

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH ENGAGEMENT PANEL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON MONDAY 6 FEBRUARY
2012, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Bull (Chairman)
Councillors R Beeching, E Buckmaster,
K Crofton and N Symonds

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey and G McAndrew

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services
Paul Thomas	- Environmental Health Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Ann Griffiths - NHS Trust

28 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs D Hone.

29 MINUTES

It was noted that Councillor G McAndrew had been in attendance at the meeting and not Councillor D Andrews.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Health Engagement Panel meeting held on 12 December 2012, as amended, be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

30 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Ann Griffiths from the NHS Trust to the meeting. Ms Griffiths would be providing Members with a presentation on the "Choose and Book Scheme".

31 CHOOSE AND BOOK SCHEME - EXTERNAL SPEAKER
ANN GRIFFITHS (NHS)

Ann Griffiths provided Members with a presentation on the background and use of the "Choose and Book Scheme". The scheme aimed to empower individuals in terms of providing them with a choice of hospital to undergo treatment based on the patient's criteria and their personal circumstances.

In response to Members queries, Ms Griffiths explained that not all GPs were using the system at the moment, but hoped to see more use in the future. She explained the referral system in relation to complex orthopaedic treatment.

Councillor R Beeching questioned the 10 minute slot that Doctors allowed for a patient to discuss one problem and how this might impact on the use of the new system. Ms Griffiths stated that using the system correctly would take the GP just over 2 minutes although some surgeries were having GPs make just the original clinical short-list selection and then passing the rest of the booking process over to one of their support staff to finalise with patients.

Councillor R Beeching stated that the system could be very confusing for the elderly and the fact that you had to make a choice "there and then" which suggested that an individual could not research which hospital would offer the best

treatment. Ms Griffiths explained that the individual would be given a unique booking code and could change the appointment and hospital as the need arose.

The issue of transport to a hospital of choice was considered. Members were advised that the GP would scrutinise this issue in terms of whether this was needed, which would take account of those with special needs. Ms Griffiths stressed the need for patient engagement. She stated that there was a role to be played by the District Council and County Council in publicising the process and which surgeries used the “Choose and Book Scheme” and those who did not. Councillor R Beeching offered to keep a watching brief on this issue.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members, thanked Ann Griffiths for providing an insight into the “Choose and Book” Scheme.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

32 HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY - FEEDBACK FROM CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor R Beeching provided an update to Members, on Hertfordshire County Council’s Health Scrutiny matters. He stated that the briefing for county councillors on the LINK to Health Watch transition did not go ahead as scheduled. Councillor R Beeching provided updates on the scrutiny of mental health and Accident and Emergency issues, vulnerability audits, maternity care and safeguarding children. The issue of returning veterans had also been scrutinised at the County Council and caring for stroke patients. It was noted that the Health Service Community Plan would be considered by Hertfordshire County Council’s Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2012.

Members received the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

33 PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY ACTION PLAN - 2012-13

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer submitted a report regarding public health issues which impacted on the health of local residents and how the Council could impact positively on these areas in terms of supporting a Public Health Strategy Action Plan for 2012/13, the detail of which was set out in the report now submitted.

Members discussed the role of the Council's Leisure Contractor (SLM) in promoting good health. It was noted that community involvement in terms of promoting good health had been written into the leisure contract.

The Environment Health Promotion Officer stated that there were 50 actions proposed to address the six core themes, the detail of which were set out in Essential Reference Paper "B" attached to the report now submitted. Members complimented the Officer on the report and actions proposed and queried how the Council could realistically achieve the actions proposed. The Officer explained that he anticipated that pro-active partnership working would go some way to achieving the objectives.

In response to queries raised by Members, clarification was provided by the Environment Health Promotion Officer on some of the strategies proposed within the Action Plan attached to the report now submitted.

In supporting the Action Plan for 2012/13 as set out in the report now submitted, Members also requested that their thanks be recorded on the report presented by the Environment Health Promotion Officer.

RESOLVED – that the Public Health Strategy Action Plan for 2012/13 as set out in the report now submitted, be supported.

34 WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report detailing the Panel's Work Programme for 2012/13. Members were sought from those who also held a Town and Parish role, who might wish

to attend a briefing on 22 March 2012 on the LINK to Health Watch transition.

The Executive Member for Health Housing and Community Support suggested that a future Health Engagement Panel include a consideration of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy consultation from Hertfordshire County Council. This was supported. It was also suggested that the future remit of the Health Engagement Panel itself be considered at the next meeting given the considerable changes to the NHS and public health which are coming forward in the new Health and Social Care Bill currently going through parliament. The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support also felt that the Panel should be adopting a broader approach rather than just receiving passive presentations and needed to ensure that the speaker was orientated towards East Herts issues. This was supported.

An update was provided on the role of the East of England Local Government Association and their work from a health promotion viewpoint.

The issue of working with GPs was considered. The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support felt that the Panel needed to be working with the leads of the new commissioning consortia rather than each GP independently.

Members received the report and supported the amendments as proposed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the work programme as amended be agreed; and

(B) the Scrutiny Officer be authorised to make changes, additions or arrangement as necessary to the work programme.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Chairman
Date