the provision of Mental Health Care and Multiple Sclerosis in the District. The Panel also referred to out of hours GP care and GP provision in Bishop's Stortford generally. Also of interest to the Panel was District wide transport access to healthcare.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that dates for meetings of the Health Engagement Panel were confirmed through to summer 2010. Future dates were dependent on the HCC Health Scrutiny Committee meetings and as soon as their autumn/winter dates are confirmed, new Panel dates would be scheduled.

RESOLVED - that the work programme for 2009/10, as now amended, be approved.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Chairman	.....
Date	.....