

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH/NHS OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 MARCH 2010 AT 1.15PM AT COUNTY
HALL, CHELMSFORD**

Membership

County Councillors:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| * G Butland (Chairman) | * R Gooding |
| * Dr A Naylor (Vice-Chairman) | * Mrs M Hutchon |
| * Mrs M A Miller (Vice-Chairman) | * Mrs S Hillier |
| * J Baugh | * E Johnson |
| * R Boyce | * J Knapman |
| L Dangerfield | * Mrs J M Reeves |

District Councillors:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| * Councillor N Offen | - Colchester Borough Council |
| Councillor M Maddocks | - Rochford District Council |
| Vacancy | - Tendring District Council |

(* present)

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sophie Campion | - Committee Officer |
| David Moses | - Head of Member Support & Governance |
| Graham Redgwell | - Governance Officer |

John Carr of Essex and Southend LINK also participated in the discussion with the agreement of the discussion.

15. Membership

The Committee decided at a previous meeting to co-opt up to four District Councillors to serve on the Committee in order to give representation to any geographical areas unrepresented by County Councillors on the Committee. With the current membership of the Committee, nine of the twelve districts in the County were represented and therefore an invitation had been sent to Colchester, Rochford and Tendring District/Borough Councils to put forward a Member.

The Committee noted the following appointments to the Committee:

- Colchester Borough Council – Councillor Nigel Offen
- Rochford District Council – Councillor Malcolm Maddocks
- Tendring District Council - TBC

Councillor Offen was welcomed to the meeting.

16. Apologies and Substitution Notices

The Committee Officer reported apologies from Councillor L Dangerfield, Councillor M Maddocks and Councillor C Riley (one of the named substitutes).

17. Declarations of Interest

The following standing declarations of interest were recorded:

Councillor Graham Butland	Personal interest as Chief Executive of the East Anglia Children's Hospice. Personal interest due to being in receipt of an NHS Pension.
Councillor Dr Ann Naylor	Personal interest due to being in receipt of an NHS Pension.
Councillor Sandra Hillier	Personal interest as a Governor of the Basildon and Thurrock University Foundation Trust Hospital.
Councillor Nigel Offen	Personal interest due to being in receipt of an NHS Pension.

18. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 January 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. Questions from the Public

The Chairman invited questions from the Public on any matters falling within the remit of the Committee.

Betty Perry a member of the public asked two questions relating to the last set of minutes:

- Minute 7 – Whether a response had been received from NHS Mid Essex regarding a briefing on being in the lowest quartile for Breast Cancer. In response it was reported that a response had not yet been received and would be chased.
- Minute 12 – Whether the Summary Care Records applied to children as well. In response it was thought that it did but this would be checked with NHS South West Essex.

Clarity on both issues would be sought by the Committee.

20. Outcomes from the HOSC Workshop and a Programme of future Work

The Committee considered report HOSC/10/10 from David Moses, Head of Member Support and Governance, reporting on the issues coming out of the HOSC Workshop held on 3 February 2010 and proposing a programme of future work. The Chairman welcomed comments from the Committee.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- John Carr, suggested that more information was shared with the public in future as people had a lack of understanding of what is going on within the health services.
- Members found the workshop to be a very helpful and worthwhile event, particularly having representation from all five Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). It was thought that this would have been useful for the PCTs as well, to see the workflows for all five organisations. Members had also found the event useful for making local contacts.

- A Member who had been unwell at the time and therefore unable to attend the workshop raised concern regarding the standard of hospital food and suggested that this may be an issue for the Committee to look at in more detail. In response the Chairman suggested that initially this issue would be best taken up with the hospital concerned and then, depending on the response, other options for taking the issue forward could be looked at. The aim of the Committee was to focus on the major issues initially.
- A Member suggested that the issue of preparing for the dementia explosion was such a huge subject that a task and finish group may struggle to form conclusions. Therefore, a public hearing may be a better way of taking this issue forward.
- As a new Member of the Committee at this meeting, Councillor Offen, suggested that a review of hospital services would be beneficial, particularly in light of recent issues raised about local hospitals. It was felt that some hospital services may be suffering due to requests for information meaning that the focus was being drawn away from the clinical services. The Chairman advised that, at the January meeting of the Committee, the Chairmen of the two local hospitals concerned had been before the Committee and had both agreed to return to a meeting in six months time to report on progress. Once the Committee had received that report the issue of hospital services could be taken up more generally.

