

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE HEALTH
ENGAGEMENT PANEL) HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER
2012, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor N Symonds (Chairman).
Councillors E Buckmaster, S Bull, P Moore
and P Ballam.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M Carver, Mrs R Cheswright,
L Haysey, Mrs D Hollebon, G Lawrence,
J Mayes, G McAndrew, T Page, C Rowley,
P Ruffles, G Williamson, M Wood and
B Wrangles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Will O'Neill	- Head of Communications, Engagement and Cultural Services
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Paul Thomas	- Environmental Health Manager

6 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Beeching, K Crofton and J Taylor. It was noted that Councillor P Ballam was substituting for Councillor K Crofton.

7 MINUTES – 19 JUNE 2012

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the visiting public health representatives to the first meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel. She stated that Members and Officers were keen to ascertain how East Herts Council could work with these professionals to improve the health of the public of East Herts.

9 DISCUSSION REPORT – ROLE OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL IN THE NEW HEALTH "LANDSCAPE"

The Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Panel submitted a report offering Members the opportunity to meet health partners and discuss the reorganisation of health services and public health generally. The meeting also afforded the opportunity to consider the implementation of these changes locally and to examine ways of working together in the future to get the best outcomes for East Herts residents.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer gave a presentation in respect of the East Herts Council Public Health Strategy and detailed the function of the Health and Wellbeing Panel. He stated that the purpose of this meeting was to ascertain how East Herts Council could assist the Health and Wellbeing Board, the future Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as well as setting out what the

Council could achieve from working with the Health Partners present at this meeting.

He advised that the East Herts Public Health Strategy had been approved in 2008. He set out the six priority elements of the Strategy and reminded Members that the former Health Engagement Panel had been set up to approve the aforementioned strategy.

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer concluded that East Herts Council was keen to work with the NHS, Hertfordshire County Council colleagues and other health partners to further develop the public health role of the District Authority. He also referred to the continuing importance of strong Member support and effective partnership working in East Herts.

Marc Davis, Director of Development for the Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, stated that the East Herts area was very important to the core business of the trust. He hoped to make new contacts, understand the ambitions of partners and have ongoing discussions to support residents in taking advantage of opportunities for lifestyle changes.

David Brewer, Head of Engagement for East and North Herts NHS Trust, stated that the Trust was very interested in partnership working and he looked forward to understanding the needs and aspirations of communities in East Herts. Dr Shukur, Sue Beck, Dr Nicky Williams and Jim McManus introduced themselves and stated their enthusiasm for partnership working, building bridges and developing communication channels.

Jim McManus, Director of Public Health Hertfordshire, stated that he looked forward to renewing acquaintances in East Herts. He referred to a collective enthusiasm and 'hunger' amongst various agencies to improve the health of the population.

In response to a query from Councillor E Buckmaster

regarding the two recent planning applications for doctor's surgeries in Bishop's Stortford and the lack of a "joined up" approach, Dr Williams stated that primary care was covered by the Commissioning Board and the Care Commissioning Groups (CCGs) were expected to support the work of the Commissioning Board. Dr Williams emphasised the difficulties experienced in respect of securing new premises for doctors' surgeries.

Jim McManus advised that the Health and Social Care Act meant that the NHS Commissioning Board was required to act on public health advice. The role of the Health and Wellbeing Board was to seek to influence the decision making of the Commissioning Board. Members were advised that there were large numbers of GPs and hospital doctors who were keen to make a difference in East Herts.

Dr Steven Kite, a Member of East and North Herts CCG Board, commented that GP surgeries were owned and leased by GPs and there was very little reserve capacity. He stated that this shortfall must be built into planning decision making.

Councillor M Carver emphasised that Local Planning Authorities, in relation to the Local District Plan, were aware that a major part of the plan would relate to healthcare provision and discussions at meetings like this would assist Officers with developing the right overall plan. He stated that Planning policy was about getting the right service in the right place to meet the new needs.

