

**Minutes of the meeting of the Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee,  
held in County Hall, Chelmsford on Thursday 7 October 2021 at 10:30am**

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**Present**

Cllr Jeff Henry (Chairman)	Cllr Lynda McWilliams (Co-opted member)
Cllr Dave Harris (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Clive Souter (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr David Carter (Co-opted member)	Cllr Mike Steptoe
Cllr Bob Massey	Sharon Westfield-de-Cortez (Healthwatch)
Cllr Anthony McQuiggan	Cllr Holly Whitbread (substitute)

**Apologies**

Cllr Mark Cory	Cllr June Lumley
Cllr Martin Foley	Cllr Luke Mackenzie
Cllr Carlie Mayes (Maldon District Council)	

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The following officers were supporting the meeting:

- Richard Buttress, Democratic Services Manager
- Jasmine Carswell, Democratic Services Officer

**1. Membership, apologies and declarations**

Apologies were received from Cllr Cory, Foley, Lumley, Mackenzie and Mayes.

Cllr Whitbread substituted for Cllr Lumley.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2 September 2021 were approved by the committee as an accurate record.

**3. Questions from the public**

No questions from members of the public were received.

**4. East of England Ambulance Service Trust – response to HOSC letter**

The Chairman welcomed Tom Burton, Strategic Planning Director from the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) to provide its formal response to the HOSC's letter sent to the Trust in February 2021.

The Committee received the following update:

Tom Burton, Strategic Planning Director, EEAST covered the following key issues:

- Acknowledged there are significant pressures in the health service now

- There are currently delays at certain hospital sites at particular times of the week, particularly around the night-time economy
- Partners at all hospitals in Essex have supported the EEAST well
- EEAST currently working on a number of initiatives such as hospital liaison officers
- Confirmed that the EEAST serves the Princess Alexandra Hospital
- People are accessing the EEAST for expediency and are working closely with commissioning partners to understand this further
- High sickness rate – 50% of staff unavailable at times
- EEAST lost its apprenticeship accreditation in July 2021. Existing apprenticeships are in the process of being moved to a third-party provider to ensure training is completed
- Trust is making good progress against quality performance indicators and are continuing to work with regulators
- 'Freedom to speak up' scheme being led by the Trust's Chief Executive
- Continuing to reach out to staff via a number of touch points to gain an understanding of how things are on the ground
- Pilot to trial body worn cameras commencing
- EEAST are preparing now for winter – busy six months predicated if current trajectory continues.

During the discussion, the following key points were noted:

- Number of programmes being led by interim HR Director to obtain feedback from teams on how to improve conditions
- Acknowledged that as an executive the EEAST has not been visible enough. Has been difficult to visit crews in stations due to Covid-19
- New Chief Executive has encouraged the executive to 'own' an area, according to where they live
- Before re-applying for apprenticeship accreditation, EEAST will first understand what they are as a training provider and what is the best use of their resources currently
- Confirmed that EEAST covers the Uttlesford district
- The CQC report did identify some positive findings
- Advised that 111 should be access in the first instance. The 111 provision is stretched. The EEAST should only receive emergency calls
- Taking into account that reporting is a month in arrears, that is why 173 of the KPI's are still showing as amber/red
- Bullying is taken seriously, and specific cases are being investigated in co-operation with HR
- Investing in HR service area to flatten the curve of reported cases of bullying
- Responses times are slower due to restrictions. Plan in place to mitigate this
- All vehicles have a core set of equipment
- Funding is available to spend on more CPR machines
- Mindful of challenges in rural areas. Volunteers to be community responders are being encouraged.

After discussion, it was **Resolved** that:

- i) Confirmation of whether it is still correct that a third of the 173 CQC KPI's are still amber/red?
- ii) Committee to be provided with a timescale for completion of its action plan
- iii) Committee to be provided with a full list of equipment that its rapid response vehicles carry
- iv) EEAST were invited back to a future meeting to provide an update on the cultural change progress

## **5. Covid-19 Update**

The Chairman welcomed Mike Gogarty, Director, Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities to the meeting to provide a verbal update on the current Covid-19 situation.

Mike Gogarty, Director, Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities covered the following key issues:

- Case rates in Essex are stable at the moment and remain below regional and national level
- Rates in elderly people have not increased
- Peak in 20 – 29 age group related to festival attendance and gatherings over the Summer. High male rate during Euro 2020
- Vaccine effectiveness is good and having the vaccine will help children stay in school
- Hospital admissions remain low
- Working hard with voluntary sector to vaccinate people at home
- School age vaccinations will not be completed before half-term
- Some measures of social distancing remain and may help reduce flu.

During the discussion, the following key points were noted:

- Booster vaccine is likely to be Pfizer
- Vaccines were made to prevent people being admitted into hospital
- Vaccine data is not collected by gender. Increase in communications around the lack of risk to pregnancy and fertility from having the vaccine
- Transport deprivation is an issue. Essex Welfare Service are contacting people by phone to discuss concerns around not having the vaccine
- Uncertain supply of vaccines at GP surgeries.

## **6. Chairman's Report**

The Committee noted the information update within the Chairman's report.

## **7. Member Updates**

The following updates were provided to the Committee:

- Suffolk JHOSC – hasn't met for a while. Written to Graham Hughes for update.

## **8. Work Programme**

The Committee noted the current work programme.

**9. Date of next meeting**

To note that the next committee meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 4 November 2021 at 10:30am.

**10. Urgent business**

No urgent business received.

**11. Urgent exempt business**

No urgent exempt business received.

The meeting closed at 11:47am.

**Chairman**