The Chairman proposed taking the issues forward in the following ways:

- Closing the Life-expectancy Gap – That this issue be put on hold until the Audit Commission announced its view. The Local Strategic Partnerships would be looking at this issue in the meantime.
- Access to GPs – That as these were often local issues the recently agreed protocols suggested that this would be best taken up by the relevant Area Forum. If common issues arose from local reviews the Committee could take that up at the County level.
- NHS Post Credit Crunch pressures – That it would be useful to await the post-Election budget announcements and see how that would affect the health services and future commitments. Discussions on transformation and sharing back office functions within the public sector were taking place.
- Perfecting Health and Wellbeing Partnerships – The Chairman had suggested to the Leader of the Council that a joint task and finish group be established involving Members of HOSC, the Community Wellbeing & Older People Policy and Scrutiny Committee (CWOP P&SC) and the Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee (CYP P&SC). It was suggested that non-executive directors from the PCTs be invited to participate in the scrutiny review so that any recommendations made would have the backing of the health services as well as the local authority. David Moses proposed that this suggestion be taken to the Scrutiny Board to be discussed by the Chairmen of those Committees and then a proposal could be made to all three Committees.
- Moving Health Care Closer to Home – That a scoping document on looking at the relationship between acute service and community services be considered and a review then undertaken either as a task and finish group or by the whole Committee.
- Preparing for the Dementia Explosion – That this also have input from the CWOP P&SC and health services. It was proposed that this issue be taken to the Scrutiny Board for discussion. Members felt that this piece of work to

be undertaken by a Task and Finish Group would show that Local Authorities are preparing for the situation.

- Scrutinising the NHS South East Essex Strategy – That this issue be referred to the South Essex Area Forum to review locally.

John Carr asked about how the Essex and Southend LINK could best be involved in these reviews. The Chairman responded by suggesting that the LINK needed to consider how it could best add value to a review either as a witness or by being part of the review body. Mr Carr reported that LINKs representatives were happy to sit on panels and contribute without voting rights.

David Moses advised the Committee that work streams would involve hard work from Members and officers and the Committee would need to be realistic about timescales. This was acknowledged by Members.

The Committee **Agreed** that:

1. The review of Access to GPs would be referred to the West & South Area Forums to review in co-operation with the Thurrock HOSC, with any common themes being taken up by the Committee at County level.
2. The issues of Perfecting Health and Wellbeing Partnerships and Preparing for the Dementia Explosion be taken to the Scrutiny Board for discussion, with a view to working jointly with the other appropriate Committees and representatives from the Health Services.*
3. A review of Moving Health Care Closer to Home would be scoped to take forward.
4. A review to scrutinise the South East Essex Strategy would be referred to the South Essex Area Forum to take forward locally, in co-operation with the Southend HOSC.
5. Reviews of Closing the Life-expectancy Gap, the NHS Post Credit Crunch pressures and a review of hospital services would be put on hold pending outcomes from other work and other organisations.

*[Subsequent to the meeting, Councillor John Baugh expressed an interest in leading on the Dementia work. The Chairman accepted his offer and agreed that he be involved in any preparatory work required – Governance Officer]

21. Review of Carers Support across the area of South Essex Forum

The Committee considered the final report (HOSC/11/10) of the review of Carers Support across the area of the South Essex Forum.

Councillor Ray Howard, Chairman of the South Essex Area Forum, introduced the report to the Committee. Councillor Howard paid tribute to everyone who had contributed to the report and in particular the officers who had worked on the review. The issue had been identified during a discussion of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). It was recognized that there was a need for support to carers. At the September 2009 meeting of the Forum a scrutiny of the issues was undertaken and the participation was very good. Assistance for carers was seen to be a crucial issue as outlined through the interviews with carers conducted as part of the review and shown in the appendices to the report. The recommendations would be monitored by the South Essex Area Forum.

David Moses advised the Committee that a different approach had been taken to some of the evidence gathering during this review. Interviews with people who couldn't attend the meeting had been carried out via video and played back to the Forum at the meeting. This had enabled people to take part in the review who would have been unable to do so otherwise.

It was clarified that the role of the Committee with regard to this review was as a gatekeeper of health related reviews. The Committee was invited to endorse the findings and recommendations of the review and then forward them to the appropriate health organisations.

