

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH ENGAGEMENT PANEL HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 21 JUNE 2011,
AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs D Hone (Chairman)
Councillors R Beeching, E Buckmaster,
N Symonds and P Moore

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Leech, L Haysey and P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Committee Secretary
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Darren Leech	- PAH
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1 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor S Bull. It was noted that Councillor P Moore was substituting for Councillor S Bull. Paul Thomas sent his apologies as he was on annual leave.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Nominations were sought for the appointment of a Vice Chairman. It was proposed by Councillor N Symonds and seconded by Councillor E Buckmaster that Councillor R

Beeching be appointed Vice Chairman for the Civic Year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor R Beeching be appointed Vice Chairman for the Civic Year.

3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2011 were submitted. The Chairman explained that she had emailed Councillor P Ballam regarding her query about the QEII and where eye surgeries would be carried out.

The Environmental Health Officer explained that in response to the Panel's request, he had submitted a bid to the 2011 Health Promotion and Community Well-being Organisation and Partnership Awards organised by the Royal Society of Public Health and that he would be meeting with assessors shortly. He explained the assessment process and gave some examples of who had won the award in previous years.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Health Engagement Panel held on 14 February 2011 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Darren Leech, Chief Operating Officer for the Princess Alexandra Hospital. She also welcomed new Members of the Panel.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor L Haysey, Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support. Councillor L Haysey referred to ongoing work with the PCT for Hertfordshire. She sought the Panel's support for her to approach the PCT with a view to building bridges with GP's in Bishop's Stortford to move things along, in relation to access to GP services, possibly by the establishment of conversation "cafes". Councillor R Beeching suggested that surgeries in Sawbridgeworth be included in the approach and

recommended that she contact Lynda Dent. Councillor N Symonds was concerned about the surgeries in South Street and Church Street.

The Panel supported Councillor L Haysey's request to approach the PCT and, through them, GP's.

The Chairman referred to a publication by the LGiU on accountability and of the increasing workload of the Health Engagement Panel. In the circumstances, she asked Members to support a request to Community Scrutiny Committee for there to be an additional Member added to the Health Engagement Panel to support the additional workload. It was also noted that on a number of previous occasions, the Panel had struggled to be quorate. The Panel supported this requested and the Scrutiny Officer agreed to prepare a paper for Councillor Hone to present to the next Community Scrutiny Committee.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Hone declared a personal interest in minute xx (Public Health Strategy Action Plan review 2010 -11) in that she was a Governor of the Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust.

6 PRINCESS ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL

Mr Darren Leech gave a presentation to Members on the Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust. He provided background information about the PAH, its size, patient profiles, good news stories, and the challenges for 2011/12. He explained that the PAH had a turnover of £168 million and how this cost was apportioned. In 2010/11 there had been a financial surplus of £415,000. Mr Leech stated that much of the earlier growth in administration staff numbers was attributable to the need to administer nationally set operational targets and the submission of data to central government.

Mr Leech explained that the PAH currently employed 3000

staff and had kept good control of its costs in 2010/11 in part due to reducing its dependency on agency staff. The PAH handled nearly 90,000 Accident and Emergencies and was the second busiest hospital A&E in the eastern region. Emergency and planned admissions stood at 60,000 with 200,000 outpatients. Mr Leech stated that a great deal of clinicians' time was spent driving to and from the remote location clinics – including ones at Herts and Essex site in Bishop's Stortford - and this issue was a future challenge for the hospital as it seeks to cut costs.

Mr Leech referred to the low infection rates in relation to C.Dif and MRSA bacteria. Patients with hip fractures tend to have a higher mortality rate due to knock-on complications and the new dedicated hip fracture unit was working well in addressing these problems including prevention of further falls. He referred to the imminent installation of a second MRI scanner adding that there was already a MRI scanner in use at St Margarets' Hospital in Epping and of the success in winning an award in relation to node testing in breast cancer. Cancer targets across the board were consistently good and he talked about the PAH's links with North London Cancer Network. He referred to the targets and some inconsistencies faced by Clinicians in dealing with two referring Health Authorities which do not always do things the same way.

It was noted that in relation to maternity issues, there had been a drop in planned caesarean sections from 27% to 22%. There had been 4180 births last year and of the role of midwives in providing continuity of care was crucial in the growing popularity of the midwife-led birthing suite which had recently been extended.

Mr Leech explained the partnership arrangement with Moorfields in providing ophthalmological care and that the role of the Bishop's Stortford hospital was in providing support diagnostics and local clinic facilities.

Mr Leech referred to the practical issues around transport in relation to Patient Transport Service, volunteer drivers and buses. He referred to the parking at nearby Harlow Town

Centre and hoped that the hospital might be able to provide priority parking for patients and to persuade other hospital users to park elsewhere and within the local Town Centre. The lack of signage was discussed.

Mr Leech provided a breakdown of where patients referred to the hospital came from with 66% from Essex, 31% from East Hertfordshire and 3% from other areas.

In terms of financial challenges, Mr Leech stated that the PAH needed to reduce its costs by £17 million, £7 million would be in terms of productivity with a further £10 million in relation to a capacity reduction. He explained how this might be achieved in terms of clinicians spending less time on the road, closing some wards and staff reductions by natural wastage.

Mr Leech provided a summary of how help was given to those patients with disabilities and agreed to investigate a reference to the "Purple Folder".

The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, thanked Mr Leech for attending and for his informative summary of the work being carried out at the PAH.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

7 PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY ACTION PLAN REVIEW 2010 - 2011

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer provided Members with a presentation on the progress made in implementing the East Herts Council Public Health Action Plan 2010/11, attached to the report now submitted. It was noted that the action plan for 2010/11 contained 39 projects covering key topic areas of:

- Smoking
- Physical activity
- Healthy eating
- Obesity
- Other health factors

- Powers of influence

82% of the projects had been completed. Those projects referred to in the report now submitted, involved interaction with over 16,670 adults and children from East Herts and complimented the Government's approach to improving health and wellbeing nationally and locally. Feedback was provided on each of the initiatives.

In response to a query from Councillor E Buckmaster regarding the inclusion of health and alcohol initiatives, the Director of Neighbourhood Services provided an update in terms of his involvement on a Health and Inequalities Panel which looked at best practice and worked closely with the NHS.

The Panel congratulated the Environmental Health Officer for his continuing excellent work on the East Herts Public Health Action Plan.

The Panel received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

8 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chairman reminded members that her report on the last meeting had already been given to the Panel at their previous meeting. It was noted that the last meeting of the County Health Scrutiny had been cancelled because of the District and Parish Elections so there was nothing new to report here. Councillor D Hone advised that the Health Scrutiny Committee would be considering the issue of Intermediate Care in the Watford area at its meeting on 22 June 2011. It was noted that the Work Programme for the County Council's Scrutiny Committee was now available and included discussion of stroke and intermediate care.

Councillor P Ruffles drew attention to the fact that a

demonstration was planned on 22 June 2011 by HIV Positive Aids suffers within Hertfordshire.

The Panel received the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

9 WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer provided an update on the Work Programme for the Health Engagement Panel in 2011/12. She referred to a request by East Herts Children’s Centres to make a presentation to the Health Engagement Panel on 18 October 2011 on the work of the Children’s Centre and how the Council might be able to further support their work.

Members received the report and supported a request by the Children’s Centres to provide a presentation to the next Health Engagement Panel.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be noted; and

(B) the Children’s Centres be invited to make a presentation to the Health Engagement Panel on 18 October, 2011.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Chairman
Date