

Minutes of the meeting of the Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH at 10.30am on Wednesday 24 July 2019

Present:

County Councillors

Councillor Reeves (Chairman)	Councillor Massey
Councillor Wood	Councillor Harris
Councillor Egan	Councillor Moran
Councillor Chandler	Councillor Lumley
Councillor Edwards	Councillor Sargeant

Graham Hughes - Senior Democratic Services Officer, Andrew Seaman – Democratic Services Officer were also present throughout the meeting.

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from Councillors Gadsby and Brown.

Councillor Wood had replaced Councillor Robinson.

The following Councillors declared an interest:

- (i) Councillor Egan – Code interest. Her cousin is Managing Director of Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital Trust – however, she believed that this did not prejudice her consideration of the public interest and that she was able to speak and vote on the matters on the agenda.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee (HOPSC) held on 12 June 2019 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public

4. A&E, Seasonal Pressures Planning and Admissions Avoidance

The Committee considered report **HOPSC/23/19**. The following joined the meeting and, at the invitation of the Chairman, introduced the item.

East of England Ambulance Service:

Gary Morgan, Deputy Director of Service Delivery
Alan Whitehead, Head of Operations – East

Essex County Council:

Alexandra Green, Director for Local Delivery West, Adults Social Care

East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation Trust (Colchester and Ipswich Hospitals):

Rob Power, Associate Director of Operations
Nick Hulme, Chief Executive

Mid and South Essex University Hospitals Group (incorporating Basildon, Broomfield and Southend Hospitals):

Michael Quinn, Director of Operations, Southend Hospital
Sam Goldberg, Director of Operations – Unplanned Care, Basildon Hospital

Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust (Harlow Hospital):

Stephanie Lawton, Chief Operating Officer

Members raised concerns on the timeliness of the submission of some of the papers and that this had put them at a disadvantage and asked for future reports to be submitted in a timelier manner.

It was noted that some presentations were particularly dense, and an executive summary could be used in future.

During discussion the following points were highlighted and/or acknowledged:

East of England Ambulance Service:

- (i) There were 50 new staff joining between July and November. More call centre staff had been clinically trained, allowing for a better patient redirecting process. Paramedic recruitment remained a national challenge. Different roles and marketing strategies had been trialled.
- (ii) Leadership positions had changed.
- (iii) A new tactical operations centre was put in place last year.
- (iv) Resources had been allocated to assist extensive winter planning.
- (v) Seen less handover delays and there had been improvement across all sites.

- (vi) Load sharing was introduced between different acute trusts to aid minimising risk and improving accessibility.
- (vii) They were looking to lower the high number of frequent caller issues and to manage it appropriately.
- (viii) New plans this year were in place to signpost patients to the most appropriate services.
- (ix) Working closely with partners to improve Admission avoidance.
- (x) Vacancies – fairly challenged but had seen an uplift although turnover was quite turbulent. 60-70 vacancies in Essex, Southeast Essex having the most vacancies, where additional training courses were being investigated.
- (xi) A new fleet was being rolled out.
- (xii) Better rosters were being introduced early next year.
- (xiii) There had been an increase in admitting patients to minor injuries, Essex was top of the country for redirecting patients. Paramedics had been trained to allow them to treat a wider range of patients.
- (xiv) There was some limitation to the presentation of the data, and that it had not considered hospital size and volume of patients.

Acute Trusts:

- (i) It had been a mild winter, notwithstanding that there had still been high demand for services.
- (ii) Despite winter pressures there had been an increase outside of the winter months, and so it had been noted that demand is not just seasonal but year-round.
- (iii) GP streaming at Colchester had not worked as well as expected and therefore would be amalgamated with the urgent treatment centre later in the year. Further work was being done to improve primary care. It was noted that not all Hospitals were using GP Streaming.
- (iv) A 'winter room' was set up so that Basildon, Broomfield and Southend worked better together to manage demand. The Tele-tracking would be investigated on how best to utilise it further to manage the even distribution of the ambulance service across the three trusts.
- (v) The use of HALO within A&E had seen an improvement in handover time.
- (vi) It was noted that the three areas had different demographics, and these reflect different challenges.

- (vii) Aim was to decrease patients staying longer than 21 days where appropriate. There was greater focus on enabling people to recover at home rather than in a hospital environment where possible.
- (viii) It had been identified on who would take the lead on respective expertise between trusts, so that knowledge would be shared between Hospitals.
- (ix) Hospitals were working more with GPs in order to improve sharing of information.
- (x) Hospitals were encouraged to become more involved in being consulted on future housing development.
- (xi) It was anticipated that there would be a delay in supplying flu vaccinations this year, however there was reassurance that plans were in place to prioritise recipients.
- (xii) Beds were not the only answer to managing demand, community infrastructure would seem to be the key, and emphasis on prevention.
- (xiii) It was emphasised that admission avoidance was a key principle to pursue at this time and for future strategies.
- (xiv) Mr Hulme highlighted some concerns around the possible impact of Brexit on the health service.

Essex County Council

- (i) There was continued focus on prevention and intervention and building resilient communities. This included continuing focus on safe guarding and improving care market quality and sustainability.
- (ii) Continued focus on admission avoidance and further support in intermediate care as well as a continued focus on minimising number of DTOCs (Delayed Transfers of Care) due to social care.

Conclusion:

The Chairman thanked the witnesses for attending and supporting the discussion. It was agreed for the attendees to come back in February/March, but before April when access standards for A&E may change.

Meeting paused 12:35, resumed 12:45.

5. Moorfields Eye Hospital

The report (**HOPSC/24/19**) was considered and noted. It was agreed to raise any issues of concern to Councillor Pond who would escalate it through the Outer North East London Joint HOSC.

6. Quality Accounts update

The report (**HOPSC/25/19**) was considered and noted.

7. Chairman's Report

The report (**HOPSC/26/19**) was noted, there were no questions.

8. Member Updates

The report (**HOPSC/27/19**) was considered and noted. As Councillor Wood was now serving on the committee it was agreed he would give feedback from the Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) board meeting in future.

9. Work Programme

The committee noted and considered report (**HOPSC/28/19**).

- (i) To investigate a possible future discussion on Brexit planning in the health service.
- (ii) To investigate a future session with community providers.
- (iii) To make some enquiries on continuing care.

10. Date of next meeting

The committee noted that the next committee activity day was scheduled for 09:30 on Wednesday 4 September 2019.

11. Urgent Business

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12:57.

Chairman