Councillors who were also Members of the South Essex Area Forum expressed their view that the review had been very enlightening and worthwhile and the interviews with carers had been handled diplomatically by the Area Co-ordinator, Sallyanne Thallon. It had been a well attended meeting with representatives from caring organisations present and was considered to be a good piece of work.

During the discussion the following points were made:

- Transport was a particular issue for young carers. The matter was due to return to the Forum to be looked at in more detail and for further guidance.
- With regard to Recommendation 1, it was questioned what provision/range of support the Forum had in mind within schools. In response David Moses advised that this had been considered at a follow up meeting and evidence had been taken from a youth worker about the waiting lists for young carers support groups. There were limited spaces available, leading to long waiting lists. Funding had been gained to put some support for young carers into some of the local secondary schools to assist. It was the view of professionals that more could be done within schools to assist those young carers who were on waiting lists for support groups.
- Councillor Dr Naylor raised concern regarding Recommendation 5 - finding 6, which used the integrated children's services as an example of good practice, as it was pointed out that although this approach was good in principle it was not yet perfect.
- It was suggested that the earlier implementation review dates of April 2010 were no longer realistic and would need to be amended to a later date.

The Committee **Agreed** that:

1. Any Implementation Review Dates of April 2010 in the report be amended to June 2010.
2. The report be endorsed and forwarded to the relevant Cabinet Members and health organisations, addressed to the Chairman of each PCT and copied to the Chief Executive.

22. Health for North East London Update

The Committee received report (HOSC/12/10) from Graham Redgwell, Governance Officer, updating the Committee on the actions being taken by Health for North East London and its scrutiny by a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Graham Redgwell advised the Committee that the consultation on proposals for the reconfiguration of hospital services in North East London had been extended

by two weeks to take account of all comments being made. This made the consultation period 14 weeks in total. The conclusions of the consultation were expected in April 2010 but it is unlikely that the proposals will be implemented soon after that due to the likely pre-election period. It was reported that Councillor Pond, the Essex representative on the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, had attended the public meeting in Loughton and was satisfied that Essex was not being disadvantaged by the proposed changes. The West Essex Area Forum would have an opportunity to comment during the consultation period at its next meeting.

Local Members expressed their view that, in areas of West Essex, the changes were seen as a major disadvantage for the local residents. It was also considered that moving services from the King George Hospital to Queens was not in the best interests of patients. David Moses advised that a presentation was being given to the West Essex Area Forum on 9th March and comments could be submitted as part of the consultation process. It provided an opportunity for local Members to influence the consultation. A press release had also been sent out to welcome local people to attend the meeting to contribute to this discussion.

Graham Redgwell gave a synopsis of the proposals to reconfigure some of the services. A local Member advised that the A&E department would be closed at King George's Hospital and transferred to Queen's Hospital, Romford which was a concern for the residents of Chigwell. A representative from the LINK also reported that concerns had been raised by the residents of Loughton and Chigwell.

The Chairman proposed that following the meeting of the West Essex Area Forum, that David Moses and Graham Redgwell draft a formal response to the consultation consulting with Councillors Knapman, Dr Naylor and Offen.

It was **Agreed** that:

A formal written response to the consultation would be submitted taking on board the comments of the Committee and the West Essex Area Forum.

23. Non Substantial Service Variations

The Committee considered report (HOSC/13/10) from Graham Redgwell, Governance Officer. At a previous meeting of the Committee it had been agreed that Graham Redgwell would act as a gate-keeper to all health related issues and make an appropriate indication as to how they should be dealt with. The issues within the report were considered to be non substantial variations in service and therefore it was indicated that they did not require consultation. However the Committee was asked to note the report and therefore indicate that it was happy that the issues had been dealt with in the appropriate way.

The Committee **Agreed** to note the report.

24. Appointment of Lead Member to the Mid Essex Area Forum

The Committee was invited to appoint a Member to join the Mid Essex Area Forum Task and Finish Group. As agreed by HOSC previously the Member

should be outside of the electoral divisions covered by the Forum to take an objective view of the issues being discussed and to report back to HOSC as a quality control measure of health scrutiny.

The Committee **Agreed** to appoint Councillor Mrs Sandra Hillier to the Task and Finish Group.

25. Dates of Future Meetings 2010/2011

The Committee received and noted report (HOSC/14/10) detailing the dates of future meetings in 2010/11. The Chairman advised that the dates may be used for other activities of the Committee such as Task and Finish Groups.

26. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 7 April 2010.

There being no further urgent business, the meeting closed at 2.12pm.

Chairman