

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SOUTH AREA FORUM NHS SE ESSEX
STRATEGIC PLAN SCRUTINY PANEL HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD
ON 10 JANUARY 2011 AT 2.00 PM**

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|-------------------------|------------------|
| * Mrs E Hart (Chairman) | * C Riley |
| G Butland | * B Robin |
| * A Crystall | * Mrs K Twitchen |
| * R Howard | M Velmurugan |
| * M Maddocks | * Ms P Weaver |
| * Present | |

Councillor Brian Wood was also in attendance.

Officers in attendance were:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------|
| Sallyanne Thallon | - | Area Co-ordinator |
| Graham Redgwell | - | Governance Officer |
| Matthew Waldie | - | Committee Officer |

19. Apologies and Substitution Notices

Apologies were received from Councillors Butland and Velmurugan.

20. Declarations of Interest

No new declarations of interest were made.

21. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the 29 October 2010 meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

22. Draft Final Report

The Committee considered the draft final report, as circulated, considering each section in turn.

Two general observations were made:

- The report was only concerned with South East Essex and so took no account of the situation regarding the NHS South West Essex budget (which has a substantial budget deficit)
- The answers referred to, in the report, were not those of the Panel but of NHS South East Essex.

Section 1. Reduce attendance at A & E

The Committee was disappointed at Southend Borough Council's refusal to grant planning permission for the proposed Urgent Care Centre and asked the Committee's Southend Councillors to make enquiries about this decision.

Section 3. Musculo Skeletal Community Services

The starting date of the Pilot Scheme should be included.

Section 4. Improved referral to treatment times for community services

The time taken for the provision of wheelchairs was felt to be far too long.

The Committee acknowledged that the lack of assessors with the appropriate skills could contribute to the problem. It recommended that "trusted assessors" be skilled up, to carry out assessments on the more straightforward cases. This would both enable quicker processing of easier cases and would free up those with greater technical expertise to carry out the more complex assessments.

Section 6. Implement the recommendations from service reviews

The Committee questioned the use of the word "overtraded" in this context, both because of its lack of clarity and the implication that patients were wrong to have treatment.

Section 7. Delivering outpatient services locally and reducing outpatient referrals

The use of language here was felt to be poor, as it did not make the position clear; nor did it show how savings would be made. It was suggested that alternative expressions to "pathways" and "landscapes" should be found, as these mean nothing to the general public

Section 8. Improve services for people with dementia and their carers

Inclusion of the gross investment figure for the previous period (ie 2009/10), for comparison's sake, would have been helpful.

It was noted that Essex HOSC had set up a Dementia Task & Finish Group, to consider the situation throughout Essex. This would be reporting back in the first half of 2011.

Section 9. Improved access to psychological therapies

£58,000 was not seen as a large investment in this.

Section 10. Empower people with long-term conditions and their carers to manage their conditions and take ownership of their care

Concerns were expressed by Members at the lack of clarity here – the lack of actual numbers of plans, or courses or take up of these – but also at the general vagueness of the response.

Subject to the comments above, the Panel endorsed the **Summary of Actions and Issues Arising**.

As stated in the Report, it was also agreed that the Panel should reconvene to assess what progress had been made. A suitable period was felt to be six months from the final report being "signed off" by the (Although it was suggested that the wording used in the final paragraph of the Report, as it stood, could be construed as providing a measure of opt out for the authority; this was not the intention, so this would be revised.)

The Chairman thanked all members for their individual contributions to producing this Report and also thanked the officers for their invaluable assistance.

23. Date of next meeting

Meeting to sign off the Final Report - date to be confirmed. It was noted that the Final Report would then go before the South Area Forum and Essex HOSC for ratification.

The meeting closed at 3.15 pm.

Chairman