In response to a query from Councillor S Bull, Dr Williams stated that patient transport used to be arranged locally by GPs and such provision was now arranged centrally and provided by the primary care trust. She referred to recent discussions at Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) level in respect of how patient transport should be coordinated, as there were no centralised access arrangements for patients. A mapping of existing services and voluntary schemes was currently underway.

David Brewer referred to volunteers who worked to transport patients via escorted car services. He commented that support for patients was fragmented and there was no holistic approach in East Herts. Marc Davis stated that, particularly for elderly patients, the journey to specialist hospitals in London represented a daunting prospect that was costly and could have a negative effect on patient health.

Councillor M Wood commented that GP surgeries in Bishop's Stortford had been strongly criticised in terms of appointment availability resulting in big queues for the Church Street Surgery Open Access Clinic. Dr Williams emphasised that East Herts had a lower level of health inequality funding when compared to places like Stevenage, where there was extra funding to combat health inequalities.

Dr Shukur also added insight on the health inequality funding enquiry whereby historical funding formulas for patient capacity at a particular surgery were not always compatible with current demographics. The funding was also linked to Health Inequality factors, which meant that East Herts tended not to attract a premium.

In response to a query from the Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services, Jim McManus stated that East Herts Council could have a powerful lobbying voice for residents and that close cooperation with the CCGs and NHS Partners would ensure that all agencies and authorities worked together to ascertain where lobbying would be best directed.

Marc Davis commented on the major challenge faced by the Princess Alexandra Hospital in having to navigate two neighbouring counties with different Council systems.

Marc Davis also referred to the need to be aware that Accident and Emergency Staff were unable to think of such intricacies when treating patients. He stated

however, that other staff could ensure a better patient experience by encouraging the avoidance of consultant ward rounds when patients' meals were being served.

The Panel Chairman commented on what was being done by hospitals to meet the needs of the elderly, as part of the Ageing Well agenda. There followed a general discussion on this issue, in particular in respect of caring for people with dementia.

David Brewer highlighted the growing pressure for a multi agency strategy in respect of dementia. He also stated that the development of multi professional skills sets would avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. Councillor B Wrangles referred to the scaling back of services at the QE2 hospital and the risks to patients suffering cardiac emergencies at weekends.

David Brewer emphasised that there was a well developed business case for a 24 hour cardiac service by consolidating services at the Lister Hospital in Stevenage. He stated that this would result in improved health care cover and better patient experiences, for example in maternity care. He stressed that this was the only way to deliver improved outcomes at a reduced cost.

Councillor L Haysey commented that the East Herts Council leisure provider and the CCG could have a role to play in that funding could support patient recovery processes being run outdoors in our parks and open spaces.

Jim McManus stated that a wider systematic approach was required to support better lifestyle choices in terms of diet, lack of exercise, smoking, drinking to excess and weight control. He commented that this would also help keep older people healthy, as well as ensuring the built environment supported general health and wellbeing. He concluded that East Herts could act as a "beacon" area in terms of a blueprint for the future health of the population.

Councillor L Haysey commented that East Herts Council could assist in getting out positive messages via Link magazine, as well as the Authority's website, twitter, facebook and the links between East Herts Council and Parish and Town Councils.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services stated that East Herts Council was very keen to secure optimum outcomes for the District's residents. Members and Officers were very pleased to meet the visiting health partners. He stated that East Herts Councillors had a local democratic mandate and the Authority was keen to play its part in supporting healthcare and promoting public health for the District's residents.

Members agreed that the visiting public health representatives should be invited back to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel, perhaps in 6 months time.

RESOLVED – that the visiting public health representatives should be invited back to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel in 6 months time.

10 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman submitted a report setting out the Health and Wellbeing Panel's future work programme for 2012/13, the detail of which was set out in Essential Reference Paper "B" to the report now submitted.

Members agreed that the visiting public health representatives should be invited back to a future meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel in 6 months time. The Scrutiny Officer advised that the newly appointed Chair of Health Watch Hertfordshire would be attending as a guest at the meeting of the Panel on 11 December 2012.

Members approved the Work Programme, as amended.

RESOLVED – that the Work Programme as amended, be approved.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Chairman

Date